



Trade theory and regional integration

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Outline of this presentation

- We will look into what causes international trade ("why countries trade?") and what are the welfare outcomes of trade when it is free
- We will explore why countries are not satisfied with just implementing their own free trade policy (or other trade policy) and strive to negotiate various agreements through which they reciprocate trade (and other concessions)
- We want to understand benefits and costs of these efforts, especially for a country such as Myanmar



Summary of the causes for trade





Evolution of International Trade Theory

- Mercantilist (1500-1600)
- Classical (1600-1700)
- Neo-Classical or Standard Trade Theory (1900)
- New Trade Theory (1980)
- New New Trade Theory (2000s)
- ????



Mercantilism

Thomas Munn (1571-1641) wrote "England Treasure by Foreign Trade"

- The nation will become rich and powerful it is exports more than imports
- The more gold and silver a nation had, the richer and more powerful it was. Wealth of nations measured by stocks of precious metal
- The government had to do all in its power to stimulate the nation's export and discourage imports.
- One nation could gain only on the expense of other nations (known as the zero sum game)
- Believe in strict government control of all economic activity and preached economic nationalism
- Policy implications:
 - Protectionist tariffs on imports to ensure a country export a lot but import very little
 - Government intervention to gain as much surplus as possible



Mercantilism – is it still alive?

How about Myanmar?

• Developed countries – US, EU, Japan, etc.?

What do you think foreign trade means for America? Do you see foreign trade more as --

What Americans Think Foreign Trade Means for the Country



- Do we get a different picture from the US in 2016 (election campaign?)
- What about EU and other countries?
- Developing countries (remember average protection is higher in developing countries



Do you support these claims? Why or why not?

Replace tariffs with quotas, antidumping, etc...





Classical trade theory

Adam Smith (1723-1790)

David Ricardo (1772-1823)

- Theory of absolute advantage
- Theory of comparative advantage
- Both explanations result in the same policy prescription: free trade
- Why:
 - Efficient allocation of resources
 - Maximum output
 - Maximum welfare
- Important assumptions: perfect competition, no externalities or distortions, perfect information,



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