

Ethnic management and federalism in Africa: South Africa, Nigeria and Ethiopia in Comparative Perspective

The goal of this project is to underline the complexity of the federal African systems. The first chapter deals with the complexity of the “federal world”, whom seeks to underline the specificity of the African (federal) constitutions and, consequently, their particular federal constitutional arrangements. That is the meaning of the first chapter “federalism, types of federalism and African federalism”. The “f” word should be read through the words “self-rules and shared rules” or, more specifically, the combined constitutional dispositions which tend to this meaning.

The following chapters aim to analyse federalism, decentralization and ethnic management in three federal, or quasi-federal, countries: Nigeria, Ethiopia and South Africa. This comparison is rooted in their relevance across the continent. Among them, the South African experience represents, undoubtedly and for a large number of reasons the most important case and the leading role in the enforcement of constitutionalism in Africa: the evolution within the British empire, the Union and the racist authoritarian regime, the unique transition, the role of the Constitutional Court and the original cooperative government.

Moreover, shall be taken into account the practice of the “hybrid” or centralized South African federal system shaped by the centralistic vision of the ANC, the weak role of the provinces and the crucial development of local government. Federalism in Nigeria, is likely to represent the best example of African troubles: colonization, resources’ exploitation, corruption, class, ethnicity, coup d’état and chronic instability. Since the amalgamation (1914), was clear that Nigeria should have faced several problems, due to its artificial creation. Suffice it to say that’s Watts considered the Nigeria «as a political entity an artificial creation, perhaps the most artificial of all the countries created in the course of the European occupation of Africa»¹

The third case is another classic example of ethnicity and federalism: Ethiopia. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a clear “ethno-federation”, which embraced the rights of self-determination and secession in order to accommodate ethnic diversity. The overwhelming (total) influence of the dominant party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) is the first feature to take into account for understanding the Constitution-making process, the structure of the federal system, the federal arrangements and the secession clause. Ethnic violence has recently sprung out in the Ethiopian federal system, rectius among ethnic groups and within the EPRDF internal structure. This has recently

¹ R. L. WATTS, *New Federations: Experiments in the Commonwealth*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1966.

led to the replacement of the head of government, which has the task to face the next elections, scheduled for 2020 and also the recent discovery of oil in the difficult Somali region.

Publications:

- 1) Le elezioni regionali del 2015 in Puglia, in *Federalismi.it*, n. 11/2015.
- 2) L'evoluzione del federalismo nigeriano tra conflitti etnici e transizioni democratiche, in *Federalismi.it*, n. 11/2017, 68 pp.
- 3) Ethnic Management e Revenue Sharing nei sistemi federali in transizione: i casi di Nigeria e Iraq, in *Federalismi.it*, Numero speciale 2/2018.
- 4) Iraqi federalism: the conflict between communal and oil and gas policies (submitted)

Book Review:

- 1) C. Manga Fombad, *Separation of power in African Constitutionalism*, Stellenbosch handbooks in African constitutional law, Oxford University Press, 2016, in *Nomos – Le attualità nel diritto* n. 2/2017, 10 pp.
- 2) K.K. AHMED, *Umpiring a Federal System: The Ethiopian Choice in Comparative Perspective*, in english, *Nomos – Le attualità nel diritto* n. 3/2017, 5 pp.

Unpublished Works:

- 1) Lo State-building in Iraq e Siria tra conflitti interni (regionali) e influenze esterne: “is federalism the only way”?

International Conferences:

- 1) Convegno internazionale Italo-Iberoamericano di Diritto Costituzionale, Il federalismo in tempi di transizione - Torino 16-17 ottobre 2017: Ethnic Management e Revenue Sharing nei sistemi federali in transizione: i casi di Nigeria e Iraq.
- 2) Hong Kong ICON-Society 2018 Annual Conference Identity, Security, Democracy: Challenges for Public Law 25-27 June 2018, The University of Hong Kong. Beyond Formalism: Problems and Prospects of Aspirational Principles in African Federal Constitutionalism. Nigeria, Ethiopia and South Africa in Comparative Perspective (with Erika Arban).