

Even if it is true that the European level does not constitute the center of activity for European unions, it is also true that both the European level and the regional level are quickly growing in importance for national economies and therefore for nationally based trade unions. Magone provides a detailed and rich description of the structures that unions face at the European level and presents a useful account of the existing attempts of unions to respond to this relatively new environment. For this reason, his book is well worth reading not only for readers interested in Iberian trade unionism, but also for those interested in the effects of European integration on unions in general.

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National Labour Relations in Internationalized Markets: A Comparative Study of Institutions, Change, and Performance. By Franz Traxler, Sabine Blaschke, and Bernhard Kittel. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. xvi, 339 pp. ISBN 0-19-829554-5, \$60.00 (cloth).

This book is an excellent piece of scholarship that I highly recommend to anyone interested in labor market institutions and their effects. It makes three significant contributions to our understanding of comparative labor relations.

The first contribution, and perhaps the most important, is the wealth of new data the authors present. Traxler, Blaschke, and Kittel have collected data for 20 OECD countries for the years 1970–98, with annual scores on several dozen indicators of interest group organization, wage-setting arrangements, and interest group participation in public policy-making. Quantitative comparative empirical research relies heavily on such indicators. Typically, scores are created via coding by a single expert, based on primary and secondary sources. Traxler et al. instead distributed a detailed standardized questionnaire to labor relations specialists in each of the countries, compared the responses to existing measures and to the literature, and then resolved inconsistencies via discussion with the country specialists. The authors also offer new conceptualizations of several key variables. For instance, they create a measure of wage bargaining centralization based

not on the structure of wage-setting arrangements (the basis for most existing measures), but instead on the degree to which wages are actually determined at various levels. And they make a compelling case in favor of a categorical measure of wage coordination, as opposed to existing rankings and scales. Throughout the book, the authors do a nice job of carefully explaining their measurement choices and the rationales for them.

The book's second major contribution is its empirical exploration of whether globalization generates convergence in national labor relations systems. The authors measure globalization chiefly as trade's share in GDP and the extent of legal restrictions on financial transactions. Their data suggest considerable path dependence and little convergence. One noteworthy exception is a trend toward decentralization of wage-setting in the 1990s. However, the shift has been primarily to the sectoral rather than the firm level, and Traxler et al. find that in a number of countries wage-setting remains relatively coordinated even though less centralized than before. In their view, "there is every reason to believe that the corporatist trajectory"—in the form of this "lean corporatism," centralized within sectors and coordinated across sectors—"will be sustained despite persisting internationalization" (p. 305).

The authors conclude that globalization has had relatively little impact. Yet since the pressures of trade and financial openness are mediated by domestic institutions, finding little convergence does not necessarily indicate that these pressures have had limited influence. What matters is not only the actual level of globalization but also union leaders', employers', and policy-makers' *perceptions* of the constraints globalization imposes. This kind of effect is difficult, if not impossible, to detect in regressions. Also, globalization may have had stronger effects on other aspects of labor relations not covered by the authors, such as employee participation in decision-making (team production, works councils, codetermination), employment security, the organization of production, or pay arrangements (such as profit sharing).

The book's third contribution is an empirical exploration of the impact labor relations institutions have on national economic performance. Here the authors provide a nuanced, careful, and relatively thorough set of analyses of how interest group organization, wage-setting centralization and coordination, and interest group participation in public policy-making affect inflation, unemployment, their combina-

tion in the Okun index, and economic growth. Given that most of the variation in labor relations institutions turns out to be cross-sectional, the authors wisely eschew the now-standard pooled time-series cross-section regression analysis in favor of cross-sectional regressions estimated separately for eight three- to five-year time periods. (Chapter 3 offers a very helpful discussion of some of the key methodological difficulties in cross-national quantitative analysis.) Another laudable feature of their analysis is that, unlike virtually all prior empirical studies of corporatism's performance effects, they include investigation of the purported causal link: wage restraint. That is, Traxler et al. check to see if labor relations institutions are associated with slower growth of unit labor costs (wage changes adjusted for change in productivity) before they proceed to examine their association with macroeconomic outcomes.

Among the findings, six are particularly noteworthy. (1) There is no support for the neoliberal and neoclassical theses suggesting that corporatist institutions are, respectively, detrimental or irrelevant to macroeconomic performance. (2) Interest group organization has virtually no impact on performance. (3) Wage coordination has far greater influence on macroeconomic outcomes than does wage centralization. The most beneficial forms of coordination are pattern bargaining (as in Germany and Japan) and peak-level wage bargaining under conditions of high bargaining governability (as in Sweden during the 1970s and Norway for most of the 1970s and 1980s). (4) In the 1990s monetary restrictiveness had the effect of forcing wage moderation even in noncorporatist countries. (5) "Wage moderation as such is far less beneficial to employment than conventional wisdom suggests. . . . There are signs that wage moderation contributes to significant job growth only when integrated into a broader approach to concerted policy measures" (p. 305). (6) Union participation in public policy-making has beneficial effects, but those effects have diminished over time.

Each of these findings is quite plausible. Indeed, I suspect they are mainly correct. But a few limitations of the analyses leave me less than fully convinced. For unemployment and growth, the causal link is generally presumed to be *real* labor costs; yet the authors examine only *nominal* labor costs. Also, some of the models are under-specified; in particular, the analyses of unemployment omit several key institutional variables such as employment regulations, tax rates, and the duration of unemployment ben-

efit eligibility.

Nonetheless, this book deserves to be widely read. It is certain to inform and stimulate further study of the important substantive and methodological issues it addresses.

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Constant Turmoil: The Politics of Industrial Life in Nineteenth-Century New England. By Mary H. Blewett. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000. x, 521 pp. ISBN 1-55849-239-9, \$40.00 (cloth).

Mary H. Blewett, Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell, has written several books on New England industrial workers, primarily in the cotton textile and shoe industries in the nineteenth century. Her primary interests are the workers' reactions to industrialization and to the industrialist power in the factory and in the community. In addition, she wishes to demonstrate the role of women in these protests. In *Constant Turmoil*, her focus on protest, unionization, strikes, and labor discontent results in a study that will be more familiar to those in the Commons-Perlman school of labor history than to those more sympathetic to the approach of writers like Herbert Gutman and E. P. Thompson, who give considerable attention to family, religion, and culture. To Blewett, it was attempts of textile capitalists "to control the market, to use or ignore the political system, and to force submission from their predominately immigrant workforce" (p. 5) that gave rise to the "constant turmoil of resistance in the region," making industrialization a fought-over process.

The setting covered in the book is Fall River, Massachusetts, in the years 1799–1906. By 1875 Fall River had a population almost equal to that of Lowell, with a higher level of employment in cotton goods. Its population and work force were over one-half foreign-born, the highest share in Massachusetts's leading textile centers. The immigrants from England played a critical role, since the carryover of their "culture of protest" from Lancashire helped to shape the responses of native-born workers.

Because of its focus on labor protests against