BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN

Constitutiones Africae Vol. 1.
Filip Reyntjens (General Editor)
Emile Bruylant, S.A., Bruxelles, 1988, BFr 7.500,-

Constitutiones Africae is a collection of the constitutions of the current African States. The issue which is to appear in four volumes eliminates one of the major hindrances to scholars as well as policy makers interested in the area of African Law.
The first volume, the subject of this review, contains the constitution of thirteen African States, i.e. Algeria Egypt (Only eleven constitutions are actually printed. The constitutions of Botswana and Comoro are not included, but the Editors indicate that these two will be made available later on. It should be easy to place them in their alphabetical arrangement since the volume is in a loose binding form).
A number of scholars have written introductory articles to the various constitutions. These introductory articles serve as a background to the constitution in mind and provide the history of the constitutional development in the particular country.
Each constitution is considered through five major chapters. The basic data, giving an overall summary description of the particular country; political and constitutional evolution, analysis of the constitution; the constitution itself (text); and the bibliography which provides the sources, mostly, secondary, to the information revealed in the pamphlet.
As it has been indicated, each constitution has been given the background notes plus the analysis by a specific scholar. Thirteen scholars, ranging from Africans to Europeans have each analysed the constitutional development of one of the thirteen countries.
Reyntjens' arrangement of the Constitutiones Africae deserves respect. Constitutional and political history of each country examined is quite imperative for the better understanding of the constitutions. The authors have tried their best to actually give summaries of such developments, therefore preparing the reader of the constitution for a wider interpretation of the constitutions. Analysis of the constitutions by the different authors is done at a level of neutrality, without the authors exposing their ideological and/or political prejudices. In most cases the analysis of the constitution is done in reflection of the dominant political ideology in the particular country. It might appear that the summaries embodying the analyses are a bit too short for a deeper understanding of the various constitutions. The authors, and certainly the editors never intended to publish a manual on African constitution, since this would be too involving and might even require a representative of case law in the volumes, if any, in reflection of the various constitutional developments. However, it is implicit that the editors wish to present all the necessary documented information to the reader, and upon that information, overcoming one of the major problems in legal research

https://doi.org/10.5771/0506-7286-1989-2-213 https://www.inlibra.com/de/page/agb - Open Access - (cc) BY

in Africa, the reader may proceed to working out his analysis. On this basis, therefore, the shorter the analysis the better, and especially when it is not politically biased.
One imposing shortcoming of the volume is its bilingual presentation. Africa is multilingual. English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Arabic are the dominant foreign (exept Arabic) languages used in the administration, the academic field, and in other social gatherings. The first four of these languages, are the languages of the minority in each country. The four volumes will appear in two languages, namely English and French. In this first volume, nine countries use French as their official language 2 English and 2 Portuguese. Not all of these countries have their summaries in the two languages. It is the texts of the constitutions which appear in the two language whereas the summaries in forms of chapters 2 and 3 appear in either English or French. This position denies the reader who may not be knowledgeable to one of the languages the advantages of the summaries. It would be indeed very helpful if the volumes were to appear in the above mentioned languages used in the African bureacratic, academic, commercial and social activities. However, Reyntjens acknowledges this shortcoming and has a very convincing reason for the bilingual choice - namely finance. He says that for financial reasons it has not been possible to extend the bilingualism to the accompanying analyses.
The volumes are a valuable asset to any scholar interested in African domestic legal systems.

Costa R. Mahalu

Barbara Rocksloh-Papendieck
Frauenarbeit am Straßenrand. Kenkeyküchen in Ghana
Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1988, DM 28,-

Imagine bakers who engage in their trade not primarily to make money, but because they can feed their families with the bread they produce. Such is the situation of kenkey women in Ghana, who stand in the focus of Barbara Rocksloh-Papendieck's book Frauenarbeit am Straßenrand. Kenkeyküchen in Ghana (Women's Work on the Side of the Street. Kenkey Kitchens in Ghana). They choose their trade because the production of kenkey provides them with food for their own families.
Kenkey, balls of fermented and boiled corn flour wrapped in maize or plantain leaves, are Ghanaians' "daily bread". Rocksloh-Papendieck tells the history of the trade with kenkey and analyzes women's work in the kenkey kitchen. Her research rests mainly on interviews with women in 46 different kenkey kitchens. Although the interviews may not represent a cross section of kenkey women, this does not weaken the impact of her work. Since production and sale of kenkey is concentrated in women's hands, Rocksloh-Papendieck's work

https://doi.org/10.5771/0506-7286-1989-2-213 https://www.inlibra.com/de/page/agb - Open Access - (cc) BY