Preface

This book is essentially a product of the Trade and Industry Study Group (TISG) of the Development Studies Association (DSA). Oliver Morrissey and Michael Tribe have been co-convenors of the TISG since 1994, and while papers from TISG conferences and workshops during that time have often been published, this is the first collaborative effort on the part of the group. Most of the chapters in this book have, at an embryonic stage, been presented at TISG workshops or at TISG sessions in the annual DSA conferences, and plans for the book were initiated as long ago as 1998. Edited books are a slow process, and we wish to thank all of the contributors and the publishers for their patience and co-operation. We are also grateful for the financial support of the DSA for TISG workshops.

This volume does not reflect the proceedings of a specific conference. Rather, it represents an attempt to bring together a collection of case studies to address, from varying perspectives, an issue of general interest – how has government policy towards the manufacturing sector, and economic liberalisation in particular, impacted on subsector performance? Almost all developing countries have implemented major economic reforms over the past two decades, and these have often amounted to significant liberalisation of trade and industrial policy. However, there is no consensus either on how this impacts on manufacturing or on how policy could be adapted to support manufacturing. On the one hand, there is a widely held view that ‘protection is dead’ and trade liberalisation is the only direction; not least because multilateral liberalisation under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) may preclude many of the industrial policies that have been implemented in the past. On the other hand, there is an increasing perception that government has a role in fostering manufacturing subsector development. The contributions collected here explore the various impacts of policy on manufacturing performance, spanning, in the process, the major continents and both large scale and small-to-medium scale enterprises.

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