Polish Foreign Policy from the Perspective of the World-system Approach

This article is an attempt to interpret the dominant discourses on Polish foreign policy from the position of the world-system approach. It draws inspiration from works by Immanuel Wallerstein and other researchers that follows his perspective. Following Tomasz Zarycki’s suggestion, the author views the Polish political scene as divided primarily along an axis defined by attitudes to Western Europe. The author draws inspiration from the works of researchers who describe the impact of the semi-peripheral position of Russia on the main directions in its foreign policy. The author also describes and interprets a debate on the impact of EU membership on the peripheral position of Poland and the role and significance of the so-called eastern policy. This analysis provides a picture of the fundamental dispute regarding the importance of and the relationship between the two directions in Polish foreign policy. For the supporters of Western Europe, integration within the EU is a priority and eastern policy is meant to support this process; for its opponents, however, membership in the EU is the basis for building the position of Poland in the eastern neighbourhood.

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