

The foreign policy transition of the German Scholz government in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and its causes

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Abstract. Following the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, German Chancellor Scholz delivered the Zeitenwende speech on February 27, 2022, announcing a series of measures including the supply of weapons to Ukraine and the strengthening of its own defense forces. This was a historic transition for Germany's foreign and security policy, which has always been pacifist. This paper will take the transformation of the German Scholz government's foreign policy in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as the object of study. And it is the purpose of this paper to analyze the reasons why this historical transition in foreign policy occurred in Germany at this time. In general, this paper specifically analyzes the Scholz government's foreign policy transition based on the analytical model of foreign policy transition proposed by Jakob Gustavsson, and argues that international factors, domestic factors, policy makers' factors, and the stimulus of the crisis are the four main factors that led to this foreign policy transition.

Keywords: Germany, Russian-Ukrainian conflict, Foreign policy change.

1. Introduction

Since World War II, pacifism has been the main feature of German foreign policy [1]. Germany opposed reliance on military power in the conduct of its foreign policy and insisted on restraining the development of its own military power. German foreign policy has shown great continuity in this feature. On December 8, 2021, Germany's Parliament elected Olaf Scholz as the ninth Chancellor after World War II, replacing Angela Merkel, who had led Germany for 16 years. Even though there is a growing debate in Germany about whether Germany should change its foreign policy and take more responsibility for security internationally, Scholz came to power saying he would maintain the continuity of German foreign policy and preserve the political legacy left by Merkel's 16 years [2]. Until February 24, 2022, when the Russian-Ukrainian conflict broke out, Scholz delivered the Zeitenwende speech on February 27, 2022, stating that Germany had ushered in a historic watershed and announcing that Germany would respond to the security challenges posed by Russia by providing arms to Ukraine, unconditionally fulfilling its collective defense obligations within NATO, and strengthening its own defense forces [3]. This decision is an attempt to make a change in Germany's foreign policy tradition of not relying on the military, and has been described as a revolution in German foreign policy. The future of German foreign policy may thus be transformed and will continue to evolve in this direction. Thus, it can be said that the Zeitenwende speech represents a historic shift in German foreign policy.

The transformation of foreign policy has always been a key area of concern in foreign policy studies, and the relevant theories have been developed to a high degree of maturity and sophistication. The Zeitenwende speech represents the Scholz government's foreign policy transformation, which is a relatively new case study of foreign policy transformation. It is worth noting that this is not only a reorientation of the Scholz government's own foreign policy, but also a deeper transformation of Germany's foreign policy tradition since World War II, and therefore has greater research value. The Scholz government's foreign policy transition has already attracted attention, but it is still dominated by press reports and policy commentaries. Some scholars have also conducted studies on this issue. However, most of the studies have focused on the characteristics and processes of the German foreign policy transition or only studied one aspect of it in depth, while the literature that systematically studies the motives of this transition is relatively small and the combination with theory is insufficient. This paper attempts to analyze the Scholz government's foreign policy transition using the analytical

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Eugene B. Rumer



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Russian Exceptionalism between East and West Kevork Oskanian, 2021-06-22 This monograph provides a novel long term approach to the role of Russia's imperial legacies in its interactions with the former Soviet space It develops Hybrid Exceptionalism as a critical conceptual tool aimed at uncovering the great power's self positioning between East and West and its hierarchical claims over subalterns situated in both civilizational imaginaries It explores how in the Tsarist Soviet and contemporary eras distinct civilizational spaces were created and maintained through narratives and practices emanating from Russia's ambiguous relationship with Western modernity and its part identification with a subordinated Orient The Romanov Empire's struggles with Russianness the USSR's Marxism Leninism and contemporary Russia's combination of feigned liberal and civilizational discourses are explored as the basis of a series of

successive civilising missions through an interdisciplinary engagement with official discourses scholarship and the arts The book concludes with an exploration of contemporary policy implications for the West and the former Soviet states themselves

Russian Foreign Policy Since 1990 Peter Shearman, 2018-02-12 A book which brings together leading experts on Russia's foreign relations providing the most comprehensive coverage of contemporary Russian foreign policy currently available in a single volume Detailed case studies of relations with specific countries and regions are complemented by chapters that examine the process of decision making conflict between domestic institutional actors the role of groups such as the military and Russia's search for a new identity

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Russian Foreign Policy Debates and the Conflicts in Georgia (1991-2008) Cécile Druey, 2024-04-15 Russian Foreign Policy Debates and the Conflicts in Georgia 1991-2008 Between Multilateralism and Unilateralism discusses the conflicts and crises in the former Soviet space from a historical perspective and reconstructs the often contradictory approaches of public actors in Russia on how to deal with them Notably it inquires whether the actions suggested follow a multilateral approach one based on pluralist decisions and international law or on the opposite a unilateral one concentrating exclusively on Russia's own national interests to the detriment of commonly agreed on international rules The case of Georgia from the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 to the Five Day War in August 2008 serves as an example illustrating Russian approaches to conflict management Richly illustrated with empirical data the three parts of this book show how foreign and security policy debates in Moscow and their outcomes on the ground evolved from a chaotic policy of ad hoc interventions in the 1990s to a coherent geopolitically informed strategy of coercion and persuasion in the 2000s About a decade and a half before the large scale invasion of Ukraine Moscow had already shown its willingness to go quite far in defending its interests in the former Soviet space

Capitalist Russia and the West Jeffrey Surovell, 2018-01-18 This title was first published in 2000 highly innovative work which challenges mainstream approaches to

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Securitizing Balance of Power Theory A Polymorphic Reconceptualization by Ilai Z Saltzman presents a cutting edge attempt to re conceptualize one of the fundamental concepts of International Relations theory balance of power theory by examining insights from historical analysis of interwar and post Cold War cases Russia National Security and Defence Policy Handbook Volume 1 Strategic Information and Basic Laws IBP, Inc., 2014-10-07 2011 Updated Reprint Updated Annually

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Table of Contents Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition

1. Understanding the eBook Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition User Reviews and Ratings
 - Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition Free and Paid eBooks

- Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition Public Domain eBooks
- Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition eBook Subscription Services
- Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition Compatibility with Devices
 - Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Interactive Elements Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
- 8. Staying Engaged with Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Setting Reading Goals Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Russian National Security And Foreign Policy In Transition
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development

- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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