

Some weight must be given to the underdevelopment of civil society, presidentialism per se, party traditions, and even the legacies of *caudillismo*. Another weakness is some ambiguity about what the state failed to adapt to. If policy makers had responded to the popular majority anytime between 1979 and 1996, as Crisp prescribes, they would have moved even farther away from structural adjustment, not closer. Crisp may also exaggerate the influence of the commissions. The fact that congress was weak, the executive strong, that business and labor were formally represented, and that public policy was biased in their favor does not necessarily mean that formal commissions were the channels through which influence was exercised. A less narrow explanation would recognize international policy diffusion, the imperatives of oil economies, political leadership exercised by politicians, and informal lobbying by mutually antagonistic conglomerates.

Overall, however, Crisp has made an important and provocative contribution to our understanding of Venezuelan politics that broadens the research agenda in an exemplary way and will be an essential reference for students of Venezuelan politics.

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A European Security Architecture After the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy by Gülnur Aybet. *London, MacMillan, 2000. 316 pp. \$69.95.*

The decade of the 1990s tells the story of how Western Europe and the United States—the “Western security community” in the author’s words—sought to impose their values and institutional way of life on the losing side of the cold war—the former communist world in Europe. This was done through the medium of interlocking institutions: the European Union, NATO, the Western European Union (WEU), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The latter is a pan-European organization, coopted after the cold war into the support of Western values. Through the legitimacy conferred by these institutions—sometimes self-appointed, as in the European Union’s Arbitration Commission for Yugoslavia, which “legalized” the transformation of the republics into sovereign states—the Western security community was to gain ascendancy for its views and claim for itself the conscience of the so-called international community.

Such is the thesis of Gülnur Aybet’s dense and densely researched book on the post-cold war transformations in Europe and in Europe’s “near abroad”—the Balkans, the Near East, and the Persian Gulf. The author makes the case that the Western security community deliberately set about in the aftermath of the cold war to project its values on a template of “interlocking institutions,” referred to in NATO’s communiqué issued in Rome in November 1991: “we

are working toward a new European security architecture in which NATO, the CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation], the European Community, the WEU and the Council of Europe complement each other." At the beginning of the decade of the 1990s, NATO's New Strategic Concept, the EU's Maastricht declaration, and the CSCE's Charter of Paris constituted the West's blueprint. By virtue of the attraction of these institutions, the West was expected to "radiate stability" and establish a "hegemony of consent."

Unfortunately for the West, it encountered a series of anomalies in Yugoslavia and over time lost the nearly universal acceptance of its methods that was evident at the time of the Gulf War. These included most notably the prescription in Article 2.1 of the UN Charter on the use of force against the territorial integrity of member states. In the Yugoslav case, this was in contradiction with the principles of self-determination (Article 1.2) and respect for human rights (Article 1.3). The Western security community got around this by being able to portray a humanitarian crisis (in Bosnia) as a "threat to international peace and security" (p. 232).

Morally, as a result of these anomalies, the Western security community lost credibility and therefore its "legitimacy by consent" as it sought to impose itself on the postcommunist world. Institutionally, and partly because of these anomalies, the interlocking security architecture set forth in 1992 did not work as envisaged. Rather, it was NATO, together with the UN, that brought about the end of the Bosnian war. But in the process of its military liaisons with the former Eastern Bloc countries, NATO did exercise a certain stabilizing influence over the postcommunist world, as indicated by the inclusion of some of these countries' militaries in the intervention force in Bosnia.

The author's study of the complexities of the new security architecture, backed up by a wealth of supporting detail, ends in the aftermath of the Bosnian war. The further deterioration of the West's credibility vis-à-vis the outside world, as evidenced by NATO's unilateral bombing campaign in Kosovo in 1999, could not be foreseen by the author. Neither could the revival of an autonomous European defense led by France, nor the emergence of a renascent chauvinism and strong-man rule in Russia. However, the author did anticipate that in a future crisis involving the above-described anomalies the United States might be reluctant to take the lead, and Russia might depart from the framework of intervention established with the West, such as through the Contact Group for Yugoslavia (p. 251).

At the end of the day, at Dayton, NATO had become the centerpiece of the European security architecture, replacing the OSCE, although the latter retained a certain role in spreading Western values through election monitoring and through observer groups in anticipated crisis areas. All along, however, and this is perhaps underemphasized by the author, the United States in the aftermath of the cold war was intent on developing new roles for NATO and ensuring that it did not go out of business. Much as France, and to a lesser degree Germany, wanted to make something out of the OSCE, even to the extent

of equipping it with an intervention force, as France proposed, the United States would have none of it. Thus although these institutions—NATO, EU, OSCE—were interlocking, they were also in competition.

The author's overall argument becomes less convincing at a higher level of abstraction as she links it to Antonio Gramsci's thesis of a hegemony of consent, whereby the industrial nations of the West possessed a hegemonic power based on the elements of a civil society, including churches, schools, and the media. Though intriguing, Aybet's transposing of this thesis to the plane of relations between states seems more reflective of the need to conform events to a theory than of the task of illuminating the complexities of the events themselves; these the author recounts with compelling thoroughness and accuracy, albeit not without some repetition.

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The Politics of Pension Reform: Institutions and Change in Western Europe by *Giuliano Bonoli*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000. 188 pp. Cloth, \$54.95; paper, \$19.95.

Pensions are the heart of Western welfare states, so changes in them indicate the directions welfare states are heading. For this reason, Giuliano Bonoli chose to examine pension reform in a few key West European countries. The study contains detailed discussion of recent reforms in Britain, Switzerland, and France. In addition, shorter examinations of reforms in Italy, Sweden, and Germany help to add broader relevance to the book's major findings, which are compelling, though they significantly undermine the institutionalist theory he outlines at the outset of the study.

Bonoli's argument is that institutions, or more precisely constitutional structures, explain the success or failure, as well as the content of pension reform. Specifically, he argues that countries with majoritarian institutions allow dramatic changes in policy to be developed and implemented, even against strong public resistance. Polities with lots of "veto points" in their constitutional structure by contrast allow opponents of reform many opportunities to challenge government initiative. The result is either that reform fails or that it passes with numerous bargains and concessions to the concerns of organized interests. An analytic narrative is used to examine four cases in three countries; the 1986 pension reform in Britain, the Swiss reform of 1995, and two French reforms of 1993 and 1995.

The analytic narratives are well-done and provide good information for anyone interested in the history of these four reforms. But the complexity of the pension debates, so aptly demonstrated in the narratives, overwhelms the parsimonious argument. For example, in an effort to explain why the British govern-