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The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies nr 1 (1), 162-164

2012

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CHANGING VECTORS OF GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

Jadwiga Kiwerska, Bogdan Koszel, Maria Tomczak, Stanisław Żerko,
*Polityka zagraniczna zjednoczonych Niemiec [The Foreign Policy
of the United Germany], Instytut Zachodni, Poznań 2011, pp. 400*

The beginning of the 20th century brought many changes on the global geopolitical map. One of the most important event was the reunification of Germany, which meant not only political change but also social and economic. Since the 20th anniversary of German unification has passed, it seems timely to summarize and evaluate the consequences of this process, both for Germany itself, and the world.

This book is the result of joint research by professor Jadwiga Kiwerska, professor Bogdan Koszel, professor Maria Tomczak, and professor Stanisław Żerko. The research was a part of a research project by the Western Institute entitled “Federal Republic of Germany Twenty Years after Unification. Politics – Economy – Society.” The project was implemented over the 2010–2011 period by six research teams headed by professor Andrzej Sakson. The reviewed publication is the first volume in the “The Federal Republic of Germany 20 years after unification” series,¹ in which the project’s findings will be presented.

The authors have great scientific achievements related to the study of German foreign policy and international security. The publication focuses on German foreign policy after 1990 in four areas: policy within the European Union, German policies towards NATO, policy towards Russia, as well as German reactions to the threats and challenges of the modern world. The intention of the authors was to present selected foreign policy issues of a united Germany that they feel are important and decisive in determining the position and role of Germany in the modern world. The publication consists of five articles that are preceded by a foreword by Jadwiga Kiwerska, as well as a summary in English.

The first part of the book was written by two of the researchers – Jadwiga Kiwerska and Maria Tomczak. The introduction serves as a review of the continuation and change of Germany foreign policy after reunification. The reunified Germany had to deal with the internal problems arising from the need to unite the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic governments and societies. Germany had to once again establish and clarify its role and international position. The question of how a united Germany’s foreign policy would like was asked in connection with the country’s tragic past. Regarding the declared aspirations of Germany to strengthen its role and importance in Europe, its central location in Europe and its expansionist tendencies were particularly emphasized. As the authors conclude, despite the existing

¹ Originally: “Republika Federalna Niemiec 20 lat po zjednoczeniu”.

discussion about the lack of a coherent German foreign policy, it is hard to deny that the Germans managed to draw many advantages from the reunion. After several years of weakness and division, Germany is again one of the strongest countries in Europe and in the world.

The next part of this publication, written by Bogdan Koszel, brings up the question of the role of Germany in European integration. The importance of Germany for this process is obvious; this country is in fact one of the strongest economic countries in Europe with huge demographic potential. However, as Koszel notes, Germany is currently in the process of defining its international position and, therefore, cannot impose its hegemony. The article looks at the determinants and goals the European policy of Germany, as well as examples of their implementation.

The third chapter, written by Jadwiga Kiwerska, presents the role of Germany in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It focuses on Germany's relations with the United States and the actions of Germany within NATO. The researcher concludes it is doubtful whether Germany will increase its role as a partner in NATO considering the reluctance of Germany to become involved in NATO activities aimed at resolving international conflicts.

The article by Stanisław Żerko shows Germany's policy towards Russia. All of the administrations of the united Germany have been interested in good relations with Russia, especially the governments of Gerhard Schröder and Angela Merkel. The author argues that Germany's policy towards Russia in the last twenty years did not differ substantially from the policy of the European Union and is based on the objective of stabilizing international relations. If we can speak of a particular area that characterizes the special nature of the German-Russian relationship, it is the economic relations between the countries, which, according to the author, should not be a reason for concern for Germany's other partners.

The last part of the book, which was written by Mary Tomczak, raises the issues of the new challenges facing the German foreign policy. The author includes the challenges of international terrorism and the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. According to Tomczak, German foreign policy, in this area, is characterized by a weakness resulting from the lack of a comprehensive conceptualization and the conflicting interests of the pacifist society and the Western allies, who want greater German involvement in world affairs. Moreover, the reason why Germany's foreign policy is so weak is due to the fact that Germany's security policy is based on internal dynamics, not external ones.

As the authors point out, the publication does concern itself with all of the directions in the foreign policy of Germany, but only a few selected and relevant issues to determine the position of the FRG in the world. Although the articles included in the book are characterized by a different way of recognizing the subject, narrative, or the nature of the analysis, they form a coherent whole. It may be noted that the selection of topics has been well thought out. Because the articles are complementary, certain issues are repeated in several parts of the book. However, this is a good solution, because each of

the authors used it to analyze specific elements of German foreign policy. This allows the reader to have a complete picture of the impact of these events or problems on the particular directions of the FRG's foreign policy. The reader thereby gains extensive and systematic knowledge that allows for an assessment of Germany's place in contemporary international relations.

There is a clear and logical structure to the work; the authors use the clear and understandable language. It is difficult to speak of a single research method used in the work, because, as was already mentioned, it is a collection of articles from different individuals. The disadvantage is the lack of a common bibliography or even bibliographies for different parts of the book. This situation may leave an impression that the book is not a compact publication, but several separate articles, completely separate, but thematically consistent. An ordered list of literature used in the publication makes it easier for the reader to find detailed literature. Considering that the foreign policy of Germany is of interest to many researchers, the topic is not original. However, the idea of a research project whose assumptions of the authors, which resulted in the book, based on attempt to summarize the German external strategy over the last two decades rather than solving the original research problem.

The publication provides a thorough analysis of the foreign policy of a united Germany, made all the more valuable because of the inclusion of contemporary problems. Thus, the authors were able to introduce change and continuity in foreign policy, define conditions, motives, and the character of the FRG's foreign policy. The effects of this policy are important both for Germany itself and its international environment. Without a doubt, the publication would be of interest to historians and political scientists, both Polish and German. The book provides the reader with knowledge of the nature, direction, and the consequences of changes in Germany since the unification of the two German states in 1990 to date in terms of foreign policy.

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ARE THERE CHANGES IN BELARUS?

**Eugeniusz Mironowicz, *Polityka zagraniczna Białorusi 1990–2010*
[Belorussian Foreign Policy in 1990–2010], TransHumana University Press,
Białystok 2011, pp. 262**

There are few publications that deal on the subject of Belorussian foreign policy¹. This is one of the reasons why the book of Prof. Eugeniusz Mironowicz is such a valuable

¹ The most comprehensive monograph to date is *Białoruś w stosunkach międzynarodowych* [Belarus in International Relations], I. Topolski (ed.), Lublin 2009. However, it lacks an extensive analysis of sources and studies in Belorussian and Russian.