

Gramsci (more relevantly), but does not review the contribution of the Budapest School to this debate. A review of Ágnes Heller's and Ferenc Fehér's work in relation to the capitalist development in Hungary under socialism could have been useful.

Overall, this volume promises to deliver an elaboration of the roots of the Eastern European picture in the 2000s and engages with the most recent socio-political and socio-economic turmoil in the region in view of both its history and international developments thereafter. It does not consistently achieve its goal, but it certainly opens new routes of inquiry for students of East European politics. The book could be a useful tool for undergraduate and postgraduate courses on East European politics.

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**Jochen Clasen and Daniel Clegg (eds.):
*Regulating the Risk of Unemployment:
National Adaptations to Postindustrial
Labor Markets in Europe***

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404 pp.

Jochen Clasen and Daniel Clegg offer—once more—an interesting new take on institutional adjustments in European labour markets, thus continuing a series of earlier joint publications. Following an introduction in which the two editors present their analytical framework that 'sets the scene for the chapters that follow' (p. 2), the edited volume is divided into two parts. Part I includes twelve country chapters, in which the developments in the regulation of the risk of unemployment are outlined, focusing mainly on reforms in national unemployment protection systems from the early 1990s to about 2010. The country cases include nine of the fifteen 'old' European

Union (EU) member states (excluding Austria, Ireland, Finland, Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal), two 'new' members (Hungary and the Czech Republic) as well as Switzerland, a non-EU state. Part II is comprised of three chapters that take a cross-national perspective, and a fourth, concluding chapter by the editors that summarises the findings.

In the Introduction, Clasen and Clegg first argue that the shift from industrial to service industries has generated a functional mismatch between the labour market institutions created during the Golden Age of industrial growth and welfare expansion and the needs of contemporary, post-industrial production regimes. Accordingly, they argue that with the decline in life-long, mostly male, full-time employment patterns, and the subsequent rise in flexible working careers of both men and women, unemployment protections systems are in need of adaptation. This adaptation is then captured in their proposed analytic framework, which relies on three (inter-related) processes of integration: (1) *unemployment benefit homogenisation* (ranging from a diminishing of differences between benefit tiers, to a reduction of the number of tiers, to the emergence of a single, dominant tier); (2) *risk re-categorisation* (ranging from a diminishing of differences in entitlement and conditionality between unemployment and other benefits schemes to the creation of a single benefit for working-age people that also entails—perhaps as intermediary steps—the transfer of claimants from other benefits to unemployment benefits and the merger of programmes); and (3) *activation* (which the authors understand as the tightening of job-search requirements, supporting all job-seekers regardless of benefit status with job-search and counselling services in so-called one-stop shops, and the merger of administrative units into single gateways) (cf. p. 10).

The subsequent country chapters offer a comprehensive and detailed account of

the changes in unemployment insurance and related benefits systems. They closely follow the volume's analytical framework, which ensures comparability and helps to identify both *common trends* (the so-called 'triple integration' of unemployment protection regimes) and the (persistent or emerging) cross-country *differences* (e.g. the growing differentiation, rather than harmonisation, of treatments of different claimant groups in the Czech case, continued risk categorisation in Switzerland, the absence of activation in Spain, or the continuation of multiple gateways in Sweden). All twelve country chapters are well written, logically organised and very rich in detail. They thus represent an excellent source of reference for anyone interested in recent institutional changes in (mainly Western) European unemployment protection regimes. Three questions, however, remain unanswered. First, the country chapters provide only some evidence with regard to *explaining* the (sometimes similar, sometimes different) choices made by policy makers with regard to the *Gestalt* of the described reform trajectories. Most of the chapters implicitly acknowledge path-contingencies, while some explicitly suggest that these changes are driven by changes in the ideological positioning of political parties (i.e. the general trend toward marketisation, New Public Management and paternalism), the decline in trade union power (as trade unions are typically seen as the 'defenders' of the old system that benefits labour market insiders), or the diffusion of new ideas by international organisations such as the OECD or the EU (an argument that I have also made elsewhere; see Weishaupt [2010]). While the edited volume cannot give a precise answer, it provides a good starting point for future research on these issues. What remains a bit more unsatisfactory, however, is that the chapters rarely assess the impact of structural changes in the labour market itself as a cause of the 'triple integration'.

Clasen and Clegg strongly emphasise that the process of de-industrialisation and the growth in the tertiary sector necessitate a more flexible and mobilising approach (this is inspired by the 'service sector trilemma' first proposed by Iversen and Wren [1998]). Yet, we find no, or only very little, reflection on this claim in the country analyses. Similarly unfortunate is that the book's chapters offer very little reflection on the effects of the global financial and economic crisis. A discussion, however brief, of the consequences of 'triple integration' in the face of a massive oversupply of labour and an examination of the political will to uphold or perhaps even reverse some of the reforms in the face of mass unemployment would have been a welcome contribution to an overall very interesting and informative 'tour' through twelve European unemployment policy regimes.

The cross-country chapters, in turn, tackle three important issues. First, in an extremely stimulating chapter, Werner Eichhorst and collaborators ask the important question whether the expansion of service sector employment in recent years, which was supported both by labour market flexibilisation and activation, has mainly produced precarious jobs. In order to get a grasp on this question, Eichhorst et al. first test the hypothesis that the likelihood to move from unemployment or inactivity to employment is higher in 2007 than at the end of the 1990s. In a second step, the authors test the hypothesis that gains in employment are driven by employment contracts of poor quality (which are defined as fixed-term contracts). Regarding the former, they find that there 'is indeed a pan-European trend over time towards labour markets becoming more inclusive' (p. 292). This effect, however, is significantly stronger for the group of unemployed than for inactive persons, and also varies amongst the eight countries under review (of the twelve countries studies covered in Part I of the book, Germany, the Nether-

lands, Sweden and Switzerland are missing in the sample). With respect to the latter hypothesis, the authors find no common trend. Rather, in two flexible labour markets—Denmark and the UK—as well as Hungary (albeit statistically not significant) and Spain (where the use of fixed-term contracts peaked in the late 1990s at almost 35%), the odds of getting a permanent contract was higher in 2007 than in the late 1990s. The opposite is true for Belgium (albeit statistically not significant), the Czech Republic, France and Italy. While this chapter represents a very interesting first stab at an important question, some doubts about the robustness of the results remain. For instance, the authors do not control for the degree of tertiarisation (the ‘driver’ of (precarious) employment growth), the macro-economic situation (which directly affects the demand for labour), or the composition of the group of the inactive (which may have changed over time due to demographic or institutional changes). Moreover, it is also not obvious to me why ‘precarious’ employment is equated with fixed-term contracts. The quality of temporary employment may itself vary—think the Dutch version of flexicurity—while precariousness may lie more in wage levels, working conditions, or hours worked.

In the second cross-country chapter, Johan De Deken and Jochen Clasen identify the lack of cross-national data on benefit receipt (or caseloads) as a major hurdle to advancing our knowledge about the effects of the ‘triple integration’ processes. For instance, social assistance is often administered locally, while early retirement schemes are organised by the social partners. In either case, the programmes remain outside the scope of national statistical bureaus. Yet, if we had comparable, cross-national data on caseloads—including unemployment protection but also four other types of benefits that affect employment outcomes, including work inca-

capacity benefits, early retirement, sabbatical and leave schemes, and social assistance as a residual category—a new ‘dependent variable’ would be born (p. 299). Accordingly, the authors explore the possibility of generating such a data set by reviewing the availability and quality of existing sources and subsequently produce the first results with data collected for the book. The chapter is highly successful in both ways. The discussion of data and associated challenges are very insightful, while the application convincingly illustrates two points: first, it is not possible to “‘read off” expenditure from caseload data or vice versa’ (p. 308); and second, caseloads in most countries were shifted from one benefit type to another (a process the authors call ‘communicating vessels’) rather than reduced over time. The latter point is an important corroboration of Werner Eichhorst et al.’s findings from 2008 [Eichhorst et al. 2008] and proves the ‘added value’ of examining shifts *within* benefit regimes. Worth mentioning also is that Johan De Deken offers a Caseload Annex, in which all data discussed are presented.

Finally, in the third cross-country chapter, Giuliano Bonoli restates his earlier argument that the form and function of active labour market policies (ALMP) have changed in three waves over time [see also Weishaupt 2011; Tepe and Vanhuyse 2013]. He thus complements the overall argument of the book by illustrating the mediating role of activation on both caseloads (as participants in ALMP may not be considered unemployed) and employment (as ALMP may equip job-seekers with the skills they need to enter the labour market or offer employment opportunities in a sheltered labour market). The chapter illustrates how ALMP in six Western countries—Denmark, Germany, France, Italy, Sweden and the UK—have (differently) developed from the 1950s to the early 2000s. It offers a categorisation of ALMP that differs from the

'standard' OECD definition as it includes aspects of activation (benefit conditionality, sanctions, and so on), and it explains why the 1990s saw a shift towards activation and how activation contributed to both unemployment benefit homogenisation and risk re-categorisation.

In sum, the edited volume represents an important contribution to the study of unemployment protection systems and activation more generally. The book's strength lies in its excellent overview of institutional developments in the risk regulation of unemployment in twelve European countries. It thus serves as a rich and valuable source of reference, which will be of great interest for social science scholars. The cross-country chapters nicely complement the overall argument of the book, while the Caseload Annex will certainly become an extremely sought-after source for 'data mining'.

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- Conversation analysis (CA) made an important contribution during the last decades for investigating how ordinary conversations occur in everyday contexts and how interactional sequences rely on specific socially oriented procedures of human reasoning and action. Beyond epistemological and theoretical issues concerning its status (i.e. whether it is possible to consider it a well-formed, autonomous discipline or just a general research paradigm), it is clear that, since its foundation in the mid-1960s, CA has deeply contributed to changing investigation assumptions in communication research, in accordance with a more general, renewed *Zeitgeist* that also led to the 'cognitive revolution' from a behaviourist approach to cognitivism, and the paradigm shift in linguistics and semiotics from analyses based on minimal units to text-oriented research. Through audio- and videotape recordings of natural conversations, CA researchers investigate procedures through which participants constrain each one in talking, particularly in relation to the organisation of actions and the understanding in interaction between subjects. Applications of CA have been conducted in many different fields, including health-care contexts for studying interactions between professionals (i.e. doctors and nurses) and patients. In the last three decades, a good amount of literature in this sector helped to enlighten such conversations, which can be considered delicate ones because of their intrinsic contents: discussions about health and illness, symptoms and diagnoses, diseases and therapies.
- The challenge of overcoming already established results in the field and addressing new (or at least under-investigated) is-