

Interview with Piotr Dutkiewicz

[00:00:08] First of all, thank you for allocating the time and agreeing to do this interview with us. I would like to congratulate you on the publication of another series of your books. Can you briefly tell us about this new book and what made you to make this contribution in this book?

[00:00:34] First of all, thank you for the invitation Temur. This book is published very recently. It's about hegemony, and how it's structured, what does it mean. In what kind of power you need to be hegemon or what kind of the forces should counterbalance hegemony in order to lose hegemonic power. This is about the new situation in the world where certain powers, like US is losing a bit of its own hegemonic power and there are other raising units, actors like China or Russia, who would like to revision this situation. And they would like to play a more important role. There is a European Union, which ... is not only about 27 states. It's about reaching out in order to promote their own value system and their own economic system. So this book is about how to gain power and how to lose power, from the multi-country, multi-regional perspective, but also from the multidisciplinary perspective, but also from the perspective of people from different countries.

There is also a civilizational aspect in this book, because there are people from China, from Central Asia, from Europe, from Canada, from U.S. and from Russia. And they all are trying to figure out what hegemony is from their own cultural perspectives. And on top of this, to make the book even more sophisticated or complex if you wish, there are different methodological perspectives. The idea of this book was to present how the world power is changing from liberal perspective, from realist perspective, from constructivist perspective, from neo-colonial perspective or post-colonial perspective, from the gender perspective. This book not only offers different regional and cultural perspectives, but also different methodological approaches. So that's why this book is about what we call a complex hegemony, in which all those aspects: power, state, non-state actors are playing very specific roles. So this book is about the future. This book is about how the world power will be reconstructed. And I believe that's what you see with the pandemic, with COVID19, part of the process.

[00:03:35] And how [do you think] it compares to your previous works?

[00:03:41] This book is quite specific. Wonderful authors, co-authors, wonderful co-editors, very experienced. And the previous works were about thinking about what we saw, and in thinking about the past to extrapolate in order to think about the future. This book is slightly different, because this is about the future. This is not about analyzing the past and extrapolation of the future out of that process, but rather to feeling anew what's going on from the perspective of changing the world. We know that we are facing many challenges and those challenges are global. So they require a global response. And our book is about the fundamental question whether our response to those challenges are adequate or not. And at what configuration of state and non-state actors these challenges would be met. So this is the difference between what we have done in this book by comparing to the previous volumes we were working on.

[00:04:56] We're now currently in a situation of pandemic. What are you expecting to happen based on the book itself? What it forecasts?

[00:05:07] It's about division of the world into certain blocks. We believe that this situation [with COVID19] will be forcing main players to rethink their role in the global system. So that's what we see in this book. We are forecasting that the United States will be one of the players, very big players, but only one of them. So the new pluralist originally based hegemonies will be coming. Each of this new hegemonic powers will try to absorb or subordinate they own neighborhood. So in this sense, we'll be dealing with the more complex power play. So, there's this one big conclusion.

Another big conclusion is about the play in between state and non-state actors. So our book is about not only state actors and their attempt to subordinate others, but also what is the role of the NGOs, what is the role of the social networks and so on and so forth. So all the non-state actors are playing the increasing role in making the world subordinated to they own interests and to their own networks. So this is another interesting finding. And then, this book is also about how different types of elites will play their game in reshaping globalization, either financial elites or industrial elites. We see that the new struggle is ongoing between those two elites, that they have a different division of globalization. And who wins this struggle between financial capital and the production capital. Will they reshape the ways in which we will see the new wave of globalization in the future?

[00:07:30] Well, given how busy you are working as a professor and I'll see how participating in different projects. How are you finding time for books like this?

[00:07:44] Well, it's because it's fascinating. This is the life. It's about the new ideas and how to not only absorb ideas of others, but also to react to this with our own ideas. And you have to be active. You have to be active not only in the classroom, but also active in the social space. And these books are proposing a certain idea, a set of ideas. And then we're discussing those ideas in public. That's one of the most fascinating aspects of what we're doing in the university. And, you know, we are very happy people, very lucky people, because on top of teaching, we have still some time to do these things. And the beauty of this is that you have an idea, and you're trying to test this idea with your colleagues. So you're asking the best to join you and to find out whether your ideas are OK or not. And how you can to reshape this day by joining this collective and as a collective you carry on to the stage of the book. So this is a certain process that you are not alone in front of your computer. You are discussing with many people from different countries, from three continents. This is a beauty of this work. That is the book is the logical outcome, but not even the main purpose. The book is the outcome of this debate. That's why we are very lucky, I think. And people should thank the University for allowing us to do so.

[00:09:32] I also know that unlike many faculty members of the Carleton you or not in Canada right now, you're in Poland. How were you able to travel during this pandemic and how are you holding up?

[00:09:49] I was trying to get to Poland three times. So we were waiting at the airport, you know, whether the planes are departing or not, that was in one case. And the two other cases we're just informed two days before: "No, sorry, you're not going". I don't know how I will return. And so this is a bit risky, but what to do? We're constrained. And again, I'm very

happy that I can talk to you online. Even in the Polish village, deep in the woods, we have this opportunity. So that's excellent.

[00:10:31] Well, I think it's also because you have this, in Russian they say the spirit of *avanturizm*, so you can travel to some lands, even with what's happening around the world.

[00:10:45] Without a bit of this adventurism as you say, or a bit of risk taking, you cannot be a good scholar. You are on the minefield all the time. As you recall from our class.

[00:11:04] Of course! I also recall your interesting stories about how you were meeting with Putin and also going to Valdai. Unlike many other professors who write about Russia, you actually had direct access to the president himself. Can you also just talk a little bit about how you met him for the first time and how you were invited to the Valdai Club?

[00:11:34] It was 16 years ago I believe. I received an invitation from, that time the chairman of the Valdai Club, Professor Sergey Karaganov, a very influential political scientist and also at certain point an influential policy influencer. And I received a message saying, well, you are known for what you are doing. Would you like to join? And I was a bit surprised because, you know, no one warned me about that. So I said, what are the conditions? What I should do? And the response was: "Nothing. You come, you discuss. You like it. Tell us. You don't like something. Tell us. And by the way, you have a chance to meet the Russian president, Vladimir Putin." I said, well, this is something when you are not saying no to such opportunity, because is very unique to meet Russian policy makers and also Russian top policymaker, which is president, and a decision maker. So that's how it started. And then it continued. Some people are invited, some people are not invited. And the longer I seem to be invited for the last years and taking this opportunity in order to learn more, each time there's something new, each time there's something surprising. Each time there is something that I should reflect after. So this is a big learning process for all of us who are participating. At the same time, we're sharing our views, we are not passive. We're trying to say what we think. Sometimes our Russian friends like it, sometimes not. So this is done in the very collegial atmosphere which we all like very much.

[00:13:43] I think those stories were also an interesting part of your classes. That's why we enjoyed going to your classes. We were always looking forward to those classes. What would you be your advice to future students who want to study at EURUS and who are interested in Russian politics? What would be your advice to them?

[00:14:07] Well, come and see what we can offer collectively, there's a wonderful group of professionals at EURUS, each of us can offer something else. Take it. Squeeze us. Ask questions and try to be as active as possible. But most important is, we are offering certain opportunities to go there, to go to Europe, to go to Russia, to go to Central Asia. That is very important to combine theory with practice. And to check to what extent, the theory provides you with the tools or where are some better tools to understand the situation on the ground and then making your own conclusions. So that's this opportunity to combine, more theoretic approach during your courses and then going there and working on your

M.A paper. It gives you the unique combination of those two best worlds, theory and practice.

[00:15:13] **Well, I think you brought a very good point, because in nowadays there's so many, you know, fake news spreading. So it's always good to double check what students are reading, especially when it comes to Russian politics, internal and external.**

[00:15:28] Of course!

[00:15:29] **Thank you for your time. I do appreciate it. And again, congratulations with this book. And we hope to participate in your future lessons as well.**

[00:15:40] Temur, it was so nice to see you again in such a good shape and spirit.

[00:15:47] **Thank you.**