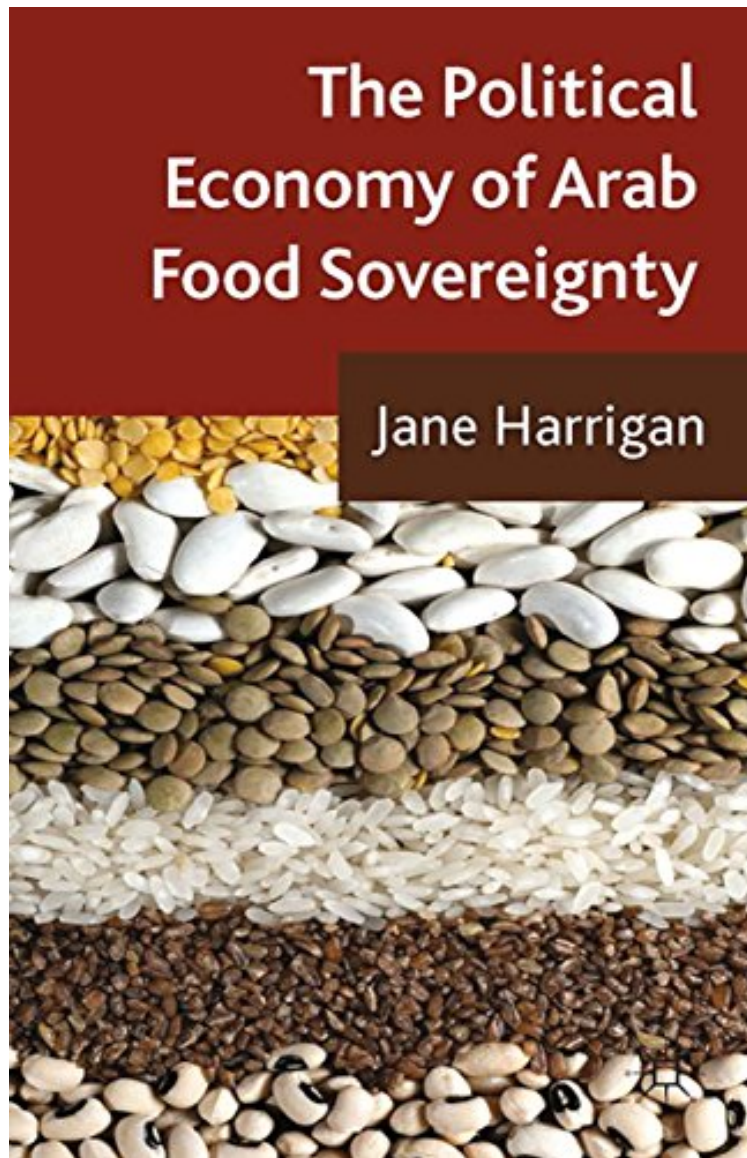


The Political Economy of Arab Food Sovereignty

J. Harrigan

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J. Harrigan : The Political Economy of Arab Food Sovereignty before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Political Economy of Arab Food Sovereignty:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Important book about MENA Food Security By Eckart Woertz Jane Harrigan's book The Political Economy of Arab Food Sovereignty provides an excellent analysis of food security challenges in the MENA. By coining the term "macro food sovereignty"; Harrigan describes multiple efforts of MENA governments to gain direct access and political control over food supplies, if necessary by disregarding market rationalities and economic efficiency. Macro food sovereignty is thus different from trade-based

approaches to food security as advised by international bodies like the World Bank. It is also different from the original meaning of the term 'food sovereignty' that has focused on the micro level and has been used by advocacy groups like La Via Campesina to call for farmers' control over their livelihoods and production decisions. Harrigan provides a rich variety of data and does a great job in analyzing the development discourse about MENA food security. She goes beyond domestic agriculture and foreign agro-investments and embeds her analysis of food security in the broader context of economic development, income distribution and food accessibility. Like in her earlier writings her approach is refreshingly unorthodox and challenges prevalent development paradigms. There is an ongoing debate about a widespread implementation gap of foreign agro-investments and the actual extent of land grabs. My reading of press reports and some earlier entries in the Land Matrix database would be more skeptical. Some of the mentioned examples like the Qatari investments in Kenya or UAE based Abraaj Capital's investments in Pakistan have never gotten off the ground. In the current version of the Land Matrix they are in fact categorized as failed. There also have not been specific land for oil deals, although land for infrastructure deals have been proposed. These squabbles aside, this is a great addition to the growing body of literature about food security in the Middle East that is particularly helpful in linking it to the broader development debate.

A political economy analysis of the history of food security in the Arab world, including the role played by the global food price crisis in the Arab Spring and the Arab response aiming at greater food sovereignty via domestic food production and land acquisition overseas – the so-called land grab.

About the Author Jane Harrigan is Professor of Economics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, UK. She has previously held positions at the University of Manchester, UK, and has worked as an Economist for the Ministry of Agriculture in Malawi. She is the author, co-author, or editor of eight books and numerous journal papers and also works as a consultant to international organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization and African Development Bank.