Preface

In hindsight the rethinking of trade and commercial policy theories from development perspectives that is discussed in the following pages first took germination in Chapter II of the dissertation that I wrote at Stanford University (Ho 1989) and that chapter is titled, 'International technological differences and uneven accumulation in a classical production model'. Before it was published several years later (Ho 1997), I devoted time to read more of the works of the classical economists, adding those of Torrens. These efforts resulted in Ho (1996a, 1996b).

The period between the latter part of the 1980s and the mid-1990s roughly coincided with the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations (MTNs) which resulted in the establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995. The North-South divide that emerged from that round and the controversy surrounding some of the agreements reached appear to me to be quite readily comprehensible within the uneven development framework that I had partly constructed by then. Nevertheless, beginning from the mid-1990s I devoted time to educate myself about the history of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, especially focusing on the issue of Special and Differential Treatment (see, for instance, Ho 1998b).

It should not be surprising that how one appraises the outcome of different rounds of MTNs depends on one's theoretical perspective. Nevertheless, it served as a reminder that there was more that I needed to do to further construct the framework of uneven development. Thus, although back in 1994 I had drafted a research paper (which has not been published) that reappraised the theory of domestic divergences and considered its limitations on shedding light on the process of development, there is a more thorough story yet to be told. If the mainstream of the economics profession has been unable, or has refused, to recognise that there is an alternative framework to stitch together the works of the classicists, might there be a similar inability or refusal when it comes to the works of the so-called 'protectionists'?

Beginning from the late 1990s, but before the protests in Seattle in 1999, I thus turned my attention to the original works of these so-called 'protectionists' or supporters of import substitution. When Edward Elgar Publishing kindly offered me the opportunity in 2001 to submit a proposal to write a book, I connected all of these different pieces together into a plan. That is essentially what the reader will find in the ensuing pages.

The chief reason why it has taken so many years before the book could be completed is because in spring 2001 I became the Department Chair and, save for the 2004–2005 academic year, had remained in that capacity until June 2010. The administrative work involved and the orchestrating effort that was necessary to strengthen what might otherwise become a ‘soft’ department (in the sense which Myrdal referred to certain nation states) had at times proved to be excessively demanding and draining. That had inevitably slowed down the completion of the project. Thanks to the University of Denver Administration, I was granted a sabbatical for two academic quarters between autumn 2004 and winter 2005. I was also allowed to take two halves of a mini-sabbatical, while remaining as the Chairperson, in each of the winter quarters of 2007 and 2010 respectively. Those periods of time off were helpful, though the project would necessitate much more. I want to thank Edward Elgar Publishing for kindly showing its understanding of the situation that I have been in and for allowing me the time that it takes to prepare the manuscript.

Given the current trend and emphasis in the mainstream of the economics profession, writing a book of this nature has understandably been quite a lonesome experience. Hence, it is particularly important for me to give thanks to those who have offered their kind encouragement and support. First and foremost I want to thank my teacher at Stanford University, Donald Harris, who supervised my dissertation research. It was through the courses that I took with him and through his supervision of my research that I came to read more about alternative approaches to economic analysis, and learned to appreciate their strengths and weaknesses. He, together with Amit Bhaduri and Medhi Shafaeddin, kindly read the whole or parts of the manuscript for this book and offered many helpful suggestions for revision. Needless to say, all remaining errors are my sole responsibility.

I also want to thank Ha-Joon Chang for allowing me, given my citizenship, to attend the 2002 Cambridge Advanced Programme on Rethinking Development Economics as an observer. That turned out to be a most important occasion for me to compare my way of thinking with that of many of the scholars and researchers whom he had invited to lecture. Over the years I have also been fortunate to get on the programmes of various conferences to present early drafts of my work and I want to thank the conference organisers involved. Back in 2001 it was at one such conference that, through Andrea Maneschi, I was introduced to Mr Edward Elgar. I want to thank Andrea for that introduction and for, prior to that occasion, pointing me to the works of John Rae. For students in my senior-/graduate-level course on trade theories and policies, I want to thank them for allowing me to test my alternative developmentalist interpretation in front of them.

Given the voluminous amount of reference materials to consult, not all of which were easily obtainable, I have sought the help of many at the University of Denver Penrose Library, especially those who have worked at the Inter-Library Loan Department. I want to thank them for the patient

assistance that they have kindly lent me. I want to thank Christopher Brown, Reference Technology Integration Librarian, for putting his nifty searching skills to use on many occasions to help me hunt down documents that are difficult to locate. Mary Sue Brown, Software Training Specialist, University of Denver Technology Services, provided ample help when I prepared the camera ready copy that conforms to the guidelines provided by Edward Elgar Publishing.

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Last but not least I want to thank my wife, Martha, for all her support of my indulgence in this undertaking. She understands that I dedicated myself to it because of my passion to learn and to discover. With much sacrifice on her part she had kindly provided me the space to carry it out and bring it to fruition.