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Klíma, Jan. 2015. Dějiny Guineje Bissau. [History of Guinea Bissau]. Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 250 pages.

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language of South India. A short note by Tanja Hammel, entitled “Of Birds and (Wo)Men,” mentions that women were rare in science and that Patrick Harries, although he did not work much on women or gender issues, encouraged this kind of research. Hammel also wonders what Patrick Harries’s “future songs” (works) will be after his retirement. Alas, we will never know. Melanie Eva Boehi looks in her essay for the Margaret Thatcher tree in Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens near Cape Town. Patrick Harries encouraged her to continue the search. Although the tree did not survive long, it is a good pretext to discuss tree-planting by politicians during and after the apartheid period. And funny enough, Mandela planted a pepper-bark tree, which is still fascinating visitors to the gardens. The remaining three articles relate to a variety of topics. Franziska Rüedi discusses narratives in post-apartheid South Africa, while Veit Arlt introduces at length “The Basel Connection” in South African jazz. Finally, Stephanie Bishop’s nostalgic memoir about how Patrick Harries inspired her to become a successful student is a very readable close of the book.

The book under review must have given Patrick Harries a great deal of joy and for other readers it is a spiritual monument to a scholar and humane personality whose departure from earthly life is regretted by so many. However, Patrick’s heritage will continue to encourage and inspire generations ahead.

Petr Skalník

Klíma, Jan. 2015. *Dějiny Guineje Bissau*. [History of Guinea Bissau]. Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 250 pages.

There are history books and there are books with histories. Definitely Prof. Klíma’s book belongs to the latter, the category of books with histories. It offers a practical compendium on the contemporary history, geography, and reality of Guinea Bissau. The author presents, on the one hand, a systematic and analytic perspective and, on the other, the African gift of story telling. He presents not only political facts with scientific rigour, but equally so the social and cultural consequences of the historical changes that have taken place in the country. This becomes particularly interesting in the Portuguese

colonial and postcolonial period, which has its specific characteristics. Some characteristics of Portuguese colonialism were curiously referred to as “outsiders” by researchers such as René Pélissier, Gerhard Seibert or more recently Malyn Newitt. The work of Jan Klima is situated along the modern lines of socio-historical scholarship, which offers the reader a series of roadmaps or guides in the midst of a great deal of information frequently created by emotional filters or myths, such as those surrounding the national liberation movement. It is to be noted that in the case of Guinea Bissau, the political leaders did not only use myths of the armed struggle for the independence of Guinea Bissau as instruments (Amilcar Cabral *et consortes*), but also made use of religious and ethnic factors. This is why the part of the book that deals with ethnic and cultural issues is not only interesting in itself, but also offers a key to the understanding of the present-day political and economic reality of the country. The appendices (*dodatky*) offer the reader condensed information about the current reality of Guinea Bissau (including demographic, educational, and economic data), a detailed chronology of events up to 2014, and a list of political leaders in the colonial as well as the post-independence period.

Essentially, the understanding of historical reality has to do with language, and Africa offers an extremely rich linguistic landscape. Hence, the book’s small dictionary (*Slovníček Pojmů*) is especially useful and enlarges the imagination of the reader. It comprises words that derive from Portuguese, Cape Verdean and Guinea Bissau Creole languages, English, French, Arabic, Mandinga, and Fula. Some examples: *brumedjo* (an ironic designation of a mulatto), *grumete* (sailor and the name of indigenes close to the establishment), *fanado* (circumcision), *zambakose* (sorcerer). In Guinea Bissau Portuguese is the official language of state, but Creole functions as the lingua franca for communication between various ethnic groups incorporating lexical items from other languages. The inclusion of some words and expressions in the dictionary, for example *négritude* and *warlord*, from French and English respectively, allows us to see analogies between the situation in Guinea Bissau and other African countries or Latin America. In chapter 8 of the book, the author highlights the crystallization of the political elites during the post-colonial period, the formation of the respective governments and above all, the overthrowing of these same governments (through *coup d’états*). It is this chapter that prepares the reader for an understanding of the reality

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of modern-day Guinea Bissau. The same chapter also points out facts and lesser-known dangers such as the risks of tourism with regard to the natural environment and social habitat on the islands of Bijagós.

Jan Klima's book is not exhaustive and often leaves the reader with the quest to know more. One can understand that this is due to the nature of the research area, where the scarcity of written documents creates research problems. There are eight maps in the work even if they are sketchy and lack convincing information. Perhaps the author was unable to follow the Portuguese tradition of cartography, producing beautiful maps with much information centuries ago.

In conclusion, one can say that *Dějiny Guineje Bissau* meets the interests of the public since the Czech Republic has recently developed an interest in the Lusophone political and cultural space. The country intends to acquire the status of associate observer in the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (*Comunidade dos Países da Língua Portuguesa*). The number of Czech students learning the Portuguese language is increasing and some of them will opt to do research on issues related to Africa. This book will be a companion and a roadmap to issues surrounding a distant and mysterious continent.

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