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Author:

Jan Klíma - Philosophical Faculty, University of Hradec Králové, The Czech Republic

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REVIEWS

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As a result of the essential continental political change all African countries adopted the democratic system after 1990/1991. Before, during the period of the global bipolarity, many of the African regimes were firmly rooted in the one-party system, several countries were subordinated to authoritarian governments or dictatorships. The recent democratic era provokes many questions, to what extent is contemporary African democracy frank and successful, how the geographical and/or historical peculiarities influence the political system in operation, to what is the reasonable rate of opinion and organizational changes within the given country system of political parties or within the individual important party. To answer such question it is necessary to describe and analyse every country as a specific case.

Vlastimil Fiala assumed the task of doing that analytical work concerning all the African Lusophone countries. The São Tomé and Príncipe case study is one part of his larger meritorious project. The small insular country seems to be of little important, but it offers many typical features as for the transition from an authoritarian regime to a one-party system and finally to the multiparty democracy. Besides, the limited dimensions allow every detail to be studied in a lucid way.

First of all, the author gives an outline of the São Tomé and Príncipe political development during the independence period (i.e. after 1975) which makes it possible to conclude that the political situation of the country is in general stable and quiet. Also the next chapter dealing with the development of the political party affiliation/membership has some current historical features. The core part commences by pointing out the main problems of the African party systems, based on the theory of the contemporary political science. The following analysis of the insular case mentions representation of political parties in the local parliament, important sociopolitical cleavages, and the influences of the chosen electoral procedure on the political system and other factors and indicators. Everywhere in the book, theory is a starting point for classifying and evaluating numerous figures and data. This allows us to characterize perfectly the political system in the country. An overview of the political parties of São Tomé and Príncipe is then a profound inside view into the political

reality and future of the insular Republic when mentioning leaders, ideological orientations, election results and the potentials of each party as well.

The book is equipped with many diagrams, footnotes, and a list of primary and secondary sources. Along with a clear style and logical composition the resulting whole leads to the establishment of conclusive evidence that African democracy has been consolidated. At the same time, from the point of view of political science Vlastimil Fiala has faultlessly substantiated and presented a successful pattern for analysing other African democracies and regimes.

Jan Klíma

Fiala, Vlastimil et al. 2012. *Politické strany Afriky, Asie a Latinské Ameriky. Rysy politického stranictví* [Political Parties in Africa, Asia and Latin America: Features of Political Partisanship]. Brno: CDK, 390 pages.

The monograph *Political Parties in Africa, Asia and Latin America: Features of Political Partisanship* deals in detail with the issues of the development, character and position of political parties outside Europe. It is a comprehensive overview of the problems in Africa, Latin America and Asia, and partly in the Far East of establishing and the functioning of political parties. Much attention is paid to the analysis of the theories of the definition and genesis of these parties. The authors also want to make the readers familiar with historical, social and cultural contexts which played a part in the origin of the parties, and they try to define especially what makes them different from their “party partners” in Europe.

The monograph forms an integral whole. The team of authors adopted for their respective themes a uniform approach so that their work is not a mere mosaic of individual pieces of stone but is a logically conceived, comprehensive set of views and interpretations. Emphasis is put on topical themes (chapters on the position of women in countries of Latin America, by K. Kouba, P. Poskočilová, O. Plachý). The chapters are arranged so that the monograph at first covers the theoretical context of the analysis of political parties (chapters written by V. Fiala on the problems of methodology and typology of political parties, and the chapter by M. Strmiska on the segregationist and integrationist approach to the research in parties in the “old” and the “new” worlds), but the book also provides enough room for the analysis of specific problems of the origin of this modern political phenomenon. Whenever it is essential for the explanation of the genesis of a political party, the authors analyse the insti-