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ABSTRACTS

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The history of postcolonial kinglets in Guinea Bissau

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This paper attempts to demonstrate that the role of traditional authorities in today's Guinea Bissau is embedded in a long-term history that goes back to their pre-colonial and colonial history. Looking back to the situation of traditional authorities by the end of the colonial period (the early '70s), the paper discusses the different configurations of legitimacy of present-day authorities in relation to both local population and State authorities.

Key words: Guinea Bissau, traditional authorities, colonialism, postcolonialism, State.

Postcolonial conflicts in the Antankarana kingdom in Northern Madagascar

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This case study presents the elements that have come into play and the political strategies that have controlled the troubled development of negotiations over the conditions for establishing an aquaculture installation in the heart of a sacred monarchy, between the sovereign and representatives of the Malgache State, and the multinational company in question. National State regulation was replaced, in this case, by initiatives by both supranational actors (the World Bank, holdings, reformist religious movements) and local ones (plebeian groups and noblemen, migrants' associations and rival dynastic branches), reaching a point at which the king of Antankarana imposed religious taboos and organised affliction rituals in opposition to the installation. This approach by contemporary globalisation highlights the way in which the mercantilisation of the environment and the private appropriation of land generate a reshaping of the conflict between political powers, both on a national and a local scale, to conquer the State apparatus and gain control of populations and territorial resources.

Key words: Madagascar, sacred monarchy, mercantilisation, infra-politics

Traditional justice in the reconciliation between Rwanda and Burundi

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This article reviews the use of traditional justice in two post-conflicts in the Great Lakes region: those of Rwanda and Burundi. In Rwanda, the government, led by the Rwanda Patriotic Front (FPR), has modernised and shaped for its own interests the *gacaca*, who are responsible for seeking justice for the victims of the 1994 genocide. In Burundi, the government has yet not deployed all the transitional justice mechanisms as envisaged in the Arusha agreement. The *bushingantahe* (the rehabilitation of whom is also envisaged in the agreement) have not yet been incorporated into transitional justice.

Key words: Sub-Saharan Africa, Rwanda, Burundi, conflict, conflict resolution, genocide

Local justice and power of an official nature in Southern Sudan

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In this article, the author examines the growing ambiguity that characterises the administration of justice in southern Sudan since an autonomous government was set up, thanks to the 2005 peace agreement. While the State was a distant, separate body owing to the monopoly exerted over it by the peoples of the North, its courts of justice, precarious though they might be, could be viewed in the South as an agent that is neutral, albeit distant from local power networks: it was considered to be the *hakuma* sphere of power, to which people would only resort after the closest systems of conflict resolution (based on family ties) had failed. However, the creation of an autonomous government has brought the *hakuma* sphere closer to local reality, creating interferences between two realities that had become accustomed to functioning in a parallel manner. This new situation has generated new dynamics as regards how to react to local conflicts and also, logically, with respect to how to go about resolving them.

Key words: Sudan, conflict resolution, justice, autonomous government, traditional authority

(Re)creating the community: The use of customary authority to resolve the Casamance conflict in Senegal

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Customary approaches have made important contributions to efforts to resolve the decades-old Casamance conflict, though not always in the way intended or claimed by their proponents or outside observers. In this paper, three customary approaches are discussed: highly localised efforts by customary leaders or institutions (for instance, the Jola-Huluf king); attempts to utilise or expand their authority (Usana priestesses); and efforts to (re)invent a mythic-history as a customary basis for a harmonious community (the Association Culturelle Aguène-Diambogne). By offering a mixed assessment as to the extent to which these approaches succeeded in promoting conflict resolution in Casamance, we analyse the contexts in which customary approaches can promote peace, while arguing that they are more likely to complement conventional forms of conflict resolution than constitute an alternative to them.

Key words: Senegal, Casamance, tradition, traditional authorities, conflict resolution

Ritual and reconciliation in Mozambique: Culture as a mediator in wartime experiences

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Based on Mozambique's post-independence armed conflict (1976-1992), this paper examines several issues linked with culture's role as a mediator in the experience of war and post-war, paying particular attention to spiritual purification rituals. The author argues that these rituals played an important role in the process of the rehabilitation, reintegration and social reconciliation of combatants returning from the war, as well as for Mozambique's societies in general. The paper also explores the potentials and limitations of these rituals.

Key words: Mozambique, culture, mediation, conflict, social reconciliation

Conflict and governability in Northern Uganda: Possibilities and limits of *mato oput* reconciliation rituals

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The war that broke out in Northern Uganda in 1986 – one of the most forgotten wars of our times – was the result of a long North-South conflict in the country, and has caused the displacement of 2 million people, the deaths of some 100,000 citizens and the kidnapping of 40,000 children by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) guerrilla. Repeated attempts by civil society (particularly by religious and traditional leaders) to stop the conflict through negotiation has ended, time after time, in failures that have led to new waves of violence, most of them directed against the civil population. In this context, the traditional culture of the Acholi people has played a paramount role, and has backed several reconciliation initiatives. The most successful one was the amnesty law which, since 2002, has succeeded in reincorporating more than 12,000 people from the LRA. However, the use of traditional peace processes, particularly the *mato oput*, clashes with a reality that is unduly complicated by the thousands of murders that have been committed, sometimes by minors who have been forced to kill. The intervention of the International Criminal Court in The Hague since 2004 has not produced a very favourable response among the Acholi society, which views this court more as an obstacle than as a means to help bring this tragedy to an end. The dilemmas created by conflicts of interest between peace and justice, and the attempts to strengthen the role of traditional leaders to reincorporate combatants returning from war into society are just some of the underlying issues in this conflict which has, furthermore, an international dimension, as it has now affected four African countries.

Key words: Sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda, civil war, conflict, mediation, conflict resolution, mato oput, governability

One kingdom, two kings: Different legitimacies in Bailundo (Angola)

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The author examines the history and structure of the kingdom of M'balundu, one of the most powerful of Angola's central *meseta* before the Portuguese conquest. During the colonial period, this kingdom was integrated into the State administration, and since then has been conditioned by several external factors that have brought certain changes, such as a significant difference between its original territory and the administrative division of the State. Independence and the war between the MPLA and UNITA further increased the political-administrative confusion, as did the areas in which neither side had control over the territory, and where traditional authorities could rule virtually unhindered. The fact that the succession of a king of M'balundu coincided with control of the kingdom's capital changing from one side to the other, has brought about the present situation in which there are two kings, each possessing a certain traditional legitimacy, and each one identifying with one or the other of the two political factions. This situation of two kings in one kingdom is highly illustrative of the deep split that characterises contemporary political life in Angola.

Key words: Angola, colonialism, State structure, conflict, traditional authorities

Analysis of Mauritania's legislative elections after the 2005 coup

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This article presents a brief analysis of the contributions made by political science to the party systems and to the holding of elections in African countries. The aim is to apply theories on the electoral and party system in the Mauritanian elections held in November 2006, following the 2005 coup. The application of the Laakso and Taagapera formula to determine the effective number of parliamentary parties highlights the change taken place in Mauritania. Under the dictatorship of Ould Taya, the party system was by nature dominat-

ing and authoritarian. The 2006 elections, meanwhile, were notable for the fact that they were organised using a multi-party system. Meanwhile, the coup in August 2008 has high-lighted the fact that this type of mathematical formula is not capable of covering the entire complex reality of Mauritania politics.

Key words: Mauritania, elections, coup, political science, party system