

In this Issue

The relevance of political research is determined by significant changes occurring in the contemporary world order, particularly the transformation of the international regime of civilizational democratization, liberal hegemony, the protection of human rights and freedoms, nuclear non-proliferation, and so on. These transformations are occurring simultaneously with a redistribution of power centers within the international system, further exacerbating the tendency toward destabilization of international relations. By studying the mechanisms behind the formation of a new order of hard, soft, and smart power—a new nuclear order—it is possible to formulate optimal approaches to decision-making to reduce threats to international security. The current period of global politics has been marked by the increasing instrumental role of nuclear weapons both in countries' national security agendas and in discussions within international institutions. An assessment of these processes has been reflected in political science discourses, as in recent years the nuclear factor and the role of nuclear weapons have become a cause of war and confrontation.

In the article '*Reforming the EU Asylum and Visa Application Processes: Challenges and Solutions*,' Stanyo Dinov analyzes the problems of the EU's unified migration system, which is governed by legal norms that clarify the conditions and procedures for granting asylum and visas, as well as international protection. The author conducts a comparative analysis of the main features of the national legislation of EU member states, which represented a crucial achievement in the development of an international system for regulating forced migration. According to the author, this system has undergone a qualitatively new development, designed to simplify the movement of EU citizens throughout the EU and, in some respects, complicate this process for third-country nationals. In this context, the relationship between the legal regime of asylum and temporary protection in the EU, which are analyzed in this article, remains insufficiently explored. The author also focuses on the challenges of implementing the provisions of universal international agreements on refugees through secondary EU law. Furthermore, over the past decade, there has been a dearth of scholarly analysis of complementary refugee protection in the EU, which has undergone significant transformation due to the massive influx of citizens from various countries into EU member states. Therefore, the author's academic interest focuses on both the political and legal conditions for granting asylum to refugees, as well as the procedural aspects surrounding these legal relationships in the EU.

In his article, '*The Effectiveness of Biosecurity Policy Regulation in China*,' Bagrat Vardanyan draws on a comparative analysis of China's biosecurity, which is increasingly alarming the public, politicians, and scientists due to the growing threat of biological threats. China's biological security encompasses a wide range of issues, the solution of which in modern conditions is becoming part of national security as a necessary condition for the country's sustainable development. According to the author, China's national regulatory and methodological documents define biosecurity as a system of medical, biological, organizational, and engineering measures and tools aimed at protecting personnel, the population, and the environment from exposure to

pathogenic biological agents. The relevance of this research topic is linked to the transformation of the very nature of global governance, in which biosecurity is becoming an integral element of sovereignty, domestic resilience, and international influence. This is coupled with the intensifying international competition for biosecurity standards and the growing political significance of this infrastructure.

In the article '*Restructuring and its Nexus with National Security and Development Management in Nigeria: An African Policy*', Jibrin Ubale Yahaya analyzes the key factors shaping Nigeria's national security as one of the continent's leading states, successfully overcoming the challenges associated with long-standing military regimes and achieving some success in addressing international challenges. In the era of globalization, the African continent has been affected by political modernization and transformation, yet the ruling elite viewed democratic change as a means of preserving and strengthening its position in the new historical context. Characteristics of military regimes in Nigeria included the concentration of power in the hands of the head of state, the assertion of a single political system of governance, the absence of democratic freedoms, and the suppression of all dissent, often through brutal means. Guided by a desire to lead Nigeria out of its impasse through the consolidation of democracy and restructuring, respect for fundamental human rights and the implementation of liberal economic reforms, the new administration has declared its goal to be the restoration of health in all sectors of the Nigerian economy and social life, the eradication of the painful legacy of military regimes, the establishment of a strong democracy and the creation of a viable economy.

In his article '*Towards an African Solution-Oriented Approach to Conflict Analysis in African Peace and Security (2002-2022)*', Abraham Ename Minko examines security issues in African countries, as it remains difficult to pinpoint the direction of political processes in the region. This allows for a precise identification of potential threats to regional and international security that may arise from these processes. The article analyzes the complex dimension of security and peace in the region and raises a number of research questions, among which the key one is the question of resilience mechanisms. This question requires an examination of political transformations in the region, taking into account global trends. In the context of this research question, it is necessary to study the processes that influence the manifestation of state strength or weakness in the Horn of Africa, which is only partly determined by globalization. A comparative study of the main research question is complicated by the lack of comprehensive theoretical approaches that would allow for a precise explanation of processes in the Horn of Africa region from a unified perspective on international security. Furthermore, conflicting approaches to the study of security currently exist. On the one hand, security is viewed from a global perspective: this approach results in researchers concentrating on the analysis of global problems, forecasting their emergence and development, and potential solutions. While valid, this approach does not allow for a thorough examination of the regional situation, which can often refute theoretical conclusions applicable at the global level. On the other hand, security is viewed from a regional perspective, which analyzes the local-regional situation over a specific period of time, preventing conclusions about the international significance of trends expressed in the region. It is equally erroneous to limit the analysis of regional

security issues to merely examining the severity of global problems and trends or to studying only local security configurations.

In their article '*Strategic Diversification of China's Foreign Policy in Africa: The Belt and Road Initiative and the Transformation of China's Public Diplomacy in Nigeria*', Ashot Aleksanyan, Arusyak Aleksanyan, and Adedeji Daniel Gbadebo analyze China's growing role in global politics and on the African continent, the increasing importance of states as sources of human capital and natural resources, and the transformation of China's strategy toward Africa. China's increased activity in Africa, along with its new positioning on the international stage, necessitates studying this issue. In Nigeria and other African countries, China's successes in economics, energy, and diplomacy have marked the beginning of this shift. While China may not have set such a goal, it is nevertheless gradually displacing Western powers from their traditional spheres of influence. Certainly, China's strategic diversification and strengthening of its position in Africa, as well as in other regions of the world, serves as a good example of this. According to forecasts, demand for raw materials will increase in the medium term, making the fact that Africa accounts for at least a third of the world's proven natural resource reserves particularly significant. This new trend in China's foreign policy stems from the African continent's importance not only for natural resource extraction but also for regional security. Essentially, if implemented, China's initiatives will mark a transition to a new stage in global human development, where collective interests will prevail over the private aspirations of individual states. These Chinese initiatives are underpinned not only by interstate dialogue based on mutually beneficial commercial relations but also by the adoption of rules for equal political partnership, regardless of the political strength and economic influence of the contracting countries. This approach by the Chinese leadership to interstate cooperation has already created the foundation for public diplomacy and China's soft power with nearly all countries worldwide, enabling countries involved in this process to establish and strengthen mutual political, scientific, and cultural ties, both within China and among themselves. Given the energy, raw materials, industrial, biological, and labor resources of developing countries, a new situation is emerging that significantly alters the global balance of power and significantly determines the global political climate. In other words, China's foreign policy strategy, aimed at expanding mutually beneficial relations with developing countries, is shaping a new framework for interstate dialogue.

In '*John Rawls and the Pursuit of Social Justice in Contemporary Nigeria: A Philosophical Study*', Oladele Daniel Idowu and Esther Oluwaseun Idowu analyze issues of justice within John Rawls's conceptual framework, attempting to model social and philosophical thought around justice in Nigerian political life. Concepts of justice in contemporary Nigerian society serve as a value criterion for analyzing social reality and addressing questions about changing social relations. Assessing various phenomena in Nigerian society as just or unjust reflects the economic, political, legal, and social conditions that give rise to them. The significance of social justice in Nigerian society is determined by the following key factors: first, the need to theoretically develop a model of a just society against the backdrop of persistent and deepening social and economic inequality and the violation of democratic rights and

freedoms. Second, it has practical significance, as an analysis of existing and implemented principles of justice may enable the design and implementation of fair and effective social policies in the future. Social experience shows that the concept of 'social justice' becomes especially relevant in public consciousness during periods of dramatic social change caused by economic, political, and spiritual crises. Thirdly, there is a need to rethink the spiritual and value orientations of contemporary Nigerian society. This article examines J. Rawls's theory and its particular significance in contemporary Nigerian society, where social justice can serve as a value-based foundation for sustainable development. The authors note that Rawls's principles of justice take on new meaning as one way out of the current societal crisis. They can serve as a foundation for social reform and the consolidation of a modern democratic society, and can also be used to address the challenges of sustainable development in modern society.

In the article '*Risks of Military Confrontation in the South Caucasus in the Context of Geopolitical Transformations*', Siranush Melikyan examines the main risks posed by the unpredictability and instability of the South Caucasus geopolitical situation, taking into account trends toward integration and the formation of a multipolar world, as well as power politics, the push for a new hegemony, and the expanding zone of conflicts and local wars. The author focuses on the diversification of post-war Armenia's military policy, which, starting in 2020, must simultaneously defend its state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and right to historical choice, seek to preserve and develop the national identity of the Armenian people in the homeland and in the diaspora, and contribute to maintaining peace and stability in the region. The author also draws attention to the post-war situation and the presence of unresolved conflicts in the region, including armed ones, and the threat of new ones, which urgently dictates the need to develop an updated military policy, applicable to the conditions of the region, and to find ways to resolve existing contradictions. It is clear that the complex military-political situation in the South Caucasus requires the military-political leadership of the three countries to pay the utmost attention to issues of ensuring regional security. The views of the South Caucasus countries on the formation of their own military policies in the region are still in the process of formation and, therefore, do not yet have a stable, systemic character. Therefore, there is an urgent need to analyze ongoing processes and phenomena in the region and explore opportunities to generate forecasts for various development scenarios based on these analyses, with the aim of identifying measures to neutralize the negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts of the states' military policies on security in the South Caucasus.

In the article '*Rethinking the Sharing of Challenges in Allied Relations: Indicators for Assessing Relations in the Dynamics of Armenian-Russian Military Cooperation*,' Alen Ghevondyan analyzes the Armenian-Russian allied relations in the context of the increased activity of Western actors in the South Caucasus, who have sought to expand their influence in the post-Soviet space. Unlike Georgia and Azerbaijan, the Armenian leadership has pursued a consistent policy of ensuring national security within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), while maintaining partnerships and constructive relations with the EU, the United

States, and other Western partners. Under an economic and communications blockade by Türkiye and Azerbaijan, Armenia is considering strategic cooperation with Russia, attempting to address existential threats and ensure its own security in the region. According to the author, Russia and Armenia are faced with the task of seriously understanding ongoing regional processes that could negatively impact the strategic nature of Armenian-Russian relations. Given current trends in regional integration processes, it is necessary to seek new joint approaches to addressing regional security and peace issues. These circumstances necessitate an analysis of the dynamics of Armenian-Russian relations, as studying this issue allows us to identify the foreign policy priorities of Armenia and Russia, define the principles of Armenian-Russian strategic cooperation, and identify challenges in developing bilateral and multilateral relations in the context of regional security and stability in the South Caucasus. The need for a scientific examination of the above-mentioned issues and the search for urgent solutions confirm the relevance of this study.

This issue of the journal includes a book review dedicated to the renowned Dutch philosopher Benedict (Baruch) Spinoza (1632-1677), a thinker whose work continues to attract attention. Spinoza represents an unconventional yet classic example of a philosophizing thinker in European philosophical culture. The author of this review attempts to take a fresh look at the established, even familiar, characteristics of Spinoza's philosophical toolkit, his methodology, and the principles for constructing his system. In this regard, the author more clearly expresses his own position on the relationship between metaphysics and ethics in the context of his works on moral philosophy. Distinct and highly fruitful ideas on the relationship between metaphysics and ethics in Spinoza's moral philosophy have been advanced by many Spinozists. Spinozism's new perspective and, accordingly, systematic studies of Spinoza's work have become a key dimension of contemporary philosophy.

Editorial Board