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CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY IN
LOCAL SELF GOVERNANCE

- the case of Mozambique in Southern Africa

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"Social relativity a doctrine of hope, not despair"

Ruth Benedict, in Patterns of Culture

I - Preamble

We will begin this article with the subject "cultural diversity" and, in this context, examine the role traditional authority can play in the process of good governance. Therefore our principal focus will be this local, African, socio-political institution.

We believe that in a culturally diversified society like Mozambique, one has to search for similarities no matter which model of governance and development one wants to implement. There are many social facts, events, habits, values, and so on, contributing to divisions among the different population groups placed together in the geo political framework of the territory. But there exist, also, socio-cultural similarities and, in this context of ideas, it is important to underline that the one similarity one finds among the peoples of Mozambique ¹ is the connection the members of the different African communities have with the land they are settled on or originated from, to the institution of traditional authority. Traditional authority plays a symbolic role in the eyes of the members of the communities, because it is perceived as the true and real representative institution of the territoriality, i.e., the territory of the lineage. This territory is where the individual recognizes him or herself as a human being, and where he or she experiences the first feeling of a collective being. In this territory, the individual is a member of a collectivity that gives him or her a sense of belonging. In this context we believe that if we value

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. This is a conclusion reached after many years of field work with research on different subjects; one and a half years of field work on the subject "traditional authority and its base for legitimacy"; and common sense after different opinions presented in a Seminar on the topic, with the participation of different institutions and personalities (representation from central government, provinces and districts).

this primary sense of belonging, lending to it its rightful dimension, it can be enlarged to comprise the whole state, and offer in the end a sense of nationality (territoriality for the case of Mozambique) ² to the members of these small communities.

We believe that the proposed government policy under discussion at present (see IV.I, in PART III of the article) to value traditional authority, especially in the symbolic role it may play for the inhabitants of the small communities (of the territory) of the country is a way to bring about good governance and development as well as to build a solid and stable united state.

This paper gives a brief general introduction to present some concepts, and thereafter introduces descriptive examples from the Mozambican reality. We will use, in our analysis, the relativist approach to understand facts and institutions, and the way they function (see Benedict;1935/1968), instead of an universal approach because we agree with Benedict when she says that "encouraging cultural differences would not mean a static world" (1946/1972:15). This methodological approach will be used in order to provoke a debate that, in our point of view, has been delayed for too long. The reality/ies of the Mozambican society, its complexities, as well as ideas and projects in which the government is engaged in at present to solve problems and bring about development and good governance, constitute the core of the information to be presented in this paper.

Our main concern in this article, is the role traditional authorities/power can play in a situation of cultural diversity; hence, our focus on this institution. Though the subject of "decentralization" will be mentioned often as a precondition for democracy, social control and good governance, we will not discuss in details the basis for it.

Because the purpose of this paper is to present our own view about the steps Mozambique is taking to bring about good governance and development in a culturally diversity society,, we will not dwell on descriptions of facts from the past, such as political choices made by the ruling elite at the time of independence. Such descriptions of choices, through important, are not all that relevant for the purpose of this paper.

Mozambique, a country situated in Southern Africa, became independent only in 1975 after centuries of Portuguese colonial rule. Colonial rule in Mozambique was differentiated in time and

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. See below the comment about the concept of nation.

space, depending upon its penetration of socio-cultural spheres of the different population groups. Centuries of colonial rule in the valley of the Zambezi river is to be contrasted to almost no colonial penetration at all in some areas of the province of Nyassa. This historical fact is illustrative in order to give a picture of a country with sharp contrasts regarding its geographic and socio-cultural regions, but we have more facts, i.e.,

- different experiences as regarding colonial occupation and oppression for various regions and population groups,
- unequal economic development in different geographic zones, and
- a socio-cultural complexity aggravated by many years of civil war (1980-1992).

Mozambique is a country with twenty ethnic groups³ of Bantu origin and two systems of descent (matrilineality and patrilineality). Arabs, Indians, Chinese and Europeans have also settled in Mozambique. Among the Europeans, the Portuguese are predominant⁴. Within its territory coexist universal religions such as Christianity, Islamism and Hinduism in addition to many local African religions. The population is about 16 million inhabitants in an area of 801,590 km² and a coastline of 2,500 km.

In 1975, at the time of independence, the ruling party Frelimo⁵ having made an agreement with Portugal in Lusaka to establish a new government in the country, chose a system of development that aimed to build something new and lead the country towards socialism in a rapid and successful process of development. However, in order to fulfil this plan, the leaders understood that they had to destroy many aspects of the socio-cultural past of the newly independent country, because (it was the common feeling then) that this was the only way to make room for the choices embedded in the selected ideological approach - socialism

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. The number of ethnic groups depends on how one groups them. We would say, thirteen main groups and seven sub-groups.

4

. Mozambique used to be a settler colony, with Portuguese settled mostly in agricultural enterprises, light industries and services.

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. FRELIMO - The portuguese acronym for Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, was the party that commanded the liberation war against the Portuguese from 1964 to 1974, when a coup d'etat in Portugal put an end to decades of dictatorship and a new government started negotiations to give independence to its colonies.

- to bring about a new society of equality and progress. In the euphoria of victory, the ruling elite forgot, or did not take into account, the role tradition, and the contents of a socio-cultural universe play in the lives of the members of the communities, which are part of the immense territory of Mozambique.

Therefore, after independence many measures were put into force, supposedly to bring about development such as, among others:

- villagization, in order to make it easier to bring formal education and health care to the countryside;
- collectivization, in order to increase production;
- nationalization, in order to give proper housing, formal education, health care, etc. to all strata of the population;
- abolishment of traditional authorities, in order to implement a new modern system of administration which was supposed to develop the country in ten years by distancing the people from socio-cultural values attached to tradition.

They did not work.

According to our perception after many years of field work, and based on an analysis with a clear socio-cultural approach, it is not so easy, and probably not even desirable, to destroy the socio-cultural complexity. The course of history has shown disastrous consequences in Africa and in other parts of the globe. The sharp deviation from established socio-cultural principles turned out to be problematic in Mozambique, especially when it was supposed to take place so quickly and even more, when what was supposed to be introduced in its place was so different from local realities that the members of the different communities were not able to identify themselves with it. Therefore, briefly, focusing mainly on the socio-cultural dimension of the problem, the failure of the post-independence ruling elite's plan of development for Mozambique can be explained by examining the socio-cultural dimension of the problem. The socio-political approach as a dimension of the failure is also important, probably even more important than the socio-cultural one for some people. However, that is not our main concern in this article ⁶ because, in our point of view, the

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. In a paper presented at a Seminar in Maputo in April 1993 (Baptista Lundin;1993), we analysed the socio-political dimension of the problem, bringing in probable reasons for the socio-political choices for development taken by the ruling elite in Mozambique at the time of independence. In that paper we underlined two factors: (1) the socio-cultural dissociation of the ruling elite from African values, and (2) the international

socio-cultural level of the local African socio-cultural universe/s functions often like an umbrella covering everything within the societies (the socio-political and the socio-economic fields). Besides, the role played by external socio-political forces in the failure of Mozambique's development as a newly independent country in 1975, is well documented and no one questions it. That is one more reason for which it is not discussed in this paper, although it is important to mention.

* * *

This article contains three parts.

In Part I we deal with general issues about cultural diversity and the concept of tradition in the African context vis-à-vis the Western context, as regarding the role played by a person, both as an individual and as a member of a community.

The reality of Mozambique is presented in Part II, with a brief introduction to its diversity. Some socio-political aspects of **Amakhuwa** society, the largest ethnic group in the country, are introduced as an example of a local social organization. We underline, then, the role played by the traditional chief and why he or she is so important for the life of the community.

In Part III we introduce general comments about good governance, and the perception that the communities had about the state before and after independence. Some considerations with regard to the role traditional authority can or may play in an African -(Mozambican) model of (good) governance, are also presented in Part III. A few remarks about a seminar held in

arena, which at that time gravitated between two antagonistic poles as a consequence of the Cold War. For cause number one, the dissociation conditioned the African elite towards a niche too close to the socio-cultural sphere of the colonial power. This fact made possible the penetration and the assimilation of Portuguese socio-cultural values by this elite, which in turn made possible their victories in the diplomatic and military fields, and on the other hand caused the socio-cultural distance that dictated later on a policy of development for the country so alien from local values. For cause number two, the socio-political scenario offered no other space to the liberation movements in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s but to turn themselves to the socialist ideological field to gain support for their cause. This support was "payed back" later on in the form of political alliances that, in many countries, implied the search for ways to destroy socio-cultural realities in order to construct a new man to serve a new society.

Maputo in April 1993, conclude Part III and the paper. The remarks concern local government and the role of traditional authorities in the process of decentralization, as well as the resolutions made by the seminar's participants as recommendations to be presented to the central administration in order to be taken into account in its administrative policies.

PART I - Cultural Diversity

I - Introduction

When the European powers divided the African continent in Berlin in 1884/85, they "created" the socio-political problem Africa is facing at present - that is multiethnicity within the borders of most states ⁷. Therefore, there is no nation-state in the African continent. All states are a complex mosaic of different groups (lineages, clans or ethnic groups), placed together within fictitious borders of a geographic space in which national elites are trying to build a common (national/territorial) identity.

The process of colonization in many countries aggravated already existent internal divisions. In the case of Mozambique, for instance, the internal division of the colony shows an arbitrary political geography (provinces, districts, and so on) accomplished without any concern for socio-cultural differences like ethnicity. After independence these divisions in the internal geographic space were kept the same, a fact that contribute to a continuous source of internal conflict. And this reality still brings about minor and major internal conflicts.

Reality is such that every state in Sub Saharan Africa, has more than one nation ⁸ within its borders. In the case of Mozambique all but a few ethnic groups have brothers and sisters

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. We are not saying that they created antagonisms between different groups living close to or far from each other. We say that many ethnic groups were compulsorily placed together in an artificial single socio-political unit, which created an "unnecessary" basis for potential conflict.

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. Here we define nation as a cultural community, even if according to Deutsch (Nation and World. In Ithiel de Sola Pool (ed.) Contemporary political Science: Toward Empirical Theory. New York. 1967:207, quoted by Alter;1985:11) "a nation is a people in possession of a state", which implies a political community. The concept of State used in this paper will be the expression for a socio political entity.

settled across Mozambique's geographic borders. And the same is true for the internal division (provinces and districts), which often still follows colonial internal borders, which used to comprise at times different systems of colonization⁹. The plurality of nations within one state is a reality even in states relatively homogeneous regarding ethnicity, like the Kingdoms of Swaziland and Lesotho in Southern Africa.

Given this scenario, cultural diversity is a reality in these countries, though some of them have more or less variety in terms of their internal ethnic complexity. The ethnic composition of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa may vary from states with peoples of Bantu and Nilotic origin, to states with ethnic groups with different systems of descent, different languages, beliefs, habits, and so on. There are even states that, having been ruled by more than one colonial power use, at present, more than one European language for the purpose of public administration. That is the case of Cameroon in West Africa.

For a non-African to understand the global picture of Sub-Saharan Africa, let's imagine Western Europe as a single country. Then travel from Scandinavia to Spain, meeting people with different physical types (different faces, bodies, hair, etc); people with different religions, beliefs and cosmological models of life and death; people with different "patterns for and of behavior" (see Keesing R.M., discussing Goodenough's (1957,1961¹⁰) concept of culture. 1981:68), with more or less intervention in the lives of individuals and groups of individuals. The inhabitants of this one single political entity, Europe, are so

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. In Mozambique, the South (South of Save River) used to be connected to South Africa, to be more specific, according to Ngoenha "the 'autonomist' nature of the Boers republic, imput a preference for the harbour at Delagoa Bay (at present Maputo) to the detriment of the English harbours of Durban and Port Elizabeth" (1992:138). The Center (between the Rivers Save and Zambezi) used to belong to The Mozambique Crown Company (with a majority of British capital). And the North (between the Rivers Zambezi and Rovuma), was also under control of mainly British capital. Ngoenha says that "Mozambique was inserted in the dynamics of XIX century's economy, let's say, as a 'British colony' by means of the Portuguese colonial power" (iden:140).

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. Goodenough, W.H. - Cultural anthropology and linguistics's, In Garvin P. (ed), report of the Seventh Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistics and Language Study. Monograph Series on Language and Linguistics, 9. Washington D.C. Georgetown University. 1957: Comment on cultural evolution. Daedalus 90:521-528. 1961.

different with very little in common in the course of their daily lives. Well, that is the reality of the African continent, where it is possible to find all this diversity within the socio-political-geographic space of one single country.

This is cultural diversity with, on the one hand, the richness engendered by plurality and, on the other hand, the complexity. A complexity, the administration has to take into account when it introduces, for instance, a code of behaviour that is supposed to punish the wrongdoing of every member of the community, and to reward their good deeds and attitudes. The same complexity shows its troublesome face, when the local leaders have to introduce a system of legal administration that is supposed to keep under control conflicts among the members of all the different communities, that make up the mosaic of its population.

Cultural diversity is, thus, for better or for worse, a reality in the African continent, and every government as well as the members of all communities have to live with this fact. The heads of African governments and states have agreed within the competence of the Organization of African Unity, to accept colonial borders in order to prevent conflicts. Even as regarding internal borders, we are aware that it is not a simple task to change borders, therefore the pragmatism of the leadership to accept present realities. The question is however, how to reach a consensus for good governance within every country? A consensus is necessary so that every community, every social organization, every ethnic group is pleased with its share of political power and participation, and to keep under control the normal conflict that exists in a latent state in any given society. The question is thus, which model of governance to adopt to reach consensus and bring about development?

On this point within this cultural diversity, tradition can play a role in helping to maintain social order and avoid conflict, and heal the social wounds of the war, for example. In this context the role played by traditional authority is very important because this authority symbolizes the connection between the ancestors with the land. And every African population group in the country praises its territory of origin and respects its ancestors. A territory of origin and the ancestors confer upon the individual in this socio-cultural universe a symbol of personal identity, and as a consequence, a symbol of national (territorial for the case of Mozambique) identity. But for traditional authority to play a role in governance, the state has to decentralize its structures of governance to a level close to where its authority/power really exists, otherwise it is no use to talk about it.

The examples we refer to here, come from the Mozambican reality. A reality we have been in contact with for the past nine

years as a lecturer, researcher and government adviser.

II - Tradition

- the question of the individual versus the community

On the subject of cultural diversity, we feel that it is important to say a few words about tradition. But we feel, also, that tradition should be defined within a proper context (Baptista Lundin 1992a, for concepts). In the Western context, for instance, one finds in any given society the tradition of a strong social connotation towards the individual, i.e., the human being the center of everything. This model comes originally from the Judeo-Christian tradition reinforced by the French Revolution's notion of the rights of the individual as opposed to the rights of the community (see Heater:1990).

The African person, on the other hand, at least in the experience of Mozambique, is a communal human being. Because of historical reasons, including colonialism, he or she is (still) first a member of a lineage. The property of the family answers for the basic needs of the individual, his or her ancestors are the gods they pray to, the elders are the government, and the youth is the defense and the support in the old age (Fortes:1959). What Smith calls "the dimensions of ethnies", "a collective name", "a common myth of descent", "a shared history", "a distinctive shared culture", "an association with a specific territory", "a sense of solidarity" (1986:22-31), is the basic essence of tradition for the Mozambican. But, because of historical reasons, the "shared territory" is not even the territory of the state and not even the territory of an ethnic group¹¹, it is rather the territory of the lineage, because in Africa states are still trying to build a nation. This "territory" has a chief that is supposed to look after the land as well as the well being of all members of the community.

Within the limits of this territory the individual becomes an adult and a collective person. There he or she shares a name, history and culture with the members of the community. It is within these boundaries that the individual learns culture, meaning civic education, how to treat other individual members of his own lineage and other lineages, i.e. the whole community. The individual learns about production and reproduction, meaning the sustenance of the group (techniques of agriculture, fishing, hunting, and the maintenance of the physical environment) and

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. The ethnic groups are dispersed in many parts of the country because of periodic wars, forced labour, migration, etc.

rules of marriage and residence. The individual learns about the history of the group, and the patterns of behaviour shared by all members of the community, i.e., the different socio cultural expressions of the community.

This territory has, thus, a history and a culture with a proper way of life. This culture moulds the personality of the individual. Therefore, the territory becomes an important point of reference for any male or female born there. This point of reference, many times a model for and of behaviour, will follow any male or female throughout his or her life. The collective human being is thus born within this community. Individual personality is thus connected with the territory of an individual's ancestors, and the history of his or her people is the history of reference for whatever happens in his or her life. This territory has a chieftancy which is a symbolic institution. It is a symbol to a group in a hierarchical relationship vis-à-vis the land and the ancestors. It is a symbol to all members of the different lineages that inhabit it. This territory is, thus, the **motherland** for all individuals, male or female, born there.

In a situation of cultural diversity, where the nation as it has been defined above does not exist, the individual is a human being of his or her own lineage's territory. The primary loyalty for him or her is located there, with all the consequences it may bear for the construction of a national identity. This is a fact at present in Mozambique that, if not treated properly could become a problem. Because of this potential source of conflict, i.e., conflict of ethnic loyalties (loyalties across the borders for example), we feel that it is urgent for governments (local or national) to understand what this primary loyalty really means for individuals and communities alike, in order to plan whatever has to be planned in the future, be it elections or democracy (following the new wave of reforms on the continent), or administration for development, with improvements in educational conditions, health, etc.

In order to build a solid and stable united state, one solution that individuals and communities alike would agree on, would be to bring to the level of governance (even if only in a symbolic way) something already known to the communities. An institution solidified by tradition ¹² that could then be(come)

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. We are aware that many traditions in many parts of Africa were manipulated by colonial powers in order to disrupt local socio political institutions (Ranger;1983:260). Nevertheless traditional authority/power is a reality in Mozambique, be it a response to many years of socio-cultural oppression or as a socio-political

universal within the territory of the state and become therefore an universal institution. We are talking about a formal recognition of the symbolic role played by traditional authority as "guardian of the land and keeper of social order". We use the word formal even if actually it is difficult to institutionalize what is a tradition. However, for the specific case of Mozambique, we feel that it should be formally recognized because, for too long as part of the official policy of the State, it has been formally denied.

PART II - The Case Of Mozambique

I - Introductory remarks

We see in the general discussion about development, democracy and good governance, the presentation of some allegedly universal elements which are made global in general terms. That may in fact be true in general terms. But we wonder whether this is really true for the majority of the countries undergoing the process of development, for example the case of Mozambique. Not being totally traditional as regarding its African heritage, Mozambique is under the influence of a system of cosmological pluralism with what we could call a poli-normativism. These norms do not answer for a dualistic system of beliefs, but they do answer for the African models of and for behaviour, i.e. its socio-cultural cosmologic system, which have been confronted with new models introduced by colonialism, diffusionism, cultural exchange, etc. This fact generates problems, especially for people working in the implementation and development of justice, land tenure issues, education, health, and administration, in general.

It is difficult to talk about universalities when, in Mozambique, for instance, the individual only feels like a social human being in the plenitude of the term, in his or her own community. The individual is basically a person of his or her community. The community gives him or her the feeling of territoriality (nationality) and therefore personality. In Mozambique the reference to any individual is always through his ancestors, "the son of someone". On the other hand, in the Western tradition, the individual is the centre of everything. He or she is supposed to be the centre of the universe. He or she is a human being by his or her own self. We have here a duality of values, a dichotomy of universes, not a universality.

reality that has endured for a long time. A recent fieldwork (1992) concerned with the search for its base of legitimacy, showed that the institution of traditional authority is important for individuals and communities alike as a symbol of territoriality and personality (see Baptista Lundin, 1993).

For African governments in general, and more specifically for people working in public management in different sectors of these countries, the existence of this duality generates problems. Problems because African countries are often under external pressure to accept new ideas many times contradictory to the way their citizens see and perceive things, and in clear disaccordance with the views of the majority of the population. According to these new external ideas the individual is often placed in a privileged position, to the detriment of the community, which causes trouble to him or her as well as to the community.

Even if we believe that the question is not to recreate what has already been created, we feel that African countries should adapt themselves to their own systems, i.e., adapt to the cognitive system of socio-political beliefs of their own people/communities, so they will recognize themselves in the different structures of government. The reason is simple, i.e., people in public management have to make the system work in order to bring about development. But what is that we view as development? What are the choices for the different countries on the continent? Let's talk about tradition, culture, as we presented it above, not in terms of traditionalism as being the equivalent of staticism. Tradition, in the way we see it, functioning in the local reality, can be and is, in fact, dynamic.

The African continent is at present in a process of transformation, as many parts of the world are. And African countries are searching for their own identities. In this complexity between time and space tradition and transition will meet each other. According to the comments of Spiegel and MacAllister in their book "Transition and Tradition in Southern Africa" "periods of social transition and transformation are commonly marked by calls upon tradition. This is because of the sense of security that tradition provides via the images it conjures up of continuity with the past. But tradition thus recalled is by no means static, as recent literature on its invention and recreation has demonstrated ¹³. Traditions invoked to lend salience to particular practices and beliefs in situations of major societal transformation are constantly being

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. Kessing R. and R. Tonkinson (eds) Reinventing traditional culture: The politics of Kastom in Island Melanesia. Special number of Mankind, 13,4.1982; Hobsbawm E. and T. Ranger (eds) The invention of tradition. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. 1983).

reworked, as are the images of the past they bring to mind. The same applies to those traditions called up in processes in which individuals undergo important transitions in personal social status. Tradition thus serves as a constantly reworkable resource" (1991:1). Equally dynamic is the use of tradition in different social organizations within the geographic space of Mozambique, as we can understand from research about survival strategies used in times of socio-cultural, socio-politic and socio-economic destabilization, like the present moment (Baptista Lundin 1991, 1992b, 1992c, 1993).

Traditional authority/power is, in Mozambique, a dynamic institution. This socio-political institution participated in different phases of the resistance against colonialism, it survived "modernism" after independence, and the war. One of the best explanations we have for its strong role at present in the society, on both sides of the conflict that originated the war that is about to end, is its dynamism.

II - The Model

- traditional authority and decentralization

The model for Mozambique should then be based on a social order that reconciles with the ideas within the tradition and the legitimacy of the exercise of authority/power. We talk about reconciliation because many years of civil war disrupted quite substantially the social fabric of the country.

But social control at local level means decentralization, which in this case will be the means to monitor the behaviour of local leaders.

The idea of decentralization is not new in the Mozambican political scenario. It has been discussed in different periods of contemporary history, especially during the Fourth Congress of Frelimo (1983), which at that time was the only political party in the country. At that time the discussion was about the excessive weight of the State at the central level, and the consequent weakness of governance in the provinces and districts

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. Mozambique has 11 provinces (the city capital has a status of province), 128 districts and 393 administrative posts. The political hierarchy is the following:

- the central state with its capital in Maputo;
- provinces;
- districts;
- administrative posts, and

With the introduction of the new constitution in November 1990, it became imperative for the central state to implement a program to decentralize the structures of government, in order to follow its article 116, which states: "at the various territorial levels, local organs of the State shall guarantee that citizens may participate and decide on matters of interest to their respective communities" (1990). Even if the Constitution does not state the specific form of participation and decision of the citizens of the Republic in matters of interest for the community, the local government should have, at least, financial and administrative autonomy.

The central idea of decentralization (see DNAL:1992/1993), and one that is of vital importance from the socio-political point of view, is to decentralize the levels of decision-making authority and provide the local governments the means (local taxes and shares of the central budget) to decide upon and implement their own policies (education, health, building of infrastructures). The citizens of the different regions of the state will then feel that they count in the central context of decision-making, and will, therefore, participate in the implementation of their own welfare.

The feeling of being part of a process, will improve the self respect and self confidence of the different population groups within the country ¹⁵. A positive (collective) feeling will arise spontaneously from their participation in the process, and help to strengthen national unity and build the foundations for a solid Nation. The philosophy behind the program is thus, to strengthen the parts, e.g., the socio-cultural pride of the different population groups, in order to build a solid and firm national unity.

Decentralization is the social control at the local level that will function as a kind of "vigilant eye" supervising the

- localities.

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. Mozambique has thirteen population groups (and seven sub-groups), grouped in two different systems of descent, i.e., matrilineality (mainly at the North of the Zambezi River) and patrilineality (mainly at the South of the Zambezi River). Matrilineal descent means that the rights to succession (political power) and inheritance (economic means and power) follows a female line. The authority and power passes normally, from her brother to her son. Patrilineal descent means that the same rights follow a male line. Normally from the father to his son.

exercise of power because, at the local level leaders are constantly under vigilance by the community. This principle of popular supervision at the local level is a good mechanism to develop Mozambique, in order to fight against, and more specifically to prevent, corruption. Especially because, if one is going to refer to tradition, to remain a (traditional) chief it is not enough to have ascribed legitimation (by birth) to exercise authority/power in the traditional society. The chief has to prove his or her competence in order to remain a chief by taking actions on daily tasks through a complicated process of legitimation that includes proper behaviour and good heart. Proper behaviour is connected with the fertility of the soil (good harvest); biological reproduction of the community (more and healthier children); redistribution of resources previously offered to him or her; and, the most important task; the maintenance of social order, i.e., keeping social conflict under control. There exist symbolic sanctions in case any of these tasks are not properly fulfilled. Because of all that, the traditional process of legitimation of the exercise of authority/power at the local level leaves little room for behaviour such as corruption. On the other hand, social prestation, distribution, redistribution, exchange and gifts, are concepts that have a space in this kind of socio-cultural reality.

The participation of traditional chiefs in matters of decision-making at the local level will then probably be one of the most important guarantees for the success of the (new) model presently being proposed.

Decentralization of the structures of government, deconcentration of the functions of different sectors from the central to local levels, and a role for traditional authority/power at local level in the symbolic context where it belongs, are the basic principles for the proposed model of government in Mozambique.

The model underlined here, approaches the popular perspective mentioned by Shivji (1991:255), in which he describes the debate about constitutionalism and democracy in Africa. Shivji discusses three perspectives: the liberal, the statist and the popular. The popular perspective is the one that, according to Shivji, "remains most undefined. It opposes both the statist /conservative/ and the liberal /approaches/ in their typically top-down orientation by emphasizing popular struggles and mass movements from below. It challenges the universality of liberal values and the authoritarianism of statist positions" (iden:ibidem). Shivji says however, that this model still remains "fuzzy and confused", which could also be the general feeling of the reader of this paper. But some characteristics of the approach presently under discussion in Mozambique, concrete

actions to be taken by the government towards the model presented here and brought for discussion at this Conference in Kampala, could help to delineate a more concrete framework for the final outline of the model, in other words, how it could be implemented, and where it could be based.

III - The Case Of Mozambique

As we said above, Mozambique is a country with twenty ethnic groups of Bantu origin with two systems of descent (matrilineality and patrilineality). Arabs, Indians, Chinese and Europeans have also settled on its territory, and we find the presence of all universal religions (Christianity, Islamism, Hinduism) along with many local African religions. Local, clanic or lineage religious customs to praise and honour the ancestors are widely practiced, and religious syncretism is also a local reality.

This cultural diversity in Mozambique manifests itself in different cultural expressions like language, dance, music, and rules of marriage and residence, and are in the different vehicles to transmit culture like myths, histories, and riddles, and in different ways to perceive and interpret concepts like good and bad, right or wrong, sickness or health (da Silva;1992 & 1992a). But in spite of the differences mentioned above, there exists similar behaviour common to all these peoples, such as the following:

- the respect for the ancestors,
- the attachment to the land (the territory of origin), and
- the concern for social reproduction of one's own group expressed in solidarity.

And as far as we have perceived different local realities, different socio-cultural universes and different cosmologies in Mozambique, there is a socio-political institution that symbolizes this set of concerns - traditional authority.

From our research, for the majority of the communities of Bantu origin found in Mozambique, the institution of traditional authority represents the highest symbolic expression of the socio-cultural universe of beliefs and respect. An important part of the process of enculturation of any individual into a socio-cultural collectivity is to value this institution. The importance of traditional authorities is embedded in the socio-cultural sphere of beliefs as a symbol. It exists by itself and is not supposed to be compared with other symbols. It should be accepted, and it is indeed accepted as long as it is important for the individual and the community alike, like other symbols elsewhere, because it represents a sense of belonging to a territory that unites the community. Traditional authority (based on a specific lineage) is something that no other community

possesses, it is unique for each community. It is a symbolic expression for the beginning of everything (nature and culture), the present, and continuity in the future. Such is the position of the institution of traditional authority in Mozambique. The reasons may vary: it could be the continuity of an old socio-cultural procedure, but it could also be something new that arose as an answer to years of oppression that attempted to disrupt many parts of the socio-cultural universe of local communities (by the colonial power and the post-independence ruling elite). Reality is that traditional authority is alive, present and important in the lives of the different communities in the country. Traditional authority is a symbol because it expresses something sacred embedded in the specific values of the communities, a value shared by all members of the community. Many attempts to suppress this symbol have failed and have brought disgrace upon communities. Therefore, the policy in Mozambique at present is to value the institution as an important part of the cultural heritage of the African people - the majority - and to look for a formula to make possible cohabitation between tradition and formal administration in areas of concern to the communities. That is, how to leave an open space in which tradition may function, to expand and develop itself in a dynamic way, and at the same time provide a legal framework, to safeguard the interests of the unitary state.

This decision can be interpreted as political pragmatism which in fact I believe it is. But it is also an attempt to give to communities and individuals alike, formal institutions in administration, where they may be able to recognize themselves. We believe that this decision might bring about a new understanding about society and models of development. It could also be part of the search for the thread of the historic process of the building of social formations from local social organizations, a process that has been interrupted for so long beginning with the advent of colonialism.

Below we offer a brief description of the social organization of a Mozambican ethnic group, the **Amakhuwa**, in order to illustrate the role a local traditional African chief plays, the attributions of chieftainship, the way in which they solve conflicts, and what they represent for the community - the symbolism of the office.

IV - An Example From The Field

The case below will illustrate a specific social organization, **Amakhuwa**, that although specific in how its mechanism function, is a good example for the purpose of this article. The phrases in quotations are words and statements made by local informants.

IV.I - The **Amakhuwa** Socio-Cultural Region

We chose examples of some of the basic aspects of **Amakhuwa** social organization because, for us, it represents an important part of the field work we accomplished recently (1989 and 1992). a project about traditional authority/power. This social organization is specific regarding its model for and of behaviour, and corresponds to the reality of other Mozambican societies in aspects we consider essential for the type of information presented in this paper. We underline, thus, some aspects of **Amakhuwan** socio-political structure in order to offer a fairly representative picture of its functioning and to support some considerations we present in this paper.

IV.I.I - The Structure Of The Exercise Of Power In **Amakhuwa** Society

The **Amakhuwa** is a matrilineal population group, which means, the line of sucession (political power), and inheritance (economic power), passes from a man to the sons of his sisters, i.e., his uterine nephew. In the area of our fieldwork ¹⁶ sucession and inheritance can also be given to a parallel cousin, son of a maternal aunt (which means one more nephew of the previously deceased uncle), keeping political and economic power in the same generation of the deceased in a system of collaterality.

The lineage is transmited through women to their sons and daughters, i.e., every person (male or female) belongs to the same lineage of their mothers and her sisters and brothers. The head of the lineage is an old woman, mother or grandmother of the members of the lineage. The stucture of a matrilineal family confers to a man the social role (principal role) of brother and maternal uncle and he is the center of family authority.

IV.I.II - The Territory Of The Lineage

The **Amakhuwa** in this region used to live in their own lineage's territory called **N'tthetthe** ¹⁷ in the linguistic **Emakhuwa** variation of the area ¹⁸. The **N'tthetthe** was not a

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. The districts of Montepuez, Namuno and Balama, in the South of the province of Cabo Delgado.

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. This norm of residence was in force until the colonial government began the policy of forced villagization. This policy of villagization continued also after independence with the introduction of the so-called communal villages.

settlement typified by a village with urban characteristics, but a dispersed settlement with small family units called **erukulu**, agglomerated in groups containing huts for living, an open space for animal breeding, territory for cultivation, and sacred territory for ceremonies, marked on the ground by geographic accidents (rivers or mountains, or land marks like trees or ditches). In order to prevent the local population to give support to the guerrilla movement during the 1960s and 1970s war of liberation, lineages were removed from their **Mitthethe**, and grouped in security settlements by the colonial power.

This territory has a chief who is a member of the lineage that first occupied the area and settled in the zone. This chief is the **Mwéné**, who is the the big chief. **N'humu** is a subordinated chief to **Mwéné**, in a hierarchical position just below him. **N'humu Mulupale** (big chief), is the **N'humu** from the **Nihimu** (clan), of the oldest segment of the lineage in the territory. Many **Mamwéné** were "Régulos" ¹⁹ during the colonial government as were many **Mahumu**, and their territory used to designate the limits of the "Regulado". In this zone, every "Régulo" was, "in principle" ²⁰,

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. South of the River Lúrio, in the province of Nampula, there is a slight linguistic variation as regarding the terms we are using here. The language is nevertheless the same and equally understandable, for the people from the South as well as the people from the North of the River.

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. The Portuguese had a system of administration whereby they "used" the legitimacy of the local traditional chiefs in order to gain legitimacy to exercise power. In this order of ideas, many traditional chiefs became a link between their own people and the colonial administration. They were called "Régulos", which means little king. Their role was to transmit the orders of the colonial administrative personnel to their own people, collect the local taxes, provide labour for the administration (building of roads, for instance) and the settlers (agriculture). But according to information gathered during recent field work in different socio-cultural areas of the country, a great number of traditional chiefs resisted the occupation through a systematic process of sabotage, preventing their own people from being taken for forced labour, sabotaging the production of cash crops like cotton and adulterating the register of the population in order to make the collection of taxes, and alike, difficult.

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. We use the expression "in principle", because in the beginning phase of contacts with the colonial power, many big chiefs used to place their slaves in the role of chief, and the lineages of those slaves occupied, thereafter, the chieftancy. However the

either **Mwéné** or **N'humu**, but not all **Mwéné** or **N'humu** became a "Régulo" due to contradictions between the institution of traditional authority and the colonial administration. "In the **N'tthetthe**, the /social/ control was exerted by the **Mwéné** with the help of a **Mahumu**. The orders they used to give to the people did not begin with colonialism, they existed before ... **Mahumu** used to bring messages from **Mamwéné** to the community, but the primary concern was cultivation for local consumption. Cotton (cash crop) was introduced by the colonial administration".

In the mind of an individual, concerning his or her own social position regarding personal reference and sense of belonging, which means, the very essence of his or her own personality, the **N'tthetthe** is this reference. It is the territory where the individual is born (his or her territory of origin), and where he goes to marry (the territory of his bride to be) following the rule of uxori-locality ²¹. It is this territory, that confers to the individual the first sensation of a collective personality within a primary group of loyalty, i.e. his or her (matri)lineage. Everything begins in this territory for the formation of "a collective I", for the formation of the individual's own personality.

The **Mwéné** has total control of his territory, also called matrimonial territory because it is there the individual marries. Marriage is exogamic (outside one's own lineage), but often preferential, in this case with the daughter of the maternal uncle ²². When this happens, the maternal nephew marries in the territory of his uncle, in what we call **avuncolocal** residence (from **avunculus**, uncle or little grandfather in Latin).

Apiamwéné, also called Queen by the Portuguese, is a female of the lineage of the **Mwéné**, and plays an important role in **Amakhuwa** society. The importance of her role derives from the fact that she is the link between two chiefs. She is born from the same womb **erukulu**, of the old chief, her brother, and from her womb the new chief, her son, is born. During the colonial era "when

members of the communities knew the real royal chiefs, especially because of the ceremonies they had to perform. Besides, during the colonial era the real royal chiefs many times used to exert the real power working behind the scenes made up by themselves in order to mislead the colonial administration.

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. Residence in the territory of the spouse (uxoris = wife in Latin).

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. Notice that the daughter of the maternal uncle follows the lineage of her mother.

the "Régulo" was absent she used to decide in his place. We had once here ... a female "Régulo" ... her name was **Nhacona**. The Portuguese placed a male, later on, at her side (her son?), because they did not believe her strength would allow her to walk long distances to hold **banjas** ²³. When she died, he stayed /in her place/ ... and afterwards only males became chiefs". **Apiamwéné** is either the **Mwéné**'s sister or his maternal aunt.

The **N'tthetthe** is a socio-political unit. Its chief carries out socio-political, socio-cultural and socio-economic functions. During colonial times, this chief used to function as a sort of linkage between the colonial administration and the community, as mentioned above. He used to bring to the community under his control, directives from the administration. The **Mwéné** used to administer his territory/land - **elapu**, and his people.

A political organigram of the hierarchal authority of the territory is as follows:

- a **Mwéné**, chief of a lineage - **n'locko** (pl. **malocko**);
- a **N'humu**, chief of the lineage's segment - **n'koto** (pl. **makoto**);
- a **Njeio** (the oldest member of the line) - **erukulu**.

... all those men have at their side an **Apiamwéné**.

- The **N'tthetthe** comprises generally,
- one **Mwéné** (chief of the royal lineage);
 - more than one **N'humu** (chiefs of lineage's segments);
 - many **Njeio** (chiefs of lines).

According to informants about the functioning of a **N'tthetthe**, one may say that it comprises a sphere of power where the authority of the **Mwéné** means:

- the control of the land (use for agriculture and hunting, and the care of the environment) and the residence;
- rights and transference of rights (in matters of sucession and inheritance);
- rights to manage production and goods (to use, sell, buy and offer);
- maintenance of the social order and social reproduction (civic education and cultural transmisson);
- marriages;

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. **Banjas** is the local word for meetings that used to take place between the chiefs and the communities about local problems, or simply for the transmission of information from the colonial administration. Over time, the colonial authorities began to take part in these meetings.

- resolution of conflicts (tribunals [Council of Elders] and ordeals, **mwaavi**);
- reconciliation through rituals of purification involving the affected groups (families, lineages, clans), to heal the social wounds caused by the wrongdoing that brought about, for example, death;
- religious matters.

Those functions are the ultimate responsibility of the **Mwéné**, for which he receives support from the **Mahumu** and the **Apiamwéné** and often, the specialist in herbs, divination and cures. Normally, problems only reach the **Mwéné** as an appeal or decision of last resort.

All territorial units have their own Council of Elders where, according to information gathered from field work, **Apiamwéné** also used to take part.

IV.I.III - Symbology Of Power

The **Mwéné** had to demonstrate a certain behaviour and natural capacity (especially regarding resolution of conflicts), in order to remain in "office". It was not enough to be a member of the royal lineage and belong to the royal **Nihimo** inside the **N'tthetthe**. That was without doubt a necessary, but far from sufficient condition. What was necessary and sufficient, was personal behaviour that should be specific and would distinguish him or her from the other members of the community. It should be behaviour that made him or her unique, and therefore legitimate in the eyes of the community of his or her **elapu**. Preconditions to become a chief used to be:

- ."to look to his heart ...;
- . after ... he had to be a generous person ...;
- . after ... he had to know how to treat the people."

Part of these preconditions were expressed in symbols the chief could bear, prerogatives of the office. In this zone there was the **Metthu** ²⁴, a type of shed, a locale for meetings where the chiefs used to sit and receive subjects especially for the resolution of conflicts. The **Metthu** used to, and still does, stand out by its presence in the landscape as a physical symbol of power. But there existed other symbols. The different symbols of power and of the exercise of authority can be summarized as:

- objects, and
- attitudes.

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. **Metthu** is also how this branch of **Amakhuwa** people is commonly called.

... with the rights of office such as,

- gifts,
- deference,
- usage of specific objects for,
 - appearance,
 - domination,

... and prerogatives of,

- performance of certain actions, and attitudes;
- maintenance of a certain posture.

The colonial power added more symbols as prerogatives of the big chiefs, and modified some of those already existent. Colonial power conferred new symbols to the chiefs that were of certain importance in the socio-cultural context of their own colonial societies, like military uniforms and stripes. For an occupation power that searched for legitimacy in the occupied land, this symbology was justified and can be explained from this point. However, according to informants encountered during our field work, the colonial power never gained legitimacy because it had violence as its principal means of support, and violence is never accepted as legitimate on the part of those who suffer it. "The local colonial administrator was not respected, he was feared" say the members of the locally-interviewed communities. Therefore, he had no authority, the symbol of legitimacy, but he had power, the symbol of violence. This colonial power was made legal from the point of view of legal institutions (according to its own laws), but was not legitimately legitimate (according to the cognition of the local African communities); therefore, the war for liberation.

We have here, on the one hand, the legitimacy of the office holder to make use of the symbol and, on the other hand, the legitimation (the process) of the office holder using the symbols with specific goals, regulated by norms and rules following the socio-cultural values of the community. This usage is, on the one hand, a reflection of a certain socio-cultural universe, and reflects, on the other hand, its same universe.

We have, then, objects and attitudes; rights of the office like gifts and deferences; the usage of specific objects; and the appearance and the domination. And we have also prerogatives to perform certain actions or maintain certain attitudes, which means, to have a certain behaviour that distinguishes the chief from the other members of the community.

Part III - A Socio-Cultural Overview Of Mozambique Today And Its Steps Towards The Future

I - The Perception Of The Community As Regarding The Role Of The State In Governance

Presented above is a summary description of the hierarchical structure of the mechanisms of the exercise of authority/power in **Amakhuwa Metthu** society, and a description of some parts of its socio-political spectrum. The principal aspects of the exercise of authority/power are:

- land (control of productivity and care of environment),
- resolution of conflicts, and
- symbols of power.

Using this presentation we can now understand the logic behind local perception of authority/power and the bases of support for this authority. We could see in this brief description,

- how the community feels represented by traditional authority, through the exercise of the authority of the legitimate chief in the territory of his or her own lineage, and
- how this exercise of power is connected to the symbolic sphere, so important in the formation of the personality of the individual within a given community.

The colonial power "used" this socio-political structure of power, i.e., the traditional authority, because it perceived this authority as legitimate. Based on this legitimation, the colonial power tried to legitimaze its own position which was an impossible task, because due to the nature of colonialism, it could never be made legitimate. The local African communities perceived the colonial state as an expression of power not authority. Power under colonialism meant the imposition of the use of violence. Authority was, and still is, in the eyes of the communities, the collective cognition of a process of legitimization. This process begins with an initial legitimacy perceived as legitimately legitimate for that, and therefore is accepted by the community. The power to exert such authority was, before and during the colonial period, in the hands of the traditional chief, because of his or her connection with the land. From this initial legitimacy, the control of conflict and the maintenance of the social order in the community was made possible.

At the time of independence, Frelimo, the party still in power in Mozambique, had the support of the great majority of Mozambicans. It had a legitimate mandate to exert authority and power. This legitimacy was conferred upon Frelimo because it won it in the battlefield, during the struggle for liberation, and from the political role it played in the international arena to make the struggle, and thereafter, independence, a reality.

However Frelimo did not consider then the policies necessary to maintain this legitimacy through socio-cultural governing practices, accepted and wanted by the different communities in the territory ²⁵. Then in the eyes of the communities, a dissociation between authority and power occurred, which meant in this context a dissociation between legitimacy and legitimation, on the one hand and, violence and authoritarianism, on the other hand. The socio-cultural dissociation sustained in many socio-cultural regions a declared conflict, which supported destabilization - the war. In other regions the conflict remained at the level of passive resistance with, for instance, low production and no participation in the socio-political life of the community ²⁶.

In general, the communities did not feel the representativeness of the state. They felt the presence of power but not the presence of authority. This "no-relationship" generated social disorder in the very structure of government; if we understand (good) governance to be an action that comprehends two ends; one end sending the message and the other receiving it in a interrelationship that can be minimal or maximal, functioning for the good of the community. It was a "no-relationship", if we comprehend (good) governance as the exercise of authority and non-violence in a state of law.

I.I - The Communities And Their Territories

The socio-political institutions in Mozambique, failed to develop themselves to attain a form of government with institutions functioning across lineages (see Cobbing;1976, for a study about the Matabele of the XIX century and its structure across lineages) because of colonial penetration. Therefore in Mozambique, there is nothing comparable to a centralized socio-

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. See note (2) for comments about the possible socio-politic and socio-cultural reasons for the choice of the development model adopted by the ruling elite at the time of independence.

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. It is imperative to say clearly that, according to our point of view, the external reasons for the war were without doubt extremely important. They are already widely known not only with the involvement of South Africa but also many internal and external socio-political forces displeased with a model of development that if it had functioned in Mozambique, would have created a dangerous precedent for a successful multi-racial society. Because the external causes are more widely known, we deal here only with the local internal socio-cultural reasons that offered a social base for internal destabilization.

political institution representing a people or an ethnic group, but only lineages, even if in some parts of the country one can find a kind of hierarchical subordination between neighbors, like the case among **Amakhuwa Metthu** in the South of the province of Cabo Delgado ²⁷. There existed then socio-political institutions in the area and an elaborated local socio-political system of governance, but not in the meaning of the concept made universal by western values.

Without an institution with a single chief in whom is concentrated legitimacy to rule over a whole ethnic group, the communities claim, in the present, the right to appoint their community chiefs within their own territories, even if imported electoral models must be used. This simple procedure has been denied throughout the country since independence, and in many parts of the country even before it, because of contradictions between the institution of traditional authority and the colonial government. After independence, the reason given, according to the official policy then, was that the traditional chiefs were supposed to have been collaborators of the colonial power. This alien power used traditional legitimacy of the chiefs in order to govern the country. But the majority of the communities disagrees with this version (see Baptista Lundin 1992b;1992c).

These administrative territories are, at present, called villages or localities, and there exist traditional rules dictating who should rule there and how it should be done. The communities are aware (when it is explained to them) that the new electoral game will decide who will govern the territory, but these administrative bodies could also be appointed by central government. Therefore they only ask that the prohibition on traditional authorities to administrate be lifted ²⁸, so they may

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. In the reports we wrote in 1992 about the **Metthu** (Baptista Lundin;1992a) and some areas of **Shona** (Baptista Lundin;1992b), we can find a embryo of a state with relations of hierarchy among different chieftancies, subordination, clear rules for the establishment of alliances by marriages, payment of tributes, and other vestiges being either the remains of a destroyed state, like the case of Munhumutapa in the **Shona** region, or an embryo of something that never became a state because of the colonial penetration in the area. Anyway, there is in Mozambique a typology of small and big chiefs, and hierarchy in some zones, but all chiefs are mainly chiefs of lineages exerting power within the limits of their own lineage's territories of over no more than 350 individuals.

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. A prohibition that in the present does not exist any more.

be able to choose a preferred candidate, a ban that used to be in force at the time of the one party system. In case the administrative body is to be appointed by central government, they say that "the community only asks for someone aware of the characteristics of the African man ... we have here ceremonies, dances, spirits, hunger, ... that is our life here in the bush ... the Administrator has to come and interact with the community ... he has to do it".

In the territory of the lineages exist rules and norms, well defined and well known by the community and considered legitimate. The rules and norms dictate who should be the chief. These norms should be respected for the good of the community, because the community thinks that this is the best way to do it. These rules and norms speak of the symbolic connections of the chiefs with the land, and through the land, connections with the ancestors. Besides, there exist mechanisms in the system that control the exercise of authority/power with a continuous process of legitimization whereby the chief has to prove regularly his or her legitimacy to remain in office. The legitimation (the process of reinforcement of the legitimacy) occurs primarily through the positions the chief takes in matters of production/land (economy, care of the environment), conflicts/maintenance of social order (justice), and ceremonies/social order (ideology). And in Mozambique, this has to be taken into account in any process of change, like the process of decentralization and good governance (Baptista Lundin;1992b:38).

We observed the existence of rules and norms inside lineages', clanic's or totemic's territories that are legitimate for different levels of governance, during our field work in the **Mashona** socio-cultural region in the provinces of Sofala and Manika. In those territories, with regards god governance, the communities ask for an administrator or a candidate, with a local socio-cultural identity. This will is expressed because of the previous ban. Also they feel that the administrator should understand what is going on among different groups of settlements; so as to help maintain social order and harmony among the members of the same lineages as well as between them and their guests in the same territory. At the level of the administrative hierarchy above it, the communities ask for a local administrator with a local socio-cultural identity in order to maintain good relationships through alliances (marriages) following the norms in the region. Everything above these mentioned levels (like the provinces, for instance), should follow the rules of the electoral process, where the members of the communities will also choose according to their free will, and most probably, according to local tradition.

In the case of Mozambique, "what we call these administrative units - localities, administrative territories, districts,

provinces, or state, is not important. What is important is for us to know what each one of these administrative units mean for the communities settled there" (Baptista Lundin 1992c:51).

According to what we have seen and heard during our last field work in 1992, the logical consequence of all we said above is that the state can reinforce its internal structures decentralizing administration, by using in this process administrative units based in institutions already legitimated in the eyes of different local communities. The state could then consider the involvement of traditional communities represented by their chiefs, where they are legitimated in the eyes of the communities, and in matters that have to do with the maintenance of local social order. This opinion was expressed by all provincial representatives in a Seminar held in Maputo in April 1993, where decentralization and the role of traditional authority were discussed. According to what has been said above, the traditional chief has plenty to say regarding civic education and the administration of land and justice; therefore the difficult task of the state to govern these sectors could be diminished by maintaining and using the chiefs for this purpose.

We know, for instance, of the existence of numerous problems concerning land at the local level leading to a situation of social disorder at present. We are aware of social problems of a more generalized character that have to do with lack of civic education. Traditional authorities possess the proper mechanisms and have the knowledge of specific practices to handle these matters. The rites of initiation for the purpose of socio-cultural and civic education of the members of the community serves as an example. What is suggested for Mozambique then is for the state to "use" these traditional institutions in the good sense of the term, lending to it its value, in order to reinforce the unity in the country, and bring back social order and peace to these communities, reinforcing itself in the process. And that is what is under consideration in Mozambique at present.

One of the primary concerns from the part of a leader of any community, or a good government that esteems the human rights of its members, should be to accept and take benefit from existent institutions or socio-cultural practices that make the human being feel at peace with him or herself and with his or her own physical and socio-cultural environment.

We are going to present cultural practices, which make human beings feel at peace with themselves in Mozambique. What we commonly call tradition can, therefore, increase the self-esteem of the members of specific communities. They are:

1. the environment can be cared for in a better way with the participation of local communities, where they follow rules

and norms of their cultural heritage. We should not forget the connection between ancestors and land, where the land is "the cradle and the tomb" of the ancestors, and traditionally, has to be well taken care of;

2. we have the predominant role played by women in matrilineal societies which provides a specific social place for them in these societies;
3. we have the institution of the **lobolo**, a social prestation from the lineage of the husband, that provides a guarantee for a reliable social place in the community of the husband, to children and women (wives) in patrilineal societies;

(2) and (3) are traditional practices that should be recognized and reinforced in order to strengthen the position of women and children in the specific community, and in the end reinforce civil society and good governance on the part of the state;

4. we have civic education brought out by the practice of rites of initiation, a socio-cultural practice in force among almost all population groups in Mozambique.

These are clear examples of basic rules of the local civil society under traditional chiefs. These are local socio-cultural expressions providing a reinforcement of the role of individuals in the society, and guaranteeing social reproduction under a system of controlled conflict. These are, thus, examples of socio-cultural expressions that can reinforce the role of individuals within their own communities, reinforce the different communities as a whole, and in the end reinforce the state itself. But of course one has to understand the concepts explaining these socio-cultural realities in their own socio-cultural context (see Baptista Lundin 1992a for concepts in their own socio-cultural context), otherwise one may end up with ready made explanations and, either reject the practices as static, or adopt them with harmful consequences for the society. The risk to confuse tradition with the "ossification" of the law, should be prevented at any cost (Bourdillon:19725).

II - A Discussion About A Mozambican Model For Good Governance And Development

The discussion about the decentralization of the structures of government, deconcentration of the functions of some sectors, and the role of traditional authority/power in governance in Mozambique, is at present an exercise aiming to provide a space for a better system of government in order to solve national as well as local problems.

Decentralization will be put in force with a good use of the existing legitimacy of the traditional local African authority with its own mechanisms to maintain social order. This measure,

once in force, will avoid the introduction of too many elements based on new and alien values, by valuing what already exists in the society and is important for the community.

As we know at present, many models of government in force in Africa have so far not presented good results; at least not as good as the results found in places from which the models originate. The continent is presently in a situation of general calamity and disorder, with war, famine, and underdevelopment in countries with different models of government. We wonder then, whether it is possible to transplant well functioning models of government from a specific historical process into a different reality with a different historical process of development. The different colonial powers have either exported their own system of government, or created new models of government into which their colonies were supposed to fit. The British colonial system created the model of indirect rule, i.e., to rule through local indigenous institutions adapted to British models (see Ranger;1983). The French created the model of direct rule, i.e., intervening with their own models. The Belgians and the Portuguese created a system of assimilation, that aimed to make the colonized people socio-cultural "copies" - clones - of their colonial "masters".

Africa is now facing a political dilemma regarding systems of government. The old models did not work, but the crucial question is what to do? We are aware that in a global world integrated from South to North, it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement a model of government totally endogeneous (a local product from a local reality) in an African country. However, what many African scholars and their colleagues, working with their eyes open to the reality of the continent, are trying to do at present, is to come together for theoretical and applied discussions, in order to find good suggestions for the form of government (maybe a syncretic solution), to meet the problems African countries are facing at present with, among other matters, a severe crisis of identity

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. People keep asking themselves "who am I?", searching for their socio-cultural identity, ... , with a confusion in their minds and an interconnection of models for and of behaviour at their disposal in the societies. Mozambique held a conference in July, at which one of the topics for discussion was to try to search for the Mozambican identity (see note 30 below).

II.I - Political Decision (democratization, legitimation)
- empowerment of civil society

As we said above, many scholars concerned about African problems are discussing, at present, the subject of local government, in order to help the continent to break the present crisis so many face, and to derive a model of government suitable to the African reality(ies).

A modern trend in the world at present, is to talk about civil societies, i.e., civil institutions supposed to represent individuals and groups of individuals. In Sub-Saharan Africa the civil society is basically constructed out of the social network based on kinship. Kinship is, for individuals, an ideology of life (see Meillassoux, 1972). This ideology consists on being a member of a lineage that gives a human being a feeling of identity in the territory of the lineage. Almost all types of relationships taking place in a situation of despair and chaos, such as the present reality of Mozambique, are founded on the social network based on kinship (kinship is actually, the real source of socio-cultural identity, even outside a delicate situation of socio-political and socio-economic chaos). We witness at present in Mozambique, on the one hand,

- a revival of the institution of family (in its different conceptual definitions), where it has been destroyed by the war (displaced, refugees, or death relatives); and,
- ... on the other hand,
- a reinforcement of family structures made concrete by the extension of the social network based on kinship (terms of) to "strangers" within the group. Even new terms of kinship have been created in order to give place to new categories of kin, in order to help the family to cope and survive in a situation of social crisis (socio-economic and socio-cultural crisis) (Baptista Lundin; 1991).

Therefore, in order to strengthen civil society, the program of decentralization is searching for structures of power the local civil society (meaning the African society) regards as legitimate ³⁰. I said in an article (Baptista Lundin:1992), that the basis for the legitimate exercise of authority/power is, in the case of Mozambique, the cognitive awareness the rural

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. In the First National Conference of Culture held in Maputo in July 12-16 1993, to delineate a cultural policy for the country, it was the consensus among the participants (delegates and guests) that the real basis of the cultural heritage of the Mozambicans is Bantu, with good contributions from Asians and Europeans (Ministry of Culture and Youth;1993).

domestic society has of its own social organization, a social organization based mainly on agricultural production ³¹ .

Legitimacy is not a social contract, but an instrument of power. And in the rural domestic society, the connection between land, social roles, status and social action, and (the exercise of) authority/power is very important. It is important to be close to choices and human actions, but is no less important to understand the forces that form these choices and actions. It is thus important (as presented by Meillassoux;1972) to understand that:

- in an agrarian society, the foundation of its ideology is the connection between the first person/group that has grown a seed, still germinating symbolically, in order to give food to the group, i.e., the symbol of continuity of the group through kinship. ...

And,

- the basis of the primary unit of production is the group that has to keep itself united (cohesive) from the time of the planting of the seed to the time of the harvest, in order to be able to use the product of the work and have the right to use the seed for the following planting (it is thus a cyclic process). The family is this basic unit of production. ...

And,

- the basis for the social reproduction of the group ³² is the trust the group has to place in alliances through marriage with other groups.

... In order to understand the premises of functioning of such a society, one has to pay attention to the connection between

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. More than 85% of the population of the country have a rural origin and the same figure answers for agricultural production in three different sectors, private, statal and familiar. The last sector is very important in the general socio-economic context because, even if it is not directed for export in order to bring foreign currency to the country, it feeds such an important portion of the population, that it solves the local problems of import of food, hunger, and misery in the country as a whole.

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. Social reproduction is the continuous process to keep and reproduce values and models of and for behaviour within a society, which is only possible through biological reproduction.

political authority/power and the economic control exerted in the group, i.e., the control of the production (land, seeds and tools), and of the social reproduction (cultural values to be reproduced and women for biological reproduction).

Let's face the facts that,

- in any given hierarchical society, the legitimacy of the exercise of authority/power reinforces an inequitable situation;
- the different agencies of transmission of culture transfer, by the means of different vehicles of cultural transmission (rituals, ceremonies, myths, and above all the language), norms and rules that sustain this hierarchy (see Bourdieu and Passeron:1977, Book I);
- groups hierarchically subjugated (women, children, slave lineages, peasants with no land, and alike), "learn" the role of subjugation through a social hierarchical order. And this order distributes social roles, social status and social action within the society;
- this hierarchy is legitimated through the usage of symbols during the process of cultural transmission to all members of the society.

Let's face the facts that,

- the hierarchy is legitimately legitimate in accordance with the factors mentioned above creating an ideology:
 - to explain the reason for the status quo, in this case, the situation of inequality;
 - to legitimate the status quo itself;
 - to control conflicts that may put the status quo in danger.

These brief theoretical considerations are presented, in order to clarify the concept of legitimacy, and the perception individuals and groups of individuals have about the exercise of authority/power in the rural domestic society, i.e., the role of the traditional authority is its right to exercise power.

Traditional socio-political systems we have found in Mozambique are well in accordance with the theoretical explanation presented above, as could be seen in Part II with the brief description of the socio-political structure of **Amakhuwa** social organization. Therefore, in order to introduce changes to meet peoples' own expectations one has to gravitate around this model, at least with a symbolic recognition of the institution. In the case of Mozambique, the subject is still open for more analysis and research. But the idea is mainly that the basis for the model of good governance and development should be well integrated, and lie within the functioning structures of local African societies in its present functioning dynamic. No one is planning to go back to the past. The idea is to meet the local socio-cultural universe and follow the dynamics of the local African civil society according to the basic principles presented

in chapter one of Mozambique's Constitution, the article 6 paragraph (g), that says, that one of the "fundamental aims of the Republic of Mozambique is the affirmation of the Mozambican character, its traditions and other social and cultural values" (1990).

IV - A Seminar About Decentralization And The Role Of Traditional Authority/power In The Process

The Ministry of State Administration, responsible for territorial and administrative questions in Mozambique, held last April a seminar about decentralization and the role Traditional Authority/power should play in this process. We will present below the recommendations in general terms (MSA;1993), that arose from discussions among administrators (ministers, governors, general directors), politicians (members of parliament and different political parties), members of Churches, academics, representantives of the foreign community, and local personalities. African scholars and local academics presented their own views on traditional authority from the perspective of their own field of research (history, philosophy, culture, land tenure issues, justice).

It is important to present these recomendations here, in order to show the ideas currently being discussed in Mozambique as regarding the acceptance of its own socio-cultural heritage in the process towards development and good governance.

IV.I - Recommendations From The Seminar

1. The existence of "Traditional Authorities" should be recognized by the State, with their socio-cultural specific features, and acknowledged as an authority with a legitimate representation within their own communities;
2. Its existence is a reality based on values, norms and rules of behaviour and a reflection of institutional forms of being of local communities;
3. These communities have their roots in local history, and have maintained a dynamic of development throughout time, far from the restrictive activity of the modern State;

The institutions are a reality in their role to keep these communities together. A reality manifesting itself before the State and its legal system. They are not created by the State, but have been generated by the communities themselves throughout centuries;

4. Being so, the seminar considers that the State should not only recognize the local African "Traditional Authorities", but

also develop a fruitful relationship with them having in view social harmony and the development of the communities;

5. More concretely, the seminar recommends that, in the process of decentralization through the constitution of municipalities, the community institution called in general terms by "Traditional Authority", should also be considered;

The seminar recommends that, the law of municipalities (local government) should also establish the role and the institutional insertion of Traditional Authorities, in symbiosis with the municipalities. The established norms should be minimal and of a general character, in order to allow the diversity of the local Traditional Authority as well as its dynamics of development.

To accelerate the process of recognition, the seminar recommends that the Ministry of State Administration prepare at once a programmed and oriented direction to be proposed to the Central Government and directed to all Provincial Governors, about the need to cooperate and the mode of articulation with local Traditional Authorities. The Ministry should also provide these directions with normal mechanisms about how government authorities should interact at the local level;

... and in order to cope with the dynamics of the local societies in a process of constant mutation, the seminar recommended finally that,

6. The Ministry of State Administration should continue to develop and to expand initiated research, following acquired experiences and make periodic evaluation of the work, as well as to take responsibility for and make the relevant parts among different levels of the administration of the State, the municipalities and local Traditional Authorities, participate as subject and object in the research.

V - Final Comments

This article aimed to give a brief overview of Mozambique's past, present and future, as regarding the socio-cultural field of choices taken and considered necessary at present in order to effect good governance and development. It is not yet a discourse based on a solid academic opinion, but an attempt to furnish, in a rather provocative way, ideas to be discussed during the Conference in Kampala.

We described problems and local realities, and tried to present ideas about how to solve this puzzle using local solutions, i.e., how to bring about good governance and

development with the acceptance and value of the African socio-cultural heritage through the participation of African civil society and traditional local authorities.

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