

## The European Union – China. Today and in the Future

The position, place and role of a state or other actor, such as the European Union, for instance, in the international system are determined by its social and political system, potentials and the foreign policy it conducts, with the quality, attractiveness and effectiveness of that policy being dependent on numerous factors as well. However, greater capabilities in this area are enjoyed by large, strong states, which are colloquially referred to as *imperia* or powers. It is they who, *de facto*, practise the most offensive foreign policy, create reality on the ground and play the primary roles in the international arena. It is also they who ultimately determine the shape and character of the international systems, or orders, being formed as expressed, *inter alia*, by bilateral and multilateral international contacts, active participation in international organisations, membership in international alliances and by the initiatives they undertake which are addressed to the international community. The scale, extent and character of this participation in international life are different because the reasons, interests and capabilities of particular states are different.<sup>1</sup>

According to the PWN *Dictionary of Foreign Words (Słownik Wyrazów Obcych PWN)* a power is a state which exerts a decisive influence on international relations and is acknowledged as such by other states. In popular understanding, the factors which determine whether a state is accorded the status of a power include the size of its territory and population, its economic, military, scientific and technological potential and its natural resources, as well as both the type of foreign policy it conducts and the quality of that policy. For

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<sup>1</sup> See T. Łoś-Nowak, *Polityka zagraniczna w przestrzeni teoretycznej [Foreign Policy in a Theoretical Space]*, in T. Łoś-Nowak (ed.), *Polityka zagraniczna. Aktorzy, potencjały, strategie [Foreign Policy. Actors, Potentials & Strategies]*, Wydawnictwo Poltext, Warsaw 2011, p. 17.

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his part, Arnold Toynbee, a British philosopher and historian, defined a power as a state having an appropriate political potential, pre-destining it to exert as large an influence on the international environment as possible<sup>2</sup>.

In turn, according to Janusz Stefanowicz, a power is a state which “by its might and the strength of its influence rather obviously takes an upper hand over other states”<sup>3</sup>. Generally, it can be said that a power is a state which has certain specified potentials and interests as well as the capabilities to realise them effectively on a global scale.

In the context of the theoretical assumption set out in the foregoing, contemporary China, in my opinion, faces a great chance of finding herself among the largest of the world powers which are co-creating the new international order and will manage it in the future. She already holds an important position in the international arena and, alongside the United States and European Union, what can only be called a leading one in the process of building the new international system<sup>4</sup>. The political line of “reform and opening to the outside world” announced at the end of 1978 by the then Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, favours precisely such an outcome. The essence of this approach consists in departing from the ‘revolutionary model’ doctrine which had thus far held sway, rejecting the supremacy of ideology and turning to pragmatic undertakings serving China’s national interests. Economic development and modernisation have since been deemed to constitute the decisive premises for building China’s power and national revival. Deng Xiaoping was wont to proclaim that, unless domestic and foreign policy were changed, China would become a marginal country and would be unable to bring her superpower aspirations to fruition. Professor Jan Rowiński phrased it in these words:

This was conducive to abandoning a revolutionary and messianic attitude and looking, probably for the first time, at one’s own country as an integral part of the world community, as well as to the conditional acceptance of the existing international order

<sup>2</sup> See A.J. Toynbee, *The World After the Peace Conference*, Oxford University Press, London 1925, pp. 4–6.

<sup>3</sup> See T. Łoś-Nowak (ed.), *Encyklopedia politologii [Encyclopaedia of Political Sciences]*, vol. V: *Stosunki międzynarodowe [International Relations]*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Krakow 2002, p. 221.

<sup>4</sup> See A. Maddison, *The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective*, OECD, Paris 2011; J. Rowiński, *Chiny: nowa globalna potęga? Cień dawnej świetności i lat poniżenia [China, a New Global Power? The Shadow of Former Excellence and the Years of Humiliation]* in A.D. Rotfeld (ed.), *Dokąd zmierza świat? [Where Is the World Heading?]*, PISM, Warsaw 2008, pp. 350–351.

and principles which served as its base. It was assumed then that, as China's international position, resulting from the country's potential and the role it performed, kept changing, it would be possible to implement such adjustments and transformations as would reflect the Chinese viewpoint, national interests and aspirations, to a higher degree<sup>5</sup>.

The authorities in Beijing are aware that, after the many failures which occurred at the turn of twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the policy being conducted at present may prove to be an historic success on the part of the People's Republic of China in the international arena. The country, which is rich in experience, wants to make a good use of the moment fate has decreed it and, during this unique period, introduce radical changes in its economic and social structure in order to catch up with Europe, Japan and the United States. Guided by her own national interests and international aspirations, China wishes to use the current financial and economic crisis as a springboard to help her overtake those regions and countries in every aspect and, simultaneously, to prove to her own society and to the entire world the advantage of the Chinese socio-political, economic and cultural model. Behind closed doors, China dreams of obtaining the status of a global power, a superpower which will be able, if not to take control over the world, then to rule it in common with other powers and entities such as the European Union, for instance. Is this dream realistic? I think it is. While such a scenario would have seemed to be impossible to implement less than twenty years ago, today we already know that the strategy based on consistently achieving the objectives set out meets the expectations of the country's authorities. On our part, we are witnessing the rebirth of the Chinese empire and the process of China's achieving a leading global role.

An eminent economist and expert in Asia's history, Professor Hu Angang described the changes under way in China at present as without precedent in the entire past of that country in terms of their scale, pace, depth and complexity, as well as of their impact on the life of her 1.3 billion inhabitants. He places these transformation under the label of "the fourth the most excellent period of development in the country's history". At the same time, however, he emphasises that these changes constitute the most difficult challenge and a severe test for the rulers and the state structures, as well as for social, economic and political stability<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> See J. Rowiński, *Chiny...*, p. 354.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 356.

For China, the twenty-first century will undoubtedly be passing by under the banner of ever stronger involvement in the world economy, resulting in increasing capability to make an impact, first on a regional scale and subsequently, on a global one. The aforementioned financial and economic crisis, which has lingered since 2008, has accelerated this process, making both Beijing and its partners aware that the PRC has entered the road / path to achieving the status of a world power<sup>7</sup>.

In the international arena, the spectacular successes, both economic and in other areas, achieved by the PRC in the decades at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries inspire admiration on the one hand while, on the other, they also raise apprehensions, particularly among the existing great powers, with the US in the lead. They give rise to a host of questions regarding China's future and her role in the new international system. Neither are they a matter of indifference to Europe and the European Union, which speaks in the international arena on behalf of the region and includes Poland, a significant actor and one which aspires to the role of both a regional power and an important member of NATO.

As far as Poland is concerned, we also want to play a consequential part in the emerging multipolar and multicivilisational world order. For this reason, we, too, must look for answers to the questions regarding the re-configuration of the global stage, its future shape and the role of China, the United States, the European Union's and the Atlantic Community in the new international order. The same holds true for questions concerning Poland's future, as well as her national and international security.

Therein, as well, lies the objective of this publication, the result of research conducted over several years by the staff of the Department of European Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences' Institute of Political Studies and the scholars and experts from other research centres across Poland who collaborated with them. Particular emphasis has been placed on presenting the relationships between the European Union and China and their determinants operative both today and in the future. Generally, what we have here is an attempt to draw up a balance sheet and a diagnosis of the cooperation between the European

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<sup>7</sup> See A. Łopińska, *Chiny w XXI wieku – potęga regionalna czy mocarstwo światowe?* [*China in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. A Regional Power or a Global Superpower?*], in „Przegląd Zachodni” [„Western Review”], No. 4, 2012, p. 112; S.V. Lawrence, D. Mac Donald, *U.S.– China Relations: Policy Issues*, CRS Report for Congress, 2 August 2012.

Union and the PRC to date, understood in the wide sense and, on the basis of both balance sheet and diagnosis, to outline the prospects of its development, opportunities and threats. This endeavour also includes a presentation of the place and role of China and the European Union in the process of building the new international order.

The primary premise of these studies posits that both the European Union and the PRC are specific, and different, subjects of contemporary international relations and are, today, already playing leading parts, alongside the United States, in building the new, post-Cold War international order. Apart from this, a working hypothesis was adopted, postulating that this new international order will be a multipolar one, where some of the main roles will be performed by China and the European Union. This publication demonstrates that China and the European Union are already affecting the world economy, directly or indirectly, despite the economic crisis. By the same token, their political significance and role in the international arena are growing.

The book consists of four parts and seventeen chapters, with each chapter divided into numerous sections. Part One, entitled *The Genesis and Historical and Cultural Premises of Relations between the European Union and China*, comprises four chapters. It opens with a contribution by Mikołaj Kukowski, who describes China's road to co-operation with the European Union. In Chapter 2, Michał Bogusz scrutinises the cultural and psychological determinants of the PRC's policy toward the European Union. Corresponding to this, in Chapter 3, Karolina Klecha-Tylec examines China's policy toward the European Union in the context of East Asian regionalism. Chapter 4 provides Jakub Wódka's description of the role of soft power in modern China's foreign policy.

Part Two, which bears the title *The European Union and the PRC. Partners or Enemies?*, also contains four chapters. It opens with a piece by Krystyna Gomółka and Izabela Borucińska-Dereszkiewicz concerning the European Union's policy toward China, seen both as a potential partner and, simultaneously, as a competitor in the international arena. The topic of Chapter 6, where Adrian Chojan considers the European Union's position toward the growing political and military power of China in the international arena, is in tune with the one which precedes it. In Chapter 7, Przemysław Osiewicz dwells on the PRC's and European Union's rivalry in the Middle East, while Paweł J. Godlewski describes the same process in respect of natural resources in Central Asia and the Caspian Sea basin in Chapter 8.

Part Three, *Political, Economic and Other Fields of Cooperation between the European Union and China. Condition and Prospects*, again consists of four chapters. It opens with Chapter 9, written by Zdzisław W. Puślecki, who dwells on the condition of, and prospects for economic cooperation between the European Union and China. To a large extent, Chapter 10, where the author, Mikołaj J. Tomaszuk, puts the PRC's role in the European Union's efforts to counteract the financial and economic crisis in 2008 to 2011 under scrutiny, is its extension. In Chapter 11, Łukasz Gacek, describes the development of alternative energy sources in China, in particular, the so-called 'green energy'.

Part Four, the final part, is entitled *The European Union and China in the New International Order*. It consists of five chapters and is devoted to the role of the European Union and China in the process of building the new international order, as well as to the future shape of that order and the place of these two actors therein. In Chapter 12, with which it opens, the author, Józef M. Fiszer analyses China's policy and role in the process by which the new, multilateral global order is being formed. The next two chapters correspond to this, with the author of Chapter 13, Rafał Kwieciński, presenting China's place in the new international system which is currently emerging, and Tomasz Paszewski describing the positions of the European Union and China in the future world order in Chapter 14. In turn, Tomasz G. Grosse dwells on contemporary and future geoeconomic relations between the European Union and China as exemplified by the Gallileo satellite navigation system. In Chapter 15, which closes the publication, Anna Czarzyńska takes an interesting approach in describing European aspirations with regard to conducting a global climate policy toward China and their multifarious consequences.