

launched the first general strike since the Pinochet era, and in 2005 the 640,000-member Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (CUT) split with the Socialist Party.

Beyond the case studies, Alemán draws on a range of quantitative and qualitative techniques to demonstrate the relationships among political inclusion, labor market regulation, unit labor costs, and industrial conflict across the globe. The results are highly suggestive. As in the Korean and Chilean cases, in new democracies at large there does seem to be little relationship between labor representation and employment security or other variables like inequality. There is also some evidence presented here that the relationship among political inclusion, left-wing political parties, and labor costs or protest are different from those we have found in the long-standing democracies. Nevertheless, these are extremely complicated relationships to tease out empirically, with problems of reverse causation and endogeneity everywhere you look, not to mention myriad measurement issues. Like other authors, Alemán is unable to resolve all of these issues definitively, and so the cross-national findings are suggestive rather than conclusive, but certainly interesting and provocative.

In addition to the positive analysis of labor relations and regulation, Alemán is interested in the policy and normative implications of what he finds. However, the central tension in the book between institutional gains for unions and economic losses for workers is a very ambiguous result that, understandably, makes the author quite uncomfortable. He wants to find reasons to be happy about the improvements in the political inclusion of labor in new democracies over the last 20 years, and talks optimistically about the introduction of tripartite negotiations, concluding that “if the purpose of including labor in policymaking may have been initially to co-opt unions or demobilize workers during periods of economic retrenchment, this no longer seems to be the primary objective” (p. 137). However, his findings on the inability of these tripartite institutions to protect frameworks of labor regulation, raise wages, or moderate industrial conflict suggest that such optimistic conclusions might be misplaced. As Alemán recognizes, labor in many new democracies is simply not strong enough to use tripartite institutions in the way they have been used in social democracies. Why this is the case is not explored in detail in the book, but it is nevertheless an important question to ask.

Coming to grips with labor’s weakness and understanding the effects of institutions would have been easier if the study had also included material from Eastern Europe, which, as Alemán acknowledges, is the region where tripartite arrangements have grown the most and have proven the weakest. Part of the answer surely lies in the fact that with some notable exceptions, tripartism in many new democracies did not come from irresistible pressure from below. Nor was it a response of employers and government to strong labor unions. Instead, tripartism was conceived

mostly as a political fig leaf to protect communist-era labor unions, to discourage the emergence of new, more representative unions, and to manage the dismantling of the state socialist economy. In that light, the fact that tripartism has coincided with deregulation is not so surprising.

As with all good books, *Labor Relations in New Democracies* answers some important questions and raises many more. Labor politics has not been a fashionable area in political science in recent decades, but by problematizing the relationship between labor institutions and economic outcomes in the developing world, Aleman has set out a key element of an important agenda for students of the political economy in the twenty-first century. With luck many more will be inspired to follow.

**Platform or Personality? The Role of Party Leaders in Elections.** By Amanda Bittner. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 272p. \$85.00.  
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— Sven-Oliver Proksch, *McGill University*

As the highest-ranking officials of their parties, leaders fulfill prominent roles in politics. They shape their parties’ policy positions, take on the highest executive offices when in government, and become the most vociferous critics of governments when in opposition. Party leadership selection is typically a widely reported party event, and leaders provide a public face for their parties come election time. The role of party leaders has therefore been at the center of numerous studies examining how leaders’ personal traits impact vote choice. Whereas previous studies have tackled this question by focusing mostly on particular countries or specific elections, *Platform or Personality?* offers a broader cross-national and longitudinal perspective using an impressive data set assembled from election studies from seven countries. In short, Amanda Bittner’s answer is that leaders’ traits matter, but that not all traits are equally important and not all leaders are evaluated according to the same criteria. In particular, the results suggest that voter evaluations of leaders’ *character* seem more important than those of leaders’ *competence*.

The author organizes the book into eight chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 offers a thorough and useful overview of available data on party leader evaluations in more than 100 election surveys. The author convincingly demonstrates that a sufficient number of studies exist with similar closed-ended questions for a pooled analysis. In total, 35 election studies across seven countries over a 40-year period form the basis for the analysis. Chapter 3 introduces competence and character as the two dimensions that define the personality traits of leaders. These are identified using pairwise correlation analyses of 55 trait questions for major conservative and center-left party leaders (and 34 for leaders from parties that include the smaller left ones). To enable a pooled analysis, Bittner recodes all

trait evaluations on a common 0–1 scale, with a value of 1 reflecting the most positive evaluation for a given leader. The consequences of doing so, however, are not entirely clear due to the different answer formats in the surveys, and a more careful discussion of the data would have been useful. For example, while some questions ask for a leader rating on an ordinal scale, others simply ask whether a particular trait applies to a leader or not. It is conceivable that pooling the data this way introduces variation simply as a result of various answer formats of the trait evaluation questions.

The next chapters investigate the data. Chapter 4 examines voters' ratings of leaders on the competence and character dimensions. The author finds that partisans of all parties give the highest ratings to their own leaders, but that voter ideology and issue attitudes further affect the evaluations. Sociodemographic characteristics of voters, on the other hand, play a minor role. Building upon this analysis, Chapter 5 additionally considers the impact of the party label of leaders. Bittner shows that voters rate leaders according to partisan stereotypes: After their own party leaders, partisans perceive leaders from left parties positively on the character dimension, but conservative leaders positively on the competence dimension. The data also suggest that these stereotypes are not a tool used by the least informed voters, which is interesting to note. In fact, politically sophisticated voters evaluate leaders most strongly according to the partisan stereotype, although it remains an open question why this occurs.

The subsequent Chapter 6 shifts the attention to the impact of leaders' traits on vote choice and forms the core empirical chapter of the book. Rather than explaining why voters choose parties in particular elections, the author groups parties across countries according to party type (conservative, center-left, and left) and runs separate logit models for these types. Controlling for partisanship and voter ideology, Bittner's results suggest that leader trait evaluations affect vote choice, with evaluations of character having slightly larger effects than those of competence. In other words, positive trait evaluations by voters increase the probability that a voter will vote for the leader's party.

In the final empirical Chapter 7, Bittner looks at the role of institutions and examines whether leader trait evaluations matter more or less in particular electoral contexts. Her results are mixed and no clear pattern emerges, with some institutions having a different impact for leaders of even the same party type. There is some evidence that left leaders' traits have a larger impact in more proportional electoral systems with large party systems. Bittner speculates that this result could be due to the better chances for higher political offices for leaders from small left parties in multiparty systems. She then summarizes the book's findings in a concluding chapter.

*Platform or Personality?* is a highly engaging study examining three aspects of the literature on party leaders simul-

taneously: the dimensionality of leader trait evaluations, the factors influencing these evaluations, and the impact of leader evaluations on electoral outcomes. The book builds on existing research, but it does not offer a novel theory of the role of leaders in elections, and does not aim at doing so. Instead, the merit of the book lies in its focused approach of testing existing hypotheses using the most comprehensive and rigorous examination of data on leader trait evaluations to date. The book is also of great interest to electoral researchers more generally, as the research design provides several workarounds to the comparability problem of survey data. Particularly noteworthy are the construction of the leader trait dimensions and the separation of the analysis by three main party types. By conducting the pooled cross-national and longitudinal analysis, Bittner manages to push the available survey data to their limit.

Notwithstanding the impressive data analysis, there are several ways the study could be expanded. First and foremost, the book demonstrates the limits of studying the role of party leaders exclusively with election surveys. Bittner mentions the strategic considerations of parties without exploring them further. But if it is true that leaders' traits have substantial effects on vote choice, then parties are likely to consider them as well. In a multiparty competitive environment, choosing a party leader may not be a trivial task. Examining the constraints inside parties when nominating leaders is therefore crucial to an understanding of the effects of leaders on partisans and voters more generally. For instance, past government or opposition experience is likely to affect parties' leader choices, and consequently the evaluation of leaders' traits by voters, an aspect that is not considered. Moreover, the book could have benefited from a more careful discussion of party platforms, not least because its title raises this expectation. Bittner incorporates the platform only indirectly, by splitting up the analysis according to "party type" and by controlling for the partisanship of voters. Alternatively, a more direct approach would be to control for the ideological proximity of voters to the party position.

In addition, the book discounts the role of political institutions. Early on, an important caveat is raised: Not all party leaders are the same, and the institutional context ought to affect the roles that leaders perform. Despite a final chapter dedicated to the role of institutions, the book does not satisfactorily address the importance of regime type, party system size, and electoral institutions. In a sense, the research design of the book, while enabling a pooled analysis of trait evaluations, comes at the cost of forcing Bittner to discount institutions. Electoral institutions and party systems, however, create particular competitive environments in which parties and leaders run election campaigns. After all, voters cast different kinds of votes in different institutional environments. A vote cast for a party in a parliamentary system with proportional

representation does mean something else than one cast for a candidate in a presidential system with single-member districts. Consequently, the way in which leaders and their parties will campaign is also likely to be different. Here, the book could have profited from a theoretical discussion of such effects early on.

Despite these criticisms, *Platform or Personality?* constitutes a major accomplishment and an important contribution to the literature on the role of party leaders in elections, and the findings should be of interest to electoral and party scholars alike. The book should furthermore stimulate research on the strategic anticipation by parties of the effects of character and competence on voters, on the sources of partisan stereotypes in leader evaluations, and on leader evaluations in complex, multiparty electoral environments.

**Regulating the Risk of Unemployment: National Adaptations to Post-Industrial Labour Markets in Europe.** Edited by Jochen Clasen and Daniel Clegg. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. 384p. \$99.00.

**Social Policy in the Smaller European Union States.** Edited by Gary B. Cohen, Ben W. Ansell, Robert Henry Cox, and Jane Gingrich. New York: Berghahn, 2011. 300p. \$95.00.

**Dismantling Social Europe: The Political Economy of Social Policy in the European Union.** By Daniel V. Preece. Boulder, CO: First Forum, 2009. 187p. \$55.00.  
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— Paul Copeland, *Queen Mary, University of London*

Why has the formation of social policy and labor law by the European Union proven so difficult over the last two decades? What has been happening in the social and employment fields in the EU member states during this period? These two questions are central for anyone researching and teaching in the fields of welfare state studies and European integration, and the three books under review each provide their own unique contributions.

Perhaps the most original and sophisticated contribution is Jochen Clasen and Daniel Clegg's edited volume *Regulating the Risk of Unemployment*. The topic of reform and the convergence/divergence of European welfare states toward a neoliberal model has spawned an extensive body of academic literature. However, understanding developments and trends across a large number of country case studies in policy areas other than pensions can be difficult. Clasen and Clegg address this void for the area of unemployment benefit systems.

The editors begin their analysis with the argument that postwar unemployment benefit systems should be understood as occupationally defined schemes linked to industrial employment, which ensured that workers were protected against the risks of cyclical and frictional unemployment. By the early 1980s, this institutionalized

arrangement for regulating the risk of unemployment had unraveled as the male breadwinner model of industrial employment declined, the service sector expanded, and a more heterogeneous form of employment took hold (part-time, fixed-term contracts). Across Europe, governments reduced unemployment benefits, provided exit strategies from the labor market (such as early retirement), or intervened to provide active labor market policies (ALMPs), but by the early 1990s, this piecemeal strategy had reached its limits. The authors hypothesize that since then, unemployment policy across Europe has converged via a triple integration process of benefit homogenization: fewer tiers of unemployment protection and the emergence of a dominant general tier; risk recategorization with diminishing differences in entitlement and conditionality between unemployment and other benefit schemes, and the possible creation of a single-benefit scheme; and activation policies whereby benefits are becoming conditional upon supported job search for recipients. Part I of the volume includes contributions that test the hypotheses in 12 country case studies (UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, and the Czech Republic).

The second part of the volume addresses the more thematic elements of the research across the national case studies, including the transition rate of the unemployed and the inactive into work (Werner Eichhorst and colleagues), the changing composition of working-age benefit recipients and the methodological problems associated with using national claimant data in research (Johan J. De Deken and Clasen), and, finally, the relationship between the broader purpose of ALMPs and economic context (Giuliano Bonoli). The volume finds substantial evidence to argue that the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and Belgium provide the clearest examples of moving toward the triple integration process, while France, Sweden, and Italy display some modest shifts. Switzerland, Spain, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have experienced the least movement in their unemployment systems, thus reminding the reader that while there has been significant convergence across Western welfare states over the last two decades, divergence persists.

Continuing with the broader theme of divergence and convergence is *Social Policy in the Smaller European Union States*, edited by Gary B. Cohen and his colleagues. The small Western European states have long been considered unique during the postwar period in that compared to larger European countries, they have always been more dependent for economic growth on their integration within the global economy. This argument was originally made in Peter J. Katzenstein's *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe* (1985). But how similar are Europe's small states in social policy in an age of globalization and Europeanization, especially given that major