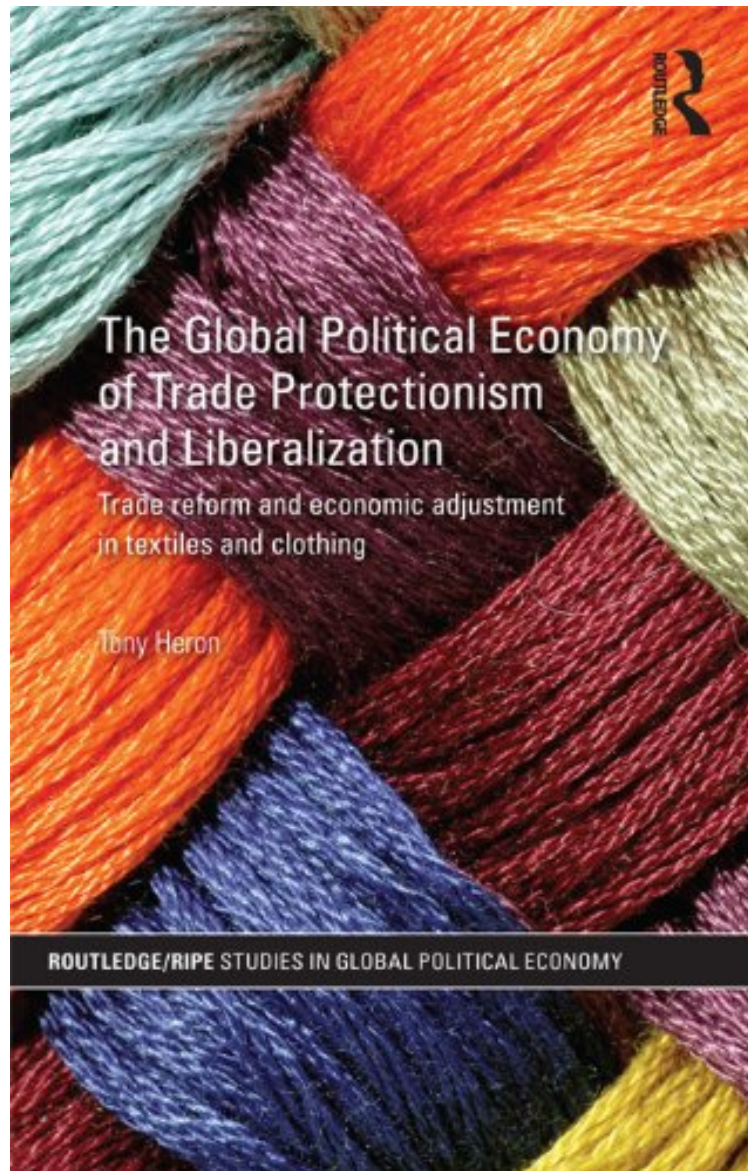


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The Global Political Economy of Trade Protectionism and Liberalization: Trade Reform and Economic Adjustment in Textiles and Clothing (RIPE Series in Global Political Economy)

Tony Heron

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Protectionism and Liberalization: Trade Reform and Economic Adjustment in Textiles and Clothing (RIPE Series in Global Political Economy):

Given the widely-accepted premise that free trade is the best means of maximising overall societal welfare, why has it proven so difficult to achieve in certain industries? This book tackles arguably the most perennial and deep-rooted of all questions in political economy, and questions the incumbent orthodox liberal theories of collective action. Using a historical institutionalist framework to explore and explain the political economy of trade protectionism and liberalization, this book is based on detailed case studies of the textiles and clothing sector in the EU, United States, China, Caribbean Basin and sub-Saharan Africa. From this, the book expands to discuss the origins of trade protectionism and examine the wider political effects of liberalization, offering an explanation of why a successful conclusion to the WTO 'Doha' round has proven to be so elusive. The book argues that the regulation of global trade - and the economic consequences that this has for both developed and developing countries - has been the result of the particular way in which trade preferences are mediated through political institutions. The Global Political Economy of Trade Protectionism and Liberalization will be of interest to those studying and researching international and comparative political economy, developing area studies, economics, law and geography.

'Tony Heron has produced a work of extraordinary insight. His book opens up the black box of textile and clothing protectionism to show how policy choices taken in the 1950s and 1960s by the industrial countries continue to act as brakes on trade-led development in areas of the global South. Throughout the reader is treated to empirical insight and theoretical clarity. This is a must read for all interested in the political economy of trade.' - Rorden Wilkinson, Professor of International Political Economy and Research Director of the Brooks World Poverty Institute at the University of Manchester 'Textiles are used in aircraft, packaging, cars, cleaning up oil spills, and of course everyone still wears clothes however dismal contemporary fashion has become. The industry's dynamism has been the font of many an industrial revolution and the undoing of more than one personal or national fortune. The textile and clothing sector is huge, ubiquitous, tied to both culture and the forefront of industrial innovation, but is seldom considered 'enough' to warrant ongoing scholarly enquiry ('bra-wars' notwithstanding). Yet the sector contains many clues to a better understanding of global market integration, development, corporate strategy, and international trade and investment patterns that render it anything but a banality to the understanding of our world. This book picks up a continuing tale of long-standing hypocrisy of western liberalisers and the elusive search by state and corporate actors to grasp the secrets of an ephemeral international division of labour. In doing so the book explodes a number of myths of globalisation: corporate and national development strategies are far from being driven principally by an endless search for low wages, or how would economies ever have become rich in the process? The book shows how corporate and state interests conspire to rig the terms of competition in ways pregnant with unintended consequences, demonstrating once again how economies seldom work as the textbooks or our intuition tell us they do. There are lessons here for policy-makers, business, and economics alike.' - Geoffrey R.D. Underhill, Professor of International Governance at the University of Amsterdam 'This thorough and rich study sheds new light on the politics of protectionism of a vital sector in the multilateral trading regime. Tony Heron successfully treads the fine balance of offering the reader key details about the rules and negotiations that underpin the textile's sector, while simultaneously keeping an eye on the big picture and extending his analysis to the present day. This book constitutes a valuable addition to the field of WTO studies, and will serve as essential reading for students and scholars of International Political Economy.' - Dr Amrita Narlikar, Reader in International Political Economy, University of Cambridge. About the Author University of Sheffield, UK