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Abstracts

Choosing union: monetary politics and Maastricht

by Wayne Sandholtz

At their Maastricht summit, heads of state of the European Community (EC) countries agreed to establish a single currency and a common central bank by the end of the century. For students of international political economy, the treaty on monetary union offers intriguing puzzles: Why did EC governments commit themselves to such a far-reaching sacrifice of sovereignty? Why did national political leaders in some cases outrun public opinion in their enthusiasm for monetary integration? This study seeks a political explanation of the choices that produced the late-1980s movement for monetary union in Europe. It examines the conversion to monetary discipline in several EC states during the 1980s, arguing that the shift toward anti-inflationary rigor was a necessary precondition for discussions on monetary union. The article outlines three general options for a European monetary regime, based variously on unilateral commitments, multilateral arrangements, and full integration. Treating national preference formation as endogenous and requiring explanation, the article weighs five propositions that explain the motives and preferences of national leaders.

Europe before the Court: a political theory of legal integration

by Anne-Marie Burley and Walter Mattli

The European Court of Justice has been the dark horse of European integration, quietly transforming the Treaty of Rome into a European Community (EC) constitution and steadily increasing the impact and scope of EC law. While legal scholars have tended to take the Court's power for granted, political scientists have overlooked it entirely. This article develops a first-stage theory of community law and politics that marries the insights of legal scholars with a theoretical framework developed by political scientists. Neofunctionalism, the theory that dominated regional integration studies in the 1960s, offers a set of independent variables that convincingly and parsimoniously explain the process of legal integration in the EC. Just as neofunctionalism predicts, the principal forces behind that process are supranational and subnational actors pursuing their own self-interests within a politically insulated sphere. Its distinctive features include a widening of the ambit of successive legal decisions according to a functional logic, a gradual shift in the expectations of both government institutions and private actors participating in the legal system, and the strategic subordination of immediate individual interests of member states to postulated collective interests over the long

term. Law functions as a mask for politics, precisely the role neofunctionalists originally forecast for economics. Paradoxically, however, the success of legal institutions in performing that function rests on their self-conscious preservation of the autonomy of law.

What was bipolarity?

by R. Harrison Wagner

In spite of its widespread use, no one has ever stated clearly what the distinction between bipolar and multipolar systems refers to. Moreover, some common definitions of “bipolarity” imply behavior that is inconsistent with the behavior of states during the cold war. This article argues that the distinctive feature of post-World War II international politics was not that two states were more powerful than the others, as the literature on bipolarity would suggest, but that one state, the Soviet Union, occupied in peacetime a position of near-dominance on the Eurasian continent, a position that states in the past had been able to achieve only after a series of military victories. This fact explains the behavior that others have sought to explain by bipolarity, as well as behavior that is inconsistent with what common definitions of bipolarity would lead us to expect. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications of the argument for structural theories of international politics and controversies about what lies ahead.

Domestic reform and international change: the Gorbachev reforms in historical perspective

by Valerie Bunce

Two rounds of stagnation and reform in Russia have occurred: from Nicholas I to Alexander II (1825–81) and from Brezhnev to Gorbachev (1964–90). A comparison between them reveals striking similarities in the sources of stagnation, the approach to reform, and the international and domestic consequences of the reforms. What emerges in particular is a pattern wherein international stability, Russian conservatism, and expanding Russian power in the international system (all of which describe developments during the regimes of Nicholas I and Brezhnev) give way to instability in Europe, liberalization of Russian politics, and Russian downward mobility in the international system (the pattern exhibited during the Alexandrine and Gorbachev eras). These similarities suggest at the very least that we should question the common assumptions about the unique properties of the postwar order, Soviet socialism, and Gorbachev’s revolution. The parallels also imply certain revisions in our understanding of the relationship between domestic and international change, the nature of the European order in the nineteenth century, and the determinants of state power in the international system.

Territoriality and beyond: problematizing modernity in international relations

by John Gerard Ruggie

The concept of territoriality has been studied surprisingly little by students of international politics. Yet, territoriality most distinctively defines modernity in international politics, and changes in few other factors can so powerfully transform the modern world polity. This article seeks to frame the study of the possible transformation of

modern territoriality by examining how that system of relations was instituted in the first place. The historical analysis suggests that “unbundled” territoriality is a useful terrain for exploring the condition of postmodernity in international politics and suggests some ways in which that exploration might proceed. The emergence of multiperspectival institutional forms is identified as a key dimension of the condition of postmodernity in international politics.