

CHOICE *connect*

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The following review appeared in the May 2014 issue of CHOICE:

Economics

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Asian tigers, African lions: comparing the development performance of Southeast Asia and Africa, ed. by Bernard Berendsen et al. Brill, 2013. 524p bibl afp (African dynamics, 12) ISBN 9789004256538 pbk, \$76.00.

This volume reports on the Tracking Development project initiated by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which involved academic institutes in the Netherlands; African and Asian students; and experts from Europe, the US, Asia, and Africa. Research design included an African PhD student in a paired Asian country, while an Asian counterpart reciprocated in Africa. The 14 comparative studies cover Nigeria/Indonesia, comparing technocracy and institutionalization, exchange rates, population policy and poverty reduction, and corruption; Malaysia/Kenya, focusing on agriculture and rural development, poverty reduction, industrial policy, and foreign direct investment; Vietnam/Tanzania, examining liberalization and poverty alleviation, the cashew market, and the textile industries; and Cambodia/Uganda, comparing agriculture, rural roads, and education. There was a clear policy orientation in all the studies, and ministry officials participated throughout. The case studies are preceded by four introductory and overview chapters, and followed by a concluding chapter helpfully titled "Policy and Governance ... Firm Findings and Remaining Questions." In a capsule, governance matters for good policy and outcomes, but the details of how and why are not always clear. As a one-volume, evidence-based response to why Asia has done so well and Africa so poorly, this book has no peer.

--J. H. Cobbe, *Florida State University*

Summing Up: Essential. Upper-division undergraduate through professional audiences as well as general readers.
