

BOOK REVIEW

SHAPING THE WORLD ORDER ACCORDING TO MILITARY POWER EVOLUTION IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Veljko Blagojević and Igor Pejić, *Military Power in International Politics: Past - Present - Future*, Lambert Academic Publishing 2019, 400 pages.

The book *Military Power in International Politics: Past – Present – Future* is a scientific work of two authors, Veljko Blagojević and Igor Pejić, published by Lambert Academic Publishing in 2019. The main subject of research is the role of military power in world politics, and how the military instrument molded the foreign policy decision making of great powers. The basic premise of the study is that anarchy in international relations is still an important factor that influences world politics, as well as how actors react and adapt various measures in order to accomplish specific strategic goals. The theoretical framework of the book is largely based upon realism and structural realism that, despite numerous criticisms in the contemporary science of international relations, provide a solid base upon which military might and war can be examined.

In a world governed by state-centric views, international politics are still exercised through a prism of realism that places the concept of power as one of the most important crucibles of past, present and most probably future international relations. A simple observation of human history indicates a reoccurring problem, a dilemma that had plagued the minds of many diplomats and statesmen. It is primarily focused on the possession of sufficient means and instruments, through which military power can be implemented as a tool of states' foreign politics. Various tinkerers and strategists from Sun-Tzu to Klauzevic, from Machiavelli to Mearsheimer and Colin S. Gray, have tried to explain the correlation between the military instrument and the state's position in the global arena of politics. Though the questions of military power may seem strictly related to the war and in many cases that is the "hard truth", in essence, the possession or lack of an efficient military instrument has determined the success rate of countries' foreign policy agenda. Despite the contemporary global political tendencies towards a more multilateral and less anarchic world politics, military power still seems to be at the crux of great power politics largely focused on the changing nature of the world order.

The analysis of the research subject follows a clear pattern of temporal comparison and examination of military power from the 17th century to modern times. The main axis of the research was also interrelated with the foreign politics of the states that represented crucial actors of their time. The authors were eager to represent the correlation between military strategies and vectors of foreign politics, the pattern which has evolved through time and space and signifies a recurring schema between statecraft and military-craft. Stratagems used and implemented by various generals and commanders mirror the political objectives of states on various levels. Previous statement should not be regarded simply in Klauzewitizian terms of war and politics, but rather as a deeper reflection of the overall connection between the dynamic nature of military strategy, and how it corresponds to the geopolitical and geostrategic objectives of states that are ultimately bound by the power capacities that they do or do not possess in a given timeframe.

Research problems examined in the book led the authors to interesting conclusions that have been summarized at the end of each chapter, which at the same time represent a certain era of world politics. A distinguishable feature of this work is a reoccurring analysis of military conflicts evolution and how these armed battles impacted the geopolitical layout of various regions. The research subject in the book has already been scientifically verified through discussion in various scientific papers and articles on international relations, geopolitics and military. The main themes of such scientific works were the development and evolution of strategy, development of RMAs, armed conflicts and great wars, the Cold War, foreign politics, international relations and the concept of power as a driving force of global politics.

The structure of this scientific study is composed of the introductory part, the historical review of military power and foreign politics, the Cold War, the unipolar moment, the shapes of multipolarity and concluding remarks. The introductory part explains the idea of military power, its significance in international relations and how it correlates with foreign policy objectives of the states. This part serves as an overall framework of the scientific study. The second chapter deals with the historical dimension of military organization and how it evolved from the 17th century onward. Although the chapter represents a bigger section without sub-sections, it encompasses a larger part of very important history in order to understand modern military development and the role of military power in international politics.

The Cold War chapter, as its name suggests, is focused on the events from the end of the Second World War to the fall of the Berlin Wall. The main theme of the chapter revolves around bipolarity, nuclear armaments and fragile balance of power that had been tested constantly in rimlands of the world. As the authors underline, “the Second World War had dissolved the

power of the European countries, at the same time ending the multipolar balance of power, allowing USSR and the US to fill the newly created power vacuum” (p. 41). The interesting part of this chapter represents its geopolitical character, supplemented with asymmetrical military operations in the third world countries.

The Unipolar moment is focused on the events after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union: “With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States have managed to establish its position in the international sphere as a predominant power, never before seen in the history of modern civilization” (p. 115). In this chapter, the authors have thoroughly examined armed conflicts and military operations of the United States as the leading military power of this period. One of the main points in the chapter represents the Revolution in Military Affairs and how it led to the restructuring of modern combat operations and the overall reorganization of military forces. The authors have made a fine remark of how these technological improvements affected the implementation and scope of military power and how it allowed the US to project its power-reach globally.

The next chapter deals with the growing sense of multipolarity in our contemporary international relations. The chapter is focused on present-day problems and military development, security threats and the so-called “revisionists” or rising powers-challengers to the US hegemony. As the authors explain, “American grand strategy in the post-Soviet era often aims at promoting security and stability in destabilized regions of “crossroad countries”. However, these spaces of instability have developed suspicion and a certain dose of hostility towards Washington’s peacemaker approach. In such places, America is not perceived as a provider of security but rather a harbinger of insecurity, which consequently “opened the door” for China and Europe, or even Russia to emerge as solid alternatives” (p. 255). Finally, the concluding chapter encompasses scientific results and projections that are focused on the development of future military operations and the role of military instruments as a state tool of foreign policy.

We can conclude that the book *Military Power in International Politics: Past - Present – Future* is an important scientific paper for understanding international politics and military power for all scholars and students interested in this specific subject. The book has 400 pages and 547 footnotes, which further proves the authors’ commitment to this study and their willingness to examine and better understand the significance of military power in international politics. The book’s bibliography has more than 250 different primary and secondary sources, which indicates the scope of this scientific endeavor.

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