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Paper: State building in war and peace in Angola

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The end of the Angolan civil war in 2002 allowed the state, controlled by the MPLA, to gain access to parts of the national territory that had previously been beyond its reach, and to establish a permanent civilian institutional presence in other parts of the country where earlier its only manifestation had been in the form of military patrols. Physical reconstruction is evident in much of the country in the form of buildings, roads, and mobile phone networks. Peace and reconstruction go together in the discourse of Angolan government politics as well as of donors and foreign commentators. My concern here is with the politics of the post-war state building process that has taken place in Angola. How are new projects presented by the state, and how do people understand the projects? The primary research on which this paper is based comprises interview around the time of the 2008 parliamentary elections in the Central Highlands of Angola, a region where the UNITA rebel movement made its strongest identity-based appeals during the independence period and after, and where the cities saw vicious fighting in 1993. My conclusion is that today's reconstruction is understood in terms that were established by the politics of wartime: more precisely, by the ways in which state building was conducted and deployed politically during the war.

Much of the literature on civil war puts the emphasis on the study of the rebel movement as a deviant phenomenon. The burden of its argument is to explain what causes rebellion. The state is both taken for granted, and seen as normatively good. Yet any understanding of state power in Angola needs to recognise that at no time before 2002 did the recognised government exercise even notional control over the whole of the national territory. Some people, notionally Angolan citizens, had had no contact with the state before 2002, while others had at least as much experience of institutions established by UNITA as those established by the state. Even in those areas where the state exercised control, its institutions functioned at best sporadically. Civil war made a mockery of the notion of the state being defined by its monopoly on the legitimate use of violence in a territory. Before 1990, some significant international actors (the United States and South Africa) openly supported UNITA against the Angolan government. UNITA, as much as the MPLA, saw its project as one of state building. UNITA elites explicitly used the words "state" or "state within a state" when they spoke of the guerrilla movement's efforts to create and sustain a relationship with local people. Even after 1990, the MPLA government was unable to control the borders of its territory, and UNITA continued to benefit from international trade.

Debates on the study of the state dating from the 1990s and after have warned us against conceptualising the state as something that is the same at all times and in all places. The concept of "stateness" shifts the emphasis towards practices associated with statehood, which are not necessarily deployed in a consistent manner, and how these practices are deployed politically and how they are received and understood. Akhil Gupta argues that one of the difficulties in studying the contemporary state in developing countries is the "reification inherent in unitary descriptions of 'the state'", which instead needs to be "conceptualized in terms far more decentralized and disaggregated than has been the case so far".[1] Gupta emphasises "the role of public culture in the discursive construction of the state" and suggests that "[f]oregrounding the question of representation shows us the modalities by which the state comes to be imagined". Hansen and Stepputat argue that "[m]odern forms of state are in a continuous process of construction, and this construction takes place through invocation of a bundle of widespread and globalized registers of governance and authority, or, as we prefer to call it, 'languages of stateness'."[2] The idea of a state "in a process of construction" is one of particular relevance to the unfinished state-making project that we can see in pre-2002 Angola.

Nevertheless, if we treat the state primarily as a construct within political discourse, this is not to disregard it as a real political force. Philip Abrams approaches the debate on the merits of studying statehood by proposing "that we should abandon the state as a material object of study […] while continuing to take the *idea* of the state very seriously". The state, for Abrams, "is first and foremost an exercise in legitimation".[3] Further literature looks at how the material manifestations of statehood are used politically by incumbent governments to create what Mitchell calls the "state effect". Das and Poole note that the state may be invoked as a way of seeking legitimacy for practices by actors outside the state: the "mimicry of the state", as they call it.[4] Such perspectives emphasise the performance of rituals and practices associated with statehood as a means of legitimation when the state lacks the resources to fulfil the more substantial prerogatives of statehood.

Accordingly, I will look at the specifics of how the MPLA state functioned during the civil war: to what extent it was able to exercise the prerogatives of statehood, including the monopolisation of violence, the building of institutions and the provision of social services. Equally, if we are to understand state building in wartime Angola, we need to look beyond the formally constituted state that was controlled by the MPLA. UNITA bore some characteristics of statehood to a varying degree during the course of the war: the control of borders, the control of the movement of people

[1] Gupta 1995:376.
[2] Hansen and Stepputat 2001:5.
[3] Abrams 2006:122.
[4] Das and Poole 2004:23.

within the national borders, international trade and a degree of international recognition. Focussing on the question of stateness as it is constituted in practices and discourses of power allows us a perspective on how these practices and discourses may be appropriated by actors other than the state.

Stateness implies norms. In studying stateness as a tool of political legitimation in Angola, we need to consider what norms of the state are being aspired to, or imitated. However much states may have failed to secure a monopoly of violence, the Weberian ideal nevertheless remains implicit in discourses of power and legitimacy. As Donald Donham suggests:

> While Weber's ideal type of the modern state has become hegemonic in the global system […] we have to realize that this ideal type describes political reality nowhere, not even in the developed "West".[5]

Charles Tilly introduces a crucial qualification to the notion of the state being defined by the monopoly on violence: "governments organize and, *wherever possible*, monopolize violence".[6] Tilly points out the circularity involved in defining the state in terms of its monopoly on legitimate violence, when it is the state that defines whether violence is legitimate or not.[7] While Weberian notions of statehood may still provide a normative basis for claims to legitimacy by governments and rebels alike, it is also important to consider the non-Weberian norms that are the reality in many post-colonial situations: these too, as we shall see, form part of the basis for the creation of "the state effect". E.S. Atieno-Odhiambo identifies in the legitimating discourses of the modern Kenyan state an "ideology of order" that bestows on the state the prerogative of silencing the "discordant political noises" of opposing class interests and alternative visions of the independent state.[8] Citing Achille Mbembe, Hansen and Stepputat note that sovereign power in certain colonial situations was not aimed at constructing a "public interest" but merely "absolute submission" and that this tendency continues in independent states.[9]

In independent Africa, the idea of the state is bound up with a particular kind of anti-colonial nationalism, since the task of nationalists was to create nations defined by the arbitrary colonial boundaries that states had inherited. At the same time, the late colonial period established a developmental model of statehood that was adopted as an ideal by independent governments in ensuing decades.[10] The developmental state

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[5] Donham 2006:20-21.
[6] Tilly 1985:171, my emphasis.
[7] Tilly 1985:173.
[8] Atieno-Odhiambo 1987:190.
[9] Hansen and Stepputat 2005:24. See also Ferme 2004.
[10] Iliffe (1995:252) observes that in Africa, "[n]ationalism aimed to imitate the most modern nation states: not the minimal governments of agricultural societies but the development plans and bureaucratic controls of the industrial (especially socialist)

came to be associated with ideologies of modernisation: a critical literature on state-led modernisation sees it as producing norms, discourses and hierarchies that came to define the relationship between ruler and ruled: more specifically, between an urban bureaucratic elite and peasant farmers.[11] In this paper I will keep in mind these sometimes contradictory norms, ranging in character from bureaucratic to oppressive, that underlie the claims to stateness made by the MPLA and by UNITA.

If we are to move beyond normative categorical distinctions between "state" and "rebel movement" we need to trace the origins and the development of the relationships that the MPLA and UNITA established with people in different parts of the country. My approach in this paper is to consider both what the two movements did, and how they talked about it – and how people who lived under the control of the movements talked about the projects of the two sides. On this basis I will analyse the norms and practices of stateness, and how these were used to construct political legitimacy on both sides. With respect to the relationship between political movements and people in Angola, 25 April 1974 is a crucial date. The coup d'état that toppled the Estado Novo dictatorship in Lisbon brought in a new regime that put a high priority on decolonisation, and which lifted the outright ban on nationalist activity in the colonies. Prior to this, members of a small elite might have encountered anti-colonial organisations while in exile, or might have known of their ideas through the MPLA's radio broadcasts from Brazzaville, or through whispered conversations with people who had contacts abroad. After April 1974, however, the FNLA, MPLA and UNITA were able to campaign freely.

The legal framework for the transition to independence was laid down in the Alvor Accord, which the FNLA, MPLA, UNITA and the Portuguese governments signed on 15 January 1975 with a view to establishing a transitional government and joint armed forces. The government was established on 31 January 1975 but lasted barely six months, the army was never established, and Portugal withdrew its troops ahead of schedule, as competition between the three liberation movements developed into territorial conflict.

Clashes between the movements started in July 1975, as well as the targeting of civilians who were assumed on the basis of their regional origins to be from an opposing party. Early in July the MPLA began setting up vigilante groups known as *poder popular* (people's power) in Luanda, initially in response to fears that the FNLA was attempting outright control of the city. People suspected of being associated either with the FNLA or UNITA came under attack. These judgements

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world".

[11] Cooper (1997:81) sees modernisation as driven by officials who "themselves had the essential knowledge to build the stage and write the script" and conceived of development as a "series of co-varying changes" that although inevitable, also required state-led intervention to make it a reality.

about political affiliation were made on the basis of people's regional origins. Thousands whose family origins were in the Central Highlands fled Luanda for the interior, even if they had no particularly strong affiliation with UNITA. Reprisals by UNITA caused supporters and suspected supporters of the MPLA to flee the cities of the interior. The territorialisation of politics became clearer when UNITA officials left Luanda early in August, and made their base in Huambo. UNITA, too, had begun to arm itself even before the Alvor Accord was signed.[12] For all three movements, politicisation happened as part of a process that also involved militarisation. This established an association between politics and the military life that persisted until the end of the civil war. What had started as the regional concentrations of political activity – the MPLA in Luanda, the FNLA in the north, and UNITA in the Central Highlands – turned into a de facto partitioning of the country.

Within each of the three zones, the dominant movement started to take on the prerogatives of statehood as the Portuguese security forces and administration withdrew ahead of schedule. A report in the daily *Província de Angola* – which by that time was under the control of the MPLA – makes clear that the party was claiming a monopoly of legitimate violence three months before independence.

> People's Defence Committees [CDP] have been created [by the MPLA in Luanda]: a paramilitary organism made up of workers guarantees the conditions for the existence and defence of the institutions of People's Power.
> …
> All armed individuals that do not belong either to the FAPLA or to the CDP are considered illegal armed bandits.[13]

In early September, a statement by the *Commissão Nacional de Descolonização* (National Decolonisation Commission) noted

> the introduction by the liberation movements of large quantities of armaments since 25 April […] a lack of political tolerance that is manifesting itself in violence […] the existence of so-called zones of influence and of supposed military superiority […] the arming of the civilian population.[14]

Other reports speak of UNITA and the FNLA commandeering planes from the state airline that had landed in their territory. [15] According to an account by as South African military officer, the Portuguese detail guarding the Cunene River dams

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[12] According to former UNITA General Geraldo Sachipengo Nunda, the Alvor Accord's requirement that each movement deliver a certain quota of soldiers to the single army prompted a rush for recruitment. (Interview, Luanda, September 2009.)
[13] *Província de Angola* 20 August 1975:3.
[14] *Província de Angola* 5 September 1975:7.
[15] *Província de Angola* 5 September 1975:2.

sought refuge in South African-occupied South West Africa as UNITA and the MPLA sought to take control of Angola's southern frontier.[16]

On 9 September *Província de Angola* announced that the MPLA had reconstituted the government, with new (MPLA) incumbents in the positions formerly occupied by UNITA and FNLA appointees.[17] In the Central Highlands, however, UNITA was consolidating its position: General Nunda recalls UNITA had by September 1975 taken control of the airport and was supervising the departure of planeloads of Portuguese citizens. [18] By the time the last Portuguese officials left at midnight on 11 November, the country was effectively divided. This fact determined how politics would be understood during the years of war. Each party in Angola saw itself as the heir to the Angolan state, not as a participant in a contest for control of a future Angolan government. The regional identity of each of the three parties became more deeply entrenched. The fact that people became the targets of violence on the basis of their perceived regions of origin ensured that politics was not only territorial, but personal. People who previously had no strong political affiliation were assigned a political identity, and this was given substance by their experience of violence.

The FNLA ceased to be a significant force following its military defeat at the hands of the MPLA's Cuban supporters. The next two sections of this paper will look at the processes of state building conducted by the MPLA and by UNITA in their respective areas of control in the years following 1975.

State building in wartime: The MPLA

As noted earlier, a consideration of the MPLA's efforts at state building during the civil war must start by acknowledging the limits on its territorial reach. Although the FAPLA[19] and their Cuban allies met little resistance in February 1976 when they entered cities such as Huambo and Kuito that UNITA had occupied upon independence, the MPLA never consolidated its control over the countryside. Its dominance was challenged by UNITA's return to war in 1981. The result was what has been called an archipelago state: the institutions and practices of statehood were confined to isolated enclaves.

But no less significant than the physical limitations that the war placed upon state building were the meanings that became attached to state building as a result of the war. The MPLA leadership had ideologically driven ideas about the role of the political party and the state and its relationship to the people: ideas that defined the

[16] Spies 1989:46.
[17] *Província de Angola* 9 September 1975:1.
[18] Interview with Nunda, Luanda, September 2009.
[19] *Forças Armadas Populares da Libertação de Angola*: The MPLA's army.

prerogatives and responsibilities of the party or state towards the people, and the rights and duties of the people with respect to the state. These ideas in themselves would have existed even if independent Angola had not been born into conflict. Yet the fact of the civil war that accompanied independence ensured that ideas of the state and party were inseparable from the MPLA's military identity. This section seeks to examine the ways in which the MPLA went about trying to construct a state and to secure legitimacy among the population: a task that was possible only with the support of Cubans whose technical expertise filled some of the gaps left by the departing Portuguese. I will contrast the ways in which different interviewees spoke about the work done by the party-state, attempting to show how these efforts were understood and received, and how they shaped people's relationship with the party and state.

Between about August 1975 and February 1976, the MPLA had no visible political presence in the cities of the Central Highlands, even though a substantial number of MPLA supporters lived there. Nevertheless, from the point of view of those people in the city who had not been active supporters of the MPLA, the MPLA entered as a military movement that only later acquired a political character. In the words of a protestant preacher, Pastor David:[20]

> The MPLA […] came with tanks, with the Cubans, so UNITA didn't resist, it left. The MPLA came, and started looking around to see if there were still any UNITA people there, and established, more than anything else, its military bases: it occupied strategic areas of the city, and later civilian structures started to appear, but first the military structures.

Those who were sympathetic to the MPLA's aims put a stronger emphasis on its civilian developmental role. According to Bernardo, a civil servant and party loyalist:

> The MPLA had barely arrived before it started concerning itself with taking over the state administration. The MPLA entered in February 1976, and reorganised structures similar to the rest of the nation […] Schools, hospitals began to work and the whole administration started to gain its previous force. They paid civil servants' salaries and tuition became free: everybody studying, everybody working and everyone on the move. Something that people now miss [in 2008] is that we studied for free. Children went to school and received books for free. There were the Pioneers [MPLA children's organisation] who received clothes for free. Everything free. This was always the philosophy of the MPLA: keep struggling for the people to have a better life.[21]

[20] For the purposes of this paper, I have assigned pseudonyms to all interviewees who wished to remain anonymous.
[21] Interviewee 31, Huambo, May 2008.

In the months that followed the MPLA forces' arrival in the cities of the interior, the government tried to assume responsibility for the provision of food, and implemented a system of state shops that sold basic manufactured foodstuffs at a low price, and which were accessibly only to people who held ration cards: those who had cards were state employees. While there was an ideological justification for this, there was a practical consideration too: the necessity of army escorts for transport between the interior and the coast implicated the state in the delivery of these items. Certain other goods, such as soap, toothpaste and soft drinks, were delivered to public functionaries when available, in quantities commensurate with the recipient's professional rank. The fertility of the land of the Central Highlands, the reliable rainfall for eight months of the year, and the presence of agricultural plots within the towns themselves, ensured that vegetables and grain were produced inside the towns and bartered on the informal market: this was technically illegal, since all goods were supposed to be sold to the state, but there was little that farmers could buy with the cash paid by the state buyers. This system implemented by the MPLA is remembered both as an example of the party's efficacy in creating structures that served the public interest, and as an example of inefficiency and discrimination in the interests of the party elite. This ambivalence is evident in the description by Paulina, another civil servant who was deeply loyal to the MPLA's principles:

> For basic, necessary goods you needed a card. The shops were only for state functionaries. At the People's Shop, you still needed a card. Later the special shops started, for skilled and mid-level workers, and the bosses. It was terrible discrimination. Everything was cheap because it was subsidised. Things like sugar or rice you could get in the people's shops. The special shops had butter, milk, imported beer. You only had the right to spend two thousand kwanzas.[22]

Paulina explained the philosophy behind the MPLA's food provision strategies as follows: "Whoever had a job was ours, and had the right to goods."[23] She contrasted the availability of foodstuffs in government shops with the situation in UNITA-held areas: "In a UNITA area you'd be in trouble if you were caught with salt or cooking oil."

The MPLA's legitimacy as a state depended on its effectiveness as a builder of infrastructure and a provider of necessary goods and services. Legitimacy was also bound up with how people perceived the party's right to exercise prerogatives of

[22] Interviewee 150, Caála, July 2009: She thought these special shops were founded about 1981, though another interviewee, who seemed more certain, gave the date as 1987. The appearance of the special shops may be seen in the context of the increasingly elitist nature of MPLA politics through the 1980s, as noted by Vidal (2008:128-130).

[23] "Ours" here means "of the MPLA". This idea of political belonging will be taken up later in this paper.

violence. People who accepted the legitimacy of the MPLA's presence also portrayed as legitimate any acts of violence committed in the name of the MPLA, or played them down completely. According to Maria de Conceição Neto, a historian who was a student in Huambo at the time of independence:

> "Reactionary violence" was met with "revolutionary violence". The various participants saw violence to be not just necessary but legitimate; they claimed that it served "the interests of the Angolan people", whom everybody claimed to represent.[24]

Such attitudes towards the use of violence were also evident among the interviews that I conducted. When asked whether any fighting accompanied the MPLA's arrival, a schoolteacher from Huambo replied:

> Of course, this [violence] happens. At that time, UNITA considered this [territory] its own property that it wanted to defend. But in order to defend territorial integrity, the government had to come and conquer all the spaces that UNITA had occupied, and this had to be done in battle. Each one defends, and withdraws when it sees the other side is advancing.[25]

The main political task of the MPLA was to render its own use of violence legitimate while denying the legitimacy of UNITA's violence. This was achieved through the propagation of a nationalist ideology accompanied by narratives that positioned the MPLA as the defender of the Angolan nation against a UNITA that was the proxy of foreign interests. Many interviewees who had lived under the MPLA, even if they were not particularly enthusiastic party supporters, would say that the role of the party was "to defend the people".

Central to the propagation of this ideology was a programme of political education aimed at promoting the single party as the unique and legitimate representative of the Angolan nation.[26] Civilian structures linked to the party such as OMA (*Organização da Mulher Angolana* – Angolan Women's Organisation), OPA (*Organização dos Pioneiros Angolanos* – Angolan Pioneers' Organisation, for children) and JMPLA (*Juventude do MPLA* – MPLA Youth) sought to create opportunities for participation in party activities. The following account by Maria da Conceição Neto illustrates how these organisations brought activities identified with the party into civic and social life, and into state functions such as the provision of education and health care.

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[24] Neto 2001:43.
[25] Interviewee 19, Huambo, May 2008.
[26] The MPLA "drew strength from its longstanding commitment to ideologically grounded political education and mobilization" (Marcum 1978:278).

> "Mass organisations" had the role of "conveyor belts" for directives from the top of the party. […] The youth organisation (JMPLA) changed from a "mass organisation" to a "nursery for cadres", a kind of antechamber leading into the party; in the process any less orthodox or controlled initiative for youth was stifled or marginalised. In spite of everything, the activities of the mass organisations were for many people important experiences of community action. Through them were carried out campaigns of literacy, sanitation and vaccination. They involved all sections of the population in socially useful activities, and through them were awakened ideas of citizenship.[27]

Moco described the role of the mass organisations as "fundamental": "A child who went to school was automatically with OPA. It was a system of total integration."[28]

Other interviews suggest that although participation was not compulsory, there were incentives to encourage it. These incentives were made possible by the close identification between party and state, and the fact that the state controlled most opportunities for employment. The following extracts are all from interviews with people who were teenagers or students in the late 1970s:

> After UNITA left it was all MPLA propaganda. People were persuaded to participate in government organisations, though not obliged to. There were privileges attached to participating, like uniforms or activities. There were OMA meetings in the schools that were sometimes obligatory. If you didn't go, it counted against you. At rallies (*comícios*) each school and each business kept a note of who was there – teachers, pupils, workers. If you didn't go you would lose a day's salary. But some went voluntarily if they were party members.[29]

> [Recruitment to the party] was obligatory. At that time [the late 1970s] there was a social structure linked to the JMPLA – it was called the AEEM (Association of High School Students / *Associação de Estudantes de Ensino Médio*) and this association was an appendage of the JMPLA. In such a way that even if you weren't incorporated as an activist you still would be involved in activities that were those of the JMPLA. In such a way that all of us [young people] were part of the JMPLA, whether directly or indirectly.[30]

> People couldn't choose. The movement that was there controlled everything. It was the same when UNITA came: everyone joined the UNITA structures. […] OPA promoted patriotic education. People couldn't go to church, because

[27] Neto 2001:45.
[28] Interview with Moco, Huambo, August 2009.
[29] Interviewee 108, Luanda, October 2008.
[30] Interviewee 9, Huambo, May 2008.

> they planned events on a Sunday. Going to church was not prohibited, but party activities took place at the same time. They gave us [in OPA] uniforms. Those who excelled were sent to Cuba to study. This was organised by party activists. [At school] history changed. They even changed the exercise books, taking away the multiplication tables [formerly printed inside the cover] and replacing them with the national anthem. In the workplace, if you didn't belong to the party you couldn't be promoted. If you criticised the system openly you were seen as being UNITA.[31]

These extracts make clear how little distinction there was either in the official discourse or in the public mind between the state and the party and their respective roles and relationships with society.

UNITA in the cities

This paper has already outlined how UNITA, at the moment of Angolan independence, found itself in control of part of Angolan territory. If we were to draw a map of where UNITA was the dominant force in the final months of 1975, it would show the coastal strip from the Cunene to the Queve River, and the adjacent part of the interior: that is, southern Angola and the Central Highlands. If, however, we were to map the places in which UNITA officials, soldiers and cadres were at work during the months immediately after independence, UNITA's presence would appear as spots rather than as a continuous shaded area. Its main efforts during this period were in the cities under its control. Just as it was for the MPLA elsewhere in Angola, UNITA's first concern was with occupying the void left by the Portuguese administration: a state that was largely urban in its character.

Huambo, as the second city of colonial Angola, was of particular symbolic importance to UNITA, and it was there that Savimbi made his claim to statehood in a ceremony to mark Angola's independence from Portugal on 11 November 1975. The symbolism of the independence ceremony and Savimbi's address to mark the occasion of independence exemplify the discourse associated with UNITA. According to the account by the British journalist Fred Bridgland, Savimbi began by berating the undisciplined behaviour of his soldiers who had fired weapons in celebration the previous night: "'Listen well,' he said. 'If tonight, or at any other time from now onwards any UNITA soldier fires a shot without an order, it will be his last shot […] if we catch you firing your gun, you will not move again from that very spot."[32]

[31] Interviewee 105, Huambo, September 2008.
[32] Bridgland 1986:134 – ellipsis in original.

Two themes emerge here that recurred throughout my interviews, and which are invoked by political leaders and followers alike as a measure of a political movement's legitimacy. The first of these is a preoccupation with maintaining order. The second is an assertion of the legitimacy of violence carried out in the name of the political movement (hence Savimbi's threat of capital punishment), as opposed to the illegitimate violence perpetrated by soldiers without orders. The remainder of Savimbi's speech included attacks both on the former Portuguese colonists and the MPLA. He sought to cast doubt on the MPLA's authenticity as Angolan by stating that "Portugal wished to decolonise by leaving us here with its godchild named Antonio Agostinho Neto".[33] He nevertheless expressed willingness to contest elections with the MPLA as soon as it "decides to consider other liberation movements as patriots". He also emphasised the MPLA's Soviet links as evidence of the movement's non-Angolan nature: 'While the MPLA goes on thinking that only through Russian arms can they offer an ideology, we will say "no" and we will continue to fight.'

The speech also set out an ambitious and idealistic conception of the role of the state in relation to the people:

> Savimbi spelled out his ideas about 'people oriented socialism' by saying leaders had to ask what people wanted, rather than dictate what they should have. 'What they want is to live well. They want jobs, schools, sanitation. We depend on the people. From the institutions here they deserve respect, kindness and consideration. The people must be cherished.'[34]

Savimbi's claims that UNITA intended to construct a state that based its legitimacy upon service provision bore no relation to the reality that UNITA inherited. First, it continued at war with the MPLA. Second, it faced the same difficulty that confronted the MPLA, namely the loss of technical expertise with the departure of the Portuguese: the independence movements inherited physical infrastructure but little else.

Few of the people I interviewed had clear memories of the very short period of UNITA rule in the city, and the accounts of the period are strongly influenced by the political prejudices of the interviewees. It is nevertheless possible to discern a broad picture of UNITA's attempts at governance in Huambo during the months in question. The following extract is from a group discussion with people still active in a local UNITA branch in the city, who had started their activity in the party shortly before independence. My questions were about what changes had come to Huambo with independence, and how UNITA had administered the region during its months of control following independence.

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[33] Bridgland 1986:134-135.
[34] Bridgland 1986:135.

> – Nothing changed with independence. The Portuguese left then the war began.
> – UNITA defended the people's goods. The administration functioned. In 1975 we had functionaries in all the areas.
> – Even in the businesses – there were shops
> – Shops, tailor's shops – everything in the service of the party.[35]

This characterisation is notable for its similarity to the MPLA's concept of the urban-based state and its difference from the kind of rural state that UNITA officials idealised later on. As long as it still had a presence in the cities, UNITA appeared to concentrate on asserting its control over the relics of the colonial state. A farmer from a village less than 30 kilometres from Huambo recalled that "in 1975 UNITA was here, but troops only occupied where the whites lived" – that is to say, the city. A long-time UNITA loyalist suggested that "the MPLA called in the Cubans [to take Huambo from UNITA in 1976] because it knew that who controls Huambo, controls the south of Angola".[36]

UNITA knew that capturing the main city of the south-central region – and a city which had, incidentally, been mooted as an alternative capital during colonial times – was its best way of asserting its claims as a contender for power on an equivalent footing to the MPLA. The symbolism of UNITA's independence ceremony echoed similar ceremonies that had accompanied the birth of new sovereign states throughout the continent in the previous two decades. No less important than the symbolism of the ceremony were the principles of governance that Savimbi set out, even if they were never implemented. One *soba* (chief) who had been loyal to UNITA since before independence expressed UNITA's efforts more in terms of the principles that the movement espoused rather than in terms of concrete progress:

> Savimbi fought for Angolans to have no limits on their education, that the colonist limited. Savimbi wanted everyone to study to whatever level, without paying money. In the days of Savimbi we understood for the first time that one could get medical treatment without paying.[37]

Positive assessments like this one need to be contrasted with the accounts of people with a more sceptical attitude towards UNITA in order to gain an idea of the extent to which UNITA succeeded in its stated aims. Bernardo, the former civil servant quoted

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[35] Interviewees 82 and 83, Huambo, June 2008.
[36] Interviewee 60, Caála, June 2008. Compare Herbst's (2000) ideas about the challenge faced by African states in "projecting" their power from urban centres to peripheries.
[37] Interviewee 86, Huambo, July 2008.

earlier, suggested that Savimbi's declaration of statehood was nothing more than empty rhetoric:

> Even if it's known that Savimbi proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Angola, I know nothing of this because UNITA governed in a climate of war. […]
> [Nevertheless] there were efforts, there were certain tasks done by them in the midst of conditions of war, this never stopped: safeguarding certain health services, certain education services. These functioned, but not to the extent that people would have wished them to be in peacetime – they were services in a climate of war.[38]

Two points are notable here. The first concerns Bernardo's definition of the criteria whereby a movement may become a state: these include the visible symbols of statehood, but also international recognition. Second, he acknowledges that UNITA's failure in this respect was at least in part due to the context of war in which it operated. This fact alone, however, does not make him any more sympathetic to UNITA. His assessment of the 1975-1976 UNITA occupation seems to have been coloured by his own long association with the MPLA state. Crucially, he evokes peace itself as one of the criteria for the creation of state-like legitimacy. The idea of peace endowing a government with legitimacy is one that emerged in many interviews, with barely-educated rural people as well as with members of the urban intelligentsia.

The divergent views expressed about UNITA's attempts at governance appear largely to coincide with the present-day political affiliations of the interviewees, though there is a consensus on certain facts: UNITA officials took seats in government offices, but the administration had neither the human nor the material resources to function effectively.[39] The best that the administration could hope for would be to keep the functions inherited from the colonial government operating at a minimal level. Where this happened, it appears to be thanks to teachers and other public servants who remained in their posts, rather than to any original initiative by UNITA.

UNITA's bush bases

Although the Cuban conquest of the cities on behalf of the MPLA halted UNITA's attempts to maintain the remnants of the colonial state, it did not extinguish UNITA's state building ambitions. Following UNITA's retreat from the cities, Savimbi

[38] Interviewee 31, Huambo, May 2008.
[39] A visiting journalist described Huambo in January 1976 as a town where economic activity and public services had all but ceased. "The War in Angola: View From 2 Sides". *New York Times*, 23 January 1976.

declared his intention to establish the basis for a guerrilla war. A strategic approach derived from Mao recognised the importance of the peasantry as a source of sustenance for the guerrilla army, and also the need to have incorporated into UNITA a class of cadres who through providing services to the rural population would establish UNITA as a legitimate political force.

Throughout the war, UNITA maintained a network of bases across much of rural Angola, from which it sought to build relationships with farming communities in order to secure a supply of food for its army. Starting in the early 1980s, UNITA established its centre of operations at Jamba in the far south-east of Angola. UNITA's state building ambitions were realised only in a fragmentary manner at the bush bases, but more completely at Jamba. I will consider these two aspects in turn. I use interviews with people who occupied different places in the UNITA hierarchy, from the leadership to peasant farmers who lived under UNITA control. The purpose of examining accounts by people from across the hierarchy is to explain both the ideological and strategic approach adopted by the UNITA leadership, and how the ideas and practices associated with UNITA were accepted and understood by the population at large. Some communities, particularly those close to the margins of control between the two military forces, experienced UNITA only as a violent and predatory force. The purpose of the following discussion is not to cast doubt upon these accounts, but rather to examine UNITA's ways of operating in those areas where the military situation was sufficiently stable to enable it to engage in a peaceful manner with the local population.

All of the accounts indicate that the core element of UNITA's presence in a rural district comprised bases that had a military character but which also were central to UNITA's attempts to provide services, particularly health and education, to villages within the area of influence of the base. Estêvão, a farmer, declared himself to have been "captured" by UNITA initially, but soon became integrated into UNITA's political and economic structures and was appointed as a "director" of a village, continuing to live in the village but serving as the point of contact between his fellow villagers and the UNITA officials from the nearby base. When interviewed in 2008 he continued privately to express strong loyalty to UNITA, though he believed that it would not be safe to make his continued support for UNITA publicly known.

> From 1975 to 1979 I was with the government. From 1979 to 1991 I was placed in a village after they [UNITA] captured me and made me go to the bush. I was director of a village. UNITA chose men who had vision. There were between one and three directors controlling each village. The leaders lived in bases and the population lived in the villages. When they [the leadership] came from the bases to the villages, they would contact the

> director [of the village]. They would ask, for example, "were there MPLA troops here?" And they would make a report.[40]

The point here is that villagers were militarily useful, in this instance as sources of information, but they were separate from UNITA, which was conceived of essentially as a military structure.

Costa had joined UNITA's army "from my own convictions" in 1975, aged 20. He remained with UNITA until the end of the war in 2002, when he went to one of the quartering areas established in terms of the Luena peace accord. When interviewed in 2008 he still considered himself a UNITA activist. Costa explained the composition and functions of the UNITA bases as follows:

> At the base there were no civilians – the party secretariat, all of them were soldiers. They were there to organise the masses, to explain the cause – why we were here to defend Angolans. There were between 800 and 1 000 people at each base. As well as the base there was [military] protection to allow the people to be able to work in peace. There were military patrols – there were fronts where between five and ten people were stationed. […]
>
> The base had to move [for security reasons] three or four times a year. The people [the peasant farmers] didn't move much: there were attempts to capture people but our troops defended them.[41]

The mobility of the bases was in contrast to the more permanent settlements at Jamba that will be discussed later in this chapter. Also important is Costa's reference to the merging of political and military functions within the base: the political functionaries were also soldiers. Given Costa's ongoing unequivocal support for UNITA at the time of the interview, it is likely that his account contains elements of UNITA's official discourses. Two elements are most apparent. First, UNITA portrayed its role as defending the people and defending the peace. Second, the interview suggests that UNITA knew that political education was necessary if people were to be convinced of the justice of UNITA's cause.

We have seen how Savimbi and other leaders believed that providing services – or, at least, causing UNITA to be associated with the provision of services – was essential in establishing a political relationship with people. Interviewees who had lived under UNITA control before 1990 mostly recalled that UNITA either provided or attempted

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[40] Interviewee 60, Huambo, June 2008. In this extract I have translated "*mulher*" variously as "wife" and as "woman" as seemed appropriate in English, though the same word was used in Portuguese.

[41] Interviewee 63, Caála, June 2008. As discussed above, "consolidated" is relative. In this case it refers not to the Jamba area but to a part of the Central Highlands that was relatively safe for UNITA.

to provide basic social services, principally health and education, to people in villages as a central element of its vision of the political relationship that it sought with the people. Estêvão, the former village "director", described the relationship between a base and the surrounding villages as follows:

> Teachers and nurses […] lived at the bases and left the bases to help the people [*populações*] in the villages. Medicine was free and pupils didn't have to pay for classes. There was one teacher in a normal village, four in a bigger village. Some had been trained in the bush, others in colonial times. This is why teaching in the bush was different from in the city. UNITA had more teachers from colonial times. When the Portuguese left UNITA already had teachers, who were obliged to go to the bush. There were no salaries, just exchange – there was no money. They would receive food or salt.[42]

The usefulness of the farmers to UNITA was, of course, as providers of food. Extracting food from the farmers was both a practical task and a political one for UNITA, since UNITA officials had to convince people that it was in their own interests to give up part of their harvest. The logistics of extracting food was one of the tasks of people at the base, in co-operation with designated individuals in the village. According to a woman, born about 1950, who was with UNITA throughout the civil war:

> I was responsible for organising food, in the fields, with people who cultivated. I arranged food for the troops. The responsibility of each farmer was to deliver x kilograms [the x varied from time to time and place to place]. I lived in a military base. My husband was the secretary of the organisation.[43]

In addition, in some places UNITA staked an active role for itself in the process of agricultural production by teaching agriculture. This hides the fact that the peasant farmers had been self-sufficient for food before UNITA arrived, and that in their relationship with UNITA, they almost certainly gave more in material terms than they ever received. The "organisation" of agriculture described by the UNITA loyalists was above all a matter of extracting. There was little that a movement like UNITA could do in terms of providing basic foodstuffs. In favourable circumstances it could (and, as we shall see, sometimes did) try to supply manufactured items such as clothing, soap and salt, which had to come from the cities or from the coast, but this was not always possible.

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[42] Interviewee 60, Huambo, June 2008. Interesting here is the suggestion that UNITA's employment of teachers trained in colonial times was testimony to its effectiveness. Even in the bush, appeals to legitimacy could be made in terms of UNITA's ability to mimic the colonial state.

[43] Interviewee 73, Caála, July 2008.

UNITA at Jamba

Jamba was established initially for strategic reasons: a command centre beyond the reach of the MPLA military and within the reach of South African supply lines. However, it came to be of political importance to UNITA as laboratory in which the organisation could realise its ambitions to state building in all but name. Samuel Chiwale, at one time the commander of UNITA's armed forces, links the emergence of Jamba explicitly to UNITA's military capacity, and points to the significance of a permanent "capital" in terms of UNITA's aspirations to statehood.

> In 1978 we had, apart from the guerrilla units, a regular and semi-regular army, which significantly increased our offensive and defensive capacity. Thus we were sowing the seeds for the creation of a state within a state. Angola was inexorably on the way to becoming a country with two capitals.[44]

Here it will consider what kind of physical, social and political infrastructure UNITA attempted to construct at Jamba. I will then look critically at how Jamba itself appears in the discourse of the people who remember it, and consider how the existence of Jamba was an important basis for UNITA's claims to statehood.

People who lived in Jamba emphasise the fact that food was plentiful there and was available for free. Social services such as health and education were also available free of charge, more widely and on a more sophisticated level than was the case in the rural bases. The following description was from a man who had moved from Huambo to Jamba with his parents as a young child, and grew up in Jamba.

> The way of living was as though it were a city. Health matters were looked after for free, not like it is with the [current MPLA] government. Education too. The first time I ever saw money was in 1995. If an individual were sick, they would go to hospital without paying. We were self-sufficient for food from agriculture, but there was also help from the party. […] There were films, from which we learnt what a city was like. There were satellite dishes – after 1990 we could see international football.
>
> I studied from first to seventh grade in Jamba. Then I reached military age – service in the military was the duty of every citizen. We received education in the army too. Civic education like in other countries – qualities of behaviour in relation to society. And political education, about our party. We learnt that a misunderstanding between brothers had led to the war. And some lessons about the origins of our kingdoms and the life in colonial times.[45]

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[44] Chiwale 2008:253.

[45] Interviewee 66, Caála, June 2008.

This interview touches on most of the principal themes that emerged in the accounts of Jamba by other people who had spent time there. Briefly, these are the provision of services, which were linked to an idea of Jamba as a city and which included a politicised education; and the contrasting of life in Jamba both with life under the MPLA and with life in the more peripheral areas of UNITA control. Crucially, the same man pointed to the role of UNITA as a political organisation in ensuring the supply of food and other goods. We can see here, on a larger scale, a political relationship comparable to the one that existed around the UNITA bases in the bush, involving the obligation to work and the right to receive benefits such as health, education and food, with the party itself at the centre of the relationship.

> Everyone worked for the party. The party supplied all needs – right down to pregnant women, the children in their bellies already had rights. I never saw money there. The party bought things from outside. The people there ate, and worked.[46]

Given that this man had grown up in UNITA areas with UNITA parents and had been educated at UNITA schools, his completely positive portrayal of Jamba is not surprising. Yet some of the details are confirmed by people who had no particular reason to endorse UNITA's preferred version of life in Jamba. Pedro, a catechist, had lived both at UNITA's bush bases and at Jamba. He displayed no sympathy for UNITA's ideals and was sceptical about UNITA's efforts at the bases, but his recollection of Jamba is entirely positive.

> Life was good in Jamba. It had all the conditions.[47] Nobody told lies. They had means – vehicles came from South Africa with enough food. […] It looked like a *bairro* but it was organised like a city. There were roads of beaten earth. The hospitals were well organised. The houses and government departments were built of wood. The hospitals were built underground out of mud bricks, and the operating theatre was made of wood. There was a parish church, St Mary the Mother of God, with houses for the missionaries, and Protestant churches too.[48]

Bridgland's descriptions of Jamba during a visit there in June 1981 include immigration checks beneath a sign proclaiming "Entering Free Angola", a secretarial college where a woman in a "smart Parisian suit and high heels" taught girls to touch-type, and a hospital where surgeons performed an appendectomy.[49] South African journalist Shaun Johnson, who was flown to Jamba as part of a media event in 1988,

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[46] Interviewee 66, Caála, June 2008.
[47] *Condições*, particularly in Angola, is often used to denote necessities or amenities.
[48] Interviewee 128, Chicomba, November 2008.
[49] Bridgland 1986:321.

describes the immigration forms, a uniformed traffic officer stationed at a traffic roundabout where vehicles rarely passed, a clinic, a uniform factory and a weapon repair workshop.[50]

Even if much of what is described here may have less to do with everyday life in Jamba and more to do with a show put on for foreign journalists, this is nevertheless significant as an indication of what UNITA considered important to put on display as a demonstration of its legitimacy expressed in terms of its potential as a state, and, moreover, as a particular kind of state.[51] The medical facilities can be explained in terms of efforts to create a relationship with the population on the basis of service provision – even if the efforts in this case were only possible thanks to South African supply lines, and seemed incongruous in a settlement that was built of mud bricks and thatch. It is more difficult to find a practical justification for high heels, Parisian suits, traffic officers, and immigration controls. These appear to be a more deliberate attempt at what Das and Poole call "the mimicry of the state"[52]: in particular, the mimicry of an urban and modern model of statehood, which competed in UNITA's political imaginary with ideas of peasant revolution.

Political movements and political identities

An earlier section of this paper discussed how the battle between the parties around the time of independence caused politics to become territorialised, with each of the parties establishing exclusive dominance in a particular region of Angola. This territorialisation assumed a different dimension as the MPLA established itself in most of Angola's towns, while UNITA waged a guerrilla war. People who recall this era associate the MPLA with the towns and UNITA with the bush. The political meanings attached to space also became associated with the people living in a particular area. Soldiers in FAPLA had orders to bring to the cities anyone who was found in the bush in the course of their operations. One former soldier, asked how soldiers were supposed to identify the enemy in the bush, replied:

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[50] *The Guardian* (London), 27 June 1988. Excerpted in *Facts and Reports* 18 (N), 1 July 1988. Holland Committee on Southern Africa.

[51] When I visited the UNITA quartering area at Calala near Cazombo in Moxico province in June 2002, I saw a traffic-free roundabout like the one Johnson describes, and I was given a tour of the "hospital" that had been constructed even although the quartering areas were never intended to last more than a year. By this time, UNITA had been cut off from foreign support for years, and the resources available to it were limited to what had survived during the years when the leadership was on the run. Nevertheless, when I arrived for the tour, the hosts made sure I was greeted by a surgeon in gown and mask, and a man using a microscope in the grass-hut laboratory.

[52] Das and Poole 2004:23.

> Those who are with the MPLA are in the environs of the city – beyond that is the bush, 30 kilometres away – anyone there is the enemy. Even if he doesn't have a gun, he's one of the enemy people. The commander would send these people to the *município* [district administration]. But if he had a gun he couldn't stay with the people [in the *município*], he might run away. So he would be sent to the province [the provincial capital].[53]

Armed or unarmed, any person who did not go along with the FAPLA soldiers risked being suspected of active collaboration with UNITA. Another former conscript into FAPLA recalled:

> We knew that there were [UNITA] troops among the people. People paid dearly for this. In confrontations no distinction was made. Both UNITA and MPLA troops killed many people. UNITA had bases, but there were moments when it hid itself among the people.
>
> [When FAPLA came to remove people,] whoever stayed behind, wasn't people any more.[54] This policy continued until 2002 in the east. If you hid and didn't go, you weren't people any more, you were [one of the] troops.[55]

Someone who was "*povo*" was liable to capture by either side: war booty rather than a belligerent. Someone who was "*tropa*" was perceived as being more closely integrated into UNITA, even though participation in UNITA's army was never voluntary. This categorical distinction made by the FAPLA soldiers echoes a distinction that was made within UNITA itself: the distinction between those individuals who had defined military or civilian roles within UNITA, and the "*povo da UNITA*" who tilled fields in areas under UNITA control and who supplied food to the military bases. Most of the *povo da UNITA* had never experienced the control of any political movement other than UNITA, and were in no position to make political choices.

Both parties, then, habitually assigned political identity to people, regardless of whatever political views the people themselves might have held. Less educated people, in particular, saw themselves as having no political identity other than that which was assigned to them. A woman from a peasant community who had passed from a UNITA area to a state-controlled area at the end of the war told me: "we used to be UNITA people, now we are government people because we are here with the government".[56] But even better educated and politically conscious people acknowledged a similar process. Adriana, aged 12 in 1976, had left Kuito with her

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[53] Interviewee 126, Chicomba, November 2008.
[54] *Quem ficou, já não era povo.*
[55] Interviewee 141, Chicomba, November 2008.
[56] Interview, Mavinga, July 2002.

family as UNITA fled the city ahead of the advancing MPLA and Cuban forces. Three years later, she was seized by the FAPLA and taken to a government-controlled *comuna* where she was eventually reunited with her family, who had also been rounded up by the FAPLA. Her experience of UNITA politicisation had left the family fearful of the MPLA and FAPLA, which is why they tried to flee and avoid capture. But after she had been educated in MPLA schools and begun a career in government service, her views changed and she became firmly loyal to the MPLA. She was nevertheless conscious of the situational nature of political identity during the war. Asked whether her parents had been followers of either party, she replied:

> In the conditions in which we were taken, of necessity one had to identify oneself as an adherent of UNITA. If you identified yourself the other way you would be dead. As long as we stayed with UNITA, we were UNITA. But when we came back here with the MPLA, we became MPLA.

The remarks by former soldiers quoted above indicate how, in the terms of government discourse, anyone living outside of a government-controlled area became an "enemy person" or a "UNITA person", and Adriana's remarks suggest that people had to express an identification with the political movement in whose territory they were living. Examining how people recollect the years of war in Angola, we may discern a number of different but overlapping discourses on the relationship between territorial control and political identity. The government, particularly the military, labelled people on the basis of their location in a way that silenced the possibility of political choice by the person in question. According to Marcolino Moco:

> During that period of almost 30 years, people lost the notion of being independent persons. They would say, "I'm UNITA" or "I'm MPLA" […] there was no middle way. People became possessions. During the time of the single party, people were all with the government.[57]

When asked what it meant to be "with the government" (*do governo*) Moco explained:

> To obey all the government's instructions, collaborate with the government – though it wasn't really the government, it was the MPLA. The MPLA was the government, it was the same thing, a fusion.

Moco's definition captures one of the contradictions in how political identity was constituted: in one sense it was assigned on the basis of where one was; in another sense, it had to be demonstrated by obeying and "collaborating". Space became associated with political identity, since within any one political space there was no

[57] Interview with Moco, Huambo, August 2008.

possibility of expressing any political choice. According to a farmer on the outskirts of Huambo, who had been a teenage girl at the time of independence:

> In those areas [away from the city] UNITA controlled its people. Here in the government area, the government also controlled its people. Each party in the area where it was, controlled its people.[58]

People who passed from one zone of control to the other, like Adriana quoted earlier, had a keener sense of how political control required that they assume one or another political identity. Political identity was more than simply a function of political control, but political control imposed limits on the political identities that people could express, and interviewees' accounts make clear that political identity, and even people's personal opinion, could change according to circumstances.[59]

Commonalities

What, then, can we see in common between the norms and the practices on the MPLA side and on the UNITA side? On both sides of the war we can observe a concept of the state as a complex of ideas and practices that link together responsibilities towards the population, prerogatives of violence, and the identity of the nation. For both, the idea of an enemy that was the surrogate of foreign interests was essential to the creation and propagation of a particular vision of Angolan nationhood, centred upon a political movement that was conceptually indistinct from the state. Hence the idea of the state became a nexus of personal and political identity.

We can also see commonalities in the kind of state envisaged by the MPLA and by UNITA, although the fact that the MPLA became the sole heir to the colonial cities made it better able than UNITA to put its ideas into practice. Both political-military movements espoused state-led development, in which we can see the ideologies, discourses and practices of modernisation of a kind that is generally associated with the late colonial and early independence periods elsewhere in Africa. Both sought to mimic or to maintain the norms and priorities of the colonial state, and this determined the urban-centred vision of statehood that both parties held, even though UNITA's presence in urban areas was only brief. However much Savimbi may have

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[58] Interviewee 30, Huambo, May 2008. I have translated "*controlar*" in Portuguese as "control" for the sake of convenience, but the two words do not have identical meanings. If the primary meaning of "control" in English is concerned with commanding or managing something, in Portuguese "*controlar*" more often has to do with watching over someone or something.

[59] The work of Stathis Kalyvas (2006) usefully debunks assumptions in some earlier literature that civilians in civil war make choices about which side to follow based on their own a priori political preferences. Kalyvas instead emphasises the potential of military control to mould political identity.

espoused ideologies of African authenticity and Maoist ideas of peasant-led revolution, UNITA's normative ideas about the state were no less influenced by urban and modernising norms than were those of the MPLA. The ideas about the role of the state in relation to the citizenry, and about citizenship and identity in relation to political authority that were forged in wartime continued to inform understandings of politics after the end of the civil war, as the next section of this paper will now discuss.

The Luena agreement

The moves towards a negotiated settlement to the Angolan conflict that began at the end of the 1980s were an external initiative, motivated by the changes in the international environment brought about by the end of the Cold War. I have argued elsewhere that they failed because they did not take into account the aspirations of the leaders on either side of the Angolan conflict, or of the relationship between the political movements and the people in the areas they controlled.[60] Instead, the 1991 Bicesse Accord assumed that two authoritarian political-military movements with exclusivist ambitions to control the Angolan state could be transformed into political parties that would represent the aspirations of the Angolan people through participation in a constitutional democracy. The Lusaka Protocol of 1994 sought to fix the failings of Bicesse by means of a degree of power-sharing, but it went no further than Bicesse in getting to grips with the questions of political and military power and the irreconcilable aspirations – and consequent fundamental mistrust – between UNITA and the MPLA. Internal and international developments in the late 1990s changed the power equation. Angola's increasing significance as an oil supplier to the global market, alongside the MPLA's 1992 election victory, strengthened the government's diplomatic position and it gained the United Nations' support for sanctions against UNITA, while oil income enabled the state to rearm its military and engage foreign mercenary assistance in a new onslaught against UNITA. UNITA lost control of its last urban bases, Bailundo and Andulo, towards the end of 1998. Over the following three years UNITA continued to conduct raids on towns and villages in the interior. Counter-insurgency measures by the state – conducted at tremendous human cost – largely achieved their objective of ending UNITA's access to food produced by peasant farmers in rural areas. Even after the return to war in 1993, UNITA tried to maintain the state-like relationships that it had established in the rural areas where its control was secure. But these became impossible to sustain in the course of a long war of attrition. By the time that members of the Angolan Armed Forces killed Savimbi on 22 February 2002, UNITA was weakened to the extent that the surviving UNITA leadership accepted talks on the government's terms.

[60] Pearce 2011.

These talks were held during March 2002 the eastern Angolan town of Luena, the garrison town for the military operation against Savimbi, beyond the reach of the media, of Angolan political or civil society, and of foreign observers. In contrast to the Lusaka agreement which had involved political concessions to UNITA, and in defiance of calls from Angolan civil society which had wanted a more inclusive dialogue on ending the war, the Memorandum of Understanding that emerged from the Luena talks was essentially a technical document setting out the modalities for the disarmament and dispersal of UNITA's remaining troops. Another outcome of the talks was the offer of benefits in the form of housing for UNITA's senior political and military officials. The effect of the settlement was to dismember what was left of UNITA as a political-military entity, by making UNITA's leaders dependent on the patronage of the MPLA state and severing the links between the political leadership and the people who had been attached to or identified with UNITA during the war.

In the remainder of this paper I consider the nature of the post-2002 political order in Angola, no longer at war and now dominated by a single political force: the MPLA. I will look first at the specific practices of state building, and the ideologies in terms of which these practices are understood. I will consider the discourses of the MPLA and the state media, and the extent to which the understandings presented by the party and by the media are echoed in the ways in which citizens talk about their experiences of the post-war state. The post-2002 order has been characterised by the advance of the state into regions of rural Angola where it had never been before, and by the forging of contact with people in such areas with whom it had never had any relationship before. At the same time, the state has become more active in places – notably the towns of the interior – which, although they were undoubtedly under state control for the most of the war period, saw almost no public services or new infrastructure provision during that time.

Travelling around the Angolan interior reveals a dramatic difference in the experience of post-war state building between the towns and the rural villages. In town centres that had been shelled to ruin during the war, colonial buildings have been restored, and new facilities such as clinics and sports facilities constructed. There was a rush to complete these projects before the 2008 parliamentary elections, and the MPLA and the state media presented these as the gift of the party. President dos Santos made an unprecedented tour of the provinces in the week before the election and unveiled new building projects, amid ceremonies that were indistinguishable from MPLA rallies. Following a practice established during wartime one-party rule, state employees were obliged by their bosses to attend these events. Some of the first reconstruction projects were plainly utilitarian: new electrical generators in Saurimo, a hospital in Lubango, a basketball stadium in Huambo. But others appeared to be as much about creating spectacle as about serving any practical purpose. In Huambo, for example, a long derelict park was restored, complete with illuminated fountains, less than a kilometre away from homes that enjoyed neither electricity nor running water. This was featured in lengthy television coverage of Huambo during the president's visit,

alongside footage of the public meetings where MPLA banners were prominent. The message of the presidential address and of the accompanying media coverage was of the rebirth of a once-modern city that had been devastated by war, and that the MPLA was central to a process both in bringing peace and in effecting reconstruction.

Outside of the towns, the most visible sign of post-war reconstruction is the rebuilding of roads. Some reports suggest that the roads were built as cheaply and as quickly as possible so as to be ready in time for the elections, and are already starting to decay. They were built with motorised traffic in mind, and pedestrians use the margins of the tarmac at their peril. Nevertheless, they do bring some collateral benefit to the villages in that farmers as much as 100 km away from an urban centre can now get their produce to the market by taking a minibus taxi. Away from the tarmac, signs of state investment are few, but the MPLA is present. An important part of the 2008 election campaign was the presentation of motorcycles, bags of grain and other gifts to village headmen, and the acts of donation were displayed on national television almost every day in the weeks before the election. In Angola the practice of chiefs receiving a state stipend started in colonial times. Today, chiefs who do not accept MPLA membership may find their stipend halted, or be replaced by a new incumbent sanctioned by the party. In some village a figure known as the "co-ordinator" works alongside the chief. Villagers I spoke to were unclear as to whether the co-ordinator's responsibility was to the party or to the state. He reported to the administration at the level of the *comuna* – the lowest rung on the administrative hierarchy – but was perceived as being the party's representative. In the villages, the merging of the concepts of party and state appeared to be complete. People in one village said how the same group of individuals had come from the local administrative centre first to conduct voter registration, and then to campaign for the MPLA. In another village, when I asked whether UNITA or other opposition parties had any representation, the reply was: "Here we have a church committee for spiritual matters, and an MPLA committee for political matters. There is no need for another committee." Where state services have been extended into rural areas, they are politicised. Teachers formerly attached to UNITA have been incorporated into the state education service, but only on condition that they renounce their links with UNITA and receive MPLA membership cards. I heard of incidents where UNITA members who tried to draw water from a newly-installed well, only to be chased away by MPLA supporters who told them "this well was put here by the government, so it is not for UNITA people".

Where political violence has occurred in rural Angola since the end of the war, the victims have been those people who dare to remain public about their UNITA affiliation, and there have been no visible efforts by the state to bring the perpetrators

to justice.[61] A local journalist who had spoken to the perpetrators of an attack on a UNITA political meeting told me:

> They [the attackers] said if UNITA comes again we'll do this again. They said UNITA had made them suffer a lot in the past - "we don't want UNITA, who made us suffer – we only want the government here – UNITA killed our families and destroyed our houses and fields".

Some of these attacks may well have been the spontaneous actions of MPLA supporters with real grievances against UNITA as a result of their experiences of the war. This, however, is not to deny that MPLA activists encouraged a selective and politicised remembering of the war years. Before the 2008 elections, MPLA campaigners in the rural Central Highlands reminded citizens of the suffering that they had experienced in the time when UNITA controlled the area. Such talk made UNITA responsible for the war and the suffering that was associated with it, and portrayed the MPLA as the party that had brought peace to Angola. MPLA campaigners told villagers: "In the time of UNITA you ate husks. Now you eat maize porridge and vegetables. In the time of UNITA, even if you had money, you could not buy salt." In villages where the MPLA was dominant, people spoke of a vote for UNITA as a vote against the peaceful post-war order that they associated with the MPLA, or even as a vote for a return to war.

Conclusion

In wartime, the MPLA was the public face of the Angolan state. It was the MPLA that sought to forge a relationship with the Angolan people that would enshrine the legitimacy of that state. The party, using access to the resources of the state, defended the legitimacy of the state against the challenge that UNITA presented to it. Today, UNITA no longer challenges the legitimacy of the state. The MPLA's task is now to defend its own incumbency in government in what is now, in theory at least, a multiparty system in which UNITA is the principal opposition party. The MPLA does so by deploying the resources of the state to which it retains privileged access, and by invoking the same ideas about politics that have their roots in the era of war and single-party rule.

As I have shown, political discourse on the UNITA side as well as on the MPLA side during the war served to conflate the concepts of party and state into a notion of a single sovereign entity whose interests were by definition the interests of the nation,

[61] Human Rights Watch 2008. During May 2008, while this paper was being written, a parliamentary commission of inquiry comprising members of various Angolan political parties was investigating claims of "intolerance" brought by

and to which any challenge was both against the common interest and liable to punishment. I have identified two principal functions that defined stateness in wartime, namely ability of the political entity to associate itself with the provision of goods and the maintenance of order.

As the Angolan state did in wartime, so the MPLA in peacetime continues to embody its legitimacy by presenting as the gift of the party those goods such as infrastructure that are provided by the state. Here the priorities reflect the ideologies of the state that were developed in wartime. They are dictated by the urban-centred ideas of the state inherited from colonial times and which were the first preoccupation both for UNITA and for the MPLA in the years after independence. It is primarily in urban areas that the ideology of the state as provider has been given material sustenance. Just as was the case during the war, the party and state invest as heavily in making a spectacle of provision as in the infrastructure itself.

The second foundation for political legitimacy that was established in wartime was maintenance of a peaceful and orderly environment. I have shown that a large part of the political work of each party was to associate itself with the maintenance of order, and to convince the population under its control that its own violence was necessary in order to defend the population against the violence of the other side. During the war, these processes operated in mirror fashion. On each side the logic was the same, but with the roles of "defender" and "enemy" reversed. The idea of the state drew together these notions of provision, legitimate violence and the nation. The ending of the war through the Luena agreement not only marked the physical reach of the MPLA state over the entire national territory for the first time: it also provided the opportunity for the MPLA to impose its preferred narratives about history, identity and political legitimacy on the entire population as it set about its newly expanded project of state building. In order to achieve this, elements within the MPLA continue to represent their political opponent, UNITA, as a threat to the order of peace and reconstruction that is the gift of the MPLA. The infrastructure projects in the towns of the interior have been presented specifically as projects of reconstruction, associated with the MPLA as the bringer of peace, and amid suggestions from some elements in the MPLA that UNITA had been wholly responsible for the destruction wrought during the years of conflict.[62] In the rural areas, where expectations of the state had always been much lower, the state's concern has been not so much with reconstruction as with presenting itself, and the MPLA, as the defender of order while keeping alive the idea that any opposition is a threat to this order. What we see in the countryside is an extension of party rather than state but still supported by a narrative about state building. At the same time, the MPLA continues to define itself as the defender of a common interest linked to Angolan national identity. The state itself

[62] For example, the then Defence Minister Kundi Paihama claimed that UNITA had retained arms caches since some of its leaders planned to return to war: an accusation that UNITA denied. Lusa news agency, 12 February 2008.

tacitly permits violence against those in the countryside who continue to identify with UNITA. Yet at the same time as UNITA members face threats and violence, political identities remain subject to change as they were in wartime. Former UNITA cadres are allowed into state employment, but only on condition that they renounce their former identity. Peace and order at local level are to be attained not through a process of reconciliation, but through the acceptance of a common political identity. Attaining the full rights of citizenship is contingent on party affiliation.

Commonly held ideas about party and state and the foundations of legitimacy remain the same as before. What is different now is that one party has access to the whole national territory and the whole population. There is no longer a challenge to the state, and even the political challenge to the MPLA appears feeble. In a recent article, Ricardo Soares de Oliveira used the term "illiberal peace building" to characterise a political process that contrary to the predictions of liberal peace theory uses the post-war moment to consolidate the economic, political and repressive power of a party whose responsibility is to a tiny elite.[63] Whether in the towns or the countryside, the post-war advance of the state is inextricable, both in the official discourse and in the minds of a large section of the public, from the political advance of the MPLA. Such an understanding of the post-war process has, clearly, been promoted quite consciously and deliberately by the party. In this paper I have attempted to show why the narrative of events presented by the MPLA and the state is credible in Angola. I suggest that its credibility stems from its continuities with the ways in which state building was understood during the war.

[63] Soares de Oliveira 2011.

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