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## Are there changes in Belarus?

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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 policy<sup>1</sup>. This is one of the reasons why the book of Prof. Eugeniusz Mironowicz is such a valuable

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

monograph, as it describes Belorussian foreign policy in 1990–2010, including bilateral and multilateral relations. This book is the first publication of the Polish academic, in which he presents the evolution and a comprehensive analysis of the foreign policy of the eastern neighbour of Poland.

Most often, Polish researchers in their publications have focussed on Polish-Belorussian and Russian-Belorussian relations. There was no study that would describe in a complementary manner the various directions of Belorussian foreign policy from the moment of gaining independence to contemporary times. The author of *Belorussian Foreign Policy in 1990–2010* wanted to examine various directions of Belorussian foreign policy, including the relations with the USA, African countries and China. Belorussian perspective on those matters is what distinguishes this monograph.

The subject matter of this book is presented by an expert on the subject. Prof. Eugeniusz Mironowicz is an academic, whose main research interests are ethnic problems, international relations in Central and Eastern Europe, and the recent history of the Belorussian state. He is the head of Eastern Studies Department of the Institute of History at the University of Białystok. The fact that for many years the author has dealt with Belorussian matters is indicative of his high level of competence in the field.

The book is divided into four parts. The first one, entitled *Soviet Belarus in the perestroika period. Internal and external conditions of establishing a sovereign state*, presents a synthetic description on how the Belorussian state came into existence, also as a sovereign entity in international law. The author analyses both internal and external factors that contributed to the establishment of the independent state of Belarus. This chapter is largely an introduction to Belorussian foreign policy, as it allows for a better understanding of the actions taken by Belorussian dignitaries.

The second part entitled *Neutrality and the non-involvement. Foreign policy of the parliamentary republic (1991–1994)* contains an analysis of Belorussian policy towards Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, China, Germany, USA and the Community of Independent States. This period in the Belorussian foreign policy was marked by neutrality. Belorussian politicians were firmly stating that Belarus is non-engaged country and were convincing other states, in particular those from the East and Central Europe, to create a nuclear-free zone in that part of the old continent. In that period, Belarus intensively sought new markets for its goods, which is visible in establishing and subsequent intensification of bilateral relationships with China. This part of the monograph brilliantly shows the evolution of Belorussian foreign policy and its development on the international arena. It presents the difficulties that the young state had to face difficult choices and the need to create a new direction for itself.

The third part, *Integration with Russia. Foreign policy of Alexander Lukashenko (1994–2000)*, deals with the issues connected with the Belorussian foreign policy in first years of the presidency of Alexander Lukashenko. As a candidate for presidential seat he had already granted priority to Belorussian-Russian relations. The author successfully argues that all actions of Alexander Lukashenko's foreign policy towards neighbourly states, EU states, or the USA during that period were secondary to Belorussian-Russian

relations and overshadowed by his desire to become head of a federal state that would be composed of both countries.

In the last part of the monograph, *Multi-directional foreign policy of Alexander Lukashenko (2001–2010)*, the author describes and analyzes the changes in Belorussian foreign policy in the course of the last decade. His analysis of the reasons for the changes in the foreign policy conducted by the Belorussian president is accurate and extremely valuable. The author perfectly captures the problems and failures that forced Alexander Lukashenko to redefine his assumptions and goals. What is more, he accurately portrays the manoeuvres between the East and the West of the Belorussian president, who wanted to achieve the best position in negotiations on the matters important for his country. The most important objective of Alexander Lukashenko's policy – the absolute priority of staying in power – is also highlighted.

A considerable merit of the publication is the extensive list of literature on the subject placed at the end of the book that enables the reader to find other publications on a given area of the Belorussian foreign policy. The reader may be greatly impressed by the rich source material and studies not only in Polish, but also in Belorussian and Russian. Analysed were normative acts on bilateral relations of Belarus, studies, monographs, academic syntheses, Polish, Belorussian, and Russian press, as well as academic and press syntheses available on the Internet.

To sum up, the book is best described as solid and unconventional. The author has put a lot of effort into seeking out source materials and studies. The monograph is an outstanding analysis and a summary of the foreign policy conducted by Belarus. It is an excellent book on the politics of a country marginalized by many researchers, and, what is more, it is full of remarkable insights that can be a good starting point for further research on the issues discussed by the author. Interestingly, it is the first publication by a Polish academic which contains an analysis of Belorussian foreign policy from the perspective of Belorussian goals, interests, and needs.

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**CONFERENCE REPORT 3<sup>rd</sup> TRIALOG INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
“BETWEEN ODER AND NEMAN: ISSUES OF CULTURAL MEMORY”,  
KALININGRAD (RUSSIA), 26<sup>th</sup>–29<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2012**

Questions about politics of memory and political influence on collective memory are becoming more and more popular within international academic discourse. The importance of these issues is evidenced by the state's growing interest in using narratives about the past as a substantiation of current decisions and programs. Initially, the German debate expanded to include the entirety of Europe and has joined