

Abstract

Abstract of the doctoral dissertation entitled "Multi-vector foreign policy of Belarus - relations with the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America (1990-2015)" by mgr. Łukasz Staśkiewicz, written under the supervision of prof. UAM dr. hab. Marek Figura at the Faculty of History of the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań

The research topic objective is to analyse the history of relations between Belarus and the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America within 1990-2015 and in the context of political, diplomatic and economic cooperation. The leading research problem concerns the changes in the rank and importance of Asian, African and Latin American states in the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus in the period from 1990 to 2015. The analysis performed by the author will show the level of cooperation with selected countries and regions. The dissertation also touches upon aspects related to the geopolitical and international position of Belarus in the world, the periodization of Belarusian foreign policy and its priorities and goals, as well as the competences of state bodies influencing the country's foreign policy, taking into account the context of cooperation with Asia, Africa and Latin America. The meaning of the term "multi-vector foreign policy", in the context of Belarusian policy, was also scrutinized.

In the doctoral dissertation, in order to achieve the research goal and verify the adopted hypotheses, the following were applied: analysis and criticism of the literature on the subject; analysis of archival sources; document content analysis; statistical data analysis; as well as the comparative and system method.

The research paper consists of an introduction, five chapters that are divided into sub-chapters and other smaller parts, as well as a conclusion, lists, bibliography and a personal index. The first chapter constitutes a reference to the issue related to the position of Belarus in the international arena in terms of its geopolitical and economic situation and participation in selected international organizations. The author, when demonstrating the relevance of the Belarusian state, refers to geopolitical features that can be attributed to Belarus on the basis of its location, transport position, natural resources, as well as conditions influencing its defence and military potential. The specificity of the Belarusian economic system was also subjected to an analysis; both from the parliamentary republic (1990-1994) and the presidential republic periods (from 1994). The determinants of the Belarusian international position are complemented by the author's presentation of the influence of state bodies on the shaping and implementation of foreign policy, as well as its participation in individual organizations.

The next part of the dissertation focuses on elements related to the clarification and elaboration of aspects connected with the broadly understood foreign policy of Belarus. In the second chapter, the author, while referring back to previous Polish and Belarusian research, indicates its periodization and presents his own division. On the basis of various documents, memoirs, statements (including the address of President Alexander Lukashenka), archival materials, subject literature and other sources, he defines the priorities, targets and tasks of Belarusian foreign policy. The author also attempts to explain the "multi-vector" concept in reference to the scientific work of various researchers, and exposes elements that, in his view, fit into this type of policy. Moreover, he pinpoints the beginning of Belarus's current multi-vector foreign policy. At the end of this part of the dissertation, he analyses the reasons for rapprochement with Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The last three chapters are devoted to the history of relations with individual regions – Asia, Latin America and Africa. These were described in relation to political, diplomatic and economic issues. The author presents the process of establishing official relations, the creation of a normative and legal base, and the diplomatic presence of Belarus in a particular region. He also describes issues related to political relations in the context of selected countries or international problems. The most extensive sections of the last three chapters are those devoted to economic cooperation. This is due to the fact that the cooperation with the regions in question was primarily of economic nature. This, the author pursues to prove his hypothesis.