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AGNIESZKA PAWŁOWSKA, *SAMORZĄD TERYTORIALNY W STANACH ZJEDNOCZONYCH AMERYKI*, WYDAWNICTWO NAUKOWE SCHOLAR, WARSZAWA 2016, PP. 413.

Restitution of local self-government in Poland took place in 1990. In the early years self-government has functioned only on the municipalities level. Then in 1997 the Polish administrative reform restored the poviats and voivodships. Another and last important change has been the establishment of the Act on Direct Selection of the Executive Body in the Municipality in 2002. It was a time when politicians and experts based primarily on the experiences of European countries. Researchers notes that Polish self-government functions on the basis of such local government as French and Danish. At that time, the experiences of non-European countries were not taken into account. For a long time, we did not have significant publications on local government in Europe and first of all in non-European countries. In spite of many years, Agnieszka Pawłowska's monograph is the first attempt of detailed description, which concerns on issues of local government in the United States of America. Taking into account the current problems of Polish self-government such as finance or the problem of delineating metropolitan areas, studying the experience of the USA, where many unconventional solutions are implemented, seems particularly valuable.

The publication consists of six comprehensive and detailed chapters that describes issues such as the genesis of local self-government in the United States of America, the legal basis of self-government, the types and formation of self-government units, the election and form of direct democracy in self-government, the authorities of local self-government, tasks and finances of local self-government.

The first chapter, which concerns on the origin of local self-government in the United States is particularly interesting. The tradition of American self-government described by Agnieszka Pawłowska is helpful in understanding one of the key issue: why the american system of self-government in spite of numerous alternatives and local institutions, maintain an unique permanence?

The third chapter is also curious. This part of the book concerns on the type and formation of territorial self-government in the United States. First of all local communities in some states have a lot of autonomy in question of municipalities border. They have ability to decide about such issues as: formation of the new territorial unit (villages), connection to

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another area and transformation the legal status of this unit. Communities also have the ability to effectively prevent the incorporation of their territory by other territorial units. This kind of law is adapted for example in such states as New York, Florida, Montana, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut. On the one hand, we can say that this solution allows the creation of municipalities that were created by the will of the citizens. On the other hand the territorial units, created by decision of local communities, may have financial difficulties and may be influenced by interest groups.

Undoubtedly the value of the book is also numerous tables and graphs in summary of the publication. These materials presents in transparent and synthetic way the complexity of self-governmental systems in each states. Numerous tables and diagrams in the text also help the reader understanding the causes and effects of reforms and changes in American self-government over the years.

Some deficiency can be found in chapter four. This section describes the election process and forms of direct democracy in local government units in individual states. The researcher describes the elections process and the legal forms of participation of citizens in the framework of direct democracy such as *initiative*, *referendum* and *recall*. However, this description is based only on legal documents, which not include informal forms of direct participation such as participatory budgeting. Participatory budgeting was established in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in 1989. The USA was one of the first countries in the world, which promote this idea. Currently the participatory budgeting is an integral part of local democracy in many territorial units in USA.

The reviewed book is undoubtedly the important publication in polish literature, which concerns on structure of self-government in different countries. The book of Agnieszka Pawłowska is the first comprehensive publication in Poland, which describe the self-government in the USA. The author analyzes numerous legal acts and critically refers to scientific publications. The work also consist of numerous tables and graphs that clearly present the specifics of each states. On the one hand presented publication is a reliable source of information for students. Undoubtedly, the reviewed book may be also useful in comparative studies on self-governmental systems.