



The Politics of Reform in Ghana, 1982-1991

Jeffrey Herbst

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Economic reform was the most pressing question for African and other Third World countries during the 1980s, and it will continue to dominate their public policy agendas during the coming decade. In this first full-length examination of the political economy of adjustment in Ghana, Jeffrey Herbst describes the causes of Ghana's dramatic economic decline and reviews the politics of reform that began in 1983.

Ghana was one of the first African countries to adopt a comprehensive reform program and the one that has sustained adjustment longest. As Africa confronts the possibility of total economic collapse by the turn of the century, the Ghanaian experience will have profound ramifications across the continent in the debates regarding stabilization and structural change.

Herbst devotes special attention to the interaction between the type of government and the politics of adjustment, the reaction of interest groups such as urban labor and the peasantry, and the relationship between economic and political change. His extended field research and sophisticated knowledge of the issues involved, both from the economic and political science literature, make this an extremely useful study. It will be important not only to Africanists, political scientists, economists, and sociologists, but also to government and financial leaders wrestling with economic reform in the Third World.

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