

Open Access in the Economic Sphere: A Framework Interpreting the Rise of the UK, US and China at Different Historical Times

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Abstract : This article has examined the rise of the UK, US, and China at different historical times to explain the argument that it is open access in the economic sphere, as well as institutional building related to the protection of property rights, contract enforcement, financial market, the rule of law, and human resource accumulation that determine economic and human development. Both the UK, after the Glorious Revolution in the seventeenth century, and China, after its adoption of the open door policy at the end of the 1970s, follow such a path of development. The difference between the UK and China in moving toward that path is the different coordination of elites. While the coordination of elites in the UK through parliament played important roles in forcing the government to consider the wider encompassing interest in society after the Glorious Revolution, the coordination of elites in China has mainly been achieved by the Communist Party of China such that the Chinese Government has started to pay greater deal of attention to the wider encompassing interest in the country from 1978. The article has also examined the rise of the US following colonial settlement to independence and institutional building thereafter. The US case is similarly consistent with the argument that open access in the economic sphere and institutional building matter the most to economic development. More decentralized methods of the coordination of elites in the US among colonies (states), the federal governments, and other political groups similarly shaped the path towards open access in the economic sphere and institutional building. As such, open access in the political sphere plays an indirect role in development at best. If that is correct, there are possibilities that different political systems are able to achieve coordination of elites so that governments will turn their attention to development.

Keywords : open access, interconnected institutions, democracy, development

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