

F-6 International Economics: Interaction in an Age of Transition

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The Effect of Economic Interactions on the Evolution of States' Repressive Behavior

ABSTRACT:

I am interested in exploring the relationship between a state's domestic behaviour and its international economic policies. Previous studies have examined the direct relationship between international trade, foreign direct investments and participation in free trade regimes and levels of repression within a state. In this study I propose to look at trade and foreign direct investments as intervening variables between dissent and repression. Existing literature in the field of international political economy shows that in the short term interactions such as trade and financial investments create both winners and losers. When losers from a states' economic interactions mount a dissent, a state is faced with the option of responding with repression or accommodation. Traditional liberal theory claims that free trade and unobstructed markets results in pacifying inter-state behaviour. I wish to study if this claim can be extended to states' domestic behaviour. Therefore, this paper investigates if adherence to free trade principles results in a more accommodative or repressive behaviour by the state in response to dissent that such economic interactions produce. To understand the above relationship, one has to observe if hostile or favourable government actions followed actual protest against international economic policies. As a first cut analysis, I select countries from three broad categories: 1) democracies and high-wealth, 2) democracies and low- wealth and 3) non-democracies and low-wealth and conduct a qualitative case study analysis to chart the trends in states' repressive behaviour after significant economic interactions. I expect to find that in the short term states are more repressive in response to dissent, whereas in the long term, "gains" from trade allow states to be more accommodative by redistributing resources. The data on economic interactions is collected from the World Bank Annual Reports and data on domestic dissent and response is primarily collected from the International Political Interactions Project.

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Multinational Corporations: Cruel and Unusual Exploitation?

ABSTRACT:

“Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he can eat forever.” This well known saying does not fully state the situation in the world of multinational corporations today. What might be a more accurate description could be stated thus: “See some men fishing and take all their fish in return for some brightly colored beads or the equivalent.” And “Persuade the men to open a huge fish farm, then after all their back breaking work, take the best fish and sell them at a vast profit.” The exploitation by colonizing nations in the past and multinational corporations today is complex, based on supply and demand, and usually comes about due to a feeling of geographical superiority and a desire to reap huge profits. While hundreds of years ago European nations looked towards Africa and the Far East, saw the natural resources and colonized or conquered the people, today’s multinational corporations see poorer countries as a source of cheap labor and markets for their own goods. The role of multinational corporations is one which has come under close scrutiny in the last decade with numerous scandals and some changes in policy. Is enough being done? Is it naïve to expect companies to lower their profits to satisfy the social consciences of a few? This presentation will examine the complexities of this situation and encourage the audience to come up with some solutions.

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Two-Level Game Analysis of the AFTA Agreements: What Caused ASEAN
States to Move
Toward Economic Integration?

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Second Image Reversed: What Can We Learn from Developing Countries
Responses to the WTO Competition Policy?

ABSTRACT:

Abstract: Developing countries in the World Trade Organization (WTO) project a near-unanimous opposition to the proposal for a multilateral competition policy advanced by the European Union. However, the domestic responses by these countries to this international policy measure have conspicuously been non-uniform. While some countries have flatly ignored such a development, others have taken steps to install their own domestic competition policy institutions or revamped existing ones. Such wide differences in domestic policy responses to an international policy development are puzzling, considering the fact that these countries projected a unified international response based on similar concerns regarding the domestic repercussions of the proposed multilateral policy. This raises the following question that this paper addresses: why do countries that share similar concerns over a multilateral policy and display unanimity at the international institution do not display uniformity in their domestic policy responses? Given the nature of the question, the paper employs the “second image reversed” framework to motivate the discussion. The paper advances a series of hypotheses regarding the relationship between a developing country’s domestic policy response and its political, economic, and social characteristics and preferences. The hypotheses are tested using data on developing countries that are members of the WTO. The results are expected to further our understanding of the various sources of domestic policy responses. Moreover, the paper contributes to the international political economy literature by showcasing the interaction between a policy development in a multilateral economic institution and the domestic political economy of its member-states.

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