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ABSTRACTS

AFTER NEOLIBERALISM

THE POLITICS OF REREGULATION IN MEXICO

By RICHARD SNYDER

Neoliberal economic reforms, rather than unleashing market forces, can result in new institutions for market governance. By vacating institutionalized policy domains, neoliberal reforms can trigger two-step reregulation processes, as first, political entrepreneurs launch projects to build support coalitions by reregulating markets, and second, societal groups respond to these projects by mobilizing to influence the terms of reregulation. Depending on the strengths and strategies of politicians and societal groups, reregulation processes result in varied institutions for market governance. The article develops this argument by analyzing how neoliberal reforms in Mexico led to the construction of distinct institutions for market governance across four states (Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Puebla). The findings from Mexico highlight the importance of moving beyond the questions of why developing countries choose neoliberal policies and how they implement them. Students of the political economy of development should shift their attention instead to understanding the kinds of new institutions that replace those destroyed or displaced by neoliberal reforms.

DEMOCRATIZATION AND DISINTEGRATION IN MULTINATIONAL STATES

THE BREAKUP OF THE COMMUNIST FEDERATIONS

By CAROL SKALNIK LEFF

One of the challenges presented to democratization theory by the collapse of communist regimes is the need to take into account the impact of ethnonational diversity on the processes of transition. This article explores that question in a comparative analysis of the dissolutions of the multinational federations of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union. It revisits what has been a core—although usually unarticulated—premise of the democratization literature: that the decisions and negotiations that critically shape regime transition occur in a single, central political arena, a political space common to all actors. In contrast to that perspective, the strategic political context for transition in multinational states differs both from that in homogeneous states and from that in unitary multinational states, in offering multiple arenas of political contestation. The implication for democratization in multinational states is that, depending on the institutional structure of the state, regime change may occur at different rates in different sub-state political arenas—the republics—in such a way as to trigger the erosion of central control over the transition. Where democratization theory has emphasized strategic choice conditioned by the balance of power between regime and opposition actors, an accounting of the politics of transition in ethnofederal states must emphasize (1) strategic choices by actors in multiple political arenas and (2) the shifting balance of power between center and republics.

DISTRIBUTIONAL COALITIONS AND THE POLITICS OF ECONOMIC REFORM IN LATIN AMERICA

By HECTOR E. SCHAMIS

For much of the discipline of economics, a closed economy is seen as the result of efforts of distributional coalitions and rent seekers to maintain sector-specific protections. Accordingly, economic liberalization is explained by the policy consistency of uncompromising reform elites. Students of the politics of economic adjustment in the developing world, in turn, have argued that reform programs concentrate costs in the present and disperse benefits in the future. Hence, losers are prepared to engage in collective action, whereas prospective winners, facing uncertainty about payoffs, remain disorganized. They thus posit the cohesiveness and insularity of policy-makers as the main variable for explaining successful reform. Both economists and political scientists, therefore, adopt a collective action approach that overlooks how groups organize *in support* of liberalization.

In the recent Latin American experience, however, these reforms have preserved market reserves for firms that provided vital political support to, and often colluded with, policymaking elites. This setting has thus reproduced incentives for rent-seeking behavior, even in the presence of comprehensive liberalization. This evidence supports two interrelated theoretical claims. First, distributional coalitions may proliferate when the state withdraws from the economy, not only when it intervenes. Second, interest-based variables retain explanatory power in political economy—which state autonomy arguments disregard—irrespective of whether the economy is closed or open—which neoclassical perspectives overlook. To highlight the centrality of interest groups favoring marketization, therefore, the article suggests modifications to the dominant theories of collective action and the literature on the politics of economic adjustment.

INTERNATIONAL LIBERALISM AND DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

A SURVEY OF RECENT THOUGHT

By CHARLES R. BEITZ

In recent years there has been a renewal of interest in the liberal tradition in international thought, with particular attention being paid to liberal conceptions of international distributive justice. This article describes and criticizes three different approaches to international distributive justice represented in the recent literature: (1) social liberalism, which takes the nation-state as basic and argues for international transfers to the extent necessary to sustain just domestic institutions; (2) *laissez-faire* liberalism, which, in its redistributivist variant, aims to rectify injustices arising from the unequal appropriation of natural resources; and (3) cosmopolitan liberalism, which takes each individual's interests as equally deserving of concern in the design of global (and sectional) institutions.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE RESOURCE CURSE

By MICHAEL L. ROSS

How does a state's natural resource wealth influence its economic development? For the past fifty years, versions of this question have been explored by both economists and political scientists. New research suggests that resource wealth tends to harm economic growth, yet there is little agreement on why this occurs. This article reviews a wide range of recent attempts in both economics and political science to explain the "resource curse." It suggests that much has been learned about the economic problems of resource exporters but less is known about their political problems. The disparity between strong findings on economic matters and weak findings on political ones partly reflects the failure of political scientists to carefully test their own theories.