

Sandberg and Binder highlight changes in the above sectors at great length, but they also identify the key fact that all these modernisation efforts have not been able to significantly alleviate Morocco's income disparities. In fact, one entire chapter, 'One Morocco for the haves, one for the have-nots', addresses the question of why modernisation did not lead to any significant improvements in Gross National Income (GNI) per capita. Using the Atlas method, which accounts for inflation, GNI per capita decreased from USD 2,930 in 2010 to USD 2,860 in 2017. To explain why modernising efforts have not yielded any real income improvement, this chapter identifies rampant corruption, and illustrates that protests, including those of the Northern Moroccan Rif region in 2016, are a reaction to the informal and precarious work conditions that prevail outside of the modernising sectors. The Rif region has been the area where widespread anti-government protests have been the most persistent over the past four years.

Despite this acknowledgement of ongoing inequality and dissatisfaction, the ways in which the authors examine many of the modernising strategies often use overly optimistic catchwords, such as 'leapfrog', 'global leader', 'cutting-edge technologies' in order to characterise the Kingdom's modernising efforts. This applies to the automotive sector, which according to the authors 'has become one of the most successful (industries) in the country' (60), only for this to be qualified five pages later in that 'Moroccan firms that aspire to produce for the automakers may not have achieved the success they desire yet' (65). In other words, in the detailed analysis given, it often appears that the optimistic portrayal of modernisation processes is premature or even misleading.

The example of climate change serves as another case in point. To be able to assess Morocco's claim to global leadership, it would be useful to understand how much renewable energy the country produces, the extent of the introduction of new technologies, and the extent to which carbon emissions are being reduced by those efforts. This is even more so if one wishes to understand why Morocco sits so high in the above-mentioned index. Unfortunately, the authors do not provide any of this. Instead, they present declarations of intent by the King (such as his aim to invest USD 40 billion until 2030), and praise by Ernst & Young, which rates Morocco as the 15th most attractive country for investment in renewables (79). In this way, the authors use declarations as indications of success instead of presenting and independently assessing relevant substantive evidence.

On a positive note, this book contains very detailed and informative data on the above-mentioned industrial sectors, which is likely to be useful to a wide range of students and scholars. More negatively, anyone interested in a critical analysis of the country's development efforts, and a theoretically challenging view of what 'modernisation' means in the 21st century, may find him or herself disappointed.

JAMES SATER  
*University of Malta*

**A History of the Present: a biography of Indian South Africans, 1994–2019** by  
ASHWIN DESAI and GOOLAM VAHED

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What is the historical trajectory of the Indian South African community in a post-apartheid context? How have Indian South Africans managed to navigate the complex politics of difference in a rapidly changing society? What sense have they made of the struggles and hardships of their ancestors in light of their own challenges in post-apartheid South Africa? What should Indian South Africans rightly call themselves? Is there even such a thing as a South African Indian identity? Ashwin Desai and Goolam Vahed's book, *A History of the Present: A Biography of Indian South Africans, 1994–2019*, strives to answer all of the above questions, and much more.

As a literary genre, a biography is understood to be a true story of the life of a single person. To endeavour to produce a biography of a group of people as such, is a daunting task but nonetheless one which the authors have ambitiously set for themselves. Accordingly, the book entails a deep-dive into the real lives, histories and stories of the Indian South African community. While this work cannot be called a biography in the strict sense of the word, what emerges is a thoughtful portrait of the Indian South African community after the formal end of apartheid in South Africa. In spite of the sweeping subject matter, the authors manage to compress it all into 14 content-rich chapters.

The authors bring to life a portrait of a community straining under numerous pressures, and as they say, 'caught between longing – what was lost in the multiple moves across the *kala pani*, from the plantations to the cities, the forced uprooting and settlement in racially bounded townships during the apartheid era and the jump into the post-apartheid moment – and belonging and their quest through the long twentieth century for citizenship, for dignity, for a place to call home' (19). Many troubling dilemmas of the Indian South African post-apartheid experience, such as equity, affirmative action, access to education, and the need for belonging, are frankly addressed, and with an impressive depth and breadth to the critical insights expressed therein.

The value of this book lies in its readability and imaginative writing. The complicated racialised politics of the country are presented to the reader in an accessible style which will ensure the popular appeal of the book to a wide range of audiences. The book layers historical context among and between many colourful and detailed stories about the experiences of Indian South Africans. Key historical flashpoints – from the 1949 'riots' between Indians and black Africans to the 'Guptagate' scandals – are inserted into the narrative in a skilful oscillation between past and present in a way that helps to explain the totality of the journey of Indian South Africans. Accordingly, the authors acknowledge that, 'it is a tricky exercise to write a story that is, at once, necessary and out of date, while guarding against losing the spine of one's narrative, the contemporary history of Indian South Africans' (15). Nonetheless, they have managed to do so.

This book connects with the other pioneering work of the authors, *Inside Indian Indenture: 1860–1914*. The aforementioned book is a compelling work of immense dimensions about indentured labour in South Africa, which will serve as a reference for the historiography of Indian South Africans for years and generations to come. Through the scholarship of these authors, it is possible to see that a robust body of work about the experiences of Indian South Africans is now being forged.

ANNSILLA NYAR

*University of Johannesburg*