While labor plays an important role in many accounts of democratization, we know very little about how it has fared in the aftermath of democracy’s “third wave.” And while scholars have long studied the various effects of neo-corporatism in Western Europe, we know very little about corporatism and its effects in new democracies. Alemán’s *Labor Relations in New Democracies: East Asia, Latin America and Europe* is an important contribution to filling these gaps.

I would highlight three of the book’s multiple findings: First, labor has benefited comparatively little from democratization in the third wave. Second, labor market regulations play an important role in providing workers with the political leverage to negotiate effectively. Higher employment protection is associated with a higher likelihood of corporatist bargains, more wage-setting regulations with higher wages and a higher likelihood of strikes. Third, stronger labor unions are associated with more industrial conflicts in new democracies. As a consequence, social pacts have little impact on preventing industrial conflicts.

The book assembles an impressive array of evidence. A statistical analysis using panel data on wage developments and strikes is followed by an analysis of the determinants of social pacts using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) on an original dataset and case studies of labor politics after democratization in South Korea and Chile. The statistical evidence is largely convincing and Alemán should be applauded particularly for creating a novel dataset of social pacts and more generally his close attention to questions of measurement and conceptualization. While the two case studies do not introduce much novel primary evidence, they are well written and tightly argued, adding much to clarify and support Alemán’s claims.

Generally convinced by the book’s arguments, I wish it engaged more with historical and contextual factors. Alemán is aware of the importance of historical legacies, ending his book by emphasizing “factors that have proved more durable and resistant to change than many recent transformations would seem to suggest” (p. 147) Yet in his theorizing and analysis, questions of path dependence, sequencing, and institutional interaction are mostly absent. And while the case studies mention the role of industrial and productive structure, these issues are missing from most of the analysis. Here, the book may have benefited from engaging with the “Varieties of Capitalism” literature that describes labor relations in the context of the broader structure of the economy. These quibble aside, Alemán has written an important book, with a wealth of information that should appeal to scholars of corporatism and of democratization as well as those interested in the political economy of new democracies.