

Malwina Hopej

University of Wrocław (Poland)

Geopolitical Basis for Enlargement of the European Union

Book Review: Pierre Verluise, *Geopolityka granic Wspólnoty Europejskiej*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek 2014 (pp. 211). ISBN 978–83–8019–016–0. Price: PLN 31.40.

The history of Europe is the history of its borders (Pomian, 2004) and integration process exerts influence on boundaries, but particularly conceptualisation European Union. The title involves dilemma that an extent of the limitations must harmonise with Western culture is the another Dr Pierre Verluise's publication concerning the place of the EU position on an international scale, even though we could say this is the first publication concerning its borders. It might seem that in the Western World which is undergoing the deep integration processes as well as people, goods as thoughts flow, boundaries could be an overlooked area. It is a mistaken assumption. The determination of the state, as well as the borders of the country, are being redefined. On the one hand, it is a common thing to mean borders as classic geographical demarcation lines separating nation states within the meaning of The Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States. However, on the other hand, borders can separate discourses or knowledge, referring to the critical approach.

The reviewed monograph is a Polish translation of the publication *Géopolitique des frontières européennes. Élargir, jusqu'où?* brought out in 2013. Undoubtedly this title is obliging. On Polish book market – what is quite paradoxical due to the geographical situation of Poland – there is a lack of literature analyse geopolitics and the European Union in the border studies field. Therefore there is not astonishing that the publication demands would be strict, and it is difficult to predict whether it would fulfil expectations though. It might seem because of the title that Verluise is

trying to broaden those categories to international organisation adding state attribute what a border is. The book consists of three main parts divided into chapters with conclusions, which represent three different issues which EU broadening is facing.

The first part presents the deliberation on future enlargement and prospective accession states which differs so much from “European pivot”, appearing potential members at the same time. First of all it is worth remarking that those countries are characterised due to the following indexes – area, GDP referring to PPS, population, fertility rate, as well as less infrequent in modelling and measurement national power: net migration rate and the projections of population growth in the year 2025 – those factors should illustrate their contribution into making EU position on an international scale more or less powerful. Verluise pays much attention to those weak candidate states evincing an organised crime, corruption, media dependence or excessive connections with non-EU states.

The second part considers relations with the Russian Federation in the context of energy politics (geopolitics of pipelines). The following chapters discuss Ukraine and the Eastern Partnership in interviews with the former French ambassador in Kiev and expert in energetics and ‘Great Europe’. It represents the advantages as well as makes it more interesting for Polish readers as in both of those chapters the role of Poland is being described.

The third part describes the situation in the South, bringing over the immediate surroundings of the EU – Mediterranean region – relating here albeit to the Union for the Mediterranean as well as Morocco which in the first beneficiary in Environmental Infrastructure Support Programme, therefore an example of French diplomacy activity on the European arena. The last chapter which is the last part of the book as well concerns an Official Development Assistance. What is interesting Verluise adduces EU institutions critiques especially effectiveness ODA, however EU is the most generous donor in the world. Moreover, it should be emphasising creation Union for the Mediterranean in the capacity of the arena of German-French policy scuffle.

This publication left the audience unsatisfied. There is a lack of explicit information about the geopolitics of borders, for instance, definitions that point out the book in approach. While reading the study, it might seem that the author has represented merely a part of the reality, what is allowing to freely analyse and interpret the facts, not imposing personal opinion though. The reader can notice that this strategy is missing. In the organisation of contents itself could be a companion to representing official and potential candidates, which as well describes local, regional policy due to the immediate surroundings of the EU, but at the same time due to the narrow range of reality, in consequence, member of an audience is uncombined with this subject area.

Not to mention the fact that this academic publication editorialises French stand-point on politics (an example worth mentioning is UfM or Morocco), I reckon that author can add advice for EU – with the purpose of increase of power at the regional level, ultimately great power. An unusual selection of indicators, which describe potential candidates for EU membership are worth attention, even though the author does not explain the selective system. Besides, there is also a lack of previous indexes and trend analysis. It might create an illusion that the leading role of the EU states is an increase of GDP distinguished by the highest rate of population growth thus components of traditional national power. Also, none of the previously mentioned components refers to cultures, religions or social system, as a result of one may suggest that Verluise combines borders and classical geopolitics, not critical.

On balance, regardless of the fact that is the lack of necessary methodological information, excerpts could be a didactic complement. I would like to point out awareness of the interviews, maps but also an infrequent selection of a component of national power.

References:

- Pomian, K. (2004). *Europa i jej narody*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo słowo/obraz terytoria.
 Verluise, P. (2014). *Geopolityka granic Wspólnoty Europejskiej*. Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek.

Author

Ms Malwina Hopej

University of Wrocław, Institute of International Studies. Contact details: ul. Koszarowa 3, 51–149 Wrocław, Poland; e-mail: malwina.hopej@uwr.edu.pl.