

**Domestic-International Linkages on China's Periphery:
The Foreign Economic Liberalization of China's Border Regions (2000-2015)**

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Abstract

Why have China's late-developing border regions responded differently to the shared challenges of economic globalization? Theories of political economy and accounts of China's integration into the world economy remain divided on the relative significance of internal and external forces of change. I argue that China's foreign economic liberalization is best understood at the subnational level, where the interaction of central, local, and international actors produces distinct provincial trajectories of reform. While central state preferences dictate policy choice under authoritarian leadership, they can change through local feedback effects and domestic institutional innovations brought on by external agents. My case studies of Jilin (Northeast Asia), Yunnan (Southeast Asia), and Xinjiang (Central Asia) since China's turn to inland development in 2000 complement quantitative comparisons of provincial trade openness with qualitative assessments of liberalization strategies. By tracing "top-down, bottom-up" and "inside-out, outside-in" dynamics of change, I present the other side of what have primarily been coastal accounts of China's global economic integration.