

When Solidarity Works

Why do some labor movements successfully defend the welfare state even under the pressures of neo-liberal market reform? Why do some unions (and their allied parties and civic associations) succeed in building more universal and comprehensive social policy regimes, while others fail to do so? In this innovative work, Cheol-Sung Lee explores these conundrums through a comparative historical analysis of four countries: Argentina, Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan. He introduces the notion of ‘embedded cohesiveness’ in order to develop an explanatory model in which labor–civic solidarity and union–political party alliance jointly account for outcomes of welfare state retrenchment as well as welfare state expansion. Lee’s exploration of the critical roles of civil society and social movement processes in shaping democratic governance and public policies make this ideal for academic researchers and graduate students in comparative politics, political sociology, and network analysis.

Cheol-Sung Lee is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago. His research interests lie in comparative welfare states and politics of inequality and specifically in the evolution and transformation of modern welfare states. His work has been published in *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces*, *Sociological Theory*, *World Politics*, and *Comparative Political Studies*.

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When Solidarity Works

*Labor–Civic Networks and Welfare States in
the Market Reform Era*

CHEOL-SUNG LEE
The University of Chicago



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To my parents

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> xi
<i>List of Tables</i>	xiii
<i>Preface</i>	xv
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xx
PART I	I
1 Introduction	3
2 Revisiting Theories of the Welfare State in Developing Countries	32
3 Theoretical Discussion: The Structures of Associational Networks and the Politics of the Welfare State	51
PART II	77
4 The Origin of Top-Down Solidarity in South Korea	79
5 Embeddedness, Cohesiveness, and the Politics of Social Policy Expansion in South Korea: Universal vs. Selective Reforms	110
6 The Politics of Retrenchment under Market Reforms	143
PART III	179
7 Market-Oriented Reforms of the Welfare State and Union Responses in Brazil and Argentina	181
8 Market-Oriented Reforms of the Welfare State and Union Responses in Taiwan and South Korea	202
9 Associational Networks and the Welfare State in Argentina, Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan	234
10 Conclusion	269

<i>Appendix A Profiles of Labor and Civic Activists from Field Interviews</i>	293
<i>Appendix B Measurements of Embeddedness and Cohesiveness in Associational Network Data</i>	319
<i>Appendix C Network-Informed Strategic Actions of the State and Unions: The Structures of Retrenchment and Expansion Games</i>	322
<i>Appendix D Supplementary Analyses: South Korean Associational Networks in the 2000s</i>	334
<i>Appendix E Generalization: Findings from Cross-National Quantitative Analyses</i>	344
Notes	347
Bibliography	381
Index	401

Figures

1.1	Causal Sequences	<i>page</i> 22
3.1	Illustration of Cohesiveness and Embeddedness in Formal and Informal Civic Sectors	57
3.2	Combinational Spaces of Cohesiveness and Embeddedness of the Formal Sector	60
3.3	Components of Policy and Mobilization Capacity and their Relevance to Embeddedness and Cohesiveness	65
3.4	Network-Informed Strategic Actions of the State and Unions in the Combinational Spaces of Cohesiveness and Embeddedness: Retrenchment and Expansion Games	68
4.1	Individual-Level Career Trajectories of Radical Intellectuals from Autocracy to Democracy	84
4.2	Organizational Evolution of Labor-Based Organizations from Autocracy to Democracy	89
4.3	Trajectories of Mobilization and Policy Capacity of Union Organizations during the Course of Institutionalization in South Korea	95
4.4	Mobilization Embeddedness: Over-Time Betweenness Centrality Rankings of Key Labor and Civic Organizations in Associational (Co-affiliation) Networks in South Korea: 1991–2005	98
5.1	Civic Mobilization Network in 1997 in South Korea (based on Mobilization-Oriented Events)	123
5.2	Civic Policy Network in 1997 in South Korea (based on Policy-Oriented Events)	123
5.3	Number of Brokerage Roles of Key Labor Unions and Civic Associations across Sub-Groups	124

5.4	Network-Informed Strategic Actions of the State and Unions in the Combinational Spaces of Cohesiveness and Embeddedness: Expansion Games (South Korean Cases)	137
6.1	South Korean Health Field Networks in 2005 (based on Mobilization-Oriented Events)	153
6.2	South Korean Health Field Networks in 2005 (based on Policy-Oriented Events)	154
6.3	Embeddedness, Coordination, and Dominance of Universal Reform Strategy in the Health Care Field	166
6.4	Network-Informed Strategic Actions of the State and Unions in the Combinational Spaces of Cohesiveness and Embeddedness: South Korean Retrenchment Cases	173
9.1	Associational Networks based on Co-membership Data for Brazil: 2005	236
9.2	Total Social Expenditure in Argentina and Brazil: 1990–2010	243
9.3	Associational Networks based on Co-membership Data for Argentina: 2005	245
9.4	Associational Networks based on Co-membership Data for Taiwan: 2005	248
9.5	Associational Networks based on Co-membership Data for South Korea: 2005	251
9.6	Total Social Expenditure in South Korea and Taiwan: 1990–2011	254
9.7	Disarticulated Cohesiveness, Embedded Cohesiveness, and Partisan Leaders' Preferences for the Welfare State	255
9.8	Unions' Cohesiveness within the Formal Sector and Embeddedness in the Informal Civic Sphere in Four Countries: 1995–2005	256
9.9	Unions' Cohesiveness within the Formal Sector and Embeddedness in the Informal Civic Sphere in Taiwan and South Korea: 1995–2014	261
10.1	Causal Argument	271
C.1	Payoff Structure of Retrenchment Game	323
C.2	Unions' Choice Space by Embeddedness and Cohesiveness	325
C.3	The State's Choice Space by Embeddedness and Cohesiveness	327
C.4	Payoff Structure of Expansion Game	329
C.5	The State's Choice Space by Embeddedness and Cohesiveness (Expansion Game)	333
C.6	Unions' Choice Space by Embeddedness and Cohesiveness (Expansion Game)	333

Tables

1.1	Expansion and Retrenchment of Income Maintenance Policies in Four Developing Economies: 1990s and 2000s	<i>page</i> 8
3.1	A Comparison: Retrenchment Game vs. Expansion Game	72
5.1	Politics of Labor Market and Social Policy Reforms during the Tripartite Committee under the Reformist Kim Dae-jung Regime	135
6.1	Politics of Market-Oriented Reforms of Social Policies during the Reformist Rho Mu-hyun Regime	159
6.2	Development of Privatization of Health Care (Ideas and Laws) in South Korea	163
6.3	Politics of Neo-Liberal Reforms during the Two Conservative Regimes (2008–2014)	172
8.1	Basic Economic, Demographic, and Social Spending Data for Four Countries: 1990s and 2000s	225
8.2	Causal Combinations: Determinants of State–Union Interactions in the 1990s (Time of Economic Crisis) at Confederation Level	228
8.3	Causal Combinations: Determinants of State–Union Interactions in the 2000s (Time of Growth) at Confederation Level	229
9.1	Cohesiveness and Embeddedness of the Formal Sector in Four Developing Countries: 1995 and 2005	237
9.2	Parties’ Interorganizational Ties within and outside the Formal Sector in Four Developing Countries: 1995 and 2005	239
9.3	Unions’ Interorganizational Ties within and outside the Formal Sector in Four Developing Countries: 1995 and 2005	240
9.4	Over-Time Changes in Cohesiveness, Embeddedness, and the Welfare State: 1995–2005	257

D.1	Key Solidaristic Events on Social Welfare and Health Issues and Participating Civic and Labor Organizations in 2005	335
D.2	Ranking of Top 15 Associations for Three Centrality Measures (based on 361 Events and 1,744 Organizations)	339
D.3	Ranking of Top 15 Associations for Three Centrality Measures (based on 52 Mobilization-Oriented Events and 85 Policy-Oriented Events, 1,744 Organizations)	340
D.4	Sub-Group Cohesion Density (Mobilization-Oriented Events): South Korean Civic Networks, 2005	342
D.5	Sub-Group Cohesion Density (Policy-Oriented Events): South Korean Civic Networks, 2005	343
E.1	Unstandardized Coefficients from the Linear Regression (Using HC ₃) of Social Spending on Embeddedness and Control Variables	345

Preface

This book explores how labor–civic solidarity evolves in civil society and how it builds welfare states. I wrote this book for several different audiences: those who hope to explain the development and retrenchment of the welfare states in developing countries, but have become dissatisfied with the existing welfare state literature focusing on rich democracies; those who wish to explore the critical roles of civil society and social movement processes in shaping democratic governance and public policies; and finally those who are interested in the evolving processes of different forms of organizational solidarity for collective actions.

The book is a combined version of two earlier projects: one started with my ‘going-underground’ project, in which I wanted to investigate how different forms of labor–civic solidarity emerged during authoritarian repression eras in developing countries, and how they eventually evolved into different forms of labor organizations during democratic consolidation eras. The other project, published in *World Politics* in 2012, explored how different configurations of civic networks played a role in steering party and union elites’ political decision-making regarding the retrenchment or expansion of the welfare states. In the project, I first developed the notions of embeddedness and cohesiveness to capture how unions develop linkages with formal governmental and non-governmental civic organizations. In the combined project, my new task was to illuminate a historical process in which labor–civic solidarity evolves around specific social policies.

To achieve this goal, I had to raise the bar beyond a structuralist argument, which is typical in conventional network analysis. I had to analyze different layers of labor organizations and civic associations to investigate

the historical evolutionary processes of labor–civic networks and their changing structures over time. In order to accomplish this task, I interviewed the top leadership of the major unions and labor organizations in four developing countries through referrals and soliciting contacts and information for years. In South Korea, I approached and met with top experts in social and labor market policies, which opened my eyes to the ideas of ‘policy networks’ and ‘policy capacity’, as well as leading me to develop the notions of ‘policy embeddedness’ and ‘mobilization’-based organizational capacity. During the interview processes, I had to discard many of my earlier hypotheses and devise new theoretical tools to explain novel and deep realities which I could not detect from secondary documents. Thanks to the interview data, I was able to interweave detailed historical contexts and field-level voices with associational network data. It was a process of letting each node in a network produce a voice and tell its story. Through this process, I was able to explain how and why different social policies evolved in policy and mobilization fields and became institutionalized in different ways. It was an eye-opening experience to walk into the structure of an existing network, and to see smaller or newly evolving structures within larger underlying structures. Through such experiences, I came up with the argument that the evolving or devolving configuration of labor–civic solidarity and its mobilization and policy capacity effectively accounts for variations in the retrenchment and expansion of social policies.

This book also has another origin, which traces back to my experience as a college student and as a graduate student during the tumultuous democratization periods in the 1990s in South Korea, more than 20 years ago. At that time, I bumped into several older students who had prior experiences as disguised workers for union movements at local factories. Retrospectively, it was the time when the revolutionary fervors of the 1980s evaporated and democratization opened a new political space for those radical entrepreneurs. Some of them stayed around their old college campuses briefly and then ventured out to build new labor and civic organizations. Others quit their movement careers or lived as professionals in relevant fields.

For the last 20 years, I have been hoping to launch a study on those who ‘went underground.’ I wanted to investigate more seriously why they went into factories and poor neighborhoods, why they came out of there, why and how they built contemporary forms of labor and civic organizations, and what they achieved or failed to achieve. I wanted to walk into their histories and reorganize them with the analytical measures and

languages I have acquired since then. I thought it would be critical to understand their career trajectories, including goals, strategies, actions, and resources, in order to reveal how contemporary labor politics institutionalized around certain routines and practices. I also thought it would be essential to put the evolving process of labor politics in the larger context of civil society development or multi-organizational fields, so that we could investigate not only labor organizations' internal capacity, but also their embedded institutional features in the larger associational field. I assumed that such efforts would help advance our knowledge especially in the study of the welfare state in recently democratized/democratizing developing societies, filling an important gap between social movement/organizational analysis literature and welfare state literature.

Writing this book, I am indebted to many people. First of all, I would like to thank labor and civic leaders who willingly shared their time and experience with me. They provided not only historical data on labor-civic solidarity through their vivid memory, but also diagnoses and analyses of labor and civic politics in different societies. They served as the most essential grounds for this book. The data collection was financially supported by an NSF Award (No. 1260191, "Identity, Networks, and The Origins of Participatory Democracy"). I thank Francois Nielsen and John D. Stephens, who were my dissertation advisors and have continued to support my research since then. Mentors at UNC-Chapel Hill such as Evelyne Huber, Ken Bollen, and Charles Kurzman also kept offering me valuable advice whenever I needed it. Peter Evans was an important supporter of this project from its early inception to its late development. He encouraged me to keep pursuing this project by inviting me to his research group. David Brady, Art Alderson, Andrew Schrank, and Kraig Beyerlein helped me to sustain my journey in several workplaces in the US by providing emotional as well as intellectual support. I am grateful to my colleagues in the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago: Andrew Abbott, Edward Laumann, Dingxin Zhao, Elisabeth Clemens, James Evans, Andreas Glaeser, and Terry Clark, who continually encouraged me to develop a serious – in a Chicago sense – project, and gave me invaluable feedback at various stages of this book project. Marco Garrido, Kimberly Hoang, and John Levi Martin read several chapters of this book and delivered incredibly insightful comments. Kyung-Hee Choi and Bruce Cumings in the East Asian Studies program also encouraged me to pursue this agenda at its very early stage. Several portions of this book were read by my other colleagues: I thank Jason Beckfield, Seok-ju Cho, Kentaro Hirose, Chang-whan Kim, Yong-kyun Kim, James Montgomery,

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significant time providing substantive comments as well as copyediting the several versions of the manuscript.

Some parts of this book were drawn from my articles, either unpublished or published elsewhere. Segments of Chapter 1 were drawn from a paper I published in *American Sociological Review* (August 2007) with the title “Labor Unions and Good Governance.” Chapters 3 and 9 were developed from my article published in *World Politics* (July 2012) under the title “Associational Networks and Welfare States in Argentina, Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan.” One section in Chapter 4 (The origins of cohesiveness and embeddedness) was built on my forthcoming article in *Sociological Theory* (September 2016), “Going Underground: The Origins of Divergent Forms of Labor Parties and their Successes in Recently Democratized Countries.” One section in Chapter 7 (on Argentina) and another section in Chapter 8 (on Taiwan) were built on and expanded from an unpublished paper I wrote with Maria Akchurin and Jean Yenchun Lin.

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Abbreviations

ANDES-SN	National Union of Teachers of Higher Education Institutions (Sindicato Nacional dos Docentes das Instituições de Ensino Superior, Brazil)
CAUP	Catholic Association for the Urban Poor (S. Korea)
CCC	Classist and Combative Current (Corriente Clasista y Combativa, Argentina)
CCEJ	Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (S. Korea)
CFL	Chinese Federation of Labor (Taiwan)
CGT	General Confederation of Labor (Confederación General del Trabajo de la República Argentina)
CGT (Brazil)	General Confederation of Workers (Central Geral dos Trabalhadores, Brazil)
CMAP	Christian Medical Association for the Poor (S. Korea)
CNTA	National Confederation of Food Workers (Brazil)
CONDSEF	National Federation of Federal Public Servants (Brazil)
CPA	Catholic Peasant Association (S. Korea)
CSP-Conlutas	National Coordination of Struggles (Brazil)
CTA	Argentine Workers' Central Union (Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina)
CUT	Unified Workers' Central (Central Única dos Trabalhadores, Brazil)
DIEESE	Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies (Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Socioeconômicos, Brazil)

Abbreviations

xxi

DLP	Democratic Labor Party (S. Korea)
DP	Democratic Party (S. Korea)
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party (Taiwan)
FDA	Free Democratic Alliance (Party) (S. Korea)
FERAESP	Federation of Rural Workers of the State of São Paulo (Brazil)
FKI	Federation of Korean Industries
FKTU	Federation of Korean Trade Unions
FLACSO-Argentina	Latin American Faculty of Social Science in Argentina
FPV	The Front for Victory (Frente Para la Victoria, Argentina)
FS	Força Sindical (Brazil)
GNP	Grand National Party (S. Korea)
HRMA	Human Rights Movement Association (S. Korea)
HRN	Health Rights Network (S. Korea)
HCSE	Health Care Service for Employees (S. Korea)
KCTU	Korean Confederation of Trade Unions
KDHS	Korean Dentists for Healthy Society
KDMU	Korean Democratic Metal Union
KEF	Korean Employers' Federation
KFEM	Korean Federation of Environmental Movements
KFMA	Korean Federation of Medical Activist Group for Health Rights
KGEU	Korean Government Employees' Union
KHMU	Korean Health and Medicine Union
KIHASA	Korean Institute for Health and Social Welfare
KLSI	Korean Labor and Society Institute
KMT	Kuomintang, Chinese Nationalist Party
KHU	Korean Hospitals Union
KPA	Korean Peasants' Association
KPDS	Korean Pharmacists for Democratic Society
KPTSU	Korean Public Transportation and Service Union
KPTU	Korean Public Service and Transport Worker's Union
KSIU	Korean Social Insurance Union
KTU	Korean Teachers' Union
KWAU	Korean Women's Associations United
MFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy (S. Korea)
MST	Landless Workers' Movement (Brazil)
MTA	Movement of Argentine Workers (Movimiento de los Trabajadores Argentinos)
NAFITU	National Federation of Independent Trade Unions (Taiwan)

NAHC	National Association for the Health Care (S. Korea)
NCHIU	National Conference for Health Insurance Unification (S. Korea)
NCTU	National Council of Trade Unions (S. Korea)
NHIS	National Health Insurance Service
NPA	National Peasants' Association
NPS	National Pensions Service
NPSU	National Pensions Service Union
NKP	New Korea Party (S. Korea)
PAAHR	Physicians' Association for Action for Human Rights (S. Korea)
PJ	The Judicialist Party (Partido Justicialista, Argentina)
PMDB	Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement (Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro)
PMPHC	People's Movement against Privatization of Health Care (S. Korea)
PSDB	Brazilian Social Democracy Party (Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira)
PSPD	People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (S. Korea)
PT	The Workers' Party (Brazil)
RHCS	Regional Health Care Service (S. Korea)
RHCU	Regional Health Care Service Union (S. Korea)
RING	National Assembly of Students – Free (Brazil)
SHR	Solidarity for Health Rights (S. Korea)
SNHMA	Solidarity Network of Health and Medical Associations (S. Korea)
SUH	Solidarity Union for Hope (Union for Non-Standard Workers, S. Korea)
SUS	Unified Health System (Sistema Único de Saúde, Brazil)
TAMI	Taiwan Association of Machinery Industry
TCTU	Taiwanese Confederation of Trade Unions
TLF	Taiwanese Labor Front
TLSA	Taiwan Labor and Social Policy Research Association
UNE	National Union of Students
WAU	Women's Associations United (S. Korea)
WP	Workers' Party (S. Korea)