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Trading Down: Africa, Value Chains, And The Global Economy

Peter Gibbon
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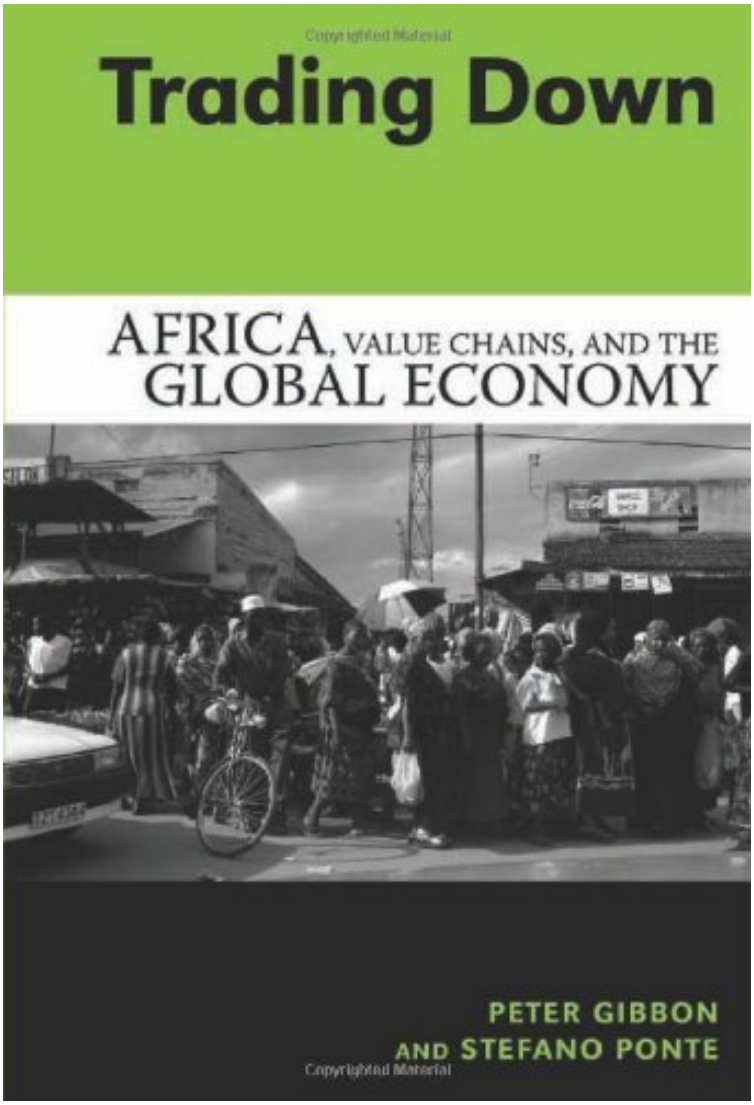

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Peter Gibbon : Trading Down: Africa, Value Chains, And The Global Economy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Trading Down: Africa, Value Chains, And The Global Economy:

Africa's role in the global economy is evolving as a result of new corporate strategies, changing trade regulations, and innovative ways of overseeing the globalized production and distribution of goods both within Africa and internationally. African participants in the global economy, now faced with demands for higher levels of performance

and quality, have generated occasional successes but also many failures. Peter Gibbon and Stefano Ponte describe the central processes that are integrating some African firms into the global economy while at the same time marginalizing others. They show the effects of these processes on African countries, and the farms and firms within them. The authors use an innovative combination of global value chain analysismdash;which links production, trade, and consumptionmdash;and convention theory, an approach to understanding the conduct of business. In doing so, Gibbon and Ponte present a timely overview of the economic challenges that lay ahead in Africa, and point to ways to best address them.

"Trading Down makes new, original, and creative contributions to understanding obstacles to African economic development. With detailed treatment of sub-Saharan Africa's role in global value chains-placing African performance squarely within the context of global capitalism-the authors bring much insight to a problem (weak African economic performance) that still cries out for new ideas. The combination of theoretical sophistication and detailed case knowledge is very impressive."-William Milberg, Associate Professor of Economics, New School University "This is an exceptionally important piece of work. It simultaneously achieves a number of important objectives. The first is to situate Africa-typically seen in terms of marginalization-centrally on the landscape of specific post-adjustment forms of globalization and its impact. Second, it performs an important empirical service by providing an account of the new high value sectors (which extends beyond Africa of course). Third, it links convention theory with global value chains (as part of a project that rethinks the political economy of contemporary forms of capitalism). And all of this through a careful analysis of forms of governance and regulation and the ways in which quality and value are now central to the 'new' economy."-Michael Watts, Chancellor's Professor of Geography and Development Studies, University of California, BerkeleyFrom the PublisherExamining the effects of integration and marginalization on African farms and firmsAbout the AuthorPeter Gibbon is a Senior Researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies. Amongst his authored works is A Blighted Harvest: The World Bank and African Agriculture in the 1980s. He has also edited numerous books. Stefano Ponte is a Senior Researcher at the Danish Institute for International Studies. He is the author of Farmers and Markets in Tanzania: How Market Reforms Affect Rural Livelihoods in Africa and co-author (with Benoit Daviron) of The Coffee Paradox: Global Markets, Commodity Trade and the Elusive Promise of Development.