

War, Authoritarianism and the Origins of the Japanese Welfare State

A.K.M. Skarpelis | Sociology | New York University
aks402@nyu.edu
Network Q Submission, SASE 2015

Updated Abstract

Theories of development and expansion of the welfare state have invoked arguments of working class strength or cross-class coalitions, institutional determinants (Pontusson 2005) or electoral systems (Estevez-Abe 2008). Still missing are analyses of the impact of dramatic shifts associated with the rise of authoritarianism and war in the long-run growth of state institutions and social welfare policies. My paper adds to the burgeoning field of non-democratic social policy studies by contributing evidence from social policy and welfare state transformation under Japanese authoritarianism as well as the two World Wars, roughly the period between 1910 and 1945.

Ideas on social policy transformation based on contemporary understandings of ‘social problems’ had gained in importance in the early 20th century already, and the field of social and relief work underwent significant changes during the Taishō period (1912-1926) in response to widespread protest during the 1918 Rice Riots. However, it was only during authoritarian governance and under total war that *significant social insurance institutions* were set up. What explains this peculiar timing, as well as selective focus on health and pensions, rather than educational reform or labour-containment policies?

Contesting the view that the Japanese welfare state is a post-war product and outcome of unprecedented economic growth, I argue instead that a conjunction of transnational and global events led towards governmentality; economic crisis followed by authoritarianism led to ideological foundations and a change in the power structure that would, through the catalyst of war, shape the origins of the modern Japanese welfare state. Hence, seen from a perspective of timing, the Japanese welfare state compares favourably with those of Western Europe in spite of comparatively lower spending levels and its focus on adult males.

Introduction

While Japanese officials first used the term ‘welfare state’ in the 1961 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare white paper *Road Towards the Welfare State* (厚生省 1961), scholars of the welfare state situate the origins of the Japanese welfare state over a decade later, namely in the year 1973 (Campbell 1979), dubbed ‘the first year of welfare’ after the fact, due to social expenditures being hiked from 7% to 16.4% of national income between 1970 and 1994.¹ The consensus within both Japanese and foreign language research is that the welfare state is the post-war outcome of a rapidly growing economy. In a somewhat uneasy overlap with leftist interpretations of the vital and conflict-ridden balance between capitalism and the welfare state (Offe 2007), it argues that Japan as a capitalist democracy intent on maintaining stellar growth rates had to begin securing the reproduction of a skilled and supple labour force through social policies: Hence the focus on and expansion of welfare state policies on adult males ageing through the life course.

Implicit in most origin stories of the welfare state are certain ‘prerequisites’ that need to be in place for welfare states to arise where there previously were none: the existence of a nation state, of functioning bureaucracies, of a strong conception of citizenship and some form of social activism on behalf of disadvantaged groups. All of these were in place in Japan prior to World War II, yet Japan did not have a welfare state. The Meiji transition entailed the import of Western models of central institutions, in particular education, national jurisprudence, standing army, national taxation as well as ‘modern’ legal and judicial system (Ikegami 1995), but not of social policy. What a brief stochastic overview of events shows is that, judged by the measure of existence or absence of governmental policies covering explicit social risks, Japan had no national system of health care or pensions prior to the 1930’s, but did after World War II. Between 1920 and 1945, Japan moved from a focus on social relief to social policy and towards a fully formed welfare state, if we take centralisation, rationalisation of services, juridification, specialisation, bureaucratic standardisation and professionalization of the relevant administrative agencies along with a general expansion of policies as indicators.

In this paper, I argue:

1. Against the suggestion that the Japanese welfare state is a post-war phenomenon. If one takes a pragmatic view of the welfare state as a distinct mode of governmentality, rather than as tool of the state to promote general welfare, its origins do not only precede the year 1973, but are also firmly entrenched in the period of authoritarianism and war (*part 1: Rethinking the Welfare State*).

¹ http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/japan/socsec/maruo/maruo_1.html

2. That the particular characteristics of Japanese industrialization delayed governmental intervention into what had become serious social problems in Europe. All the while, world historical developments, like the rise of scientific management, population studies and eugenics altered the way states thought about social problems and their role and responsibility in their solution (*part 2: Industrialisation and its Discontents*).
3. That economic crisis and authoritarianism led to power shifts that would comparatively weaken the zaibatsu and thereby allow the authoritarian bureaucracy greater leeway to act. While industrial regulation was overall unsuccessful, governance of the social expanded and deepened during the 1930s and until 1945 (*part 3: Authoritarianism and the Changing Role of the Japanese State*).
4. That war provided the necessary and sufficient impetus to implement policy ideas and create institutional bases of the post-war welfare state (*part 4: Pacts of War?*).

Implications of this paper's findings for comparative welfare state research and Japan's position therein, as well as for the sociological and political science literature on state making and welfare state development in non-democratic regimes, are considered in the conclusion.

1. Rethinking the Welfare State: From decommodification to population management

Classic definitions of the welfare state – most significantly that of Asa Briggs² in conjunction with T.H. Marshall's notion of social citizenship – are steeped in the egalitarian tradition of seeing the welfare state as a tool of distributive justice and decommodification (Esping-Andersen 1990). They also emphasize the importance of rights-based benefits, where rights-based benefits are of the social insurance type. Yet, a convincing argument can be made that there are grounds for considering other aspects of state action as part of the welfare state, irrespective of eligibility criteria; and second, that even rights-based policies do not necessarily lead to distributive justice, and may have other goals, such as social pacification, social control, or may be an answer to severe social and economic dislocations resulting from the state of the political economy.

The first argument targets accounts *privileging social insurance over other types of welfare state programmes* to such an extent that social insurance becomes virtually synonymous with the term

² "...A state in which organized power is deliberately used (through politics and administration) in an effort to modify the play of market forces in at least three directions— first, by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income irrespective of the market value of their work or their property; second, by narrowing the extent of insecurity by enabling individuals and families to meet certain "social contingencies" (for example, sickness, old age and unemployment) which lead otherwise to individual and family crises; and third, by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standards available in relation to a certain agreed range of social services" (Briggs 1961)(16).

welfare state. Even in strong welfare states such as Germany, this would be overstating the importance of social insurance type programmes to the detriment of poor relief, neo-corporatist arrangements and modern social work — George Steinmetz has critiqued this bias and suggests instead the term ‘social regulation paradigms’ (Steinmetz 1993). Taking into consideration only strong social insurance-based welfare systems would result in a bias against non-Bismarckian welfare states such as the US or Japan, and by default would judge them to be less generous, although overall expenditures may be equivalent and the main difference lies in the conduits of distribution. In addition to being an issue plaguing comparative research, the focus on contemporary iterations of Bismarckian-origin welfare states predisposes one to judge the welfare states of the interwar and war period as ‘underdeveloped’. This view arises from historical myopia, for it assumes that inter-war era policymakers set the same intent as contemporary policymakers. It ignores that what we understand the welfare state to be at this point in history may not have been the understanding of interwar policymakers.

Research of Japanese historical contemporaries distinguishes between ‘social policy’ and ‘welfare’, and this split has carried over into a large part of today’s analytical social science literature. Shō and Takaoka (Shō 1998, Takaoka 2011) adopt a social insurance type view of what the welfare state is, focusing on health, pensions and the organization of wage labour. In the opposite camp, Uda et al. (右田, 高沢 and 古川 2004) focus on welfare institutions only. A similar split is in place in the German literature on the Nazi Welfare State, that splits it neatly into ‘social policy’ (pensions, health care, wage regulation) on the one hand, and ‘welfare’ (poverty assistance, social work) on the other. This analytical category neatly carries over into categories of practice, but is problematic because it suggests a systematic difference in two closely interrelated state activities.

The second argument pertains to the *purpose of* and *intentionality* behind the welfare state. The power resources approach sees the welfare state as outcome of the ‘heroic initiative’ of the working class and explain both orientation of the welfare state and its timing through labour initiative and the success of cross-class coalitions (Baldwin 1990; Korpi 2003; Korpi and Palme 1998; Steinmetz 1993). During periods of totalitarian regime this explanation cannot hold, as both trade unions and labour are incapacitated. A second actor-centred explanation exploring the reasons why decommodifying policies are implemented is that of business interests in the rationalization of work (Swenson 2002; Swenson 2004). Under this logic, it is in the interest of employers to improve working conditions so as to increase profits. Under authoritarian rule and a controlled economy, employers no longer have this kind of autonomy; hence employer activism cannot explain the origin of the Japanese welfare state either. Institutional explanations, by virtue of regime change, cannot explain origins either. The two main arguments are those of institutional determinants (Pontusson

2005) and of electoral systems (Estevez-Abe 2008) — neither of which hold, for democracy with its specific veto points system and the democratic electoral system were incapacitated.

For the purposes of this paper, I take the welfare state to consist of *nationally financed and administered state programs that entail provision for the poor (including social services), social insurance systems, public services such as education, and governance of the economy insofar as it pertains to economic stabilization (e.g. wage regulation)*. In line with other critical scholars, I take on the stance that the welfare state does not have as its primary goal distributive equality, and that instances of deliberate exclusion of specific groups should not be seen as aberrations, but rather as the rule. Rather than seeing exclusion as an exception to welfare state provision, we should understand it as a central part of it and as a lens into overall logics of industrial order. Research into employment relations in social-democratic countries shows the consequences of the insider/outsider divide between those with secure (frequently industrial sector union) jobs and those without (Rueda 2005), and a large part of the US bifurcated welfare state can be explained by the racist legacies of the South (Quadagno 1987; Quadagno 1994). Early Bismarckian social insurance legislation was exclusionary in that it only covered 10% of the workforce (Hentschel 1983), and Japanese social insurance in its exclusion of women in industrial labour (Weis 2001). Exclusion does not remove ‘welfare’ from the welfare state; rather, it is a point of insight into the underlying purposiveness of policy. I further side with David Garland and suggest that what characterizes the welfare state “is not the *aim* of promoting welfare [...] but instead the deployment of specific *means* of governing – a distinctive *governmentality* that brings a distinctive set of instruments to bear upon a distinctive set of objects: above all upon the national economy and the nation’s population.” (Garland 2013).

Three observations follow:

(1) The immediate post-war consensus of an uncontested, Keynesian and social democratic welfare state disguises the fact that welfare states were neither planned in their contemporary instantiation, nor came about because of Keynesian logic pushed by social democrats (Pierson and Leimgruber 2010). Situating the Japanese welfare state during authoritarianism and total war is hence not necessarily contradictory to other country cases and places it – temporally at least – flush in line with origins of the US, French and British welfare states.

(2) Historical accounts of welfare state development suffer from ahistorical evaluations of pre-war social policy initiatives, in that they evaluate the fascist welfare state against what we have come to understand as an ideal type of a welfare state, informed by a simplistic form of egalitarianism. Purpose, scope and content of social policies have to be evaluated within their time of genesis, and certainly not against contemporary social democratic and participatory understandings of it. Instead

of seeing the limited social provision of the 1930s as deficiency, it could instead be seen as deliberate strategy matching historical actors' preferences.

(3) As Offe, Jessop and Polanyi's works suggest, the welfare state is embedded within the political economy of its nation-state. Hence, any analysis of social provision needs to be joined by an analysis of economic regulation. The economy becomes even more salient in the context of rearmament, when social policy may become a tool to further economic policy (Jessop 1999; Offe 2007; Polanyi 2001 [1944]).

Rethinking the Japanese Welfare State

“As a recent ad hoc construct, the Japanese welfare-state model may not yet have sunk its roots. Indeed, the spate of reform and redesign over the past two decades suggests that it may still be awaiting a more permanent form. (...) It has not yet cultivated powerful institutionalized interests in favour of itself as have the European welfare states.”
(Esping-Andersen 1997: 188)

There is no agreement on where to situate the Japanese welfare state along the familiar spectra of 'varieties of capitalism' or 'worlds of welfare', nor on dating it. Opinions run the whole gamut from cultural arguments stressing Confucian values, to 1980s' orientalist and economic arguments suggesting that Japan created a productivist welfare state, free from moral or social concerns and in full service of unfettered capitalist development (for an idea on the breadth of opinions, consult (Anderson 1993; Ebbinghaus and Manow 2001; Esping-Andersen 1997; Kono 2005; Manow 2001; Miura 2012; Ogasawara 2007; Taira 1967)). More empirically grounded and comparatively orientated accounts frequently situate the origins of the Japanese welfare state in the post-war period, and, similar to Jacob Hacker's argument for the American welfare state, stress the importance of occupational welfare as opposed to social insurance type institutions (Estevez-Abe 2008; Hacker 2002; Kasza 2006; Miura 2012; Osawa 2007a; Osawa 2007b). There is no easy origin story for Japan's welfare state; or at least no easy origin that would align with familiar narratives.

Historical research on Japanese modern history on the other hand strongly suggests that welfare and social policy institutions predate the American Occupation. Sheldon Garon trained his eye on welfare innovations during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, while Gregory Kasza focused on social insurance during the Pacific War (Garon 1997; Kasza 2006; Kasza 2002). In a similar move, the Japanese-language literature has in recent years come out with several volumes on the Fifteen-Years War and the change in social welfare institutions, but ignore the role played by 'fascism' (Endō 2012; Shō 1998; 山岸 敬和 2011; 鍾 家新 (Shō Kashin) 1994). In spite of this recent growth

in historical publications on the matter, the two literatures — generic social science research on the welfare state, and historical research on the Japanese state — remain surprisingly segregate, with many political science researchers maintaining a historically myopic post-war genesis view of the Japanese welfare state. Consequently, these accounts have a tendency to overstate the importance of structural factors (like electoral systems) for the shaping of the Japanese welfare state.

We do know that semantically, the term ‘welfare state’ appeared in the post-war period, in Britain as ‘welfare state’ (in marked contrast to the German ‘warfare state’), in Germany as ‘Sozialstaat’ (social state), and in Japan as 福祉国家 *fukushi kokka*, or ‘welfare state’ (see figure 1 for the emergence of the concept in Japan). In Japan, the term became consolidated in the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s 1961 white paper “Road towards the welfare state” (厚生白書). Japanese social policy textbooks (e.g. (Nishimura and Aramata 1999)) suggest that the term first appeared in Britain during the war, and was later adopted in Japan. While semantically clearly a product of the post-war period, I suggest that given a change in the self-conception of the Japanese government as well as the depth and scope of its intervention into governance of the social, the origins of the Japanese welfare state predate its semantic appearance within Japanese public discourse.

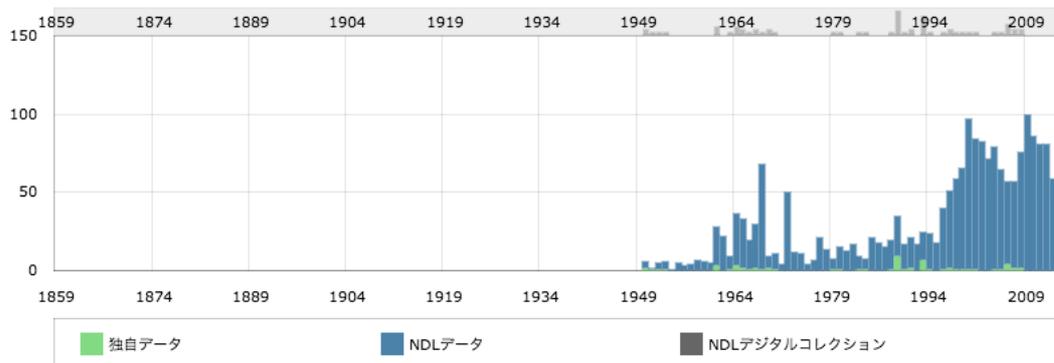


Figure 1. Mentions of the term ‘welfare state’ (福祉国家) in Japanese-language magazines (1882-2014)³

(2) Industrialization and its Discontents: No Double Movement for Japan

In *The Great Transformation*, Karl Polanyi wrote of the ‘double movement’ between industrial development and its concomitant economic and social dislocation on the one hand, and the reaction

³ Source for the following graphs is Zassaku plus, which is the “Complete Database for Japanese Magazine and Periodicals from the Meiji Era to the Present”. In figure 1, I mined it for the term *fukushi kokka* in keyword search. Since it does not rely on books but on articles, it is a good view into the concerns of any given period because it has the capacity to track trends in keywords over time.

to it in the form of social protectionism on the other, most famously the utterly misguided case of Speenhamland) (Polanyi 2001 [1944]). Similarly, the development of social policy under Bismarck in Germany has been attributed to the social and economic dislocations of industrialization, more specifically the increasing threat to Bismarck's power through the Catholics and Social Democrats (Hentschel 1983). Late developer Japan looked toward British and German experiences in the 1890's to prevent the kind of unrest Europe witnessed in response to mass pauperization (Pyle 1974).

Noboru Kanai wrote in 1891 "If workers are treated like beasts, then after several decades unions and socialism will appear. If now we concentrate on protection we can prevent unions and the spread of socialism. This is the policy of prevention. An illustration of the failure to act is not far to seek; it is in every country of the West." (Cited in (Pyle 1974: 143). He pushed the government to invest in the study of social problems, and became one of the first leaders of the Society for Social Policy, established in Tokyo in 1896 and disbanded in 1924, that had a vital role in the formulation of social problems (Takahashi 2004). Far from being a marginal association, or dominated by the left, the Society for Social Policy brought together a number of scholars, bureaucrats, labour leaders and industrialists to address labour and factory problems⁴. However, these alterations remained on the level of ideas and were not translated into concrete policies.

The only concrete policy changes implemented were in the field of social work. Although discussed in policy circles as an option due to the influence of German-educated bureaucrats, the government forewent social insurance in 1918 in favour of a new system of welfare provision (*homen-iin*). Advocacy for a revision of existing relief provisions continued, and a revised Relief Law was introduced in 1929; late 19th century progressive ideas by Goto Shimpei and others that submitted national pensions and health care were discarded until total war was in full swing and healthy soldiers and a dedicated workforce became indispensable.

Instead of social policy, the government targeted its efforts at the rural population through the 'local improvement movement' (Pyle 1973). Given the increasing poverty of rural districts and the government's fears of communism (euphemistically summarised as the 'thought problem'), it invested in the double aim of rationalisation and expansion of control, by integrating local administration more effectively with the national administration, and organizing local citizen groups into a hierarchy under the central government's control.

⁴ For example, the Society authored a number of reports criticizing conditions of factory labour, but targeted improving social integration within capitalism and preventing class conflict by improving working conditions in the factories, rather than creating a universal safety net.

The peculiarities of Japanese industrialization may contribute to explaining why Japan did not build a welfare state after industrialization, but cannot account for its establishment half a century later. Japanese industrialization took on shape very different to that of Europe — where large factories and mass-exploitation of labour dominated the European industrial scene, Japan ‘industrialized’ through the rationalization of agriculture and significant human investment into cloth production, but lacked the environmentally harmful and highly visible and deleterious effects on human existence that so obviously characterized the European case (Collins 1997). The industrial landscape was dominated by textile factories and would only in the deepest throes of war move towards a focus on heavy industry. Peculiar about the textile industry was that it was predominantly staffed with women. This meant two things: First, that unions were rather uninterested in recruiting female members into their ranks, as it was assumed that women would quite upon marriage, and never return to the workplace. Recruiting was therefore seen as costly and simply not worth it. Second, the traditional oyabun/kobun parent/child relationship governing textile work during the 17th and 18th centuries was abolished under the Meiji Restoration, leading to ‘confusion’ in labour relations (Hunter and Macnaughtan 2010).

To summarise then, the different speed and type of industrial development meant that urban problems were ‘less pressing’ than their European counterparts. Additionally, the government invested in the local improvement movement to stabilize social order and prevent unrest and smooth the effects of industrialization (Pyle 1973), rather than in systemic change. At the turn of the 20th century, the consensus among academics and politicians was that if Japan was to engage in social policy development, this was to be done in a preventative manner (Ishida 2008). All the while, as Dikötter observes, “Eugenics was a fundamental aspect of some of the most important cultural and social movements of the twentieth century, intimately linked to ideologies of "race," nation, and sex, inextricably meshed with population control, social hygiene, state hospitals, and the welfare state.” (Dikötter 1998: 467). Indeed, the early twentieth century saw both the biologising of social problems, and a new enthusiasm of the state to try and ‘solve’ these problems through large-scale social engineering. Contrary to European countries’ experiences, Japan was not facing the same dire consequences of industrialization and urbanization yet, but it should, as a late developer, learn from already industrialized countries and prevent making the same mistakes. The resulting accumulation of studies on social problems, while almost without consequence in the interwar period, would prove useful to accelerate policy change once total war broke out.

(3) Authoritarianism and the Changing Role of the Japanese State

A vast literature addresses the question whether Japan of the interwar and war period was fascistic or not (Duus and Okimoto 1979; Fletcher 1979; Kasza 1984; McCormack 1982; Payne 1984;

Tansman 2009; 山口 2006). This question does not contribute much to the task at hand, will therefore be ignored and the concept of ‘authoritarianism’ used instead of fascism to avoid connotations of Italian fascism. What matters about the demise of the Taishō democracy and the slow descent into authoritarianism are two things – first, a shift in the balance of power, and second a shift in how both state and citizens conceived of governmental responsibilities vis-à-vis the country. As for the former, it was popular discontent with politicians and the zaibatsu, particularly after the 1934 Teijin case, that destabilized the power of the industry and allowed the so-called reform bureaucrats and the military to gain power (Johnson 1982). Where reforms had previously faltered due to industry opposition, the balance of power shifted in favour of the bureaucrats. Second, the pre-occupation with war management since the Manchurian Incident of 1931 led to the creation and expansion of ministries and research committees within the bureaucracy. Where the struggle over social policy had led to the establishment of the Division of Social Affairs (shakaika) and the department of social affairs (shakai kyoku) within the Home Ministry, in 1919 and 1920 respectively. The first Ministry of Health and Welfare is created in 1938.

The establishment of the Shōwa Research Association (Shōwa Kenkyūkai) in 1930 signified to some Japan becoming consciously fascist. The association, close to the government and composed of a variety of intellectuals, was in charge of developing reform proposals for Japan. Despite the variety of membership, its most notable members -- Ryū Shintarō, Miki Kiyoshi and Rōyama Masamichi – would all become intellectual leaders of the fascist New Order Movement. All three harboured Pan-Asianist views, and wanted Japan to develop an East Asian Cooperative Body (東亜共同体) that could rival the economic regions developing in the West. In spite of strong publication record on a new economic system (新体制, *shintaisei*), economic mobilization as imagined did not begin in full until 1943 (Rice 1979).

Notably opposed to liberal atomistic individualism, Miki concocted a blend of communism, fascism and liberalism into a new, cooperativist vision for Japan (Fletcher 1979). In this view, a Japan that was bound by a kinship-based *Gemeinschaft* would thoroughly reorganize its economy similar to German lines. Ryū, in *The Reorganization of the Japanese Economy*, draws on fascist precedents to formulate a specifically Japanese version of economic governance. Where initially Japan had invested heavily in becoming a 'defence state', the late 1930's saw its ambitions grow and pan-Asianism gain currency (Mimura 2011). Despite gaining traction within Japanese politics, so much so that Prince Konoe forged ahead in 1940 and created the New Order Movement, the fascist bureaucrats soon had to back down when their radical economic reforms proved too radical for business. In spite of this somewhat public defeat, fascist ideas and war rationale underlie a number of policy changes of the period.

While economic regulation faltered, the forays of authoritarianism on social governance were more successful and lasting. A significant number of the young men dispatched to Japanese colonies in administrative and military capacities would, throughout the 1930's, returned to the metropole to take on high-ranking positions within the Japanese bureaucracy. Mimura found in her analysis of these 'techno-fascists' and reform bureaucrats that they imported a range of ideas from their experiences abroad. In particular, they returned with the idea of a 'political economy', which in the Japanese variant meant understanding society as a 'living, developing organism in which the welfare of the whole takes precedence over the individual members' (114), and the state and economy as institutions that could be developed accordingly. This involved restructuring the economy, technology, labour, finance, science and land planning, in short: a massive intervention by the state in spheres previously untouched by it.

After the Manchurian Incident in 1931, and under the influence of ever more powerful eugenic associations, the government slowly shifted from social work (*shakai jigyo*) to public health work (*kosei jigyo*). Rapidly, and due to the increasing demands of colonialism and war, various groups lobbied for state expansion to enable the continued provision of young, healthy, and capable recruits. Since 1937, the military had been pushing for a eugenics ministry, and the central association of social work for a ministry of social affairs. The cabinet of Konoe Fumimaro decided in 1937 to combine both interests and create a ministry of health and social affairs, and by December 1938, the Ministry of Health (*kosei shō*) was born. The cabinet eschewed the term ministry of social affairs, for fears of alluding to 'socialism' (Takahashi 2004). It is also in 1937 that various laws pertaining to soldiers are passed in rapid succession: the Law on Military Assistance (*gunji fujo hō*) and the Law of Protection of Mothers and Children (*boshi hogo-hō*) in 1937, the Law on National Health insurance (*kokumin kenkō hoken-hō*), the law for National Mobilization (*kokka sōdōin hō*) and a Social Work Law in 1938, the law on seamen's insurance (*sen'in hoken hō*) in 1939, the Law on medical protection (*iryō hogo hō*) in 1941, the workers' pension (*rōdō nenkin hoken*) in 1942, which was renamed labour pension (*kōsei nenkin hoken*) in 1944. Bureaucratic expansion under authoritarianism thus translated into concrete policies.

(4) Pacts of War?

The literature on war and social policy has its foundations in Richard Titmuss' essay *War and Social Policy*. Titmuss uses the term 'demostrategy', as which he designates "those acts of Governments deliberately designed and taken to improve the welfare of the civil population in time of war", the "organised attempts of Governments to control these [i.e. Social and biological consequences of

war] consequences” (Titmuss 1987 [1958]: 77). These include, but are not limited to, an increasing concern of the State with biological characteristics of its people (1); increasing demands made upon society for those fit physically and psychologically (2); public concern then widens to include worries about the health of the whole population, and in particular children, who will be the next generation of recruits (3); the need to call for ‘civilian morale’, or demostategy, which will inevitable lead to the expansion of egalitarian and universal forms of social policy (4). This is because “... the aims and content of social policy, both in peace and in war, are thus determined - at least to a substantial extent - by how far the co-operation of the masses is essential to the successful prosecution of the war. If this co-operation is thought to be essential, then inequalities must be reduced and the pyramid of social stratification must be flattened” (Titmuss 1987 [1958]: 86).

War, in this view, generates a set of problems (recruits’ health, sustaining the war machine and home front) that states will address in a number of predictable ways (improving access to health care and education, providing job security, food rations, etc.). Foucault, in *Birth of Biopolitics* (Foucault 2004 [1979]) makes a similar argument on what he calls ‘pacts of war’, i.e. forms of social contract between the government and its citizens tied for purposes of compensating citizens for the increased risk of substantial injury and death they incur through warmaking. Total wars like the two Great Wars of the twentieth century are thus assumed to be more generative than the smaller wars countries engaged in, as total war involved the co-operation of the home front to continue a steady supply of soldiers, nutrition and weapons.

And indeed, the United States implemented the G.I. Bill in the wake of World War II (Mettler 2002), a technically universal bill providing first generation higher education access to many Americans (in practice, African Americans were frequently excluded from the programme). Japan also promised some of it imperial citizens – namely Koreans and Formosans – improved citizenship rights upon joining the imperial army (Fujitani 2011). Concomitant with army membership came the benefits accruing to veterans and their dependents, however as one of the conditions of the American Occupation was that former military personnel were not to receive preferred treatment over civilians (Pennington 2005), the promised benefits accrued to no one, hitting former colonial citizens who had difficulty repatriating particularly hard.

The most frequent argument made by contemporary scholars in favour of expanding social policies under the war was one of economic rationality and the necessities of wartime production. Labour conditions in most munitions factories and coalmines were dire, and in spite of legislation forbidding labour mobility, many workers changed jobs. In order to improve employment tenure, contemporaries reasoned that labour conditions had to be improved through state intervention into the regulation of wages.

Contemporary publications by social work experts, economists and lawyers echo the transition in support for social policy from progressive organisations to conservative thinkers. Workers as well as army recruits become the objects of demo-strategy, which means that they fall into the purview of governmental activities. Ken Kojima, in a piece for *The Review of Social Work*, writes that war imposes specific costs, which alter the existing definition of social problems. During war, labour conditions -- especially wages-- become crucial and will need to be regulated to avoid problems of labour shortage (Kojima 1939). Nobu Mitaka, drawing on the example of German National Socialist Social Policy, argues in favour of improving labour conditions so as to successfully incorporate workers into the national *Volksgemeinschaft* (国民共同体) and thereby boosting popular morale (Mitaka 1943).

Specific reference is made to the German experience during WWI, when Germany managed to transcend production shortages by virtue of sacrificial manpower; this, so economist Kojima Ken, through an investment in social hygiene and workers' rights (Kojima 1939 [昭和 14 年]). Treating soldiers and workers engaged in war production 'right' spilled over and improved the morale of the German population. Kazayaha makes a similarly utilitarian, or demo-strategic, argument calling for social policy expansion in that he traces the history of the Japanese state's involvement in social affairs from 'the emperor's mercy' to 'social policy'. Intervention through social policy became only necessary with war exigencies concentrating previously manageable problems of labour supply and general population health (風早八十二 [Kazahaya Yasoji] 1937).

The most obvious changes that occurred during the 15 Years War (1931-1945) were the creation of national health and pension plans. Medical services had been expanded during previous wars already, but it was only during Pacific War that the government decided to expand health care for the entire nation, rather than focusing its efforts on soldiers' health exclusively, as it had done during previous wars. While war may have given the impetus for policy change, it did not determine the shape of the program: instead, it was the unexpected length of the war that eventually wore down opposition to establishing a comprehensive health care system (Yamagishi 2011). Hence, it was not uniquely a concern with soldiers' health that led to the system, as the functionalistic literature on war and welfare would suggest.

National pensions, too, were created as ready source of income for a state that had depleted its citizens' savings potential (Garon 2000), rather than as reward for citizen loyalty, or for purposes of motivating soldiers to serve well so that they and their dependents could gain access to the program. The War saw the introduction of a seamen's pension (1939), a worker's pension law (1942) and the

Welfare Pension Law (1944) that made pension insurance compulsory for workers and office staff in workplaces with more than five workers (Kasza 2002). Part of this expansion was purely opportunistic, as a pay-as-you-go system that only entitled the insured to entitlements after a set number of years meant more money to fill state coffers, and by extension, finance the war effort (a deal was struck between the ministry of finance and the ministry of welfare that pension contributions could be spent on the war effort) (Weis 2001). By the end of the war, the vast majority of persons was covered under the basic national pension, but the benefits were marginal and company-based pensions and private savings soon gained in importance.

A less obvious change was that of military and veterans care moving from relief to welfare (Pennington 2005), and it was changes in military and veterans care along with those in social work that lend themselves to be more consciously observed under a fascistic angle. What is maybe the most surprising aspect of the development of social legislation during authoritarianism and war is the comparative lack of policies targeted at women and fertility. The Eugenic Protection Law of 1940 and the Law on protection of Mothers and Children (母子保護法) were the only laws specifically targeted at women; contrast this to the number of measures passed in Nazi Germany and fascist Italy to promote high fertility and 'protect the genetic stock' of the 'desirable' population⁵.

Perversely then, in spite of decades of lobbying and organising on behalf of workers by progressive groups, it was only under authoritarianism and the labour market pressures that war put on consistent and reliable munitions manufacturing as well as a steady home front, that physical well-being and compensation of workers became a concern that had to be addressed through legislation. This renewed interest in workers and labour markets during the war resulted in similar consequences for workers' rights as had industrialisation in Europe. War never was an equalizer in the romantic readings of Baldwin and others (Baldwin 1990; Dryzek and Goodin 1986), who see at the latest post-war societies joining together to pass universalistic policies out of an awareness of being tied together by their common history and fate, as a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*.

(5) Implications in lieu of a conclusion

“(...) history is to the nation as memory is to the individual. As a person deprived of memory becomes disoriented and lost, not knowing where he has been or where he is going, so a nation denied a conception of its past will be disabled in dealing with its present and its future. Conceptions of the past are far from stable. They are perennially revised by the urgencies of the present. When

⁵ The first Child Welfare Law was only passed under the American Occupation in 1947, and that in response to the large number of war orphans who, in urban agglomerations, resorted to theft and prostitution to secure their livelihood.

new urgencies arise in our own times and lives, the historian's spotlight shifts, probing now into the shadows, throwing into sharp relief things that were always there but that earlier historians had carelessly excised from collective memory. New voices ring out of the historical darkness and demand attention."

Arthur Schlesinger Jr.⁶

Far from Schlesinger's changing 'conceptions of the past' being the historians' prerogative, Shinzo Abe's government has been instrumental in forging ahead with a rewriting of Japanese history, especially the period of the Fifteen Years War (1931-1945) and Japanese colonialism. This rising nationalist sentiment has had real consequences: An increased reporting of hate speech against Koreans; the clarification in court whether permanent residents who do not hold Japanese nationality can receive livelihood assistance (they cannot, although in the past benefits were rendered on a case by case basis)⁷; and serious debates about revising the constitution so that Japan can once again become a military power. The latter, nefariously, is promoted by the Ministry of Defence in a 68-page long manga, the last frame of which zooms in on the toddler of the Honobono family, urging his family to make the right decision and think of the future of the children in 'the great country that is Japan'.⁸

Hence, there is a double motivation underlying this paper: (1) to address a substantive and theoretical gap in social science literature on the development of the Japanese welfare state, and thereby contribute to political science and sociological studies on the Japanese Welfare State as well as comparative welfare state research; and (2), to respond to the very contemporary moment of politically motivated historical revisionism with an empirical and analytical attempt at rethinking the period of Japanese authoritarianism and the Second World War as being one of the most critical and formative – albeit little discussed – moments of Japanese (welfare) state building.

⁶ In "History and National Stupidity", New York Review of Books, April 27, 2006 <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2006/apr/27/history-and-national-stupidity/>

⁷ http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201407190034

⁸ http://jimin.ncss.nifty.com/pdf/pamphlet/kenoukaisei_manga_pamphlet.pdf

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