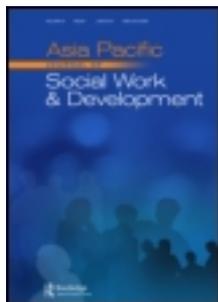


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Social policy and social order in East Asia: an evolutionary view

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This study contrasts two varieties of comparative analysis: on one hand, researchers may look to explain the historical development of the East Asian welfare systems (EAWS) with an eye towards delineating some common trends, while on the other hand, they may seek to recognize the institutional features of these systems through the cross-regime comparisons. We discuss problems in the operation of these two approaches, instead choosing to employ contextual analysis to illuminate developments in social policy in EAWS. This study proposes to understand the policy model of these systems as a two-phase evolution in policy, thus providing a new foundational approach for the study of EAWS.

Keywords: social policy; East Asia; welfare regime; social order; development

1. Introduction: model comparison and model evolution

In the twenty-first century, the social policy developments in the East Asian region indicate a trend towards welfare expansion. This trend seems to contrast with the orientation of policy development in Europe, which was described by Pierson (2001) as 'welfare retrenchment'. The reasons for expansion in these East Asian welfare systems (EAWS) should be thoroughly explored; however, the cross-national diversity in policy making and implementation make it difficult to draw general conclusions. This discourages researchers from exploring EAWS as a special welfare regime type like they did in the 1990s, and even the debate on productivist welfare in relation to EAWS seems to have diminished in recent years. Nevertheless, we can still observe some common points of policy development in this region in the past, and recently, the direction of EAWS policy developments seems to be following convergent tracks. Since these similarities can only be identified through comparative studies and through contextual analysis beyond the country reports, we need to explain the contextual reasons that lead the policy evolution among these EAWSs towards a similar direction.

This paper will begin with a discussion of methodological issues dealt with in this study. The history of social policy research illustrates the development of two methods for conducting comparative studies. In one approach, scholars present parallel narratives to trace the historical developments of social policy in different countries. This approach can yield useful comparisons in the developmental dynamics of policy evolution, as early work of this sort can be referenced in Rimlinger's (1971) work. Institutional analyses are another basic approach to comparative studies. This methodology can be traced back to Titmuss' three institutional models of welfare development (Titmuss, 1974), and more recently, this approach may be observed in Esping-Andersen's (1990) regime

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comparisons. To be sure, each approach suffers from its own set of shortcomings. Researchers may find the narrative method overly specific when attempting to make comparative statements, while the model comparison methods may lead researchers to over-generalize in their evaluations of systems. Accordingly, bridging these two approaches and avoiding their pitfalls is a challenging issue in comparative studies.

To respond to this challenge, we can employ a third method of comparison: contextual analysis of social policy evolution. Work done by Wilensky and Lebeaux (1965) on 'the logic of industrialisation' may be the earliest example of such analysis that asserts the changes in industrialized societies, and provides contextual reasons for social policy development; Flora and Heidenheimer (1981) and Myles and Quadagno (2002) also extend their contextual analysis to different political and institutional theories, describing the transition of political systems and social structures as the main causes of welfare state development. Thus, contextual analysis can refer to a comprehensive range of factors including economic and developmental ones (industrialization and urbanization), political and social ones (democracy and the power of civil agents), as well as cultural factors (values, citizenship rights, and the notions of people's everyday life), addressing all the basic factors that constitute a social order and which can substantially influence the contexts of social policy making and implementation.

The aforementioned approaches of historical narrative and institutional analysis have all influenced studies of EAWS. Until the mid-1990s, most studies of EAWS were produced as historical narratives about the dynamics of programs and policy developments in particular countries, but these nationally restricted reports on social policy development could not cover enough ground to paint a general picture of the EAWS group. Stimulated by Esping-Andersen's work, some scholars who engaged in comparative work presented the 'East Asian welfare regime' as a model that contrasted with the welfare regime models in Europe (Goodman, White, & Kwon, 1998). This attempt to uniformly model the East Asian welfare regime, however, did not succeed in establishing a working model over the past decade of efforts – there is still no consensus among researchers about this type of regime, although the support for this model can be still cited from some recent work such as by Ku and Jones-Finer (2007) and Kwon (2009), etc.

Bearing such experiences in mind, a third approach is necessary: we must pay close attention to contextual reasoning. The analyses resulting from this approach may not yield direct answers about the features of these East Asian systems, but this approach can help us understand the conditions under which these systems have developed by employing contextual factors in our interpretation. Factors such as later-industrialization effects, economic growth, aging populations, and path-dependency effects impact the specific dynamics of development. Thus, contextual analysis provides us with a broader field in our efforts to explain the policy processes and institutional features of these systems, identify the features of an EAWS policy model, or understand system transformation. By using a contextual analysis approach, we do not attempt to fit EAWS into a regime model; rather, we examine the contextual reasons that explain the states' common policy orientations and similar contexts of policy development.

In choosing this approach, we fully realize that it presents its own particular difficulties. We must address the following barriers: for one, contextual analysis may incorporate an overly broad range of social, political, and cultural factors for analysis (Lee & Ku, 2007), as the term 'contextual' may include factors that are not necessarily relevant; also, arriving at conclusions about the common contexts for social policymaking across various societies is a challenging undertaking; in addition, it is difficult to draw causal links between contextual factors and the policymaking discourses of any particular

society. These challenges confront the studies of both historical narrative and institutional analysis as well, but they are most relevant to the work of contextual analysis.

However, we do observe some successful cases of the contextual analysis of welfare state development in Europe. Flora, Kraus, and Pfenning's (1983) work is an early example that linked welfare state development to a number of contextual reasons. A recent example is Rothstein and Steinmo's (2002) work that discussed the factors of demographic transition, the international competition of economy, and the increased demands of interest groups and their ability to pressure modern welfare states to make policy reform. In the analysis of the particular states, the study also shows the impact of past policy practices on the policy choices of current reform efforts. Thus, even though work of this sort is still lacking in the study of EAWS, the power of the contextual factors in determining the policy paths should also be exposed by the cases of EAWS. Accordingly, this study will examine the influence of various contextual factors on EAWS. The standard of selection among these factors is not made by chance but by their significance on the change of 'social order'.

In definition, 'social order' can be defined as a set of rules required to maintain societal organization, the totality of structured human interrelationships, or a set of linked social structures, social institutions, and social practices which conserve, maintain, and enforce 'normal' ways of relating and behaving (see Oxford Dictionary and other dictionary resources). Despite the great difficulty to give the term 'social order' a clear definition, the significance of social order in the determination of social policy actions can be perceived through the historical and contextual studies of social policy, with regards to the change in social conditions of different societies and their influence on changing policy orientations. These orientations can be grouped together with the ideas of the redistributive model (focused on income redistribution), the productivist model (focused on gross domestic product (GDP) oriented growth), and the inclusive model (with the stress on social inclusion) (Holliday, 2000; Pierson, 2001; Rothstein & Steinmo, 2002; Titmuss, 1974). These ideals can be promoted by different states and parties at different times but, by their nature, they are associated with specific social orders. This paper will refer to these policy ideas when discussing the contextual changes in societies.

Accordingly, taking it as the contextual analysis, the study does not phrase the EAWS group as an institutional model or regime type, but considers it to be a set of systems with common historical, cultural, economic and political conditions that influence policy development. Thus, we shall avoid using the word 'regime' to characterize this EAWS group due to the great extent of the institutional diversities among these societies. This is also because the features of this group itself are constant changing and transforming. Thus, in light of these policy orientations, the contexts will allow some reasons for our discussion about the shift of the policy model from the productivist model (that prevailed in the region before the 1990s) toward the inclusive and developmental ones.

As the scope of research objectives to be defined, this study uses the cases of Japan, South Korea, mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore as the objects of study. Features of development in this group have been accentuated by some researchers in terms of 'developmental states' (Tang, 2000), which constitute particular relations between economic growth, social policy development, and the political order. This study takes these cases into the examination in order to reveal the impact of social change on social policy paths. For instance, mainland China kept its distinctiveness from other EAWS up to the 1990s, but the successful operation of a market system since then has made the Chinese case more applicable than those of Southeast Asian and South Asian states (e.g. Malaysia and Thailand) for comparison with other East Asian states.

2. The idea of 'East Asian welfare' and the productivist social policy model

In East Asia, some countries developed their social security programs quite early on. However, a regional analysis of these welfare systems was not undertaken until relatively recently; the notion of 'East Asian welfare' was not formally constructed until the 1990s. Some early works, including Jones-Finer (1993), proposed to employ cultural factors as contextual reasons to explain East Asian welfare patterns, but critics regard cultural influences to be insufficient explanations for the features of these systems but the political reasoning may be applicable (Goodman, White, & Kwon, 1998). Nevertheless, both cultural and political interpretations will encounter their difficulties in establishing a rational ground for the East Asian welfare regime model. Indeed, any defender of a cultural account must deal with the issue of the transition in cultural values of a modernized Asia, and it is also difficult to draw a causal link between cultural factors and the dynamics of policymaking evolution. A political account of the dynamics (party system, class conflict, political ideology, etc.) of system development will encounter difficulties with the attempt to define specifying common political factors that determine the policymaking processes in this region.

Thus, we shall choose a third path, grouping EAWS by their common features in developmental orientations in relation to their social contexts. In this regard, researchers assessed productivism as a basic feature of EAWS (Gough & Wood, 2004; Holliday, 2000). This orientation in policy development was expressed in the states' official documents and statesmen's declarations. The Japanese government, for example, identified its development goals as production first, political stability second, and welfare third, and in Singapore, politician Lee Kuan Yew espoused the belief that growth must come before wealth is equally divided (Jeon, 1995). Mainland China followed a policy, put forward by Deng, which proposed to 'Let some people get rich first' in the first two decades of economic reform.

Thus, growth-focused development was a feature of these systems in common up to the 1990s: South Korea was engaged in a 'growth-obsessed' pattern of development; Singapore had a 'growth-with-stability' model; and in Taiwan there was an 'equity-and-stability-based growth' model (see Jeon, 1995). This growth-oriented development encourages the work of a productivist policy model, which was taken up in East Asia only under a particular social order. From the view of contextual analysis, we must investigate the conditions that allowed the EAWS to operate on this model, which may have employed a system of social policy operated with a markedly different rationale from that of the European welfare states. These conditions are as follows:

- (1) *Stable social order.* In theory, social policymaking is a process of transferring class interests to the state policy agenda. In Europe, the welfare state model has become a kind of 'political settlement' (Jordan, 1987), since the conditions of class struggle and power resource analysis are integral to an analysis of the European welfare states (Korpi, 1989). Nevertheless, while power resource theory takes the power of social classes and the strength of labor power as factors that lead the state to develop redistributive policies (see Korpi, 1989 on the Swedish model), it also inhibits these states from developing productivist social policies. Thus, although the idea of 'production-oriented welfare' was discussed in European states as far back as the 1980s, most of these states, generally speaking, follow an ideal of redistributive social policy for development.

The East Asian states evolved as authoritarian states with a very weak democratic context. In this region, until the middle 1980s, both Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Taiwan's Nationalist Party (KMT) maintained strong

legitimacy. The People's Action Party (PAP) in Singapore announced an ideology of authoritarianism which has remained unchallenged through several turns of popular general elections (Mauzy & Milne, 2002). In China, the Communist Party maintained effective political control for over half a century. This authoritarian context enabled these societies to concentrate their attention on economic growth without great pressure from political democratization, thereby influencing policymaking activities.

- (2) The state's leadership in nation-building. In East Asia, the process of modernization was achieved under a 'developmental state' (Tang, 1998). In this model, the state plays a strong role in promoting economic growth, while market power plays a weak role. Thus, the state usually has very strong power to intervene into both economic affairs and social affairs. As some scholars have noted, the 'developmental states' in East Asia use 'market-intervening policies' (Wong, 2004), sharply contrasting with laissez-faire principles. Hill and Hwang (2005) also employ the term 'East Asian state-led economic development' in their case study of Taiwan. This state-led growth in developmental states differs from the market-led growth in advanced capitalist states. A strongly authoritarian society allowed the 'developmental states' to approach 'development' mainly in terms of economic development rather than social development.
- (3) A disciplined workforce for production. In contrast to the European states, the power of working-class organizations is not a critical factor in the development of East Asian social policy. Unions in Japan are fragmented and act mainly at the enterprise level; in Hong Kong, the unions were divided into pro-Mainland and pro-Taiwan camps before the transfer of sovereignty in 1997 (McLaughlin, 1994). In this region, union participation in general is low, and industrial disputes are often suppressed by state-approved union organizations (Goodman, White, & Kwon, 1998). Open fighting between social classes is rare, affording the state political elite and bureaucrats great autonomy in determining social policy matters. As a result of these conditions, governments in the region ignore many needs for welfare, concentrating their efforts mainly on economic growth.
- (4) A low demand for social security during the process of industrialization. In order to compensate for weak social protection in the absence of strong redistributive systems, a productivist social policy model relies upon both strong family and local social mutual-help networks. Until the 1990s, the East Asian states' spending on social welfare was small, and social protection for the non-labor force population was minimal (Hort & Kuhnle, 2000). Thus, various forms of non-state welfare provision developed. Indeed, both a strong system of family reliance underpinned by Confucian values and a system of corporatist welfare reduces the burden on the state to redistribute to the poor and to protect the interest of labor, and enables it to implement productivist-oriented welfare.
- (5) Improved living standards in conjunction with low levels of inequality. In East Asia, the late industrialization effect makes the power of the market generally weak, but economic growth improves people's living standards by its trickle-down effect. In this context, people were less concerned with the shortcomings of a market system, welcoming the expansion of the market with fewer concerns about its side-effects. This is also due to the fact that the level of income inequality was generally low during the 1990s (and in some states is still very low; see Table 1), which makes the issue of income redistribution less urgent. Still, in EAWS, the state faced little political pressure to use social policies to curb market power.

Table 1. Changes in the Economic and Income Situations of East Asian Societies.

	GDP growth (annual %) ¹			GDP per capita (US\$) ¹			GINI coefficient ²	
	1990	2005	2010	1990	2005	2010	1990s	2000s
Japan	5.5	1.3	4.4	25,143	35,787	43,014	0.24(1993)	0.37 (2008)
South Korea	9.2	3.9	6.3	6,307	17,550	20,764	0.31(1998)	0.31 (2010)
Taiwan	6.8	4.7	10.7	8,086	16,022	18,572	0.31(1996) ³	0.33 (2006) ³
Hong Kong	3.8	7.0	7.0	13,330	25,748	31,574	0.43(1996)	0.53 (2007)
Singapore	10.1	7.3	14.7	12,387	28,497	43,864	0.42(1998)	0.47 (2011)
mainland China	3.8	11.3	10.4	341	1,726	4,421	0.35(1996) ⁴	0.48 (2009)

Sources: 1. World Economic Outlook (WEO) data, International Monetary Fund, <http://www.econstats.com/weo/V008.htm>. 2. World Bank and other sources, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_income_equality. 3. Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive, R.O.C. (2007). 4. World Bank database, <http://www.worldbank.org>.

This differs from the systems of the western advanced capitalist countries, where market power is hegemonic. This context de-politicized social policy issues and enabled these states to remain in the position of an 'economic state' (Chen, 2003) till they were transformed by democratic politics.

However, while we address the common features of these East Asian states, we should also pay attention to the diversity in the developmental conditions of these states (see Table 1). The timing of industrialization and power resources controlled by these societies vary dramatically, and the organizational cultures are also quite different. For instance, Japan industrialized earlier than other East Asian countries, followed by the four little tigers, with mainland China's industrialization coming relatively late. The cultural atmosphere of these societies is also diverse. For instance, there is a strong community-based identity in Japan, South Korea, and mainland China, but this cultural context is weak in the immigrant societies of Hong Kong and Singapore. These different cultures make it difficult to elaborate on the commonalities of industrialization and organizational cultures that exist within these societies. However, looking into the general context of development, we can still recognize some of the abovementioned common features that form the social conditions and construct the general orientation of policy evolution in these societies.

3. Changes in the social order and its influence on social policy evolution

The conditional factors that support a productivist welfare model in East Asia have, however, undergone transformation since the late 1980s. In the past, East Asian states gave policy priority to the pursuit of economic growth under an ideology of 'struggle for survival.' The states devoted labor protection policies mainly to ensuring 'overall social productivity' rather than advancing 'social development.' Nevertheless, after the 1980s, the survival ideology was no longer sufficient to provide legitimacy for a productivist social policy model. As some scholars have noted about the Korean experience, economic growth helped Koreans escape from 'a hungry society,' but shifted Korean society into 'an angry society' (Jaeyeol & Dukjin, 2009). Once societies become rich, people shift their attention to consider how they might benefit from economic growth. This stimulates challenges to the state's single-minded economic pursuit, demanding the elaboration of a new ideology addressing people's needs in terms of livelihood and social welfare.

Change also happens at the level of social structure. The uninterrupted operation of a productivist model requires a relatively equal income structure in order for 'single-minded economic pursuit' to benefit all people. In the early days of rapid national economic growth, benefits accrue not only to the rich but also to those in lower social strata; this outcome lends general support to the productivist strategy of development. The situation changed in the 1990s, when economic growth contributed to an increased income gap between social groups. The Gini coefficient was rising between the 1990s and the 2000s in most of these societies (see Table 1).

As the economic basis of the Asian 'productivist states' undergoes transformation, the pluralism of economic ownership diminishes the legitimacy of state-led growth trajectories, thus undermining the basis of this productivist social policy model. In the new era, the state's monopoly on the socio-economic resources that facilitate industrialization and growth is challenged by a robust market after the late 1980s. Diminished state ownership and the development of a mixed economy further temper state-led growth, and corporate responsibility for welfare is also weakened. The EAWS were famous for their company welfare systems, as was often reported about Japan, South

Korea, and mainland China (Jacobs, 2000; Palley, Howard, & Usui, 1995), although this was not the case in Hong Kong and Singapore. However, in the new era of greater global connectedness amongst capitalist economies, enterprise welfare tends to take only a minimal role in protecting their workers' well-being; the effects of the decline in the social power of labor are felt as well. Company resources devoted to worker benefits, which were once responsible for greatly improving workers' living conditions, are now minimized; a change that must be compensated for through an increase in the strength of state welfare.

It has been argued that the operation of a productivist model requires support from an authoritarian order. This political order is newly challenged by increased pressure for political democratization since the late 1980s. Korea ended its military regime in 1987 and democratized its conservative rule in the 1990s; the motto for the 1980s and 1990s was 'freedom from autocratic state power' (Jaeyeol & Dukjin, 2009). The Nationalist Party in Taiwan had been challenged by the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) since the 1980s, and the latter further won the general election in 2000. In 1993, the Japanese LDP lost its majority in parliament, and in the 2004 election, the LDP obtained fewer seats in parliament than the opposition Democratic Party (DPJ) (Takegawa, 2005). In Hong Kong, the democratic movement surged in the late 1980s during the transfer of sovereignty from a British colony to a special administrative region (SAR) of China. Singapore's PAP government has softened its hard line approach in the face of challenges from opposition democratic parties (see Table 2). In mainland China, political control remains strong, but governance has been shifting from a model of direct administration to a service-oriented model that encourages an increase in the power of civil organisations.

With these changes in the economic, social, and political contexts, the essential linkage between a productivist model and the legacy of the authoritarian political regimes now becomes questionable, as a social order with democratic elements is on the rise in these societies. In response to these changes, people's norms, perceptions, and social relations are inevitably transformed. Notions of welfare rights and redistribution become popular, and even in *laissez-faire* Hong Kong, increased public dissatisfaction leads social policy debates to change their themes from productivism to welfare rights. Driven in particular by political demands, the expansion of state welfare is in part a reflection of increased democratic pressures. This encourages EAWS to shift their policy orientation from a productivist model to a redistributive model, which is closer to the European model of redistributivism. Indeed, once economic growth produces a large degree of income inequality, the development of a mechanism for income redistribution is functionally demanded.

4. New policy trends and model shifts

With the transformation of the social order as a major context of development, the social policy orientations of these EAWS societies inevitably change. The ideal of productivism is not dead in East Asia, but we could hardly confirm the existence of a productivist welfare model in the region. Instead, new features of EAWS come into focus. The demographic change of an aging population and the political pressures of democratic stirrings in these societies both increase the demand for an expansion of state welfare (see Table 3). The economic conditions of these societies have also changed as a result of the collapse of the Japanese asset price bubble, the Asian financial crisis of 1998, and the American financial crisis of 2008. The raised rate of unemployment and the reduced growth rate all put pressure on social policymaking, which demand new policies.

On the level of policy, we can see a trend of expansion in state social security programs since the late 1980s. As outlined, Japan experienced a gradual expansion of the state role

Table 2. Some Political Events and Democratic Developments in East Asian Societies.

	1990s	2000s
Japan	The ruling party LDP failed to win a majority in the Diet lower house elections in 1993 (but returned to power in 1994).	the LDP lost its majority in the upper house in 2007 but the opposition party DPJ won the lower house elections in 2009.
South Korea	The first general election in 1987 and the opposition party won the election in 1997.	By 2004, the jury on the former president by the People's Congress.
Taiwan	In 1992, the opposition party DPP won 51 of 161 seats, and in the 1997s local elections, won 12 of 23 county magistrate and city mayors.	In 2000 and 2004 elections, DPP won power and the former ruling party KMT won the election of 2008 and 2012.
Hong Kong	Established as a SAR in 1997, the head of the government was elected by an electoral committee of 400 members.	In 2009, the SAR government began a public consultation for electing the Chief Executive and Legislative Council in 2012.
Singapore	Despite PAP acting as the ruling party, the opposition parties gained a few seats in the elections of 1984, 1988, 1991, and 1997.	Increasing seats of opposition parties in 2001, 2006, and 2011. By 2011, the opposition parties contested 82 of the 87 seats.

Sources: This table was compiled by the authors with information from various web resources from these societies.

in social welfare during the 1990s; the Korean National Pension Program (set up in 1988) expanded its welfare expenditures; and Taiwan introduced universal public health-care coverage. In mainland China, social security coverage has been rapidly expanding since 1999 (Ahn & Lee, 2005; Hill & Hwang, 2005), with three new social security systems established for rural populations experimentally by the late 2000s: a minimal income guarantee, an old-age insurance program, and a collaborative program of health care (see Table 4).

This paradigm shift tracks changing social realities; nowadays, many welfare functions that were previously the domain of companies and communities (Jacobs, 2000) are being transferred to state or local public agents. For example, in Japan, the state promoted community welfare policy in the early 1990s through the state's Gold Plan, Long-term Care Insurance, and the Angel Plan, wherein the state provided social care for the elderly and support to families with dependent children. However, at present-days, public finance becomes the most important resource for the operation of the welfare systems that are demanded for state welfare. Indeed, during the last two decades, the percentage of social expenditure as the share of GDP has increased fast in these states (see data in Table 3). The promotion of community work and family welfare are still desirable in these systems, but their significance declines as a result of the wave of state welfare expansion.

Meanwhile, the ethos guiding social policy in this stage transits from residual productivist ideals to redistributive and inclusive ones. In the past, Asians often regarded this redistributive ideal as typically 'western'; Tang (1998) noted that income redistribution has hardly been an issue in East Asia. Today, as a result of expanding state welfare systems, this idea seems more acceptable to many Asians. Moreover, some

Table 3. Changes in Demographic, Financial and Working Conditions in East Asian Societies.

	Population aged 65 and above (% of total) ¹			Share of social expenditure in GDP ³			Unemployment (% of total labor force) ⁴		
	1990	2005	2010	1990	2005	2010	1990	2005	2010
	Japan	12	20	23	11.1	18.49	22.40	2.1	4.4
South Korea	5	9	11	2.8	6.5	9.2	2.6	3.7	3.7
Taiwan	6.2 ²	9.7 ²	10.7 ²	3.7	6.4	5.5	1.6	4.1	5.2
Hong Kong	9	12	13	8.8	10.9	10.7	1.3	5.5	4.3
Singapore	6	8	9	7.0	6.1	6.9	1.7	3.1	2.1
Mainland China	6	8	8	3.41 (1992)	7.97 (2006)	8.94 (2008)	2.5	4.2	4.1

Sources: 1. World Bank database, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.65UP.TO.ZS>. 2. National Bureau of Statistics of China (1996, 2006, 2011). 3. Data for Japan and South Korea come from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2012), and the figures for Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore are from the Asian Development Bank (2006, 2012). 'Expenditure by Function, Central Government' table, with the spending on social security and welfare, health, education, housing, and community amenities adopted in proportion to GDP. The figures for mainland China are from Wang and Long (2011), with data from the Chinese statistical yearbooks to formulate the table about 'the governmental fiscal expenditure on social security in proportion of GDP'. These data include the social expenditures on pensions and social welfare, the state subsidy to the social security fund, and the expenditure on education and health (but excluding housing and community amenities). 4. International Monetary Fund, <http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm>.

Table 4. Social Policy Events in East Asian Societies.

	1990s	2000s
Japan	Expanding old-age pension in the 1990s, The New Gold Plan in 1994. The public long-term care insurance was designed in 1997.	Pension reform in 2004, the laws on employment protection for disabilities in 2008 and the law on reforming the national pension in 2009.
South Korea	The employment insurance scheme in 1993 (implemented in 1995), and national health insurance in 1999.	The basic old-age pension established in 2007, and the long-term care insurance implemented in 2008.
Taiwan	Temporary provisions for family health insurance in 1990 and health insurance for the disabled and handicapped in 1991; universal health-care insurance was introduced in 1995, and the employment service act in 1992 and amended in 1997.	The individual accounts in pension fund in 2005 and a universal pensions scheme implemented in 2008.
Hong Kong	A social assistance scheme on old-age and disability allowances in 1993, and mandatory provident funds was enacted in 1995.	Social assistance with high spending in the 2000s. The compulsory saving program for housing was enhanced in 2000.
Singapore	A scheme for the lowest saving in the compulsory saving program was established by 1987 and amended by 1995.	The law on The Central Provident Fund (CPF) was revised in 2001 and, by 2001, set up the child development co-savings scheme. The law concerning work injury compensation was enacted in 2008.
Mainland China	The old-age pension and health insurance schemes were reformed in the 1990s, with individual accounts combined.	In 2007–2009, the old-age pension was established for the rural population, and a rural cooperative health-care insurance system was introduced.

Sources: Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare: Annual Health, Labour and Welfare Report 2008–2009; US Social Security Bureau: Social Security Programs throughout the World: Asia and the Pacific, 2008, etc.

universal benefit programs for the elderly have begun to develop in this region (for example, those in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea). Thus, in the East Asian region, new discourses that differ from the old productivist social policy model start to prevail: those ideas of redistributivism and welfare rights are becoming widely accepted by the general public (Walker, 2011). This paves the ground for a paradigm shift from a productivist model toward a mix of the productivist and redistributive models.

Overall, we observe many changes in policy ideas and programs in the East Asian region. The increased pressure of democratization shifts the direction of policy development toward redistributivism, while the commitment to productivism is diminished. This shift of policy orientation makes some scholars underscore the direction toward ‘welfare developmentalism’ or the ‘developmental welfare state’ in East Asia (Kwon, Mkandavire, & Palme, 2009; Lee & Ku, 2007). The idea of human investment as a function to support the labor force becomes secondary to the goal of developing state welfare. The state faces pressures from both economic globalization and political democracy. Increasing the competitiveness of national economies remains a policy goal in

this region, but the problem of coping with democratic pressures for social equality and social justice rises to the forefront.

Indeed, in this EAWS group, the popular image of an authoritarian regime that supports a productivist model is fading; the governments increasingly use social policy as a measure to cope with political pressure (or at least to win support in political elections, as in Taiwan, social policy programs were developed as a result of generous promises in competitive electoral politics in order to win votes). Thus, a new set of policy ideas are adopted, including welfare rights, inclusiveness, social cohesion, redistribution, and social empowerment. This creates a new climate for EAWS to develop, with a hybrid form of welfare ideas as the guiding principles. Nevertheless, though the contextual reasons indeed substantially influence the shift of policy line, we do find difficulties in drawing a clear time line on the period of system transformation. In the process of this development, some aspects of social change appeared earlier than others, and some countries may encounter these sets of problems but other countries may call for these urgent needs in other sets of work.

The reasons are understandable. (1) the contextual reasons at work do not immediately lead to particular policy outcomes, which will be subject to the real policymaking process. (2) these societies have different speeds of industrialization and marketization, and their influence on political, economic, and social life are not the same. The steps of social change may not be coherent between these societies. Thus, it is not easy to bring EAWS together due to their differences in political and policy focuses (3) Even similar phenomena may get dissimilar feedback or reactions from the public in different societies. For instance, Taiwan has a lower Gini coefficient than that of Hong Kong, but Taiwanese people complained more about poverty than the Hong Kong Chinese in a post-2007 financial tsunami comparative survey between these two Chinese societies.

With all these reasons, we could hardly make a general statement about the timing of these changes in the region. For example, Takegawa's (2009) work illustrated a different logical ground of welfare development made in Japan and Korea. This makes great difficulty for comparative researchers to conclude these EAWS as a common regime or to draw a general picture about the regime shift that has taken place. It even makes more difficulty for defining the periods of model transformation based on the empirical data as evidences. Nevertheless, the transition of policy orientation from a productivist one to a redistributive and inclusive one can be observed from this region. This transition may take place in these EAWS at different time periods and to various extents, but through a lens of social order transition we can understand how the EAWS evolved and their social policy orientations were redefined.

5. Conclusions

After a period of postwar reconstruction, the East Asian states developed their economies through authoritarian models that granted little free market power. This generated less demand for the extension of state welfare and also impeded their adoption of a redistributive social policy. However, changes in these conditions occurred as this growth began to contribute to the enlargement of the income gap. This stimulated pressure for political democracy and incurred a demand for state welfare. Naturally, this change in the social order raised demands for the extension of state welfare – in order to maintain social stability at the very least – thus setting a new direction of development. Accordingly, this study offers perspective on questioning the characterization of the EAWS model as either a productivist social policy or as a developmental social policy model. It supports the claim of the existence of a productivist model in EAWS before the 1990s, but the model

has evolved into a hybrid form of social policy since then, including elements of both redistributive and inclusive social policies.

This study presents an evolutionary outlook to respond to the question of whether a productivist social policy model can survive in the East Asian region. Some elements of the productivist model may still remain dominant in this group, to be sure, but they have been merged into a new model of development policy. Thus, we argue that as a result of recent developments, the EAWS group cannot be simply termed either a productivist model or a redistributive model; rather, we should adopt an evolutionary view of system transition through different periods of policy development. A study of the fundamental changes in social contexts and social order in East Asia helps us to understand the causes of this transition in dominant development ideals and their corresponding social policy models.

Thus, this work offers an interesting observation on the models of social policy development: while European scholars favor the East Asian experience on the merits of its productivist social policy – which was regarded as a globally competitive ‘workfare state,’ ‘competitive state,’ or ‘social investment state,’ – the EAWS currently demonstrate an upward trend in the extension of state welfare. In looking to the policy instrument to alleviate the economic risk and release the financial burden of social expenditure, many European states applied active labor market policy and selectivist policies and also showed great interest in the experiences of the productivist welfare in EAWS, regarding them as achieving success in the synergy between social and economic development. For East Asians, on the other hands, people complain about some negative social outcomes of this economic growth, with a demand for state welfare expansion.

Overall, this study maintains that the models of policy choices are determined by the conditions of change in social order. The possibility of any model being implemented is subject to the limits of social order conditions. For evaluating the outcomes of this evolution, we need to investigate the features of both the early and the later stages of social policy development in this region, otherwise it will not be possible to explain the reasons for EAWS shifting towards incorporating productivist and redistributive models. We also need to explore whether or not certain elements of the different models conflict with each other and understand the various side-effects of state welfare expansion in East Asia. However, considering the short history of development of welfare expansion in East Asia, it is still too early to make a full assessment the side-effects of this development, especially while the need for this expansion remains strong (i.e. due to social inequality, aging populations, and the limited public sector, etc.), and the welfare expenditure is not too high.

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