elections or disappearing from the political system entirely, they will rely on promises of benefits targeted to mobilized middle-class strata to win electoral support. Social spending will, as a consequence, become higher, more targeted toward nonpoor organized voters, and less redistributive. When party systems stabilize, welfare systems can be reformed, spending controlled, and benefits made more pro-poor, lessening inequality.

Karakoç structures his argument around two pairs of "most similar systems": postcommunist Poland and the Czech Republic, and post-authoritarian Turkey and Spain. He relies on comparisons both between and within these cases. According to the logic of his argument, states with more stable politics have less inequality. A state with volatile politics that stabilize at some point becomes more egalitarian. So, in Poland low voter turnout and a volatile party system from 1989–2011 produced high social expenditures and high inequality. The Czech Republic's higher voter turnout and relatively stable system during the same period produced significantly lower and more egalitarian social expenditures. Turkey's volatile party system produced a hierarchical social policy and increased targeted spending until 2002; when the party system stabilized, hierarchy in social policy was reduced, and spending on the poor increased. In Spain, higher turnout and lower volatility produced an incremental welfare policy.

Karakoç's analysis necessarily depends on multiple sets of statistics and definitions of what they measure, and he usually has comparable high-quality statistics for these European cases. Most statistics are straightforward: voting by income, seat turnover in legislatures' seats to measure volatility, the bottom quintile as a rough estimate for the poor. Karakoç's measure of targeted welfare expenditures versus expenditures that benefit everyone, however, is more debatable. He assumes that all monetary transfers—that is, pensions, unemployment and family benefits, and the like—are targeted to middle-income groups, whereas health care and education spending benefit everyone, including the poor. These are reasonable but imperfect assumptions. Poverty in these states tends to be highest among large families and children, and health care spending may vary greatly across regions and between urban and rural areas. Family benefits, depending on their structure, may well cover some of the poor, whereas expenditures on health may barely reach them. The author might have supplemented this data with systematic data on the introduction, scale, cuts, or elimination of means-tested benefits that (at least in theory) go only to the poor. These benefits are discussed in some places, but not systematically. Including them would give a clearer idea of what was given to and taken from those clearly recognized as poor.

One of the most interesting and valuable aspects of Karakoç's study is that it brings societal groups and their linkages to political parties back into the center of politics, especially in the CEE. Although much of the literature continues to treat CEE societies as poorly organized, scholars have recognized the political influence of pensioners in individual polities. Karakoç's study provides a systematic transnational explanation for pensioners' high political salience. Unions and organized labor have been viewed as nearly irrelevant politically in the postcommunist states, beyond the argument that populations use elections to punish governments for high unemployment. Karakoç challenges that view of organized labor, especially for Poland, showing that the minority who remained in unions have been sufficiently politically engaged to pressure parties for social payments, if not to influence broader economic policy. For each of his cases, Karakoç constructs party–social group linkages and connects them with electoral support. In sum, he presents a novel and convincing analysis that makes sense of both politics and welfare outcomes in new democracies.

I have a few issues, however, with the book. The analysis does not, in fact, explain overall inequality, which is a product of many factors: it explains inegalitarian distributive outcomes that are systematically produced by the political process. Most of the analysis focuses on pensions, unemployment, and other benefits, which redistribute but do not replace market outcomes. In addition, parties and coalitions in these cases also contribute to inequality by tolerating corruption that enriches politically connected elites. Karakoç recognizes that groups allied with the old authoritarian regime enjoy privileges post-transition, but these privileges are often conferred informally, outside the formal policy making he studies. Granting that corruption is impossible to measure, its connection to political parties and inequality should still be recognized. The author might also have addressed the questions why most who benefit from parties' social policies do not form attachments and why systems stabilize when they do.

Nevertheless, Karakoç's study makes important contributions to the literatures on democratization and welfare states. It shows that weakly institutionalized parties are poor social policy makers. Desperate to survive the next election, they expand the welfare state while ignoring the poor. Karakoç points to two paths out of this dysfunctional pattern: party systems may stabilize, or the poor may mobilize and increase their electoral participation. He suggests that mobilization of the poor by populist parties may increase equality, raising the critical question whether populism is in fact a corrective to a form of democracy that generates growing inequality.

Tough on Crime: The Rise of Punitive Populism in Latin America. By Michelle D. Bonner. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019. 220p. $40.00 cloth.
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"Tough-on-crime" rhetoric and policies have been a common feature in Latin American political campaigns and are

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part of a global growth in punitive populism. In this outstanding book, Michelle D. Bonner analyzes the rise of punitive populism in Latin America and the central role the mass media have played in promoting a tough-on-crime approach in Argentina and Chile.

Although the literature associates the rise of punitive populism with right-wing conservative politics, an increase in physical and socioeconomic insecurity, or the diffusion and development of neoliberalism, little attention has been paid to the role mass media play in this development. Bonner argues that the neoliberal reforms of the media system, which include the privatization and deregulation of mass media, have affected journalists' practices, reduced their ability to question punitive populist rhetoric and policies, and increased the salience of crime and punitive ideas in policy-making. Punitive voices have come to dominate public discourse, encouraging political leaders to adopt a tough-on-crime strategy to win elections (see figure 1.1, p. 8).

Bonner develops a typology of three media systems. In a *democratic corporatist* model, freedom of the press and access to government information are strongly defended, state regulations and subsidies encourage the use of a diversity of sources, public opinion is presented as complex and heterogeneous, and watchdog journalism is practiced. In *neoliberal media* systems, such as in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, media are seen as a business, and there is little state funding or regulation. When the state intervenes, it is to promote a sense of national identity, rather than to encourage watchdog journalism and access to a diverse pool of sources. Media conglomerates and media practices are driven by making profits rather than fostering democracy. Finally, Bonner describes a third system called *captured neoliberal*, which is common in Latin America. This system has the same features as the neoliberal system, but media outlets have been further polarized and politicized, and the number and diversity of sources are limited both by the market and clientelistic interests. Drama and emotions are favored, public opinion is presented as homogeneous, watchdog journalism is discouraged unless it favors patrons' interests, and there is no time or money for contextualizing and analyzing the root causes of the social phenomena being covered.

Bonner argues that the introduction of neoliberal reforms in Chile and Argentina deeply affected the media system. The privatization and deregulation of media outlets in both countries led to an increase in competition and the need to survive in a complex business environment. Watchdog journalism was undermined by the need to reduce costs and time and by the promotion of drama over analysis. At the same time, commercial media systems were "captured" by political and economic powers, which favored specific editorial lines and used crime coverage as a way of promoting their interests. In the case of Chile, neoliberal reforms that were introduced during the Pinochet dictatorship limited the development of a pluralistic media system when democracy returned. Pinochet's privatization favored media conglomerates that supported his regime. These conglomerates continued to operate after the regime fell, favoring the criminalization of political opposition and the popular sectors. In the case of Argentina, the late development of neoliberalism favored a more diverse use of sources. However, once neoliberalism was consolidated and the government gave preferences to specific media outlets in a clientelistic manner, the media system was "captured," reducing the possibility for watchdog journalism and favoring punitive populism instead.

The book begins with a general introduction to the topic, an analysis of alternative explanations regarding the rise of punitive populism, and a conceptualization of penal populism as used by political leaders with tough-on-crime rhetoric and policies to gain popular support and win elections. Chapter 1 examines existing problems regarding the unreliability of crime statistics in Argentina and Chile. The available statistics highlight crimes that produce public panic. In Argentina there is a greater acknowledgment of police violence than in Chile, leading to a greater mistrust of the police in that country. However, the book does not consider that criticism of the police may also advance stricter tough-on-crime proposals (for instance, the use of military as police forces, as is being proposed in Uruguay).

Chapter 2 analyzes the way mass media construct insecurity and the prevalence of drama over analysis, which aligns with punitive populism's emphasis of emotions over rational thought, contrary to Enlightenment ideas. However, as Emile Durkheim (*The Division of Labor in Society*, 1984 [1893]) argued, emotions related to punishment play a fundamental role in creating a sense of community and the "us" versus "them" rhetoric prevalent in punitive populism. Although the book acknowledges this point, it would have benefited from a deeper discussion of the role punishment plays in fostering this sense of community and the longing for a mythical past when social hierarchies were clear (Rafael Paternain, "La hegemonia conservadora en el campo de la seguridad: Una interpretación del caso uruguayo," *Crítica Contemporánea. Revista de Teoría Política* 2, 2012). Chapter 3 compares the historical evolution of the media systems in Argentina and Chile, as well as the early development of neoliberalism in Chile, which reduced the possibility for alternative media sources that could challenge the hegemonic discourse.

Chapters 4–6 focus on the development of journalistic practices and state and civil society actors' communication strategies in the context of a captured neoliberal media system. Because of cost and time pressures, journalists tend to abandon their watchdog role, which is fundamental for a democratic regime—giving preference to a reduced

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number of sources and to drama over analysis. Chapters 5 and 6 describe the increasing role of public relations agencies and agents in state institutions and civil society organizations, as well as journalists' preferences for working with public relations agents. This communication strategy produces quick and ready-made messages that focus on crime, insecurity, and the call for immediate action, which are easy to use by journalists and easy to consume by the general public, rather than long-term policies. This strategy, Bonner claims, favors the development of punitive populism.

Bonner's book provides an important contribution to our attempts to understand the rise of punitive populism in Latin America. The literature has rarely addressed the role played by mass media in this process. This book brings the media to the forefront of the debate and examines in greater detail the detrimental effects of neoliberalism and market logics on democracy. Neoliberalism is not only an economic policy, but it is also a way of governing populations (Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in G. Burchell, C. Gordon, & P. Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* 1991; David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2005). Neoliberalism produces a hegemonic discourse that sees social problems as individual failures, attempts to eliminate or reduce state responsibility, and favors the tightening of social control as a way of maintaining the social order. Tough-on-crime policies have been central in enforcing this neoliberal order (David Garland, *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society,* 2001; Jonathan Simon, *Governing through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear,* 2007). The mass media preference for punitive voices and the dramatization of crime is not only a response to market needs, but it is also part of the construction and maintenance of a hegemonic discourse. This discourse has at its center the promotion of specific policing strategies, such as "Broken Windows," packaged under the rubric of community policing, which have little community empowerment and too much policing, thereby diminishing the quality of democracy. Although this book could have benefited from a deeper discussion on the construction of this hegemony, Bonner nonetheless makes a very important contribution by showing how legal and institutional guarantees of a free press are not enough if the market and media system promote practices that limit the media's role in fostering democracy.

The Politics of the Core Leader in China: Culture, Institution, Legitimacy, and Power. By Xuezhi Guo. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 434p. $120.00 cloth.
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As President Xi Jinping continues to consolidate personal control over the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and other autocratic strongmen are becoming more assertive around the globe, scholars and policy makers are seeking to better understand the nature and roots of one-man rule in the modern era. Guo Xuezhi's *The Politics of the Core Leader in China*, which is about the role of the party leader in the CCP and how it has evolved, is a timely and useful study. Guo proposes a conceptual framework in which China's political system, infused with Confucian and Communist traditions, "desires" a strong, competent, and moral leader who thereby "earns" the title of "core" leader (pp. 1–3). Not all party leaders can attain this status, however, so there is a cycle of strong and weak collective leadership in a "self-regulating, adjusting" system (p. 14). Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping were core leaders, and Xi Jinping is one today. But other party leaders, including Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, did not make the cut, Guo argues.

In its substantive chapters, the book provides cogent explanations of numerous key concepts, institutions, and trends in elite Chinese politics. Chapter 1 reviews various models and approaches that other scholars have applied to the topic, especially to the question of succession. Chapter 2 highlights four "enduring structural factors" that shape elite politics: gerontocracy or "mentor politics," meritocracy, factionalism, and the "tendency toward the 'core' leadership" (pp. 80, 24). Chapter 3 stresses the lasting influence of Confucianism and other imperial traditions. Chapter 4 discusses the CCP's ideologies, institutions, and norms with a focus on the formal thought of the major party leaders. Chapter 5 is about groupings in Chinese politics: Guo distinguishes among identity groups, such as the Communist Youth League; factions, such as the Jiang Zemin faction; and cliques, which are like factions except they are more horizontally organized and not necessarily political. Chapter 6 focuses on the history of the core leader, which I return to shortly. And chapter 7 presents three case studies of elite opposition to core leaders: the Gao-Rao affair in 1953, the Gang of Four and its fall in 1976, and resistance to Xi's rise since 2012. Throughout, Guo displays a wealth of detailed knowledge about relevant people, organizations, and events.

Guo's conceptual framework for elite Chinese politics provides both a ready-made answer to the question of why Xi has become such a powerful leader and the historical context for understanding such a development. The story goes something like this: Xi's predecessor, Hu, was a weak leader under whom China experienced a "lost decade" of corruption and social discontent. Party elites were therefore compelled to choose a strong successor who would amass formal and informal powers and use them to lead bold reforms. The Chinese political system requires a strong leader to be effective, and most Chinese people, following Confucianism and other cultural traditions, care

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