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## REVIEW

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### NON-WESTERN ACTORS OF WORLD SECURITY / Nezápadní aktéři světové bezpečnosti

Miloš Balabán, Antonín Rašek et al., 2010.  
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On August 16, 2010, Chinese GDP surpassed that of Japan and moved China to the second place in the world, right behind the US. This development was consistent with the majority of long-term forecasting studies which had traditionally pointed out the high growth rate, or expected growth rate, of several economies with respect to their political potential in future world affairs. One such prediction, namely that of Goldman Sachs analyst Jim O'Neill, coined the term BRIC (Brazil-Russia-India-China). The phenomenon of potential new powers in world politics has been with us ever since.

The book called *Non-Western Actors of World Security* is focused on the so-called emerging powers and analyzes major tendencies and developments concerning these states and their position among others in the global community. In six chapters, the authors offer a comprehensive overview. Two chapters are dedicated to specific problems of the world standing of the so-called emerging powers. The other four comment on particular states, usually giving information on recent developments in politics and economics and then moving to the respective country's relations with others in the BRIC bloc and other important current players, particularly the EU or the US. Furthermore, the book's appendix summarizes various statistics concerning the BRIC countries in an understandable and clear fashion.

Chapter 1 opens the discussion by evaluating the current state of "global governance." The comments presented reflect very clearly that the system in question is rather too complicated and already suffering from inherent deficiencies. While the crisis of the UN is only the tip of the problem iceberg (with various regional organizations and their respective relations and interactions hidden "under the surface"), the authors remind us that there have been several calls for reform, at least of the most important part of the system, the UN Security Council. Chances and ambitions of the BRIC countries in the foreseeable upcoming reform are discussed with respect to their potential role in world economy, demography, and in turn politics. At the end of the chapter, possible directions of such a reform are commented on. This evaluation is partially based on the outcomes of the *Global Strategic Trends Programme*<sup>1</sup> developed by the UK Ministry of Defence.

Chapter 2 tandem of authors, Jan Němec and Matyáš Pelant, evaluates Brazil's standing and expected rise in self-confidence. As expected, this contribution is mostly concerned with the reform process which has been taking place since the 1985 coup, with special interest in the role of *Partido dos Trabalhadores* in the political life of the country and during President Lula da Silva's two terms of office. Brazilian ambition is seen as a primarily local one, but with several important accents transcending the local framework, namely multilateralism and relations within the so-called "Global South." Apart from the global and local political ambitions, a historically significant contact with Japan has made it an important political partner for Brazil. The presumably large reserves of oil raised the hopes of the government to strengthen its global position and maybe even join the OPEC. However, the chapter omits the widely-known problems of social cohesion and poverty as well as the emerging phenomena of „failed cities“, which may play a decisive role in Brazil's development throughout the upcoming years.

Chapter 3 is focused on Russia. As such, it is one of the most important contributions in this book considering the fact that the reader is most likely to be from Central Europe. The author, Dr. Miloš Balabán, offers an informed commentary on recent modernization attempts and the place of economic diplomacy in Russia's foreign policy. He offers the view that traditional geopolitical determinants and Russia's tendency to preserve and to promote its world standing will continue to guide Russia in the future. Furthermore, the country's orientation towards the Arctic region is commented on with respect to its resource-export-based economy and, to some extent, foreign policy. After all, the

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1 Global Strategic Trends Programme. DCDC. Her Majesty's Government, Ministry of Defence. 2007.

modernization program recently announced by President Medvedev needs extensive financing. Energy resources are important in broader policies of the Russian Federation; the push for organizational coordination of natural gas exporting countries continues to be a particularly important initiative. Notwithstanding Russia's traditionally self-interested foreign policy, largely based on influence in neighboring regions, the current government concentrates on supporting the BRIC as a coordination platform and even a policy instrument for challenging the US. Among the topic which should be elaborated more, although they are touched upon, are the future role of the Islamic element in Russian society and the demographic problems of Siberian regions, particularly illegal immigration from China.

Chapter 4 by Vlastimil Blecha is dedicated to India. While suffering from complicated internal political, religious and nationalist tensions, this country is portrayed as one of the most promising members of the BRIC group. Several reasons are given to support that point, namely a newly established program of nuclear energy cooperation with the US (which significantly lowered the concerns surrounding India's nuclear warfare capability), and an important relaxation within its relations with China, which have not always been idyllic. Nonetheless, India continues a military build-up within the framework of its rather pragmatic or even realist current foreign policy. This development is not limited to nuclear or land warfare capabilities, as one would presume since the issue of Pakistan and Kashmir continues to be the most burning one, but also in maritime policing capacities. Consequently, India starts to play a more important role within the Indian Ocean region and might take over some of the burden currently carried by the US Navy, or challenge the role of the US in the region in the long run. Yet again, the problem of social cohesion should be addressed in more depth, as it is a major limiting factor in the development of the country and a significant determinant in its relations with neighbors.

Chapter 5, arguably the most important one, deals with China. Along with India, the People's Republic of China is possibly the most promising player of the BRIC. In this chapter, Rudolf Fürst, researcher from the Institute of International Relations in Prague, deviates from the structure common to the other country-specific chapters and concentrates on intellectual developments behind China's foreign policy and policy-making process. Only does the author demonstrate his assumptions about the practical steps made by China to ensure the goal of taking over global leadership, or at least achieving balance with the US. The major tool used for this purpose comprises of the so-called soft power, region-wide and world-wide, notwithstanding the need to possess the capacity to intervene by force if necessary. Therefore, China concentrates on the activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which helped

to settle the China-Russia relations and, on the other hand, invests heavily into modernization and capacity building within its military, again in terms of both land and naval power. Detailed discussion of some of China's foreign policy steps may, however, undermine the idea of a global leadership goal. China's ambition may lie in self-development, rather than world-wide influence.

Finally, Chapter 6 offers four scenarios of possible future developments concerning the multipolar power structure over the next several decades. The contributors use the assumptions and conclusions given by previous chapter to produce a "concert of powers" scenario in which the US, the EU, and BRIC countries form some sort of global coordination. The other scenarios put emphasis on the role of China: one scenario discusses the US-China bipolarity; the next one evaluates the options for a tripolarity of blocs (namely the West, BRIC and SCO) leading to a bipolarity between the West and the SCO; and the final scenario predicts a peaceful rise of China into the position of a single superpower.

The book presented offers a pointed and thought-provoking discussion in a rather dense fashion. It is clearly structured and helpful, especially to someone who is not an expert in the field or focuses on other players and regions. Certainly, the book could serve as a manual for practitioners, namely politicians, who interact with the nations under discussion or even set policy guidelines towards them. The book is handy and helpful for quick reference within the assumed limits posed by the goal of the analysis, which was not to present thorough evaluation of internal politics but rather to discuss briefly the respective nations' past developments and analyze the prospects for their future standing in the global arena, with reference to the impact of such a new setting on older players, namely the EU and the US.