

of trade liberalization. The result is a certain “inwardness” in the trade policy literature.

Perhaps as a reflection of this, comparatively little has been written to date about the role of contextual factors in explaining: (a) why trade liberalization happened in the first place; (b) when and at what pace it happened; and (c) why it took the form that it did. To shed light on these questions, this chapter examines the economic and political context in which trade rounds have been launched and negotiated.

The analysis in this chapter contrasts the early postwar rounds with the rather unique Dillon Round, which marked the beginning of a transition, and with the later “named” rounds—the Kennedy, Tokyo and Uruguay Rounds—which completed the transition to a more complicated management of international trade. Based on this review, the analysis attempts to shed light on why a round failed to emerge from the WTO Ministerial in Seattle in November/December 1999, and why one did emerge from Doha in November 2001.

The Early Rounds

To some extent, the inwardness of trade policy literature reflects the habits of minds fashioned by the way the early GATT rounds, listed in the panel below, unfolded.

Early GATT Rounds ²	Dates
Geneva Round	April to October 1947
Annecy Round	April to August 1949
Torquay Round	September 1950 – April 1951
Geneva Round	1955-1956

As can be seen, these earlier rounds were launched in fairly rapid succession. There is little to indicate that they were driven

² These rounds were not actually “named”; that practice began with the Dillon Round. Nonetheless, the first four rounds have come to be referred to by the name of the locale in which they were negotiated: Geneva, Annecy in the French Alps, and Torquay in the United Kingdom.