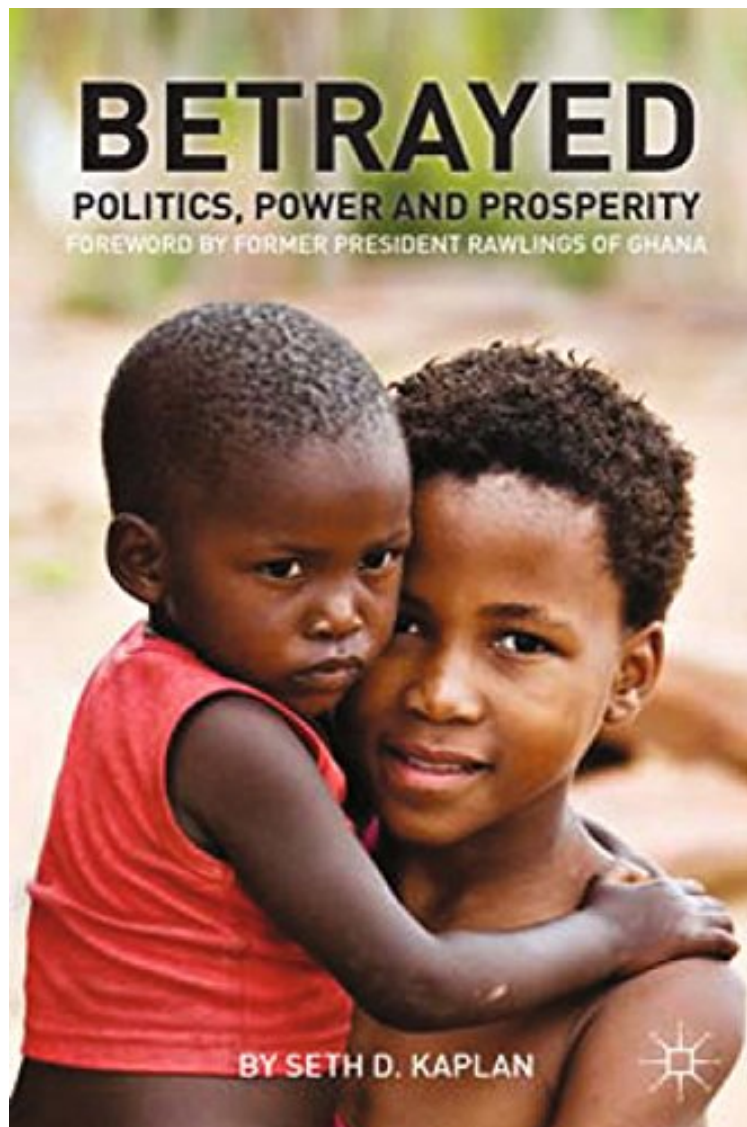


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Betrayed: Politics, Power, and Prosperity (Fixing Fragile States: a New Paradigm for Development)

S. Kaplan

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S. Kaplan : Betrayed: Politics, Power, and Prosperity (Fixing Fragile States: a New Paradigm for Development) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Betrayed: Politics, Power, and Prosperity (Fixing Fragile States: a New Paradigm for Development):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent examples of fragile states' dynamics. By Guadalupe Kaplan is thorough through and through in his analysis. This is one of the best books I read on fragile states. It is fundamental

reading for students, scholars and consultants in the development field who seek to make a difference in dealing with poor countries that cannot move beyond the poverty trap. In his book, Kaplan dissects the numerous dynamics of poverty. He talks about the politics of exclusion and how it contributes to a vicious cycle of exploitation and failure, often exacerbating the gap between the rich and the poor. He also highlights many discrepancies in fragile states that have some sort of a functional elite system on the surface, while festering with poverty and decay in its rural communities. In such conditions, the poor are deprived from access to basic services such as schooling, roads, and work opportunities, thereby making a significant portion of the community unable to participate equally in their economies and societies. Kaplan provides many memorable real life examples throughout the book that articulates this dilemma. The author also assesses the role of the donor community toward fragile states, which is a topic that is rarely broached outside of the "Paris and Busan partnerships for effective development". He looks at donor ideologies as impediments to pro-poor change. I believe more discussion around donor practices in developing countries is needed in order to maximize the input of aid and minimize the type of experimentation that lead countries to failure. Kaplan also provides insight into the ability of poor countries to change and stabilize economically. The nations that were able to transform from poor to stable all had three things in common, first, a political system that is serious about inclusive development, second the institutional capacity to realize that goal, and finally the ability to design a development model that fits the cultural and social dynamics of each country's institutional and financial capacity. Kaplan concludes by stressing the importance of taking specific policy prescriptions that are tailored to each environment, not only at the country level, but the governorate and district level. But the onus is on the country itself to see the need for an attitude adjustment and find its way. In addition, this book stands out from other literature in this domain because the expert has his own personal experience as both an academic and a businessman who was able to make some successful and unsuccessful investments in various developing countries. He is able to bring a fresh perspective on issues that are often forgotten in the development agenda. I appreciated topics dealing with people's motivation, belief in the power of change, and even psychological impediments to reform and change (issues of fatalism, powerlessness, etc). After all, we are dealing with human beings, and it is important to take a holistic approach in understanding the way people in these countries operate in order to know how to drive the desired change. Kaplan believes that empowering people is a fundamental step that could unlock their potential. As a researcher and a consultant in developing countries myself, I think this book contains much insights, examples, and new ideas that are important for me as a reference. This book should be required reading for students in international development majors. I highly recommend reading it.

Betrayed takes a new approach to the subject of global poverty, one that doesn't blame the West but also doesn't rely on the West for solutions. Betrayed puts the poor themselves at center stage, and shows how their entrepreneurial energies are shackled by political and social discrimination. When these shackles are removed, as is happening in places such as China and Vietnam, the poor are able to seize opportunities and drive wealth creation. Combining the latest research into poverty and state building with the author's personal observations drawn from years running businesses in the developing world, Betrayed explains how leaders in the developing world can build more inclusive societies and more equitable governments, thereby creating dynamic national economies and giving the poor the opportunity to accumulate the means and skills to control their own destinies. This refreshing new approach will appeal to business people who are fed up with reading critiques of global poverty that see capitalism as the problem, not the solution; people in both the global North and South who want to see attention focused not on Western aid but on what developing countries and their citizens can do to help themselves; scholars and practitioners in the development field who are looking for new, practicable ideas; and general readers who want accessible and engaging accounts of ordinary people struggling to overcome poverty.

"Kaplan makes a compelling and eloquent argument for empowering all citizens, especially the poor. He explains how hard-working individuals are shackled to their poverty, how discrimination stifles the entrepreneurial hopes of entire groups of people, and how political and economic exclusion conspire to keep elites rich at everyone else's expense. . . . It is, he says, up to the elites and leaders of the developing world to start building and operating this machinery." - Jerry Rawlings, Former President of the Republic of Ghana "Betrayed is an interesting, readable presentation of a complex and often difficult subject. The author's approach to and analysis of world poverty and what can be done to change the dynamic underpinning it will be a worthy read for both development professionals as well as the general educated reader." - Andrew Natsios, Former Head, USAID "A welcome relief from the avalanche of microstudies with narrow approach and applicability . . . It is refreshing to see a multidisciplinary approach and one that references works from a wide variety of academic, think tank, practitioner, and official sources." - Governance From the Inside Flap Betrayed takes a new approach to the subject of global poverty, one that doesn't blame the West but also doesn't rely on the West for solutions. Betrayed puts the poor themselves at center stage, and shows how their entrepreneurial energies are shackled by political and social discrimination. When these shackles are removed, as is happening in places such as China and Vietnam, the poor are able to seize opportunities and drive wealth creation. Combining the latest research into poverty and state building with the author's personal observations drawn from years running

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About the Author Seth Kaplan is a Professorial Lecturer at Johns Hopkins University, USA.