

highlights a major paradox in the evolution of the farming sector. While neoliberal agricultural policies carried out since the 1980s have resulted in the aggravation of food dependency and the impoverishment of Egyptian peasants, the latter continue to ‘maintain one of the most highly productive forms of agriculture’ (146). Based on this observation and pointing to the longstanding struggles of Tunisian and Egyptian peasants to defend their existence, as well as to recent initiatives developed by local NGOs, the authors explore the model of food sovereignty promoted by the international farmers movement *Via Campesina* as an alternative option for agricultural development for the two countries (Chapter 7). Although the authors recognise that advancing this agenda requires the emergence of a political force capable of promoting policies to support smallholder farming and encourage the diversification of production systems and their orientation towards local market needs, the final note of the book remains optimistic. This is not unrelated to the activist approach within which the authors have placed their research.

Based on extensive empirical and theoretical literature, drawing on longstanding field research and a comparative approach across the MENA region, Ayeb and Bush’s book constitutes a significant contribution to the understanding of agricultural issues and their stakes in the MENA region and to broader reflections on alternative development models.

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**Inside African Politics (second edition)** by KEVIN C. DUNN and PIERRE ENGLEBERT  
Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2019. Pp. 477. \$35 (pbk).

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There is an often cited lacuna in textbook provision on the topic of African politics. There are a few notable exceptions (*Government and Politics in Africa* by Tordoff, Macmillan HE 2002; *Routledge Handbook of African Politics* by Cheeseman *et al.*, Routledge 2005; *An Introduction to African Politics* by Thomson, Routledge 2016; amongst others), yet there remains space for texts in this area to take new and original approaches to the study of the continent. Or, more realistically, the study of certain aspects of a diverse and historically complex continent that has often been presented through a homogenising lens. As the authors of *Inside African Politics* recognise in the opening pages of this textbook, there are many problems associated with the way that the continent of Africa is engaged with, taught and written about. Among these is the fact that the ‘continent [is] often marginalised and its study frequently relegated to the periphery of knowledge about the world ... [suffering] from people’s limited knowledge of it being based on stereotypes, many informed by racist tropes and assumptions’ (1).

Yet, as they state early on, there are many reasons to grapple with African Politics. For instance, recentring the continent in our discussions of Politics and International Relations provides key lessons for understanding security, economics, growth, strategic relationships and broader questions of comparative politics. *Inside African Politics* provides a valuable jumping off point for students and scholars to do this – to engage with questions of statehood, identity, power, regime types, war and security through a lens that centres rather than marginalises the continent of Africa.

Chapter 2's discussion of statehood, for example, avoids the trap of assuming states in Africa began at the point of Western colonisation. This textbook instead opens with discussions on the pre-colonial situation before continuing to colonisation, decolonisation and contemporary statehood. It does so through engagement with western scholarship on the nation state, often grounded in western experience. It asks questions not only about what, if anything, these models tell us about the continent but also how the continent challenges the models themselves.

However, there are scholars whose views I was surprised not to see discussed and engaged with within this text. For example, in the introduction, discussions of universalism could have been strengthened through engagement with key debates on the topic in African scholarship, in particular the work of Kwasi Wiredu and Kwame Gyekye. Similarly, engagement with the work of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o would have added to the exploration of the topic of identity in the third chapter. I do recognise, however, that this may have been an issue partly of structure – the decision to approach this chapter thematically may have prevented engagement with some of these voices and this structure otherwise enables an impressive level of analysis within the confines of a textbook. In fact, overall the depth of engagement with key debates pushes beyond what is often found in a textbook, making this a book that is relevant not only to teaching but to broader scholarship and research as well.

The overall argument of the textbook, that 'it would be a mistake to assume Africans are somehow marginal to, or even outside of, world affairs' (344) should go without saying. Yet in a world in which perceptions of Africa and Africans are dominated by media-generated tropes and stereotypes this remains an important message. As such, a textbook like this one, that is able to challenge those tropes, to draw on pluralist approaches to scholarship, and to provide a challenging resource for students and scholars alike remains both necessary and valuable.

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**Mohammed VI's Strategies for Moroccan Economic Development** by EVA SANDBERG and SETH BINDER.

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The aim of Sandberg and Binder's new addition to the literature on economic development is to analyse 20 years of the current King's efforts to modernise the economy of Morocco. The authors highlight five areas, notably the financial sector, the telecommunications sector, transportation, renewable energy and tourism, and show how new initiatives have modernised the ways in which these sectors are performing.

These efforts appear very impressive. To name one example, in renewable energy the authors demonstrate that Morocco has been rated as one of the world's top ten performers in the Climate Change Performance Index since 2015, occupying fifth place in 2019, just behind Sweden. The authors attribute this advance to the National Energy Strategy (NES) of 2008, which introduced a series of laws that had as their objective the creation of more renewable energy sources.