Title
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The Crude Urban Revolution:

Land Markets, Planning Forms and the Making of a New Luanda

by

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Abstract

The Crude Urban Revolution: Land Markets, Planning Forms and the Making of a New Luanda

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This dissertation examines the relationship between petro-capitalism and urban development in contemporary Luanda. Focusing on the last two decades of intense urban transformation, the dissertation advances the notion of "the crude urban revolution" as a placeholder for the decisive role that petroleum plays in shaping the city. Making sense of how this powerful configuring arrangement has been unfolding on different realms of officialdom, three interrelated stories are told.

The first is about the formation of an official market for land and real estate. Providing an analysis of the Luanda Sul Program, a public-private initiative aimed at stimulating formal land transactions, this story maps out the establishment of its main private partner – the Brazilian firm Odebrecht – in Angola. This provides a vantage point to see how oil enabled the real estate market to be introduced as a means for promoting urban development, and to make sense of what arguably became a crucial reference model for subsequent state-sanctioned interventions in Luanda.

The second story focuses on the creation of the Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management. Delving into the vicissitudes of planning forms and institutions, the ensuing analysis offers a reflection on law, planning and the practices of the state. Luanda's planning realm is considered here as a heterogeneous and highly contested arena where bureaucratic complication becomes a mode of rule and oil emerges as a key agent for dissolving the entrapments of official planning processes.

The third and final story of this dissertation is about the emergence of a new mode of city making. Examining the urban development apparatus that led to establishment of Luanda's New Centralities, this story traces the intricate ensemble of oil deals, financial transitions, urban developmental ambitions and modes of planning expertise that connect the undersea of the Angolan coastline to the rise of new cities in the periphery of Luanda, via circuitry threads that extend to Beijing and Hong Kong.

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THE CRUDE URBAN REVOLUTION
LAND MARKETS, PLANNING FORMS AND THE MAKING OF A NEW LUANDA

LUANDANÇAS

TRACING CONTOURS OF A CRUDE URBAN REVOLUTION

> Great cities, although very different from each other, face similar problems. Luanda is no exception. Under the pressure of war, Luanda has grown at such a rate that its structures are on the verge of collapse. To a greater or lesser extent, all cities, especially those located in the Third World, have various unresolved problems.
>
> José Eduardo dos Santos at the UCCLA Summit of March 17, 1996.

> The inauguration of Cidade do Kilamba is a source of pride and great satisfaction for me and for all members of the Executive. This project is part of the general fabric of Luanda and it is the first important step of the Executive towards meeting the right of Angolans to access housing with a minimum of dignity and comfort.
>
> José Eduardo dos Santos at the inauguration of Cidade do Kilamba on July 11, 2011.

In 1996 the Union of Portuguese Language Capital Cities[1] held its twelfth plenary assembly in Luanda, the capital of Angola. Various dignitaries and representatives of local governments, private companies and business associations across the lusophone world had flown in for the event and it fell to the President of the Republic to give the opening speech. Then in his seventeenth year in office, José Eduardo dos Santos admitted that Luanda was in a rather difficult situation. "As you may have been able to notice," he said to the visitors at one point, "our capital is deeply degraded."[2] Its failures – he continued – were a consequence of the protracted civil war, the concomitant rural exodus and the severe crisis the country was now facing. And things were not getting better. Reciting one of the most often heard dictums about the history and geography of the city, dos Santos explained that since the last year of colonial rule Luanda had grown sixfold without the necessary investments in housing and infrastructure development. If in 1974 less than half of its 500 thousand inhabitants was estimated to be living in *musseques* surrounding what was purported to be the modern city,[3] twenty-two years later virtually all growth had happened in these unserviced urban peripheries. Three million people (and counting) were now living in the capital of the war-torn country. As a way of appealing to the interest of the meeting participants, dos Santos acknowledged that the financial resources to

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[1] Created with an orientation towards collaboration and mutual understanding (as well as a considerable dose of imperial nostalgia), the *União das Cidades Capitais Luso-Afro-Américo-Asiáticas* (UCCLA) or *União das Cidades Capitais de Língua Portuguesa* is an intermunicipal association whose statutory objective is to promote cooperation among local authorities in Portuguese speaking countries. The intention is to stimulate cultural, scientific and technological exchanges and create social and economic opportunities for fostering progress and welfare in each city. See UCCLA website.

[2] In José Eduardo dos Santos, "Luanda," in *José Eduardo dos Santos e os Desafios do Seu Tempo: Palavras de um Estadista 1979-2004*, Volume II, Ed. José Mena Abrantes (Luanda: Edições Maianga, 2004), 209. See also Volume I, 131-136, for excerpts of speeches made on Luanda in the first 12 years of his presidency.

[3] *Musseque*, the Kimbundu word for sandy area, is the term used in Angola to refer to what elsewhere is often called a "slum" or an "informal area." Historically forged in opposition to the colonial "cement city," the *musseque* holds now different layers of meaning that vary in accordance to who is employing the word. Amongst those who live in these areas, *bairro* or neighborhood is more commonly used. For an account of Luanda's *musseques* in the late colonial period see Ilídio do Amaral, "Luanda e os seus 'Muceques': Problemas de Geografia Urbana," *Finisterra* XVIII (36), 1983: 293-325. For a profile of the city that reviews some of this history until the end of the war see Paul Jenkins, Paul Robson and Allan Cain, "Luanda," *Cities* 19 (2), 2002: 139-150.

respond to them were only getting scarcer. "Everything is a priority," he declared. "All requires attention and needs immediate solution."

Fifteen years later, during the inauguration of the first 20,000 apartments of a new city ultimately planned for half a million people in the southern periphery of Luanda, the mood was rather different. Still holding power in the country's top political office, dos Santos spoke not just for the high-ranked national dignitaries in the audience but also to the cameras before of him. He now refused to hide his government's "ambition to include Luanda in the lot of the greatest and most beautiful cities in the world."[4] Built under the auspices of Sonangol, the national oil company, Cidade do Kilamba was the largest of multiple satellite cities and new urban developments planned by the notorious GRN, the *Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional*,[5] after the end of the civil war in 2002. In Luanda alone, which now reached a total population of over five million people – the vast majority of whom were living in ever expanding *musseques* – four other projects were under construction. Exulting the merits of urban deconcentration and vowing for administrative decentralization, dos Santos assured his audience that this was "the most commonly adopted way of correcting uncontrolled growth in large cities." With not just one but several urban centers, he promised that Luanda would be better equipped to counter the chaos and infrastructural mayhem that had gripped its entire region. The building works would continue, both there and elsewhere, but it was now time to cheer for the new city: "*Viva a Cidade do Kilamba*!"

This dissertation aims, at the most basic level, to make sense of this fifteen-year-long mood swing. Not that I am concerned with the emotional sways of the second longest serving president in Africa, who is also often considered to be an authoritarian ruler and one of the most corrupt political leaders in the world today.[6] Not because I am wondering about how the late colonial mythical construct of Luso-Tropicalism might have served to create and sustain an institution like the Union of Portuguese Language Capital Cities.[7] Not even due to the fact that Cidade do Kilamba constitutes one of the most astonishing instances of Africa's emerging forms of official urbanism.[8] Rather, this study contributes an informed understanding of what lies behind Santos'

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[4] José Eduardo dos Santos, "Discurso pronunciado na Inauguração da Cidade do Kilamba," Luanda, July 11, 2011, available on *Angola Press*. Accessed May 7, 2015.

[5] *Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional* can translate in English as Office for National Reconstruction.

[6] The Internet, particularly its liberal spheres, is full with maps of "current dictatorships" as well as lists of "the world's most corrupt countries" or "Africa's worst leaders." Angola and José Eduardo dos Santos are often featured in them. See, for example, Eli Rosenberg, "The Map of the World's Dictators," *The Wire*, June 8, 2011; Joshua Norman, "The World's enduring dictators: José Eduardo dos Santos, Angola," *CBS News*, June 19, 2011; Mfonobong Nsehe, "The Five Worst Leaders in Africa," *Forbes*, February 9, 2012; or Taylor Light, "Presidential Roundup: The World's 5 Most Corrupt," *Global Citizen*, February 19, 2015. All accessed May 27, 2015. But it not just from outside that dos Santos and his regime are targeted as being corrupt. The most comprehensive and well-rounded indictments of fraud and nepotism come from within, most notably through Rafael Marques de Morais' Maka Angola, a website dedicated to "support democracy" and "fighting corruption" in Angola.

[7] Even though a study of that which a former UCCLA General Secretary referred to as "[Vasco da] Gama's new caravel" would certainly be of interest. In Manuel Pinto Machado, Open Letter to Nuno Kruz Abecasis, in UCCLA website. Accessed May 27, 2015. For two good discussions on the roots and ramifications of Luso-Tropicalist discourses as well as some reflections on the *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP) or Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, of which the UCCLA was precursor, see Miguel Vale de Almeida, *An Earth-Colored Sea: 'Race', Culture and the Politics of Identity in the Post-Colonial Portuguese Speaking World* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004), 45-64, as well as David Brookshaw, "Understanding the Lusophone Atlantic," in *Theorising the Ibero-American Atlantic*, Ed. Harald Braun and Lisa Vollendorf (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2013), pp. 37-49.

[8] While Chapter 3, as we will see below, is dedicated to unpacking the underpinning circuitries of Cidade do Kilamba, this is only a means for analyzing a mode of city making that goes well beyond its boundaries, not the overall intention of the dissertation.

changing mind-set over this period of time. For the disparity between viewing a city "on the verge of collapse" and seeing it bound to be included "in the lot of the greatest and most beautiful cities in the world" is justified by some of the transformations he saw Luanda go through over the preceding decade or so.

From the point of view of the government, as well as that of many economic actors who professedly operate within the boundaries of the law, these are fundamental transformations that reach a multiplicity of domains. They range from the formation of an official market for land and real estate to a whole series of changes in the politico-administrative setup of the city. They include not just the consolidation of legal and regulatory frameworks of spatial planning, but also the reemergence of properly controlled development practices and organized modes of urban management. And, most importantly, they have gone beyond mere intentions. They have – as dos Santos' hinted at, underneath the shade of Cidade do Kilamba's 710 geometrically aligned apartment buildings – translated into tangible physical outcomes and significant improvements in patterns of urban form. "Anarchic occupations," which is how the *musseques* are typically described in official discourse, are being curbed.[9] A lot remains to be done, government and real estate investors concede, but the different strands of "order" imagined and fabricated in each of these transformations are taking over.

This dissertation is then chiefly concerned with unpacking that which is offered as emerging formations of "order" in contemporary Luanda. Rather than approaching them from the vantage point of what is in the fringes of their ensuing apparatuses – i.e. the *musseques* and the networks through which the Luandan urban majority generates the "city yet to come"[10] – this study looks at their internal workings. At the most basic level, the objective is to provide an in-depth analysis of what is entailed in the emergence of dos Santos's vision of the new Luanda. Key inquiries driving this analysis include: How has the official market for land and real estate been created? What have been their trajectories of accumulation? How have law, planning and state practices been reshaped? What do these new configurations of governmental power look like? What explains the development of new urban poles in the periphery of Luanda? In searching for answers to each of these questions, my analysis focuses on the post-colonial period and I tell three interconnected stories centered within the fifteen years that separate dos Santos' two speeches above. The first story is about the Luanda Sul Program, the initiative arguably responsible for carving out the official market for land and real estate in the Angolan capital. The second delves into the universe of IPGUL, the *Instituto de Planeamento e Gestão Urbana de Luanda* and body nominally responsible for overseeing urban development in Luanda.[11] And the

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[9] The notion of "anarchic occupations," the direct translation of *ocupações anárquicas*, is extensively problematized by Claudia Gastrow. See "Negotiated Settlements: Housing and the Aesthetics of Citizenship in Luanda, Angola" (PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2014), especially the introduction. Seeking to trace and understand the "co-constitution of the built environment of the city and political consciousness," her dissertation explores "how urban demolition, new aesthetic styles, and the breaking apart of urban spatial dichotomies are reconfiguring urban residents' understandings and practices of citizenship and political community." She questions the idea of "anarchy" by carefully analyzing how "through the object of the house, discussions of aesthetic distinction overlap with the political-legal realm to transform senses of political community, citizenship, and ownership among Luanda's residents." My dissertation, as we will see below, aims to do something different.

[10] AbdouMaliq Simone's concern throughout his now classic study of African urbanism was to investigate "how African cities work and how the capacity to generate new and largely ephemeral forms of social collaboration are important in this process" (p. 214). My own concern in this dissertation is also to understand how Luanda works, but my focus is quite different. AbdouMaliq Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004).

[11] In English, the Luanda Urban Planning and Management Institute.

third focuses on the financing and planning apparatuses that led to the construction of Cidade do Kilamba. Together they allow us to critically reconsider the ordering qualities of Luanda's official urbanism and provide empirical substance to what I call the "crude urban revolution."

I use the idea of the "crude urban revolution" as a placeholder for the decisive role played by oil in shaping some of Luanda's urban transformations. In contemporary Angola, oil is not just central to the making of modernity. It is also a crucial configuring element of urban form.[12] Not because it dictates every little detail of what Henri Lefebvre referred to as "the urban problematic," but since it percolates through a variety of crucial institutional spheres in the "the search for solutions and modalities unique to urban society."[13] In order to give shape and meaning to this idea, this dissertation looks through different realms of officialdom, following planners and investors, as well as legal and economic structures. For one thing is clear. While petro-capitalism fuels urban changes everywhere, in Luanda crude oil is the fundamental enabling substance of official urbanism.

In 1990, ten years after drilling its first well in the northern offshore of Angola, the French oil company Elf Aquitaine[14] commissioned one of the most widely celebrated Angolan novelists, Pepetela, to write an essay about Luanda. Fernand Poimboeuf, the firm's in-country general manager at the time, wrote a short preface to the carefully illustrated bilingual volume suggesting that cities can be read just like books. "Luanda is not, however, an easy city to read." This, he explains, is because "some clues" are missing. Delving into the city's history and culture with a distinctly literary sensibility and residues of the sociologist that he also is, Pepetela's essay traces some of those missing clues; or, as the oil executive puts it, guides the readers in a journey through the city. To that journeying act, aptly translated in French as "long *flâneries* in Luanda," Pepetela called *luandando*.[15]

In this way, Luanda becomes both noun and verb. Delineating not just the city itself but also the act of wandering through it, Pepetela *luanda* through Luanda. What I try to do in this dissertation is not quite to follow on his footsteps, but to parallel them, documenting my own journeys through the Angolan capital. For even though our respective engagements with the city are very

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[12] In a way, this take on the role of oil is similar to Kristin Reed's approach in her recent study in Northern Angola. In her analysis (and her own words), oil is viewed "not as a trigger but as a constitutive force behind Angola's political economy." In Kristin Reed, *Crude Existence: Environment and the Politics in Northern Angola* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2009), 18.

[13] Written in the aftermath of the May 1968 uprising in Paris, Lefebvre's foundational text on "the urban revolution" argues, as Neil Smith puts it in the foreword to the English translation, "that the problematic of industrialization, which has dominated capitalist societies for more than two centuries, is increasingly superseded by the urban." (xi) In Lefebvre's own words, the "urban revolution" refers to "the transformations that affect contemporary society, ranging from the period when questions of growth and industrialization predominate (models, plans, programs) to the period when *the urban problematic becomes predominant*, when the search for solutions and modalities unique to urban society are foremost." (p. 5, my emphasis) In Angola, like almost everywhere else in Africa, this historical trajectory is completely different but a reflection about the predominance of the urban problematic – as we will see below – is particularly relevant today. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

[14] Elf Aquitaine, a French state-controlled oil company whose first well in Angola struck oil in the early 1980s, was acquired by TotalFina to become TotalFinaElf in 2000 and later renamed Total. Elf has operated in Angola since 1980 when it signed a contract to operate offshore block 3 with a 50 percent stake.

[15] To be sure, *luandando* is a neologism, a mash up of *Luanda* with the verb *andar* (to walk) in the gerund form: *andando*.

distinct from one another, despite the fact that the Luanda I analyze here in clunky fashion is profoundly different from that which he so eloquently depicted in his essay, and although he sees his adopted city growing "languorously slow in awakening" while I focus on the rapid oil-fuelled transformations of a city that is not mine, we are both deeply invested in understanding it for what it is. To my own wanderings through Luanda, which like Pepetela's are both literal and figurative, denoting not just the act of walking though the city but also that of writing about it, I refer to as *luandanças*.[16]

> At about 8º48'' south latitude and 13º13''east longitude, between the Bengo and Kwanza rivers, a city was built up, the oldest to be constructed by Europeans on the western coast of Africa.

> Luanda was the name of the Island that sheltered it, Luanda or Loanda was the city named. São Paulo de Luanda, later São Paulo da Assunção de Luanda.

> It is with the birth and growth of this beautiful and capricious girl, languorously slow in awakening, that this book deals. Of how she lives and plays, among the red sands, slopes and blue sea. And also of the dreams that were deposited in her and the aspirations it destroyed. Innocently cruel, she cuddles and cradles the people that live in her, tying them with the spell of her sensuality. Forever. As the legend has it, that who ever once drank water from the Bengo, can never break free.

<div align="right">Pepetela, Preamble to Luandando (Porto: Elf Aquitaine Angola, 1990), 9.</div>

THEORETICAL CONTOURS: ELEMENTS OF THE CRUDE URBAN REVOLUTION

The transformations at the heart of this dissertation, those that justify the shift in the official outlook for the future of Luanda portrayed above, can be explained in multiple ways. To make sense of Luanda's emerging apparatus of urban order, three interrelated aspects seem especially relevant. To begin with the most obvious circumstances, at the time of the inauguration of Cidade do Kilamba in 2011, Angola was almost a decade into its first sustained period of peace as an independent country and the rebuilding process had been underway in the context of what has been extensively described as the neoliberal global order. A second important explanation for dos Santos' new stance towards the development of Luanda was the range and depth of international partnerships that the Angolan government was able to forge out of these structuring political and economic arrangements. But that which explains each of these specific features, and arguably the most significant reason behind the transformation in the government's prospects for the capital, lies far out the northern coast of the country, underneath the seafloor of the Atlantic Ocean. For it is crude oil that has fueled such heightened ambitions for Luanda.

With the discussions around these three framing aspects in mind, the most salient contribution of this dissertation is in the field of African urban studies. As a study of the emerging apparatus of urban order in an African city whose economy is dependent on natural resources, this work opens up new insights into what has been recently dubbed "Africa's urban revolution."[17] In this

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[16] Derived from *luandando*, *luandanças* is also neologism. The mash up here is between *Luanda* and the plural noun *andanças* (wanderings).

[17] Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse, Eds, *Africa's Urban Revolution* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2014). Pieterse and Parnell do not make reference to Lefebvre in their introduction, but – if we put aside the latter's Marxist lexicon – their overarching argument that "Africa's urban transition (…) is not afforded the serious attention that it needs and deserves" is obviously akin to his claim that the urban is the primary means of production. In Edgar Pieterse and Susan Parnell, "Africa's

section, I situate my work in relation to each of the three explanatory frameworks highlighted above and I explain how this dissertation adds to the project of African urbanism.

Neoliberalism as Extraneous

The reconstruction of Angola took off under worldwide conditions of neoliberalism. Or at least that is what most heterodox political economists would point out at the time.[18] When the Luena Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Angolan Armed Forces and UNITA's rebel army in April 2002 (following the death of Jonas Savimbi), no critical geographer would forget to mention, ideas about the primacy of free markets, the importance of deregulation and the benefits of liberating entrepreneurial freedoms had become the cornerstones of policy repertoires throughout the entire world. Under that which has been often looked at as the steamrolling tide of neoliberal restructuring,[19] the state would be removed from the economy and its role in the peacebuilding process would merely be to sustain an institutional framework appropriate for the development of formal and properly functioning markets.

Students of Africa and its political economy were careful in adopting these interpretative models, particularly because of the continent's dismal economic performance in the last two decades of the twentieth century.[20] Nevertheless, ever since structural adjustment took over in the 1980s there had been a widespread expectation of permanently dwindling state powers and in the 1990s the dearth of state capacity had become a common theme amongst both economists and political

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Urban Revolution in Context," in *Africa's Urban Revolution*, Ed. by Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse (London and New York: Zed Books, 2014), pp. 1-17, 1.

[18] This is vividly illustrated by even a cursory survey of the literature in human geography and political economy in the early 2000s. *Antipode*'s issue on "spaces of neoliberalism" gives a timely example of it. Comprising what now are some of the most widely cited articles on the spatial effects of neoliberal programs at the urban scale, the collection organized by Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore was under last revisions when the civil war finally came to an end in Angola. See *Antipode* 34 (3), 2002, which in addition to those of the two editors includes contributions from people like Jamie Peck, Neil Smith or Bob Jessop. While the empirical focus of these articles is on Western Europe and North America and most of their authors emphasize the importance of understanding those effects in contextually specific ways, the editors hoped to contribute for the task of elucidating the urban dimensions of neoliberalism in other regions of the world (see preface). Another illustrative example of how neoliberalism was then assuredly seen as the defining setting of development efforts around the world is given by the publication of David Harvey's bestseller *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), a couple of years later.

[19] To be sure, Brenner, Peck and Theodore have emphatically made the case that neoliberalization is a "variegated" process and neoliberalism may not look the same everywhere. See Neil Brenner, Jamie Peck and Nik Theodore, "Variegated Neoliberalization: Geographies, Modalities, Pathways," *Global Networks* 10, 2010: 182-222.

[20] This is not to say that the lexicon of concepts that gravitates around the term neoliberalism was not used for making sense of sub-Saharan Africa's development. In South Africa, for example, geographers and political economists were quick to identify the emergence of neoliberalism after the end of apartheid. See Patrick Bond, *The Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa* (London: Pluto Press, 2000) or Gillian Hart, *Disabling Globalization: Places of Power in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002). Analysts of the whole continent, however, were more judicious in deploying this terminology. If globalization theorists saw sub-Saharan Africa as either the "brunt" or the "black hole" of global restructuring, amongst Africanists the talk of crisis was more common. If anything, the "rolling back" of the state had provoked this crisis. On this compare Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, Volume III*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998) or Neil Smith, "The Satanic Geographies of Globalization: Uneven Development in the 1990s," *Public Culture* 10 (1), 1997: 169-189 with Giovanni Arrighi, "The African Crisis: World Systemic and Regional Aspects," *New Left Review* 15, 2002: 5-36 or Nicholas van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). When Harvey's brief history of neoliberalism was published the term was already common currency amongst Africanists. See, for example, Patrick Bond, *Looting Africa: The Economics of Exploitation* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwazulu-Natal Press and London and New York: Zed Books, 2006). For a more recent overview of "thirty years of neoliberalism in Africa" see Graham Harrison, *Neoliberal Africa: The Impact of Global Social Engineering* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2010).

scientists.[21] Most often deemed to exist in the narrow continuum that goes from weak statehood to complete state collapse, African states came to be commonly seen as being unable to perform basic state functions such as controlling natural resources, providing basic levels of public order, or guaranteeing the welfare of their citizenry. Even when the analytical target moved towards quotidian practices of rule, the transformation of state bureaucracies or their emerging forms of productivity, the tendency was to focus on privatized modes of regulation and argue that African states had withdrawn from core governing functions.[22] They had become, in James Ferguson's terms, "nongovernmental states."[23]

The actual process of reconstruction in Angola, however, seems to defy these expectations. For the Angolan government, as Ricardo Soares de Oliveira points out, has shown a "new-fanged statist activism"[24] that stands in contrast with some of the most fundamental tenets of neoliberalism. After twenty-seven years of practically uninterrupted warfare, which followed a fourteen-year war of independence against Portuguese colonial occupation, the state did not "roll back" out of the rebuilding process. Nor was it necessarily reconfigured according to market logics. In fact, the MPLA[25] government has

Fig. A Angola Faz! (in Cidade do Kilamba). In *Jornal de Angola*, July 12, 2012.

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[21] For an economic critique of structural adjustment see Thandika Mkandawire and Charles Soludo, *Our Continent, Our Future: African Perspectives on Structural Adjustment* (Dakar: CODERSIA, Ottawa: IDRC, Trenton and Asmara: Africa World Press, 1999). For some of the most widely cited works on the failures of the African state see William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999), William Zartman, Ed, *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995) and Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). To be sure, as Graham Harrison points out, the question of state capacity also became an issue of concern to both the IMF and the World Bank, and in the 1990s structural adjustment programs "moved reform issues into a broader development agenda that merely rolling back the state." Arguing that this marked the "broadening of neoliberalism as a project of social engineering," however, Harrison stresses that what happened with the rolling out of governance reforms was an attempt at "bringing the wisdom of the free market into public institutions and societies alike." In Graham Harrison, "Economic Faith, Social Project and a Misreading of African Society: The Travails of Neoliberalism in Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 26 (8), 2007: 1303-1320, 1309-1310.

[22] See, for example, Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), Jean-François Bayart, Stephen Ellis and Béatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), or Achille Mbembe, *On Private Indirect Government* (Dakar: CODERSIA, 2000). In her ethnography of economic regulation in central Africa, anthropologist Janet Roitman points in a similar direction: "Whereas state regulatory authority is in crisis on the continent, state power in Africa propagates itself even in conditions of war and bankruptcy." In Janet Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience: An Anthropology of Economic Regulation in Central Africa* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 22.

[23] See James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), especially Chapters 1 and 8.

[24] In Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, "Illiberal Peacebuilding in Angola," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 49 (2): 287-314, 2011, 288.

[25] Now officially known simply as MPLA, the *Movimento Popular para a Libertação de Angola* or Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola was one of the three main liberation movements that fought Portuguese colonialism and negotiated the

been leading the country and its people "to make" their own reconstruction (see Fig. A).[26] Whereas both the effectiveness and the redistributive reach of such a leadership role is certainly subject to dispute, the fact is that there is little evidence that the Angolan state has "gotten out of the business of governing."[27] With infrastructure, housing and urban development as the main priorities in the government's reconstruction agenda, Cidade do Kilamba stood as the pinnacle of its developmental vision and the embodiment of its aspirations for Luanda. And very little in it, as we will see below, was about "freeing up the market."

This means that neoliberalism may not actually be an appropriate analytical lens for the type of transformations that this dissertation is concerned with. This is different from saying that other "uses"[28] of the term are not possible in Angola or even Luanda.[29] It is rather to suggest that, if our objective is to shine light on the specific logics of official outlooks for the city, we might be better off "looking beyond neoliberalism."[30] In this dissertation I argue that, for a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of Luanda's emerging apparatus of urban order, we need to pay special attention to the ways in which trajectories of accumulation and political regulation have been shaped by crude oil, "a commodity and a market for which the terms market rationality or market fundamentals – let alone neoliberal or free market – seem utterly irrelevant."[31] If one sees Luanda like Sonangol does, one certainly does not recognize the homogenized grid of a mining company town in Zambia.[32] But I am not sure that what one actually sees is a vast sea of

independence of the country in 1975. Having then taken control of the state, the movement-turned-party has been in power ever since. See Chapter 1.

[26] In 2012, ten years after the end of the war, an Angolan government publicity campaign was promoted under the catchphrase "*Angola Faz*!" or "Angola Makes!" Strategically put out during the election year, the PR campaign – whose jingle ended with a verse "*com a sua gente*" or "with its people" – included billboards of various sizes, full-page adds on newspapers and multiple short videos that were shown on TV. See, for example, Governo de Angola, "Angola Faz," Vimeo video, 1:27, posted by Batuque Filmes, February 19, 2012 or Governo de Angola, "Angola Faz – Habitação," YouTube video, 1:11, posted by Laura Lins, January 13, 2012. Accessed May 8, 2015.

[27] In Ferguson, *Global Shadows*, 39.

[28] See James Ferguson, "The Uses of Neoliberalism," *Antipode* 41 (1), 2010: 166-184.

[29] In fact, neoliberalism has been recently deployed in different ways to study urban processes in Luanda. See, for example, Claudia Gastrow, "Negotiated Settlements: Housing and the Aesthetics of Citizenship in Luanda, Angola." See also António Tomás "Refracted Governmentality: Space, Politics and Social Structure in Contemporary Luanda" (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2012), Chapter 2; and Sílvia Leiria Viegas, "Luanda, Cidade (im)Previsível? Governação e Transformação Urbana e Habitacional: Paradigmas de Intervenção e Resistência no Novo Milénio" (PhD Dissertation, Universidade de Lisboa, 2015).

[30] See Susan Parnell and Jennifer Robinson, "(Re) theorizing Cities from the Global South: Looking Beyond Neoliberalism," *Urban Geography* 33 (4), 2012: 593-617. I must say, however, that while I fully agree with Susan Parnell and Jennifer Robinson when they say that urban processes need to be taken more seriously in their own right, I would respond to their hypothesis that "the creation of a whole new gated city outside of Luanda (…) may reflect the new urban form of an absent and utterly incapacitate state" (p. 601) with a firm no, it does not. This conjecture, which seems to derive from Ferguson's oversimplified reading of the Angolan case (see footnote below), is just not supported by empirical evidence.

[31] Michael Watts, "Oil Talk," *Development and Change* 44 (4), 2013: 1013-1026, 1014. See also Hannah Appel, Arthur Manson, and Michael Watts, "Introduction: Oil Talk," in *Subterranean Estates: Life Worlds of Oil and Gas*, Ed. Hannah Appel, Arthur Manson, and Michael Watts (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), pp. 1-26, 8-9.

[32] In an article that contrasts the "ways of seeing" of an oil company in neoliberal Africa with those of James Scott's state (c.f. James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*), James Ferguson compares today's capital investment in African mineral extraction with the development of copper mining in the Zambian Copperbelt in the late-colonial and early-independence period to argue that what one finds in contemporary Africa is "not homogenization within a national grid but, more often, the abandonment of the idea of national grids altogether, along with the intensive exploitation of separately administered enclaves." See "Seeing Like an Oil Company: Space, Security, and Global Capital in Neoliberal Africa," *American Anthropologist* 107 (3), 2005: 377-382, 379. This has also served as the premise to his often-cited chapter (*Global Shadows*, Chapter 8) on the "new spatializations of order and disorder in neoliberal Africa," a piece where the Angolan case takes center stage as an example of "governing by extraction."

spatialized disorder punctuated by unfettered market enclaves connected to the neoliberal global economy.

Southern Connections

Since the turn of the century, new geopolitical and developmental forces have been at work throughout the African continent. If in the decades after decolonization much of it became a proxy platform for Cold War rivalries,[33] and the 1990s relegated the whole continent to a strikingly marginal position in an international order almost entirely dominated by Western powers and the Bretton Woods institutions,[34] the past decade has seen many of its countries reappear at the core of a changing constellation of powers. This is now a commonplace assertion. As countless media pundits and academics have been repeating over and over, an unprecedented level of interest from various corners of the globe has unleashed a "new scramble for Africa."[35] The international rush, we are relentlessly told, is sometimes about finding new markets,[36] but the real scramble is for the continent's natural resources.[37] In a world with growing energy needs, Africa is more than an outlet for goods and services. Most importantly, the continent finds itself at the center of a struggle where oil is the ultimate prize.

Much of this shift in the continent's geostrategic significance, analysts have also been telling us persistently for the past few years,[38] is explained by the rise of China in the global economy. As the new "superpower" seeks far and wide for opportunity and energy security, Africa has

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[33] See, for example, Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Doubleday and Three Leaves Press), Chapter 2; or Sue Onslow, Ed, *Cold War in Southern Africa: White Power, Black Liberation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).

[34] See, for example, Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival*; Kevin Dunn and Timothy Shaw, Eds, *Africa's Challenge to International Relations Theory* (New York: Palgrave, 2001); or Ian Taylor, *The International Relations of Sub-Saharan Africa* (New York and London: Continuum, 2010).

[35] Originally used to describe the partitioning of Africa amongst the European colonial powers after the Berlin Conference of 1884, the infamous phrase has now been recycled innumerable times in a multiplicity of venues. For some of the most notable uses see Lena Weinstein, "The New Scramble for Africa," *International Socialist Review* 60, 2008; Pádraig Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011); or Marwan Bishara, "The New Scramble for Africa," Empire, *Al Jazeera* video, 47:32, July 27, 2014. Accessed June 26, 2015.

[36] See, for example, Vijay Mahajan, *Africa Rising: How 900 Million African Consumers Offer More than You Think* (Upper Saddle River: Financial Times Press and Prentice Hall, 2008), David Mataen, *Africa, The Ultimate Frontier Market: A Guide to the Business and Investment Opportunities in Emerging Africa* (Petersfield: Harriman House, 2012).

[37] See Michael Klare and Daniel Volman, "America, China and the Scramble for Africa's Oil," *Review of African Political Economy* 33 (108), 2006: 297-309; John Ghazvinian, *Untapped: The Scramble for Africa's Oil* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2007); Duncan Clarke, *Crude Continent: The Struggle for Africa's Oil Prize* (London: Profile Books, 2008); and Douglas Yates, *The Scramble for African Oil: Oppression, Corruption and War for Control of Africa's Natural Resources* (New York and London: Pluto Press, 2012). See also Michael Watts, "Empire of Oil: Capitalist Dispossession and the Scramble for Africa," *Monthly Review* 58 (4), 2006: 1-17.

[38] Much like the accounts on the "new scramble for Africa," the literature on China in Africa has exploded in the past decade. For some of the most notable and worthwhile contributions see Ian Taylor, *China in Africa: Engagement and Compromise* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006); Chris Alden, *China in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2007); Chris Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, Eds, *China Returns to Africa: A Superpower and a Continent Embrace* (London: Hurst, 2008); Ian Taylor, *China's New Role in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2008); Meine Pieter van Dijk, Ed, *The New Presence of China in Africa* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009); Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Marcus Power, Giles Mohan and May Tan-Mullins, *China's Resource Diplomacy in Africa: Powering Development?* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). See also Gilles Mohan and Marcus Power, "Africa and China and the 'New' Economic Geography of Development," *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 30 (1), 2009: 24-28; and Gilles Mohan and Marcus Power, "New African Choices? The Politics of Chinese Engagement," *Review of African Political Economy* 35 (115), 2008: 23-42.

ostensibly become its "second continent."[39] But China is not the only country to play an important role in this purported renaissance. The rise in trade, investment and development cooperation of other so-called emerging economies, most notably the BRICS,[40] has also been instrumental for the continent's awakening. Opinions differ as to whether this benefits African countries or is just another iteration of imperialism,[41] but one thing is for sure. That which the United Nations Development Program has more generally referred to as the "rise of the South"[42] has been having considerable impact all across the continent.

Fig. B José Eduardo Dos Santos with Hu Jintao and Lula da Silva.
Photos taken on December 17, 2008 (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China website) and
June 23, 2010 (see Wikipedia Commons). Both web pages last accessed on June 28, 2015.

This has been exceptionally true in the reconstruction of Angola. Not just because of its relatively well-discussed "pragmatic partnership"[43] with China, but also due to its long-standing relationship with Brazil.[44] In its analysis of the underlying explanations for Luanda's emerging

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[39] In Howard French, *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building a New Empire in Africa* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014).

[40] See Pádraig Carmody, *The Rise of the BRICS in Africa: The Geopolitics of South-South Relations* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2013); Barbara Njau, *Building BRICS: The New Scramble for Africa* (London: Endeavour Press, 2013); and Ian Taylor, *Africa Rising? BRICS – Diversifying Dependency* (Oxford: James Currey, 2014). See also *Politikon's* special issue on "Africa's relations with emerging powers:" *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies* 36 (1), 2009.

[41] For a good contrast compare, for example, these two accounts written by the time of the fifth BRICS summit in Durban: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Africa-BRICS Cooperation: Implications for Growth, Employment and Structural Transformations in Africa* (Addis Ababa: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2013); and Patrick Bond, Ed, *BRICS in Africa: Anti-Imperialist, Sub-Imperialist or In Between? A Reader for the Durban Summit* (Center for Civil Society with groundWork and the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, in conjunction with Pambazuka News, 2013.

[42] United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 2013: The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* (New York: United Nations Development Program, 2013).

[43] Indira Campos and Alex Vines, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership" (Working Paper presented at CSIS Conference, December 5, 2007; Released on March 2008). See also Marcus Power, "Angola 2025: The Future of the 'World's Richest Poor Country' as Seen through a Chinese Rear-View Mirror," *Antipode* 44 (3), 2012: 993-1014; Marcus Power and Ana Cristina Alves, Eds, *China and Angola: A Marriage of Convenience?* (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012); and Lucy Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency: Angola's Management of China's Credit Lines* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013).

[44] There is a lot more written on China's presence that there is on Brazil's. Nevertheless, there are some contributions that provide a sense of the relationship between the two countries. See, in particular, Sylvia Croese, "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," in *Strengthening the Civil Society Perspective. Series II: China and the Other Emerging Powers in Africa* (Cape Town: Fahamu, 2010), pp. 7-29; and Jerry Dávila, *Hotel Trópico: Brazil and the Challenge of African Decolonization, 1950-1980* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010). See also Alexandre de Freitas Barbosa, Thais Narciso and Marina Biancalana, "Brazil in Africa: Another Emerging Power in the Continent?," *South*

apparatus of urban order, this dissertation takes both these specific connections into strong consideration. To be sure, I am well aware that there are a number of other countries with vested interests in how this apparatus is evolving. After all, it was the sudden rise of Angola as an economic lifeline for Portuguese construction companies that brought me to Luanda in the first place. Nevertheless, this dissertation makes the case that firms from these two "BRICS" have been playing particularly significant roles in shaping Luanda's development trajectory out of flows of natural resources. Established under the purview of a Brazilian company that arrived in Angola through an oil deal, the Luanda Sul Program was instrumental in molding its contemporary forms. Entirely built by Chinese contractors hired by means of oil-backed loans, Cidade do Kilamba is the current culmination of the Angolan government's aspirations for the capital.

This is not to say that the Luanda Sul Program or Cidade do Kilamba hold some particular quality or character that needs to be better understood. It is rather to argue that they enfold processes that require examination and reasoning. Moreover, the point of the analysis that I make of these initiatives is not to discuss the merits or demerits of their underlying "southern connections," but to contribute for a better understanding of what their implications have been for Angolan urbanism and the development of Luanda. To put it in the language of contemporary urban studies, which we will turn to below, the purpose of this study is to "dislocate the center" and "rethink the geographies" of urban theory.[45]

Beyond the Curse

With the second largest proven reserves in sub-Saharan Africa,[46] Angola's oil wealth is not only vast but it has also expanded significantly after the turn of the century. By the time the construction of Cidade do Kilamba began, crude oil production had gone up from about 600 thousand barrels per day in the mid-1990s to a peak of almost 2 million in 2008.[47] In July 2011, the month of the new city's inauguration, the daily amounts extracted were just below the average of nearly 1,800 thousand barrels at which production leveled out after the spike. Entirely due to the rise of deepwater exploration 100 to 250 kilometers offshore,[48] with most drilling happening at total depths well beyond 1,000 meters of water, this production upsurge matched a very sharp increase in oil prices[49] and propelled a period of unparalleled growth in Angola.

Accounting for more than half of the wealth produced within the country's borders in the past 20 years and about two-thirds of all earnings in the five-year period leading to the production peak

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African Journal of Political Studies 36 (1), 2009: 59-86; Kamilla Raquel Rizzi, Cristiana Maglia, Lucas Paes and Marcelo Kanter, "O Brasil na África (2003-2010): Política, Desenvolvimento e Comércio," *Conjuntura Austral* 2 (5), 2011: 61-81.

[45] See Ananya Roy, "The 21st Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory," *Regional Studies* 43 (6), 2009: 819-830.

[46] In this respect Angola is only second to Nigeria, but the production levels in the two countries have been in similar orders of magnitude over the past decade or so. Consider, however, that the two countries are significantly different in size. For example, in 2013 Angola's gross domestic product was $124,2 billion while Nigeria's was 521,8. And in the same year, there were almost 175 million people living in Nigeria while Angola had less than 22 million inhabitants.

[47] See US Energy Information Administration, Overview Data for Angola, *EIA website*, Last Updated on March 20, 2015.

[48] See Christopher Brown and Wood Mackenzie, "A Golden Decade for Angola's Deepwater," *Offshore* 69 (12), December 1, 2009. Accessed May 8, 2015.

[49] Oil prices went from an average of about $20 per barrel in the late 1990s to a staggering $145 in July 2008. Then the global recession caused a dramatic drop to about $30 per barrel in less than 6 months, but the prices bounced back quite significantly in the following couple of years.

of 2008, oil rents have driven the economy up.[50] If throughout the 1990s all the way to the end of the war in 2002 the country's GDP oscillated between 4 and 12 billion US dollars, the size of the economy had grown to almost 85 billion in 2008 and had reached more than 124 by 2013. With average growth rates of over 10 percent per year since 2002 and more than 20 percent in the final three years of that which economists have called the "mini golden age of Angola's growth,"[51] the southern African country entered the 21ˢᵗ century as the spearhead of a supposedly "rising"[52] continent and one of the fastest growing economies in the world.[53]

Such natural resource abundance, however, is often expected to be a recipe for disaster. It was in the late 1980s that development economists began to conjecture that rather than a "blessing," oil windfalls might actually be a "curse."[54] Throughout the 1990s, this hypothesis developed into a "thesis"[55] and the "resource curse" became an alleged empirical fact.[56] At first, the negative impacts of large resource endowments were primarily identified as effects on economic development, but soon they extended to the domains of governance and conflict as well. Most famously, oil dependency was said to hinder democracy, foster corruption, weaken state institutions and cause civil war.[57] Once these "traps," as Paul Collier called them, were pinned

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[50] All figures in this paragraph are based on data from The World Bank Open Database. Accessed May 9, 2015.

[51] They refer to the period between 2002 and 2008 when, if excluding 2003, the annual growth of the economy averaged more than 17 percent. See Centro de Estudos e Investigação Científica da Universidade Católica de Angola, *Angola's Economic Report 2012* (Luanda: Texto Editores, 2012), 214-218.

[52] The emergence of the now conventional narrative that Africa is "rising" is perhaps best illustrated by the widely debated contrast between two *Economist* covers. If on May 13, 2000 the continent was deemed "hopeless" on December 3, 2011 Africa was said to be "rising." See Chapter 2.

[53] Angola ranked sixth, one place ahead of China, in the list of countries with the highest GDP average growth between 2003 and 2013. The only African country ahead of Angola was Equatorial Guinea, another "oil state" but a much smaller economy. See Tina Aridas and Valentina Pasquali, "Countries with the Highest GDP Average Growth, 2003-2013," *Global Finance,* March 7, 2013. Accessed May 9, 2015.

[54] One of the first studies to suggest so was Alan Gelb's *Oil Windfalls: Blessing or Curse?* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[55] Richard Auty provided some of the most foundational contributions to strengthening of this thesis. See, for example, Richard Auty, *Sustaining Development in Mineral Economies: The Resource Curse Thesis* (London: Routledge, 1993).

[56] The studies made by Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner in the late 1990s are the most well known in this respect. See, for example, Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner, "The curse of natural resources," *European Economic Review* 45 (4), 2001: 827-38, where they conclude that the "empirical support for the curse of natural resources is not bulletproof, but it is quite strong."

[57] The literature on the "resource curse" is both extensive and extremely well succeeded in making its way out of the academic circles. It is also relatively diverse, increasingly nuanced and it has also been well reviewed elsewhere. See for example, Andrew Rosser, "The Political Economy of the Resource Curse: A Literature Survey," Institute of Development Studies Working Paper 268, April 2006. In any case, some key figures deserve our attention. Michael Ross, for example, has been active in all fronts of the curse, but the study in which he suggests that "a state's reliance on oil or mineral exports tends to make it less democratic." See Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53 (3), 2001: 325-361. For a refinement of these arguments see Thad Dunning, *Crude Democracy: Natural Resource Wealth and Political Regimes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008). For Ross's most recent recapitulation of all the different aspects of the "curse" see Michael Ross, *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2013). Another influential author, particularly in what respects the association between natural resources and the onset of civil war is Paul Collier. See, for example, Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War" *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (4), 2004: 563-595. See also Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). It is also worth mentioning Terry Lynn Karl. In her work, Karl argues that the dependence on oil revenues leads to the emergence of what she calls "petro-states," states that "become the primary object of rent-seeking behavior" and therefore hinder the promotion of private investment, production and economic growth. See Terry Lynn Karl, *The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). Finally there are two books that dig deeper into the relationship between natural resources and economic development that are worth mentioning: Edward Barbier, *Natural Resources and Economic Development* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University

down and explained, the objective was find ways of "escaping" them and let development follow its course.[58] Throughout the 2000s the resource curse became not just one the most popular topics in economics and political science research, but also a theoretical proposition that was consensual enough to mold prevailing beliefs concerning oil-rich nations and generate a strong conceptual foundation for policy-making in those countries. This is not to say all economists and political scientists came to agree on it. Since the later part of the decade there have been important challenges to some of its premises within its fields of origin,[59] and popular opinion on the topic has also been changing in the past few years.[60] Nevertheless, the "curse of riches" continues to be an extremely influential framework for the analysis of the political economy of resource-exporting countries in Angola, Africa and elsewhere.[61]

Outside the fields of political science and economics, the resource curse thesis does not have the same purchase. Despite the fact that this is inescapably "constitutive of oil's discursive work in the world,"[62] most of the anthropological and historical scholarship produced on oil in recent years does not really engage with it.[63] Nevertheless, the reason why this happens can itself be understood as a criticism of its propositions. For the effort to find statistical correlations between resource abundance and political-economic development completely ignores the cultural and historical specificities of each oil nation. Adding a geographical dimension to this diagnosis,

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Press, 2005); and Jonathan Di John, *From Windfall to Curse? Oil and Industrialization in Venezuela, 1920s to the Present* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 2009).

[58] See Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, especially Parts 2 and 5; and Macartan Humphreys, Jeffrey Sachs and Joseph Stiglitz, Eds, *Escaping the Resource Curse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[59] I should notice that most challenges came from authors who paid explicit attention to historical and geographical specificities in their studies and were therefore able to complexify the relationship between oil and politics. See, for example, Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf of Guinea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Benjamin Smith, *Hard Times in the Lands of Plenty: Oil Politics and Iran and Indonesia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007); or Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, *Oil is Not a Curse: Ownership Structure and Institutions in Soviet Successor States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). But there were also important contestations made on empirical terms, by scholars using econometric methods. See, for example, Christa N. Brunnschweiler and Erwin Bulte, "The Resource Curse Revisited and Revised: A Tale of Paradoxes and Red Herrings," *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management* 55 (3), 2008: 248-264; and Michael Alexeev and Robert Conrad, "The Elusive Curse of Oil," *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 91 (3), 2009: 589-598.

[60] As usual, *The Economist* is a good barometer of popular beliefs. On this compare, "The Curse of Oil: The Paradox of Plenty," an article from December 2005 with a piece written in January 2015: "African Economic Growth: The Twilight of the Resource Curse?" To be sure, the second article does not necessarily refute the thesis. Rather, it questions it questions its validity as it reports fairly sustained levels of economic growth in Africa despite the recent plunge in commodity prices.

[61] See, for example, the recently published *The Looting Machine*, a book written by *Financial Times* journalist Tom Burgis where the Angolan case features very prominently: Tom Burgis, *The Looting Machine: Warlords, Oligarchs, Corporations, and the Theft of Africa's Wealth* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2015). Another fairly recent example where Angola is taken to be "classic example of the resource curse" is John Hammond's article on the theory of the resource curse: John Hammond, "The Resource Curse and Oil Revenues in Angola and Venezuela," *Science & Society* 75 (3), 2011: 348-378. In a similar vein, analyzing questions of "local content" in the Angolan oil and gas industry, Jesse Ovadia speaks of the curse as something to be avoided: Jesse Salah Ovadia, "The Dual Nature of Local Content in Angola's Oil and Gas Industry: Development Vs. Elite Accumulation," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 30 (3), 2012: 395-417.

[62] In Appel *et al*, "Introduction: Oil Talk," 16.

[63] See, for example, Fernado Coronil, *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1997); Suzana Sawyer, *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004); Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Miguel Tinker Salas, *The Enduring Legacy: Oil, Culture, and Society in Venezuela* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2009); or Elana Shever, *Resources for Reform: Oil and Neoliberalism in Argentina* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012).

Michael Watts makes a more direct objection to the influential thesis.[64] For him, this sort of "oil talk" slips too easily into a form of "commodity determinism" that overlooks the forms and practices of incumbent politics, pays no attention to their differences across oil-producing states, and ignores the political economy of what is a vast and complex industry.[65] What this does is to conceal the specific forms of capitalism engendered by oil, i.e. it renders invisible the actual dynamics of petro-capitalism.

Pursuing a socio-technical understanding of democracy as "the outcome of particular ways of engineering political relations out of flows of energy,"[66] Timothy Mitchell begins his analysis of "political power in the age of oil" with a similar take on those who write about the resource curse. An important part of what remains buried in their deterministic accounts of the relationship between energy and politics,[67] Mitchell points out, much to Watts's agreement,[68] is the *materiality* of oil. In other words, the problem is that they "have little to say about the nature of oil and how it is produced, distributed and used."[69] In failing to explain the "the ways in which oil is extracted, processed, shipped and consumed, the powers of oil as a concentrated source of energy, or the apparatus that turns this fuel into forms of affluence and power," Mitchell argues again to Watts' agreement, "they treat the oil curse as an affliction only of the governments that depend on its income, not of the processes by which a wider world obtains the energy that drives its material and technical life."

While there are significant differences in what Mitchell and Watts propose to explore, they agree upon a shared criticism of the resource curse thesis as well as the future path that studies of oil ought to take. For investigating what renders it governable, Mitchel proposes "following closely the oil itself,"[70] tracing the links between shipping routes and calculative techniques, financial arrangements and networks of expertise, infrastructural grids and regulation procedures. In similar fashion, Watts puts forward an alternative way of seeing oil, suggesting that in order to delve into the intricacies of "what is, in effect, a regime of accumulation and mode of regulation"[71] one has to begin with the "variety of actors, agents, infrastructures, processes, and

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[64] Philippe Le Billon is another geographer who deals directly with the resource curse thesis. His engagement his both more extensive and less critical than Watts' but his explorations on the theme provide not just great nuance to the debate, but also consideration for the spatial dimensions of resource dependence. See, for example, Philippe Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts, *Political Geography* 20(5), 2001, 561–584; Philippe Le Billon, "Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98(2), 2008, 345–372; or more recently Philippe Le Billon, *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources* (New York: Hurst and Columbia University Press, 2012). He also wrote about post-colonial Angola, where "wealth appears to be a curse for its people" (p. 56). In Philippe Le Billon, "Angola's Political Economy of War: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000," *African Affairs* 100, 2001: 55-80.

[65] See, in particular Michael Watts, "Resource curse? Governmentality, Oil and Power in the Niger Delta, Nigeria," *Geopolitics* 9(1), 2004: 50-80; and Michael Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs: Life, Death, and Dispossession along Two Oil Frontiers," *American Quarterly* 64 (3), 2012: 437-467, especially 437-443. See also and Appel *et al*, "Introduction: Oil Talk."

[66] In Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London and Brooklyn: Verso, 2011), 5.

[67] As he puts it towards the end of the book, "forms of energy [do not] determine modes of politics." Instead, "energy is a field of technical uncertainty rather than determinism." In Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 238.

[68] Watts reviews Mitchell's book in a recent essay. See Watts, "Oil Talk," especially page 1015 for this particular alignment.

[69] In Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 1.

[70] In Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 253.

[71] In Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs," 443.

imaginaries"[72] that puts it in motion and develop a sharp understanding of what "are always temporally and geographically contingent"[73] operations. In other words, even if only partially (and any analytical effort will inevitably be so), one must chart the vast space of what he calls the "oil assemblage."[74]

This dissertation takes these ideas seriously. Rejecting the deterministic nature of resource curse thesis, I explore the urban ramifications of the Angolan oil assemblage.[75] For despite all that can undermine it, there is undeniable evidence that Angola's swelling economy has manifested itself throughout the country. While the distribution of benefits has certainly been uneven and not much of the oil wealth has "trickled down" to the vast majority of Angolans, visible signs of reconstruction emerged practically everywhere. Perhaps the most salient of them all are the bridges, roads and railroads now connecting regions that the war had violently detached from each other, but there have also been important improvements in energy and water distribution systems as well as in the provision of health and education facilities. And if the MPLA's 2008 campaign promise to build one million houses by 2012 was an unrealizable goal from the get-go, the new housing developments spread through various provinces have surely not gone unnoticed.

In reality, regardless of all that remains undone, the advancements made in infrastructure reconstruction have been remarkable and relatively widespread. But nowhere have they been more conspicuous than in Luanda. The economic hub of the country and the main destination for the growing inflow of foreign capital and its management structures, the capital city has been swamped in plans and projects of all types and is the most prominent venue of Angola's development efforts. One could say, in fact, that the making of a new Luanda has emerged as a major structuring force of the Angolan oil assemblage. With Sonangol at the helm,[76] the astonishing pace at which the city has been transforming is only matched by the rate of botched intentions or the amount of ideas that have failed to materialize.

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[72] In Appel *et al*, "Introduction: Oil Talk," 24. As he puts it elsewhere, "a key starting point is to see oil and gas as a global production network with particular properties, actors, networks, governance structures, institutions, and organizations." In Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs," 443.

[73] In Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs," 443.

[74] The "oil assemblage," as Watts puts it, resembles what Andrew Barry described as a "technological zone." In thinking about the development of the transnational oil corporation, which he characterizes as a "set of coordinated but widely dispersed regulations, calculative arrangements, infrastructures and technical procedures that render certain objects or flows governable," Mitchell also uses Barry's notion. In Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*, 40. See Andrew Barry, "Technological Zones," *European Journal of Social Theory* 9 (2), 2006: 239– 53. For a description of the "oil assemblage" see Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs," 441-443.

[75] This is akin to Franklin Obeng-Odoom's analysis of Sekondi-Takoradi, a new oil city in the Western Region of Ghana. Like him, I see a "major grey" area in the debate about oil extraction and how it plays out in cities. Unlike him, however, I am not interested in "investigate in what ways or to what extent the experiences of oil cities in Africa confirm, confound, or conform to the current binaries of 'blessing' and 'curse'." See Franklin Obeng-Odoom, "Resource Curse or Blessing in Africa's Oil Cities? Empirical Evidence from Sendoki-Takoradi, West Africa," *City, Culture and Society* 4 (4), 2013: 229-240.

[76] Extending its reach into virtually all sectors of the economy, Sonangol has been hugely relevant in the reconstruction effort. See Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, "Business Success, Angola-Style: Postcolonial Politics and the Rise and Rise of Sonangol," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 45 (04), 2007: 595-619; and Patrick Heller, "Angola's Sonangol: Dexterous Right Hand of the State," in *Oil and Governance: State-Owned Enterprises and the World Energy Supply*, Ed. David Victor, David Hults, and Mark Thurber (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 836-884.

This is palpable not just in Cidade do Kilamba and the more than 60 thousand houses built under the purview of the national oil company.[77] It is also visible in the gleaming skyscrapers that have risen out of the dilapidated memory of Portuguese colonial architecture or in the renovation of public spaces such as those of the Bay of Luanda boardwalk. Just as it is obvious in the maze of gated communities that is Luanda Sul, the Nova Vida housing project or in the mushrooming condominiums in places like Camama or Viana. And this is far from an exhaustive list. In addition to the new roads and public infrastructures, the transformations are also clear in the

Fig. C Future City: Why Luanda is the New Dubai.
Sonangol Universo, Winter 2008.

development of shopping centers, the advancements in the Luanda-Bengo Special Economic Zone or the construction of a massive new internal airport in the southeast of the city. If in the 1990s dos Santos deemed everything a priority, he was one of the first to rejoice at the fact that Luanda had become a "construction site" after the end of the war. Indeed, it took less than a decade for it to be seen as having "changed out of all recognition"[78] and regularly compared to (and touted as) Africa's Dubai. In drawing that very same parallel to pitch it as a "future city," for example, a 2008 issue of *Sonangol Universo*[79] packed with fanciful 3D renderings of glass and steel skyscrapers as well as pictures of construction works, portrayed it as a "Phoenix rising,"[80] a "building site" where "a new city is emerging" and the "grandeur" of when "Luanda used to be one the most beautiful cities in Africa"[81] was slowly returning.

Before considering what this means in the context of the continent-wide urban transition, a final remark must be made about the role that oil plays in this dissertation. Even though crude oil is presented as a fundamental element for comprehending Luanda's contemporary urbanity, this is not intended as a study of oil. Not only is the full scale and scope of the Angolan oil assemblage well beyond the analytical reach of what is examined, the focus of each of the three main chapters is on what I believe to be its burgeoning urban character. Entering the assemblage through the practices, procedures and regulations for the reconstruction of Luanda, the analysis reaches for their contingent oiled

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[77] If we add all the new centralities and urban development projects that have, in one way or another, been under the responsibility of the national oil company (see Chapter 3) to the projects built by its own housing cooperative (*Cooperativa Cajueiro*) in Luanda Sul, Camama and Viana, Sonangol has been responsible for the construction of at least 60 thousand houses in Luanda.

[78] See "Rising Angola: Oil, Glorious Oil," *The Economist*, January 30, 2010. Accessed May 10, 2015.

[79] Produced in London by Impact Media, under a contract from Sonangol's Department of Communication and Image, *Sonangol Universo* is a quarterly publication aimed that showcasing Sonangol as "Africa's leading oil and gas company with a global reach." In *Sonangol Universo* website. Accessed May 10, 2015.

[80] Alex Bellos, "Phoenix rising," *Sonangol Universo*, Winter 2008, 4.

[81] I.e. in the 1960s and 1970s, when the Portuguese, enchanted by its tropical cosmopolitanism (just as they were untroubled by any claims for independence or the ongoing anti-colonial war in the interior), called it "the Paris of Africa."

foundations, rather than following the oil out of its deepwater wells to uncover its purported powerful effects on urban form. In that sense, what this dissertation does is both to provide an examination of what oil can do to cities and to consider how oil assemblages can be reshaped by urbanism.

Africa's Urban Revolution and the Project of African Urbanism

There is, however, a flipside to the story of the emerging new city. For once, and to focus on housing alone, as much as the volume of presumably regularized construction has been impressive, it is still far from addressing the needs of the entire population. Even if we calculate in all of the units built in sprawling rehousing areas such as Zango or Panguila,[82] the official means of distributing land and real estate, be it through the market or via administrative mechanisms, are not even close to meet the existing demand in the capital. The preliminary results from the 2014 census suggest that the number of people living in Luanda has grown about 30 percent in relation to the five million indicated by dos Santos – and the UN[83] – in 2011. The urban population for the province was projected at around 6.37 million in 2014, which is more than one fourth of the total for the entire country.[84] And out of the 6.53 million living in the entire province, 71 percent are said to be "living in housing built with inappropriate material."[85] While this comprises for as much 4,63 million people, it is unclear what such category actually means. But we can look elsewhere for a slightly more detailed analysis of Luanda's contemporary urban conditions.

Between 2009 and 2011, Development Workshop used remote sensing technology and 2008 imagery to develop a typology of urban settlements that reflects differences in physical form, housing types and access to urban infrastructure.[86] According to the Luanda-based NGO, back then only 6 percent of a total population estimated at 5.8 million lived in areas with "adequate basic services." Following their typology, these consisted of the "old urban center" as well as the "new suburbs and condominiums." The areas with "upgraded basic services," which included colonial neighborhoods built for then-called "indigenous" population as well as "social housing

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[82] Located well beyond the periphery, some 30 Km away from the city center, Panguila and Zango are the two most significant examples of resettlement areas in Luanda. Located to the north of the city, Panguila is said to have about 60 thousand inhabitants. See Chloé Buire, "The Dream and the Ordinary: An Ethnographic Investigation of Suburbanization in Luanda," *African Studies* 73(2), 2014: 290-312, 297. Zango is located to the southeast and is estimated to house between 120 and 200 thousand people. See Sylvia Croese, "Post-war state-led development at work in Angola: The Zango housing project in Luanda as a case study" (PhD Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2013), 2. Between Zango and Panguila, the two largest rehousing areas, at least 35 thousand single-story housing units have been built.

[83] See UN Habitat, *The State of African Cities 2014: Re-Imagining Sustainable Urban Transitions* (Nairobi: UN Habitat, 2014), 192.

[84] See Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Resultados Preliminares do Recenseamento Geral da População e da Habitação de Angola 2014* (Luanda: INE, September 2014), 51. To be sure, this "urban population" might include agglomerations that some would probably consider to be part of the city, but their size is negligible. In addition to that, for the actual total in the Luanda urban region and given that parts of Luanda "spill over" to Bengo (e.g. Panguila), some amount of the 218 thousand estimated for Dande would have to be added.

[85] See Instituto Nacional de Estatística, *Principais Indicadores de Angola por Província*, INE Website. Accessed May 11, 2015.

[86] See Development Workshop, *Poverty and Environmental Vulnerability in Angola's Growing Slums: Comparative Analysis of Luanda, Huambo and Cachiungo* (Luanda: DW for the International Development Research Centers, November 2011). For a table laying out these settlement types see Allan Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," *Environment and Urbanization* 26 (2), 2014: 561-567, 566. To be sure, there are two other settlement types in Development Workshop's typology: "rural settlements" with "no access to basic services" and 4 percent of the population and an "industrial zone" with "adequate basic services" and less than three thousand inhabitants.

zones" such as Zango or Panguila and some "transitional *musseques*," comprised about 825 thousand people or 14 percent of the total population. About the same number of people resided in areas with "upgradable basic services," which were either "organized *musseques*" or auto-constructed neighborhoods "on planned sites," but 61 percent of the population lived in "old" or "peripheral *musseques*." Just as Sonangol saw Luanda as the new Dubai, more than 3.5 million people were living in urban settlements with "poor" or "no access to basic services."

These are, of course, approximate calculations and the authors of the study are the first to admit that the categories themselves are both porous and transient.[87] Yet, regardless of the methods used or the accuracy of the results, these numbers provide substance to an unassailable fact. That at any moment Luanda was praised, admired or looked at with astonishment for being a "construction site," reality had already overtaken it. Even before weighting in the rate of urban growth, which according to the UN has been around 4 percent per year,[88] the extent of Luanda's "rise" into the "future" through public works and what is typically conceptualized as formal urbanization processes seems rather meager. Nothing, of course, most urban scholars and global commentators would not be expecting.

One of the first to anticipate it would have certainly been Mike Davis. Had he been asked to comment on *Sonangol Universo*'s explanation for why Luanda was the new Dubai, he would have certainly frowned at the comparison. By then, in the "winter" of 2008, not only did he know what one of the most remarkable "dreamworlds of neoliberalism" was all about,[89] he could also say a thing or two about the Angolan capital. Equipped, as he would have been, with the language of critical urban studies and his special penchant for apocalyptic rhetoric, he would have described a rather different city from that which Sonangol so proudly depicted. Had he actually been flown in to elaborate on his commentary, he would be assured of what he had to say before even landing. Looking out the window as the plane approached the 4 de Fevereiro Airport, he would have been able to verify that the "prodigious" growth he had then recently written about had indeed led to "the mass production of slums."[90] Confirming the sheer absence of anything resembling a meaningful manufacturing sector or any indication that a robust public support system was in place, he would have also been able to see Luanda's burgeoning "informality" as yet another display in the "living museum of human exploitation."[91] That would probably be enough for him to reassert that its future, like that of all other "exploding cities" across the continent, was in fact being "largely constructed out of crude brick, straw, recycled plastic, cement blocks, and scrap wood."[92] From above Luanda would be just like he had inferred from perusing through the data and literature on "slums" and "informal settlements" years

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[87] See Development Workshop, *Poverty and Environmental Vulnerability in Angola's Growing Slums: Comparative Analysis of Luanda, Huambo and Cachiungo*, 8.

[88] See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights* (New York: United Nations, 2014), 27.

[89] See Mike Davis, "Sand, Fear and Money in Dubai," in *Evil Paradises: Dreamworlds of Neoliberalism*, Ed. Mike Davis and Daniel Bertrand Monk (New York and London: New Press, 2007), pp.48-68.

[90] Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (New York and London: Verso, 2006), 16-17. Davis mentions Luanda in seven occasions throughout his book. In addition to stating that its growth has been prodigious (p. 16), he refers to the capital of Angola in relation to the following themes: evictions (see below), poverty, refugees, segregation, unemployment, and water sales (see index on p. 219).

[91] In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 186.

[92] In Davis, *Planet of Slums*, 19.

before.[93] One more example of "urban involution"[94] in the aftermath of the "neoliberal tsunami."[95]

Once Davis got his feet on the ground, after being taken to Talatona or any viewpoint over the crane-congested downtown, he would have surely been impressed by the extent to which the "utopian frenzy"[96] of neoliberalism had actually arrived to Luanda, but there is no reason to think that his grounding convictions in writing *Planet of Slums* would be shaken. For "the prevalence of slums" in Luanda was indeed overwhelming, and by that time the book that had began in a 2004 *New Left Review* article with the same bombastic title[97] had already taken the discipline of urban studies by storm.[98] "Instead of cities of light soaring towards heaven," he could now perhaps say with Sonangol's 3D renderings in mind, "much of the twenty-first-century urban world squats in squalor, surrounded by pollution, excrement, and decay."[99] And he would arrive to the same conclusion again. That "the future of human solidarity depends upon the militant refusal of the new urban poor to accept their terminal marginality within global capitalism."[100]

This, of course, is far from a novel proposition. Many have said so since Marx and Engels, and David Harvey has been on it for some decades now. In 2008, for instance, months before Sonangol conjectured on Luanda's impending future in its corporate magazine, he too published a world-encompassing article with a single phrase title on the pages of the *New Left Review*. In "The Right to the City,"[101] Harvey proposes to go beyond the mere idea of rebellion – of which he see signs everywhere – to think about what the common demands of the urban poor should

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[93] One of his main sources of inspiration is UN Habitat's 2003 report on human settlements. See UN Habitat, *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003* (London and Sterling: Earthscan for UN Habitat, 2003).

[94] In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 182-183.

[95] The language here is Michael Watts's. The reason why I bring him in is not because that Davis does not have his own blasting depiction of the "the brutal tectonics of neoliberal globalization" (p. 174), but simply due to the fact that Watts – who, in a piece about "capitalist dispossession and the scramble for Africa," leaned on Davis's account of how Structural Adjustment Programs led to the implacable growth of slums to argue that "the neoliberal tsunami broke with a dreadful ferocity on African cities, and the African slum world in particular" (see Watts, "Empire of Oil: Capitalist Dispossession and the Scramble for Africa.") – had a small, but important contribution to the debates on African urbanism when he wrote an incisive critique of a *Public Culture* special issue on "Johannesburg, the elusive metropolis," (see below) a piece in which Davis was also referenced. See Michael Watts, "Baudelaire over Berea, Simmel over Sandton?," *Public Culture* 17 (1), 2005: 181-192. For the editors' response see Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe, "A Blasé Atitude: A Response to Michael Watts," *Public Culture* 17 (1), 2005: 193-201.

[96] In Mike Davis and Daniel Bertrand Monk, "Introduction," in *Evil Paradises: Dreamworlds of Neoliberalism*, Ed. Mike Davis and Daniel Bertrand Monk (New York and London: New Press, 2007), pp. ix-xvi, xiv.

[97] Mike Davis, "Planet of Slums," *New Left Review* 26, 2004: 5-34.

[98] Ten years after it came out, it is virtually impossible to keep track of the impact that this book has had. Not only is *Planet of Slums* cited by practically anyone that writes about cities today, particularly those that write about cities of the South (see below), the book was reviewed dozens of times. For one of the most cited of these reviews is see Tom Angoti, "Apocalyptic Anti-Urbanism: Mike Davis and His Planet of Slums," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30 (4), 2006: 961-967.

[99] In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 19.

[100] In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 202.

[101] David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *New Left Review* 53, 2008: 23-40. As *the* most widely well-regarded student of capitalist urbanization, David Harvey's engagement with the idea that some sort of anti-capitalist struggle is needed to solve the problems of the contemporary city goes back to *Social Justice and the City* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973). "The right to the city" formulated as such seems to have emerged for the first time in 2003, in a short piece on the Debates and Developments section of the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. The *NLR* article was later revised and updated as the first chapter of a book that built on this work. See David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (Brooklyn and London: Verso, 2012).

actually be.[102] In doing so he sums up much of his own thought on contemporary urbanization, by explaining how the development of cities has "played a particularly active role in absorbing the surplus product that capitalists perpetually produce in their search for profits."[103] But that is not all. "Surplus absorption through urban transformation," he explains further ahead, "has entailed repeated bouts of urban restructuring through 'creative destruction'."[104] From the "urban revolutions" that once took place in Paris and the United States, to the different ways in which

Fig. D Angola Desfaz! (The President's Mum House).
By *Projeto Kissonde*, 2012.

capitalist urbanization is now "girding the globe," the production of urban form has always been coupled with processes of "accumulation by dispossession,"[105] or what Davis referred to as "Haussmannization."[106] "The planet as a building site," Harvey says as he winks at him, "collides with the 'planet of slums'."[107]

Amongst the most gruesome contemporary manifestations of these processes is the forced eviction of people living in informal settlements for the construction of "off worlds,"[108] as Davis called the "fortified, fantasy-themed enclaves and edge cities" now being built in cities all around the world. In Luanda, where "the President's mum house"

along the Samba road is not only one of the most striking examples of how these enclaves involve "a drastic diminution of the intersections between the lives of the rich and the poor"[109] but is also often used amongst residents as an illustration of how the "corrupt government of Angola" is leading to the "unmaking" of the country (see Fig D),[110] the clearing of *musseques*

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[102] This theoretical and political move owes greatly to the ideas of Henri Lefebvre, who of course is the infamous founder of the concept of "the right to the city." As Harvey puts it, if *The Urban Revolution* predicted "that urbanization was central to the survival of capitalism and [was] therefore bound to become a crucial focus of political and class struggle," then "the right to the city had to mean the command of the whole urban process." In Harvey, "The Right to the City," 28.

[103] Harvey, "The Right to the City," 25.

[104] Harvey, "The Right to the City," 33.

[105] In David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). To be sure, the practices of "accumulation by dispossession," which Harvey conceptualizes as a critical extension of Marx's concept of "primitive accumulation," go well beyond the urban realm.

[106] In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 114.

[107] Harvey, "The Right to the City," 37.

[108] As Davis, using Blade Runner's terminology, called the "fortified, fantasy-themed enclaves and edge cities." In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 114-120.

[109] In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 119.

[110] On March 7, 2011 a handful of people staged a protest that triggered a small but active movement whose main demand has been to call for José Eduardo dos Santos resignation. Hardly felt throughout the city, the movement has a fairly strong web presence. One of its center stages is *Central Angola 7311*, where I first saw the image on Fig. D (which, of course, mocks the campaign on Fig. A). For analyses of these protests see Gastrow, "Negotiated Settlements," Chapter 5 and Jon Schubert,

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has been a recurrent occurrence since before the end of the war.[111] With such considerations in mind, Harvey sees only one possibility for formulating unified demands in what now "has to be a global struggle"[112] for urban justice. "Since the urban process is a major channel of surplus use, establishing democratic management over its deployment"[113] is the imperative solution. That, he argues, is what constitutes "the right to the city."

From elsewhere, however, things can look rather different. With a singular set of tools to study cities and a distinctly Southern perspective on the urban question, AbdouMaliq Simone has a substantially different idea of what "the right to the city" might be about. At the end of a book examining "city life from Jakarta to Dakar," at the heart of which "is the capacity for its different people, spaces, activities, and things to interact in ways that exceed any attempt to regulate them,"[114] he too recognizes the importance of the concept. But after a book-length analysis of everyday practices and spaces of possibility across multiple urban regions of the South he suggests that "the right to the city may be the right to be messy and inconsistent, or to look disordered."[115] Because, as he put it in an earlier piece for the postcolonial journal *interventions*,[116] when life unfolds – like it does in much of urban Africa – without the possibility of "rendering what one does today in some larger framework of purpose and meaning," the right to the city "must include the selective right to use the city as an arena of mutable aspirations, to varying degrees of realization." Viewing it in this way, he adds, "ensures that no structure of governance can ever really manage the activation of this right." In other words, for Simone the right to the city "is not the right to be left alone, but to be engaged, to be the object of request, to be re-settled or re-aligned – to thrive in unanticipated ways."[117]

To be sure, just like Harvey's article does not exhaust the range of debates on the right to the city from an aspiringly global (but conspicuously Northern) perspective,[118] Simone's take on it is far from representing the different ways in which the concept has been discussed across the

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"'Working the System': Affect, Amnesia and the Aesthetics of Power in the "New Angola" (PhD Dissertation, The University of Edinburgh, 2014), Chapter 7.

[111] Another insight into Luanda in *Planet of Slums* is precisely about this. Rephrasing Tony Hodges – see *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State* (Oxford and Bloomington: James Currey and Indiana University Press, 2004), 30-31 – he says: "in July 2001, the provincial governments [sic] sent armed police and bulldozers to clear more than 10,000 families from the Boavista slum on Luanda Bay to make way for a luxury housing development. Two residents were shot dead; the rest were trucked out to the countryside, 40 kilometers from their old homes, and left to fend for themselves." In Davis, *Planet of Slums,* 103. For a more thorough analysis of the many evictions that took place between 2001 and 2006 see Human Rights Watch and SOS Habitat, *They Pushed Down the Houses: Forced Evictions and Insecure Land Tenure for Luanda's Urban Poor*, Volume 19, No 7 (A) (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2007); and Amnesty International, *Angola. Lives in Ruins: Forced Evictions Continue,* AFR 12/001/2007 (London: Amnesty International, 2007).

[112] Harvey, "The Right to the City," 39.

[113] Harvey, "The Right to the City," 37.

[114] AbdouMaliq Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar: Movements at the Crossroads* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), 3.

[115] Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar*, 331.

[116] AbdouMaliq Simone, "The Right to the City," *interventions*: *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 7 (3), 2005: 321-325.

[117] Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar*, 331.

[118] See, for example, Mark Purcell, "Citizenship and the Right to the Global City: Reimagining the Capitalist World Order," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27(3), 2003: 564-590; Edward Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); or Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse and Margit Mayer, Eds, *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012).

South.[119] My intention, however, is not to dissect what emerged in the 2000s as one of the key concepts in urban theory and practice. Rather, I highlight this remarkable contrast in ways of thinking about cities, change and the aspiration of progress as a window into the recent efforts to theorize the specificity of African cities. For Simone has arguably been *the* central figure in these endeavors and *Planet of Slums* came to condense contemporary forms of Afro-pessimism contra which many of their proponents have written.[120] In fact, Simone himself recognizes that Davis' book is useful in demonstrating how global economic trends and policies have an effect on cities and what urban residents are able to do, only to firmly argue that "the sheer enumeration of how bad slums are does not tell us what specific cities are capable of. It does not tell us where attention should be placed in terms of trying to begin to change things within a specific city."[121]

Since the mid-2000s, much propelled by the formidable rates of urbanization the continent has been experiencing as well as the mounting realization that Euro-American urban theory is only partially relevant to understand what is going on,[122] a growing number of scholars have been thinking and writing about African urbanism.[123] Initially driven by academic gatherings such as Documenta11's meeting in Lagos,[124] workshops on "theorizing city spaces and urban

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[119] See, for example, Edésio Fernandes, "Constructing the 'Right to the City' in Brazil," *Social and Legal Studies* 16 (2), 2007: 201-219; James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2008), Tony Roshan Samara, Shenjing He and Gou Chen, Eds, *Locating Right to the City in the Global South* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013). In the African continent, the notion of the right to the city has been particularly relevant in academic and practice setting in South Africa. In fact, Simone's piece for *interventions* was written in the context of a special issue to think about "the promise of freedom and its practice" ten years after the end of Apartheid. For a significantly approach to the concept see Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse, "The 'Right to the City': Institutional Imperatives of a Developmental State," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34 (1), 2010: 146-162.

[120] Mike Davis, I have to say, makes it rather easy for Africanists to rise up against him. While he sees a Dickensian nightmare happening all across the South, nowhere is the scene more dismal than in Africa. As he puts it, after dropping some figures about urbanization in Latin America and Asia: "The African situation, of course, is even more extreme." In Davis, *Planet of Slums*, 18.

[121] Simone, *City Life from Jakarta to Dakar*, 26-28. Other important students of African cities who have framed their work in opposition to *Planet of Slums* include Edgar Pieterse, *City Futures: Confronting the Crisis of Urban Development* (London and New York: Zed Books and Cape Town: UCT Press, 2008), 1-2. Garth Myers, *African Cities: Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Practice* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2011), 6-7.

[122] This realization is obviously not exclusive to students of the African continent. The important theoretical reorientation that it leads to has been grounded in essays such as Jennifer Robinson, *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006); Vanessa Watson, "Seeing from the South: Refocusing Urban Planning on the Globe's Central Urban Issues," *Urban Studies* 46, 2009: 2259-2275; or Roy, "The 21st Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory;" and more recently consolidated in edited volumes such as Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong, Eds, *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, (Malden and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); or Susan Parnell and Sophie Oldfield, Eds, *The Routledge Handbook on Cities of the Global South*, (London and New York, 2014). Such efforts to "post-colonize urban studies" and "dislocate the center of theoretical production" are of course firmly situated in attempts to question Euro-American modernity such as those drafted in Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000): Timothy Mitchell, Ed, *Questions of Modernity* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); or Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2001) and the more recent trend to think from the South delineated in works such Raewyn Connell, *Southern Theory: Social Science and the Global Dynamics of Knowledge* (Malden: Polity, 2007); or Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Theory from the South or, How Euro-America is Evolving Toward Africa* (Boulder and London: Paradigm Publishers, 2012).

[123] For a recent discussion on the "conceptual vectors" (Roy, "The 21st Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory;") of African urbanism, including a concise genealogy of African urban studies see Henrik Ernston, Mary Lawhon and James Duminy, "Conceptual Vectors of African Urbanism: 'Engaged Theory-Making' and 'Platforms of Engagement'," *Regional Studies* 48 (9), 2014: 1563-1577.

[124] In 2002 the 11th Kassel-based *documenta* – one of the most important periodic art events in the world – was organized as a constellation of five platforms, one of them being a meeting convened at the Goethe Institute in Lagos by Okwui Enwezor under the title *Under siege, four African cities, Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos* (Documenta 11_Platform 4). This event included a workshop on "urban processes and change in Africa" organized by CODERSIA (see below), a keynote lecture by

development from Southern Africa" in Europe,[125] or panels on "new African urban studies" in various American conferences,[126] as well as the publication of Simone's seminal *For the City Yet to Come*,[127] Filip de Boeck's *Tales of the Invisible City* in Kinshasa,[128] *Public Culture*'s special issue on Johannesburg,[129] or CODERSIA's edited volume on urban Africa and the "changing contours of survival in the city,"[130] over the past five years or so this scholarship has been greatly stimulated by the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town. This is not to say that the ACC single-handedly upholds the project of African urbanism, but to emphasize its role in shaping "the assemblage of practical-theoretical knowledge on African cities."[131] For its institution building mission, I would argue, is deeply entangled with the theoretical propositions of that project.

Set up in 2008 under a clear mandate to focus on urban research from an "endogenous" African perspective,[132] the center now draws together an interdisciplinary constellation of networks,

AbdouMaliq Simone as well as interventions by Carole Rakodi, Lindsay Bremner or Filip De Boeck. The proceedings were published as Okwui Enwezor, Carlos Basualdo, Ute Meter Bauer, Susanne Ghez, Mark Nash and Octavio Zaya, Eds, *Under siege, four African cities, Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos* (Stuttgart: Hatje Cantz Publishers, 2002).

[125] In 2003 the Geography Department at The Open University, where Jennifer Robinson was based, organized a workshop on precisely this topic. AbdouMaliq Simone gave the opening seminar. Some years later AEGIS, the Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies, embraced the urban problematic. In 2006 a thematic conference to deal with some of the challenges of African cities in the 21st century was organized in Edinburgh (Simone also participated) and led to the publication of Francesca Locatelli and Paul Nugent, Eds, *African Cities: Competing Claims on Urban Space* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). A more recent AEGIS thematic conference took place in Basel in 2010 and led to the publication of Brigit Obrist, Veit Arlt and Elísio Macamo, Eds, *Living the City in Africa: Processes of Invention and Intervention* (Berlin and Zurich: Lit Verlag, 2013).

[126] In 2002 the panel organized under this tittle at the 2002 African Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington DC provided the groundwork for the publication of Martin Murray and Garth Meyers, Eds, *Cities in Contemporary Africa* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), which includes contributions from AbdouMaliq Simone, Dominique Malaquais, Deborah Potts and Matthew Gandy. After that initial gathering, their ideas were refined in subsequent meetings of the African Studies Association (2004) as well as the Association of American Geographers (2004 and 2005).

[127] AbdouMaliq Simone, *For the City Yet to Come: Changing African Life in Four Cities* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004).

[128] Filip De Boeck and Marie-Françoise Plissart, *Kinshasa: Tales of the Invisible City* (Ghent: Ludion, 2004).

[129] This special issue (*Public Culture* 16 (3), 2004), which was organized by Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall (and also included contributions by AbdouMaliq Simone and Lindsay Bremner) would later turn into one of the fundamental books in the contemporary literature on African urbanism: Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe, Eds, *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008). In the subsequent issue (*Public Culture* 17 (1), 2005) an important exchange between Michael Watts and the two editors was published (see above).

[130] Edited by AbdouMaliq Simone and Abdelghani Abouhani, this volume was published by CODERSIA, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa. The work in progress was first presented in the Documenta 11 meeting in Lagos (see above). See AbdouMaliq Simone and Abdelghani Abouhani, Eds, *Urban Africa: Changing Contours of Survival in the City* (Dakar: CODERSIA Books in association with London and New York: Zed Books and Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2005).

[131] In Ernston, Lawhon and Duminy, "Conceptual Vectors of African Urbanism: 'Engaged Theory-Making' and 'Platforms of Engagement'," 1570. In their discussion on the "conceptual vectors" of African urbanism, Ernston, Lawhon and Duminy make this same point while presenting a brief list of other locations within the continent where this project is being push forward (p. 1569). I would also add that in no way does this mean that institutions from Europe or the United Stated are not deeply involved in the project of African urbanism. Beyond even its financing structures, there are important African scholars who are based in the North (Jennifer Robinson is one of the most prominent examples) as well as non-African writers making important contributions for the project of African urbanism from outside the continent (see, for example, Myers, *African Cities: Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Practice*).

[132] The ACC, it is said on its website (under networks), "is driven by the belief that Africa's urban challenges can only be addressed once there is sufficient endogenous intellectual capital steeped in urban research." With its establishment its founders "were determined to created Africa-wide platforms that would allow scholars, practitioners, policy managers and activists to convene on a regular basis to interrogate the urban development *problematique*, in order to foster an endogenous reading of 'the urban' that was both theoretically robust and connected to fields of practice." In Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse, Eds, *Africa's*

platforms and programs aimed not just at interpreting the centrality of cities for the future of the continent but also at confronting the impending crisis of urban development. Led by Edgar Pieterse,[133] who in 2008 proposed a concise road map to move "towards alternative city futures"[134] predicated on the idea of "blurring boundaries"[135] between theory and applied domains of urban studies, the ACC is deeply invested in helping to build a knowledge infrastructure that on the one hand is not strangled by the imperative of "addressing the framing conditions of the global economy," and on the other provides a contextualized alternative to the "unreflexive policy prescriptions" generated by the agencies and actors of what in development theory is often called "big D" Development.[136] As Pieterse puts it in first pages of *City Futures*, "unless the complex, dynamic, highly improvising and generative actions of the urban poor are acknowledged and explored, it is foolish to come to conclusions about what is going on in a city, or may or may not work, either from a insurrectionary perspective or from a 'policy-fix' approach."[137] To put it in reference to two recent outcomes of its initiatives, what this means is that the ACC is both committed to facing the very tangible (and often urgent) challenges of "Africa's urban transition"[138] and dedicated to cultivating theoretical tools for unpacking "the rogue intensities that mark African cityness."[139] These two books – *Africa's Urban Transition* and *Rogue Urbanism: Emergent African Cities* – stand alongside each other as spearheads in the burgeoning project of African urbanism.

This is an ongoing project that is slowly and gradually responding to a long-standing but still unresolved need. The need, as Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe put it ten years ago,[140] not just for understanding "that African cities represent a great deal more than that which is excluded,

Urban Revolution (London and New York: Zed Books, 2014), ix. Also and to be sure, the ACC did not just emerge out of a vacuum. There is a particular institutional and intellectual history to its creation. For a brief glance at it see Edgar Pieterse, "Blurring Boundaries: Fragments of an Urban Research Agenda," *Urban Forum* 17 (4), 2006: 398-412.

[133] Two other South African urbanists with a crucial role is building the ACC are Susan Parnell and Vanessa Watson. And in the background is, of course, AbdouMaliq Simone, with whom Edgar Pieterse collaborated for a study of CBOs in Cape Town in the early 1990s. For the significance of this collaboration see Pieterse, "Blurring Boundaries: Fragments of an Urban Research Agenda," 399-400.

[134] Pieterse, *City Futures: Confronting the Crisis of Urban*. The quote is from chapter 8's title.

[135] See Pieterse, "Blurring Boundaries: Fragments of an Urban Research Agenda." The ideas he puts forward in both this article and *City Futures* build on the critique of urban studies made by Jennifer Robinson (in Jennifer Robinson, "Global and World Cities: A View Off the Map," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26 (3), 2002: 531-554; or Robinson, *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*) as well as earlier calls by Susan Parnell for a "more thorough investigation into how we can best understand cities that fall outside the territories where urban theory is formulated" in Susan Parnell, "South African Cities: Perspectives from the Ivory Tower of Urban Studies," *Urban Studies* 34 (5-6), 1997: 891-906. It is worth noticing, in this respect, how these preoccupations about African urban research seem to have come out of discussions of South African cities.

[136] See Pieterse, *City Futures: Confronting the Crisis of Urban*, 2. For Gillian Hart's distinction between "little d" and "big D" development see Gillian Hart, "Development Critiques in the 1990s: *Culs de Sac* and Promising Paths," *Progress in Human Geography* 24 (5), 2001: 649-658. In her own words, "bid D" Development is "defined as the post-second world war project of intervention in the 'third world' that emerged in the context of decolonization and the cold war." (p. 650)

[137] See Pieterse, *City Futures: Confronting the Crisis of Urban*, 3. This is unsurprisingly equivalent to Simone's charge on *Planet of Slums* (see above).

[138] Parnell and Pieterse, Eds, *Africa's Urban Revolution* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2014), 1.

[139] Edgar Pieterse and AbdouMaliq Simone, Eds, *Rogue Urbanism: Emergent African Cities* (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2013).

[140] In Nuttall and Mbembe, "A Blasé Attitude: A Response to Michael Watts," 196. This was written in response to Michael Watts's trenchant critique of their edited issue of Public Culture on Johannesburg (se above). In particular it was written to counter Watts's argument that "what one needs to understand [in African cities] is the politics of the governed in [their] vast urban spaces of exclusion and invisibility." In Watts, "Baudelaire over Berea, Simmel over Sandton?," 190.

invisible, weak, and limited," but also for reading "that which is excluded, invisible, weak, and limited (…) in more imaginative theoretical terms." But it is also a project fraught with some foundational limitations – inadvertences that, in my mind, inhibit important components in the overall aim of "thinking and theorizing the specificity of African cities."[141] What to me is often lacking is a sense for the specific trajectories of officialdom in contemporary African cities. The deficiency, I believe, goes back to the groundwork made for the project of African urbanism.

In Simone's own words, the thrust of *For the City Yet to Come* "is that a wide range of provisional, highly fluid, yet coordinated and collective actions are being generated" in African cities.[142] This interconnected weave of people's activities in the city – what he famously described under the notion of "people as infrastructure"[143] – "runs parallel to, yet intersects with, a growing proliferation of decentralized local authorities, small-scale enterprises, community associations, and civil society organizations."[144] In a more recent piece, his contribution for *Africa's Urban Revolution*, Simone builds once again on these premises to propose ways of "assembling the components for regional urban development in Africa."[145] His main point there is that 'real' economies and governance structures need to be accounted for. As he puts in the conclusion, "any urban development strategy must be built around the aspirations, capacities and histories of a city's majority."[146] Going back to the gist of *For the City Yet to Come*, Simone's very reasonable contention is that "if African cities do, at some level, work," then the practices of their majorities "play a major role in making them work."[147]

To my understanding, after spending little over a year in Luanda, this is not only a reasonable contention but also a sound empirical observation. But as I familiarized myself with the official transformations the Angolan capital was going through, as I talked to planners and real estate investors, as I delved into the entanglements of law and history, I could not help thinking that something else was also working – something else that had already made a particular Luanda arrive. Perhaps the criteria of "the just city,"[148] a la Susan Fainstein or others, were not being observed (I was not for me to say), but alongside "the streets of the ordinary"[149] there was

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[141] To use the wording of the African Urbanism Initiative out of which *Rogue Urbanism* came out. In Edgar Pieterse, "Introducing Rogue Urbanism," in *Rogue Urbanism: Emergent African Cities*, Ed. by Edgar Pieterse and AbdouMaliq Simone, (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2013), pp. 12-15, 12.

[142] Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*, 13.

[143] AbdouMaliq Simone, "People as Infrastructure: Intersecting Fragments in Johannesburg," *Public Culture* 16 (3), 2004: 407-429. This is part of the aforementioned *Public Culture* issue on Johannesburg.

[144] Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*, 13.

[145] AbdouMaliq Simone, "Infrastructure, Real Economies and Social Transformation: Assembling the Components for Regional Urban Development," In *Africa's Urban Revolution*, Ed. by Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse (London and New York: Zed Books, 2014), pp. 221-236.

[146] Simone, "Infrastructure, Real Economies and Social Transformation: Assembling the Components for Regional Urban Development," 234.

[147] Simone, *For the City Yet to Come*, 13.

[148] Susan Fainstein, *The Just City* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010).

[149] Edgar Pieterse introduces *Rogue Urbanism* with an extended quote from Kathleen Stewart's *Ordinary Affects*: "Rogue intensities roam the streets of the ordinary. There are all the lived, yet unassimilated impacts of things, all the fragments of the experience left hanging. Everything left unframed by the stories of what makes a life pulse at the edges of things. All the excesses and extra effects unwittingly propagated by plans and projects and routines of all kinds surge, experiment and meander. They pull things in their awake. They incite truth claims, confusions, acceptance, endurance, tall tales, circuits of deadness and desire, dull and risky moves and the most ordinary forms of watchfulness." In Pieterse, "Introducing Rogue Urbanism," 12.

something making Luanda work. Many argue that it is a generalized system of patrimonialism, corruption and illiberal politics that makes it work, but that never felt like a sufficient explanation. If ten years ago the "politics of the governed" in African cities had arguably yet to be understood,[150] today the politics of those who govern them continue to be mostly taken for granted. Amongst proponents of the project of African urbanism there has generally been little interest in understanding what exactly forms and informs official attempts to manage, regulate and service urban development. As if the streets of the African city contained "lines of flight"[151] for a new urban theory but in its bureaucracy Weberian categories remained intact. As if "studying up"[152] was not a fundamental part of developing "a more credible account of everyday urbanism" and subsequently fulfilling the "desire for urban improvement."[153] As if that which everyday roams through the corridors of government buildings, that which forms a formal land market, or that which is made visible in the registries of the law did not also have to be read in "more imaginative theoretical terms."

Reiterating what I said in the beginning of this introduction, what this dissertation then does is to explore different realms of officialdom in the development of contemporary Luanda. Given the crucial role that oil plays in these realms, the objective is to make sense of what I am calling the crude urban revolution. I see this as a contribution for the project of African urbanism. To put it in the language of ACC's African Urbanism Initiative, by advancing our knowledge of how the purported new Luanda is emerging, this dissertation aims to add to the range of "perspectives on the nature of the urban and cityness (…) in order to open new lines of thought and imagination that may help us to forge more persuasive and compelling accounts of the complexity of everyday urbanism in multiple African spaces."[154]

TRACING METHODS: REFLECTIONS ON FIELDWORK IN LUANDA

This dissertation is an ethnographic account of what I am calling the crude urban revolution. As a grounded examination of processes that unfold across multiple scales and sites, it relies on a combination of methods and it draws on a wide range of evidence to trace specific connections between oil, development and urban imaginations.[155] With that said, this is also an inquiry into the making of place. It is, to put it differently, a study of a particular city. While being far removed from a comprehensive breakdown of its layered and complex realities, this dissertation is also an ethnographic analysis of forms and practices of urbanism in contemporary Luanda.

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[150] As we have seen above already, this was part of Watts's argument in his dispute with Nuttall and Mbembe. See Watts, "Baudelaire over Berea, Simmel over Sandton?," 190.

[151] To use Mbembe and Nuttall's phrase in the introduction to *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*. In Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall, "Introduction: Afropolis," in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, Ed. by Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008), pp. 1-33, 8.

[152] Laura Nader, "Up the Anthropologist: Perspectives Gained from Studying Up," in *Reinventing Anthropology*, Ed. by Dell Hymes (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), pp. 284-311.

[153] Once again, to use the language of the African Urbanism Initiative. In Pieterse, "Introducing Rogue Urbanism," 12.

[154] In Pieterse, "Introducing Rogue Urbanism," 13.

[155] At this level, Michael Burawoy's and Anna Tsing's methodological approaches have been particularly inspiring. See Michael Burawoy et al, *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections and Imaginations in a Postmodern World* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000); and Anna Tsing, *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Studying Luanda was not a likely pursuit for me. I had barely been to Africa when I embarked on the idea of doing it and I had no ties to it when I first arrived in Angola to actually do it. But it was also not an incidental undertaking, as I did not choose it as a case study that could fulfill a set of theoretical expectations. From where I stood, however, Luanda was simply not just any other city. It was, first and foremost, the capital of a country I had always been used to hear about. Taking cue from Paul Rabinow's own "reflections on fieldwork," particularly from his understanding of it as an ethical practice of self-formation,[156] in this section I explain what led me to study Luanda, reflect upon the specificities of my own epistemological predicaments and describe what my research and writing strategies were.

Tales of the El Dorado

I grew up hearing about Angola in distant stories of gloom and doom. In school, from the basics of elementary to the entrenched fundamentals of middle grade curriculums,[157] Angola was just another place mentioned in history class. Diogo Cão had first explored the shoreline south of the Congo River in the 1480s and in 1575 Paulo Dias de Novais had gotten to the Island of Luanda "in the service of Our Lord, to subjugate and to conquer the Kingdom of Angola."[158] For about three centuries after that, we were also told without much critical reflection, it was from trade posts along its coast that millions of people were taken across the Atlantic as slaves. So much of the basic curriculum was a celebration of what we learned to be "the Discoveries" that we barely made it to the 20th century. Here Angola was, for the most part, one of the theaters of what we were taught to call "the Colonial War." And nothing was said about what had happened after "we" left in 1975.

But it was not only in school that Angola was a remote part of my early life in Portugal. Throughout the 1990s the country and its war were so often on the news that both José Eduardo dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi were genuine household names, even for those of us steeped in the self-centeredness of adolescence. In 1991 it was the Portuguese government who mediated the negotiations that would not only lead to an agreement to put an end to the conflict between MPLA and UNITA, but also force the establishment of a multi-party system in the country. Signed in a quiet village less than half an hour outside Lisbon, the Bicesse Accords paved the way to the 1992 elections, but Savimbi rejected the official results and the war resumed in full force. In the ensuing years the news stories were as dismal as ever. In 1994 another peace agreement was signed in Lusaka but its failures were almost immediately apparent.[159] When in 1998 I was finishing high school, while Lisbon housed "the last World Exposition of the twentieth century" under the banner of "The Oceans" and a strong narrative about Portugal's key

[156] Paul Rabinow, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2007), see xxiv.

[157] Since I followed the "scientific route" in high school, history was not part of my curriculum after middle school.

[158] In 1571 King Sebastião I sent Dias de Novais to what then was the Kingdom of Ndongo with a charter that formally established the Portuguese colony of Angola. This is an excerpt from the opening sentence as cited in Linda Heywood and John Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585-1660* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 82.

[159] For a brief analysis of why these accords failed see Christine Messiant, "Why Did Bicesse and Lusaka Fail? A Critical analysis," *From Military Peace to Social Justice? The Angolan Peace Process*, Ed. Guus Meijer, *Accord* 15 (London: Conciliation Resources, 2004), pp. 16-23.

role in Western exploration and discovery,[160] Angola was preparing for a new period of intense hostilities. In December, as my first semester as a civil engineer student at University of Porto was drawing to a close, the MPLA government launched what it called a "war for peace." I cannot say I was paying much attention.

I am not sure, however, many people around me were. By the end of the decade Angola had become synonymous with failure and despair. Cursed by its riches, as most accounts of the ever more distant country went, it was a place of perennial war. Moreover, any collective bad conscious regarding the legacies of Portuguese imperialism were then directed to East Timor and what Miguel Vale de Almeida called our "postcolonial catharsis."[161] In fact, it was not until February 2002 that Angola inundated the national headlines again. Jonas Savimbi had been killed in the eastern province of Moxico. When the Luena Memorandum of Understanding put a definitive end to the civil war, I was eagerly getting ready to leave the design of reinforced concrete slabs and sewage collection networks to my colleagues. In the fifth and final year of my undergrad program I would specialize in urban planning,[162] but not quite to intervene in Luanda. For me, my classmates and our professors, Portugal and the predicaments of its cities presented enough challenges to keep us busy.

But things were changing rapidly when, after a couple of years abroad, I returned to my alma mater to take on a research position. Despite having gone through a graduate program in urban development planning that is primarily aimed at engaging with the realities of regions beyond Europe and North America,[163] my work at the Department of Civil Engineering's Research Center for Territory, Transports and Environment[164] was still mostly dedicated to the problems of Portuguese cities. In the other departmental divisions, however, the transformation was already noticeable. If the 1986 admission to the European Union had propelled almost two decades of growing investments in infrastructure and urban development, the construction sector had been in a downward trend more or less since I had graduated in 2002. Famed stories of companies hiring before graduation had vanished, but when I returned home in 2006 there were still plenty of job opportunities. The main difference was that now an increasing number of my colleagues were leaving the country. Their destination was Angola.

The numbers have always been uncertain, but the trend was very clear already. If soon after the end of the war there were about 20 thousand Portuguese citizens living in Angola, between 2006

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[160] For a "critique of Western representations of discovery, centrality and self-identity via a focus on Portugal's Expo'98" see Marcus Power and James Sidaway, "Deconstructing Twinned Towers: Lisbon's Expo '98 and the Occluded Geographies of Discovery," *Social and Cultural Geography* 6 (6), 2005: 865-883.

[161] In 1999 a large-scale civic movement erupted all across Portugal in reaction to the violence that broke out after a vast majority of the population of East Timor, a former Portuguese colony, voted to be independent from Indonesia. See Vale de Almeida, *An Earth-Colored Sea*, 83-100.

[162] In the five-year civil engineering degree I earned at University of Porto, only in the final year was optional. After four years of core curriculum the students had to choose a specialization in one of the scientific and technical domains of civil engineering. I chose Environmental and Territorial Planning. See the Department of Civil Engineering website.

[163] In 2004/2005 I went to University College London to do a masters in Urban Development Planning at the Development Planning Unit, a division of The Bartlett that purportedly "helps to build the capacity of national governments, local authorities, NGOs, aid agencies and businesses working towards socially just and sustainable development in the global south." See the Development Planning Unit website.

[164] CITTA, the Research Center for Territory, Transports and Environment, is based at the departmental unit where I took my specialization in environmental and spatial planning. See its website.

and 2008 alone more than 60 thousand were estimated to have left towards Luanda.[165] Most were recent graduates in engineering, architecture and other construction-related professions. And this was only the beginning. In the succeeding years of crisis and austerity this tendency has both diversified and intensified.[166] This was not necessarily new. After all, even though there was a noticeable change in the education levels of those who were leaving the country, Portugal has a long history of emigration. But this specific flow of migrants was accompanied by an outpouring of interest in their destination, a new enthusiasm for Angola that stood in stark contrast with the intermittent images of the country I had grown up with. From the stories in the media to the corridors of the Department of Civil Engineering, Angola was no longer the embodiment of hopelessness and despair. It was now a booming economy, a country in reconstruction and a generous solution for the largest and best-qualified generation of graduates in Portugal's history. Still profoundly "broken," my colleagues would make sure to tell me at all times, it certainly was a place of fabulous wealth and opportunity. And this was not all. The rising interest in Angola did not stop on the torrent of building projects eagerly embraced by the construction sector, or on it being the purported El Dorado of an increasingly jobless generation.[167] Something else was now surging in the Portuguese public sphere.

With the tales of the land of plenty came the remembrance of a time gone past. As the Portuguese "returned" to Angola, an outbreak of memories revisited stories of the economic boom in the last few decades of colonial rule. Books, photo essays and long reportages brought back emotional and often unapologetically nostalgic recollections of when an increase in coffee and cotton productions had propelled Angola to become the "promise land" for hundreds of thousands of white settlers.[168] Many of those memories were of Luanda, a city that had grown rapidly to become the apex of Portugal's late colonial modernity or what many remembered as the most "advanced" and "cosmopolitan" in the whole continent. Despite the rising levels of racial stratification or the fact that in 1961 the war broke out in the interior, those thriving decades provided the "best days in the life of many Portuguese who in Angola found a warm and generous land."[169] Even at home, where I had always favored hearing about my parents' involvement in the student struggles against the colonial dictatorship, new conversations emerged in pace with the images on TV. My grandfather, who had been stationed in Luanda in the mid-1960s, shared his own memories of Angola. Not of the war he was there to fight, but of the good times he had spent in Luanda.

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[165] See "Portugueses em Angola quadruplicaram," *Jornal de Notícias*, March 10, 2009 (accessed June 2, 2015).

[166] In 2014 there were more than 125 thousand people registered in the Portuguese consulate in Luanda, but this is likely to be a conservative estimate on the actual number of Portuguese living in Angola. See *Observatório da Emigração* website for more information.

[167] Describing Angola as an El Dorado for Portuguese emigrants became the norm in the outpouring of commentary and news stories in Portugal and beyond. See, for example, Helena Norte, "Angola é o novo El Dorado da emigração portuguesa," *Jornal de Notícias*, July 6, 2010; François Musseau, "L'Angola, un pari portugais," *Libération*, October 11, 2010; or David Smith, "Portuguese escape austerity and find a new El Dorado in Angola," *The Guardian*, September 15, 2012 (all accessed June 2, 2015).

[168] Ana Sofia Fonseca, *Angola, Terra Prometida: A Vida que os Portugueses Deixaram* (Lisboa: A Esfera dos Livros, 2009), Ana Magalhães and Inês Gonçalves, *Moderno Tropical: Arquitectura em Angola e Moçambique 1948-1975* (Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2009), Paulo Salvador, *Recordar Angola: Fotos e Gentes, de Cabinda ao Cunene*, (Lisboa: Quetzal Editores, 2004), Manuel Acácio, *A Balada do Ultramar* (Lisboa: Oficina do Livro, 2009).

[169] Ana Sofia Fonseca, *Angola, Terra Prometida*, synopsis.

All this was perplexing, often also upsetting. Disconcerted with how presumptuous, condescending and just plainly uninformed most of all that talk of Angola seemed to be, I experienced a high degree of frustration. I felt estranged from my colleagues, I yelled in angrily at the TV, and I listened to my grandfather's stories with the selectivity that only unconditional love allows for. Lacking the language of postcolonial studies, I could not wholly make sense of what is a deep-rooted cultural legacy of imperialism and colonial domination. But I grew more and more curious about what actually was happening in Angola. In particular, I wondered about what really was going on in Luanda. To what extent were all those projects changing the city? What exactly was the nature of the transformations? Who got to benefit from them? What were their costs? Were residents being included in the decision-making processes? How did Luandans take in all such purported development? What was Luanda like?

Epistemological Contingencies

This is what led me to embark on the idea of doing research in Angola, of studying a society that is not mine, of writing about a city where I had never even been. As an urban planner it was not just the pursuit of knowledge that motivated me. Even if I leaned towards the research side of the profession I had just entered, I was less informed by the ambition of describing the workings of society than I was by that of intervening in it. After all, planning is "the relating of knowledge to action" and planners are specialists in "mediating" the linkage between the two.[170] Which is to say that my curiosity for what was going on in Luanda carried the ethos of over one century of attempts to ameliorate the urban environment. It bore with it, one might say, that which has been critically depicted in anthropology as "the will to improve."[171] My "benevolent intentions" might have had more to do with ideas of justice than with quests for order, efficiency or beauty, but they were still unmistakably marked by an ethics of intervention. In other words, the motivation for my interest in Angola was fundamentally rooted in the purpose of acting towards social change; not just in the commitment to support it by refining our understanding of urban processes, but ultimately also in the engagement with the envisioning of future cities. With time, however, I was confronted with some fundamental quandaries.

Once I gained familiarity with postcolonial theory or the reflexive turn in anthropology, I could no longer take refuge in the rickety underpinnings of my own discipline. For even when the positivist pillars of modernist planning have been recast as pontoons of "postmodern praxis," forms of "collaboration," or the concept of the "just city,"[172] they have continued to be based on universal assumptions which do not hold in many parts of the world.[173] Regardless of any twists

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[170] John Friedmann, *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 40 and 4. See, especially 35-48.

[171] Tania Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development and the Practice of Politics* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007).

[172] In the 1990s much of planning theory moved away from its positivist foundations. Three of the most celebrated approaches were, respectively, Leonie Sandercock, *Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), Patsy Healey, *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave, 1997), and Susan Fainstein, "New Directions in Planning Theory," *Urban Affairs Review* 35 (4), 2000: 451-478.

[173] For these critiques see Margo Huxley and Oren Yiftachel, "New Paradigm or Old Myopia? Understanding the Communicative Turn in Planning Theory," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 19 (4), 2000: 333-342; Vanessa Watson, "The Usefulness of Normative Planning Theory in the Context of Sub-Saharan Africa," *Planning Theory* 1 (1). 2002: 27-52; and Vanessa Watson, "Conflicting Rationalities: Implications for Planning Theory and Practice," *Planning Theory and Practice* 4 (4), 2003: 395-407.

and turns, most planning ideas persist on concealing the locations from which they are produced and planners have for the most part remain oblivious to their own socio-cultural background.[174] In a discipline like anthropology, however, the path has been very different. As practitioners of a discipline centrally concerned with diversity, anthropologists have long been confronting the fact that "the writing and reading of ethnography are overdetermined by forces ultimately beyond the control of either an author or an interpretative community."[175] Even though I was travelling to Angola as a planner, if I too aimed at examining social patterns and practices in sites and places different from my own, I simply could not evade these thick layers of "language, rhetoric, power and history." While ideas of "critical transnationalism"[176] and "co-production"[177] have created exciting new grounds for the evolution of planning thought and practice, I had a hard time making sense of where and how to stand in the new geographies of learning that they put forward. How could I "see from the South"[178]? What Luanda would I really be able to "grasp in the dark"[179]? With what legitimacy was I to contribute for the future of a city whose past my ancestors had so brutally denied? Regarding the specific task of writing this doctoral dissertation, if any ethnographic text is an economy of truth through which power and history work,[180] how was I to engrave Luanda in words let alone do it towards some goal of socially just environmental change?

Nothing here is new and much of it has been subject of extensive reflection by anthropologists over the past three decades. Yet, as a Portuguese urban planner aiming to write about Luanda, my impasses were of a peculiar nature. Not only was I contemplating the transformations Angola was going through from a particular socio-cultural context, I was also starting from a specific professional perspective and implicitly aiming at a significantly different target. To put it differently, while my dilemmas were, in many ways, those of the contemporary ethnographer, there were also various specificities to my own epistemological predicament.

First of all, the disciplinary arenas within which I developed my interest in what was going on in Luanda do not necessarily privilege the experience of being-there in relation to other methodological strategies. From the more procedural traditions of urban planning research to the substantive inquiries of urban studies,[181] ethnography is far from being what defines the fields in

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[174] Ananya Roy, "Urbanisms, Worlding Practices and the Theory of Planning," *Planning Theory* 10 (1), 2011: 6-15, 13.

[175] See James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Ed. James Clifford and George Marcus (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 1-26, 25.

[176] Ananya Roy, "Commentary: Placing Planning in the World – Transnationalism as Practice and Critique," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 31 (4), 2011: 406-415.

[177] Vanessa Watson, "Co-Production and Collaboration in Planning – The Difference," *Planning Theory & Practice* 15 (1), 2014: 62-76.

[178] Watson, "Seeing from the South: Refocusing Urban Planning on the Globe's Central Urban Issues."

[179] See Edgar Pieterse, "Grasping the Unknowable: Coming to Grips with African Urbanisms," *Social Dynamics* 37 (1), 2011: 5-23, 18.

[180] See James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," 7.

[181] To be sure, that which I have been referring to as "urban planning" is a very diverse discipline. Many distinctions can be drawn, but Scott Campbell and Susan Fainstein make a rather instructive separation at the level of the theory that is produced within this diverse field. Their approach to planning theory is to place it "at the intersection of political economy and intellectual history." In organizing two volumes of essential readings – *Readings in Planning Theory* and *Readings in Urban Theory* – they use, "though not always consistently, the practical distinction of substantive versus procedural theory. See Scott Campbell and Susan Fainstein, "Introduction: The Structure and Debates of Planning Theory," in *Readings in Planning Theory*, Ed. Scott Campbell and Susan Fainstein (Malden, Oxford and Carton: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 5-16.

which I have been primarily trained. At the same time, however, no other research method seemed to be able to yield answers to the kind of questions I was asking. Given that I was dealing with new frames of reference in practically all aspects of my inquiry, the open-ended character of ethnography effectively allowed me to refrain from imposing my own categories in analyzing Luanda and its transformations. If I were to contravene the dark history of my profession in this respect, only participant observation, in-depth interviewing and descriptive representation could have constituted the core of my research approach. But just as I was not disciplinarily bound to ethnography, I was also not wholly convinced by its particular insights or the data that I was able to generate through it.

This takes me to a second aspect that significantly conditioned my fieldwork. It takes me, in particular, to fact that I undertook research in Angola in a period of growing immigration from Portugal and after some years of proliferating urban projects by Portuguese companies. Differently from most ethnographers or even many urban researchers, very rarely in Luanda was I merely a scholar interested in understanding the city and its underpinning social processes. In the social and professional circles within which most of my research activities took place, I was often also just another person coming from Portugal with an interest in urban development. After all, as I have suggested above already, I was very far from being the only built environment professional arriving on those daily flights from Porto and Lisbon. In other words, even though I almost always presented myself as student of urban planning at an American university, I was frequently also seen as a Portuguese young male professional, often taken to be an architect, asking questions about planning processes and real estate development. I was, to put it from a different angle, a rather frequent sight for the vast majority of my informants.

And finally, the third way in which the scope of my methodological approach was shaped differently from that of the ethnographer relates back to the specificities of my educational and professional background. In this respect, the reflections of anthropologist Teresa Caldeira about her engagement with São Paulo, the city she studies but also the place in which she grew up and spent most of her life in, are quite helpful.[182] As she compares the national and Euro-American anthropological traditions in which she works, Caldeira points out that when she writes about her research in Portuguese for a Brazilian audience she does so as a citizen – a resident of São Paulo that engages with its present and future conditions.[183] Because, as she explains, "the cities of which we are citizens, are cities in which we want to intervene, build, reform, criticize and transform." Differently from the cities that we long for at a distance, they move and affect us on an everyday basis. They are, she sums up right after, "cities to make sense of, to question, to change." When she writes in English, however, when she presents her research to the Euro-American academia, her city becomes simply a "subject of study."

My own engagement with Luanda is, by all means, of a very different kind. I am not a citizen of Luanda. I visited for the first time with the intention of doing research there. And, unlike Caldeira in São Paulo, throughout my research I felt many of the "estrangements and oddities of travelling abroad to do fieldwork." This said, for me Luanda was really never merely a "subject

[182] See Teresa Caldeira, *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in São Paulo* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000), 6-8.

[183] Like Caldeira, I am considering citizenship here in non-formalist terms, well beyond the limits of official nationality. See Caldeira, *City of Walls*, 381n6.

of study." Consciously or unconsciously, pure science is just not the aim the urban planner. It is not that the positivist ideology of science has been knocked loose by the "poetics and politics" of our methodologies,[184] but rather that planning is a value-oriented profession defined by ethics and a principle of action.[185] In other words, while I was not daily or emotionally engaged in transforming Luanda I approached it from the standpoint of a discipline innately imbued in the task of changing society. Despite the incongruities of such mission, I intuitively looked at Luanda as a city "to intervene, build, reform, criticize and transform." For better of for worse, an urban planner sees all cities as "cities to make sense of, to question, to change."

Modes of Inquiry: Research and Writing Strategies

The contingencies of my own engagement with Luanda, from the aloof presence of Angola throughout my youth to the disciplinary lenses through which I delved into it, have shaped not only the research methods I have used but also the process of writing this dissertation. Together with crucial factors such as being a white Portuguese male in Angola or the fact that I am writing this dissertation in a language other than my native tongue (and the language in which I conducted most of my research), they have defined the texture of this study. As I pushed through the daily tasks of my analytical endeavors, as I negotiated my way into a multiplicity of venues and sites, as I interacted with a wide variety of people in over 17 months of fieldwork in Luanda, as I write in English without "the freedom and the security of unconscious constructions,"[186] they have all presented obstacles just as they have created opportunities. But most importantly, they have framed and conditioned each and every of my quotidian undertakings.

In the broadest of senses, the dilemmas laid out above have led me to adopt qualitative data collection strategies such as direct observation, informal conversations or in-depth interviews, while persistently digging for factual accuracy, only to see it constantly deteriorate in the contested and incomplete nature of truth. This obstinacy for "rigorous partiality" has been less a response to the "thorny problems of verification"[187] with which reflexive anthropologists are confronted with, than an instrument of substantiation in my own writing about Luanda. In that sense, despite its deep and inherent flaws, data verification in this research project is not just a form of "triangulation." It is rather more an expression of a particular quest for validity. To put it in more concrete terms, while the structuring core of my research approach was distinctly ethnographic, much of the textual substance and empirical sustenance of this dissertation comes from document analysis as well as the grind of meticulous crosschecking in web-based news sources and different sorts of digitized archives.

My very first visit to Angola took place in 2009, during the summer term of my first year as a doctoral student at UC Berkeley. I spent about a month and half in Luanda then. Using that time to familiarize myself with the city, I got acquainted with different facets of its rapidly changing urban environment and began building a network of interlocutors and informants. One year later

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[184] Like the essays collected in *Writing Culture* claim to have happened in anthropology. See James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," 2.

[185] See Ananya Roy, "Commentary: Placing Planning in the World – Transnationalism as Practice and Critique," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 31 (4), 2011: 406-415, 412.

[186] Caldeira, *City of Walls*, 5.

[187] See James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," 25.

I returned, under the auspices of UC Berkeley's Human Rights Center, with the main objective of cooperating with SOS Habitat, a small housing rights organization created by victims of demolitions in 2002. By participating in their daily activities during the nearly two months I was in the country, I joined them in various site visits across the city, met with some of the evictees whose rights they were then advocating for and learned extensively about the dire landscape of insecurity and violence caused by the development of various new urban projects. I also conducted semi-structured interviews with a few of their staff members and helped them organize their archives for a couple of specific cases. This collaboration with SOS Habitat extended into the core period of my fieldwork, as I joined in on their activities on a number of different occasions during the time I was in Angola, but the main focus of my inquiry moved elsewhere. For the key purpose of this dissertation has been to analyze Luanda's emerging apparatus of urban order.

Getting to Angola on a long-term visa was not an easy task, not least of which because of the hordes of people flocking to its consulates in Portugal at the time, but I finally succeeded to enter the country as a student researcher in the beginning of 2012. Building on a set of research routines I had partially initiated in the years leading up to then, I structured my research endeavors in six modes of inquiry that encompass both research and writing strategies. Even though I am presenting them separately here, they are naturally interrelated and complementary. With different durations and varying degrees of intensity, each required full dedication at times and some endured well beyond the day I left Luanda in mid-2013.

The most recurrent research strategy I used throughout my time in Luanda was to *luandar* (see above), to wander around the city. Following liberally on a long tradition of *flânerie* and urban drifting, I did so regularly, purposely and strategically while being well aware of the limits and stark impossibility of "becoming one flesh with the crowd."[188] Mostly by myself but always engaging in dialogues with residents in the different places I visited, I did it by walking, I did it in public transport, and I did it by driving everywhere I could on a motorcycle. Sometimes I would go for short walks around the neighborhood I was living in in central Luanda, at others I would spend the whole day exploring distant areas in the outskirts of the city. Without overstating its importance, this probing method gave me the possibility of getting a sense of the entire city as well as a feeling for its different pulses and experiences. It was also a good way of expanding the range of conversations I was having elsewhere with planners and developers, and it allowed me to build a photographic register of the built environment and the innumerable manifestations of urban change spread all over the city.

My second mode of inquiry was the most resolutely ethnographic. I was able to secure "internships," as they were officially designated, in two organizations with different stakes in the development of Luanda. One was IPGUL,[189] the state body nominally responsible for planning and urban management in the province of Luanda, and the other was Imogestin, one of the most notorious real estate companies in the city. At IPGUL, where I have spent three months in the early period of my fieldwork, I was given a specific assignment – to help interpret the results of

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[188] Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life", in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays* (New York: Phaidon Press, 1995), 1-41, 9.

[189] IPGUL, as we have seen above already, stands for *Instituto de Planeamento e Gestão Urbana de Luanda* or Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management.

an ongoing mapping project aimed at analyzing the distribution of social services across the entire province – but this was tangential to my research endeavors. Most importantly, I joined the routines of its civil servants and learned about the daily activities of its planners. By conducting in-depth interviews in all units and divisions I was able to get a good grasp of IPGUL's history and purpose as well as a decent understanding of its specific duties and responsibilities. But it was in the casual chitchat from desk to desk or the offhand conversations at the lunch table that I managed to developed a sensibility for the practices of the state organization and how they are conditioned by the particularities of Luanda's socio-institutional landscape. At Imogestin, which I frequented daily for about two months, I had no duties of any kind. I was simply given permission to come in to the office responsible for managing phase two of the Nova Vida project and partake in the activities they had going on at the time. Following closely the work of Mace, an international consultancy and construction company that had been contracted to oversee the building process, I learned extensively about their technical delivery practices and the details of developing a fairly large real estate project in Luanda. While most of the data I collected during this period did not make it to this dissertation, my research at Imogestin allowed me to gain knowledge and perspective for the rest of my fieldwork.

There were multiple other ways in which these "internships" allowed me to gain insight into how state and private sector organizations have been involved in the official efforts to organize and control urban development patterns in Luanda. Field visits with staff members in both IPGUL and Imogestin, for example, were a great opportunity to look at the city through the eyes of those purportedly "ordering" it. Two other crucial benefits of being "immersed" in both these organizations was being able to broaden my network of informants as well as to gain access to a number of different venues otherwise out of the radar or simply closed off to me. Which takes me to the third and fourth modes of inquiry structuring my research endeavors in Luanda.

In addition to the many conversations I held at IPGUL and Imogestin, I conducted dozens of interviews with public officials in a wide array of government bodies and I spoke with private consultants, developers and real estate investors in some of the most widely recognized companies in Luanda. I also talked to a number of NGO workers and several built environment professionals involved in different urban development projects across the city. More than simply looking for filling in specific information gaps in my knowledge of particular urban processes, my goal in these interviews was to capture the ways in which a new city has been imagined, planned and effectively built over the past decades. Many were one-off occurrences, but in a few key instances I was able to either meet on multiple occasions with the same person or talk to different people in the same organization. It was out of these sustained relationships that I was able to develop a deeper understanding of how urban initiatives such as the Luanda Sul Program or Cidade do Kilamba came to be.

The fourth research routine I developed while I was in the field was to look for and participate in all sorts of public or semi-public events that could provide me with insights into processes and experiences of urban change in contemporary Luanda. Not just into the specific workings of the emerging apparatus of urban order but also across public demonstrations of both support and protest that took place while I was in town. I attended any talks, conferences and public consultation proceedings I could and I sat in on a few restricted professional workshops and closed-off meetings on matters of urban development. I was also present at a number of cultural events where the urban condition and the transformations Luanda is going through was a central

driving concern, and I followed closely key political events such as anti-government protests or campaign rallies in the build up to the 2012 elections.

This is a good segue into the fifth and most prolonged mode of inquiry I have used in doing empirical research for this dissertation. While I was in Luanda I regularly monitored newspapers and periodicals for coverage on a variety of issues relevant to my study, using it not only to follow what was going on at the time but also to get a feeling for how questions pertaining to housing, urban development or Luanda's transformations were being articulated in the public realm. I surveyed weekly and independent newspapers for opinion pieces and longer features, but the day-to-day scanning was confined to the only two outlets with daily news in the country, *Jornal de Angola* and *Agência Angola Press*, both of which are entirely controlled by the state. Once I left Angola I stopped doing this so systematically but I have continued to make extensive use of their online archives to triangulate information throughout the writing phase. In fact, given the specificities of my epistemological dilemmas and the many silences I was confronted with in my ethnographic fieldwork, they have become a crucial component in the voice with which I came to depict the efforts of official urbanism in contemporary Luanda. The same is true for a number of other archives and historical records. Of particular importance in this respect was the painstaking and methodical digging of the *Diário da República*, the Official Journal of the Republic. Another key sources included Odebrecht's online collection and the private records of several of my informants. Finally, I have also conducted traditional research in two different archives. At the Luanda Municipal Library I have scanned through selected years of 1990s *Jornal de Angola* as well as other periodicals. At the National Institute of Spatial Planning, the *Instituto Nacional de Ordenamento do Território*, I have examined carefully a number of urban plans made since before independence until the mid-1990s.

And finally, one that I am deploying as I write this very paragraph, writing. Never a marginal routine, writing took many crucial forms throughout the course of this research project. It was a central part of shaping it into a specific program of action, essential for describing it in a variety of venues and an obviously vital element in the production of fieldnotes, which I naturally did in Portuguese. In all of these moments I have approached writing as a way of knowing and an interpretative tool, but it was during the so-called process of "writing up" my findings from the field that writing most notably became a full-fledged mode of inquiry with clear rhetorical and political functions. Far from constituting a mere organizing and polishing off procedure at the end of the research period, writing in this dissertation has been openly taken up as a performative activity deeply intertwined with data interpretation and continuous research. The phenomena explained here are, in that sense, fragments of reality actively produced and made up on the computer screen. They are, as it has been famously said, "true fictions."[190] Which means that in this dissertation I am, above all, a compiler and teller of stories, a carver of *luandanças*.

THE DISSERTATION

The notion of the "crude urban revolution" denotes the pivotal part that oil has played in shaping emerging forms of official urbanism in contemporary Luanda. In making sense of how this powerful configuring arrangement has been unfolding over the past two decades, this dissertation tells three interrelated stories. The first revolves around the formation of land markets, the

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[190] See James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," 6.

second explores the texture of planning forms, and the third one delves into the making of a new Luanda. While they are chronologically organized according to their historical spans, each of them touches on different aspects and dimensions of these ongoing processes.

In chapter one – Mirantes do Talatona: Lineages of Real Estate Markets and Spatial Forms – the storyline is centered on the emergence of the Luanda Sul Program, a public-private initiative aimed at instigating formal land transactions in order to strengthen the then budding market economy. Officially launched in 1994, its origins date back to the period of economic reforms and coincide with the constitutional transition to a multiparty democracy. The analysis, however, spans the country's entire post-colonial history and goes well beyond the boundaries of the program. The objective is to construct a genealogy of the initiative by mapping out the establishment of its main private partner – the Brazilian firm Odebrecht – in Angola. This allows us to consider how oil enabled the market to be introduced as a means for promoting urban development, and to make sense of what arguably became a crucial reference model for subsequent state-sanctioned interventions in Luanda.

The analysis of the Luanda Sul Program provides a first glance at the particular role played by the Angolan state in contemporary urban development, which is why the dissertation then turns to the study of urban planning efforts in present day Luanda. Chapter two – Planning Confusão: IPGUL and the Volatility of the State – tells the story of the Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management in order to reflect upon law, planning and the practices of the state. Once again, the institute was formally established in 2007, but the analysis goes all the way back to the mid-1990s, when the first master plan of the post-colonial era was elaborated. The realm of official planning in Luanda is considered here as a heterogeneous and highly contested arena where different legal and institutional forms are laid upon each other to create a range of bureaucratic complication that is frequently impossible to disentangle. *Confusão* becomes a mode of rule and oil is often a key agent for extricating development initiatives from the entrapments of official planning processes.

Lastly, the third and final chapter – Cidade Kilamba: Fantasies and Circuitries of Luanda's New Centralities – provides an analysis of one of these initiatives. Focusing on the story of how the new city came about, this chapter traces some of the links between Angola's oil reserves, the state's developmental ambitions and the modes of expertise enacted in devising specific solutions for the future of Angolan cities. Connecting them to the first oil-backed loans given by Chinese banks to the Angolan government soon after the end of the civil war in 2002, the urban development apparatus that led to the inauguration of Cidade do Kilamba in July 2011 is analyzed here as an intricate ensemble of oil deals, financial transactions and architectural blueprints that connects the undersea of the Angolan coastline with the periphery of Luanda via circuitry threads that extend all the way to Beijing and Hong Kong. These threads, my final story leads me to conclude, are sustained by a calculative regime that converts oil barrels crossing past the Indian Ocean into and tallies of built area all across Angola.

The dissertation closes with a very brief reflection on what lies untouched by the strands of official urbanism analyzed in these three chapters. Weaving through Ondjaki's fascinating portrayal of contemporary Luanda, the conclusion is an evocation of all of those who are made transparent by the "crude urban revolution."

Luanda

ILHA

SAMBIZANGA

CHICALA

INGOMBOTA

CAZENGA

PANGUILA

CACUACO

Airport

TALATONA

VIANA

CAMAMA

City Center

New Centralities

Luanda Sul Program

KILAMBA

Resettlement Areas

Industrial Area

Outer Ring Expressway

ZANGO

New Airport

~ 10 Km

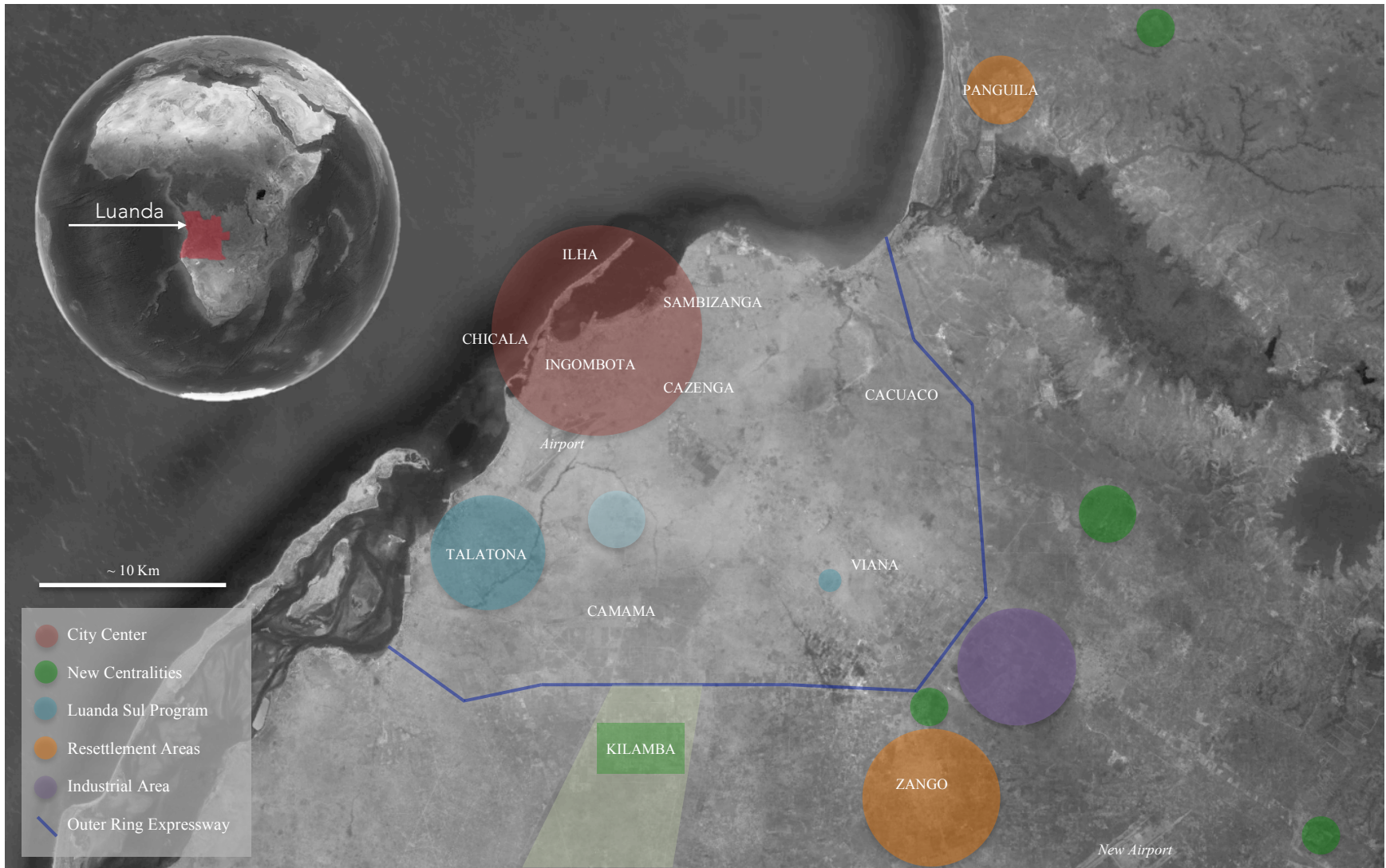**Fig. E** This Dissertation's Luanda
Background Image from Google Earth (Retrieved on March 30, 2015)

MIRANTES DO TALATONA
LINEAGES OF REAL ESTATE MARKETS AND SPATIAL FORMS

When I asked him what he foresaw for Talatona, Lourenço did not blink. New York, he replied almost immediately. One day all that was around us is going to be as lively and dynamic as any Manhattan neighborhood is today. His words radiated confidence. His eyes wore pride and determination. Neither of us might live to see it, but it will certainly happen.

I was intrigued. Why New York City? Why Manhattan? Why such specific fantasies? In reality, Lourenço riposted, it did not make a difference. It could also be London, São Paulo or Singapore. What he avidly was trying to convey to me is that the future will be nothing like today. That wooden deck upon which we eagerly anticipated lunch will have disappeared. Both the communal kitchen where the housemaid was finishing up cooking a mouthwatering Brazilian *feijoada* and the shared dining room where the mandatory Saturday *funge* was waiting to be served will be gone. There will be no trace of his or any of the other single-family houses limiting the peaceful patch of greenery spreading in front of us. The trees and grass themselves will give way to brick and mortar. Even the wall separating all that from the adjacent gated community could not expect anything other than being flattened to the ground in some near future. Under the right institutional conditions, densification and urban renewal were inexorable material certainties.

I must have continued to look baffled because Lourenço showed no hesitation in shedding light on my bewilderment. For him this was more than just an unattainable dream. Most importantly, he explained with the kind of tenacious conviction that only architects and environmental designers can bear, because his urban vision was not close-ended. It was not drawn in any grand master plan. For his aspirations were nothing like the prescribing ambitions of modernist architecture. So much so that the first signs of transition were already noticeable. Pointing to the high-rise under construction not more than two hundred meters away from us, he assured me that the *process* of transformation was well underway. Talatona is densifying under the aegis of a virtuous and self-regulating engine, an apparatus of relentless reorganization to which even that ascending high-rise will not resist. Regardless of when its first occupants move in, the process of transformation will continue to unfold. In the future Talatona will be compact and energetic. The whole neighborhood will have changed completely, only to renew itself again.

But how? I asked still puzzled by such possibility. How were all those gated communities around us going to give way to something other than segregation and self-enclosed developments? How could a district currently split into walled parcels of affluence evolve into anything similar to the close-knit and vibrant urban fabric he seemed to be envisioning? I restrained myself rapidly but I could not help showing my distaste with what Talatona currently was and represented. Lourenço, however, seemed nothing but amused with my disconcertment. He paused and smiled at me. The answer lied on what he called *the living forces of the city*. In the same way that *naked land* had been converted in what Talatona is today, the economic forces of supply and demand will determine not only where Talatona is heading but also what the entire city of Luanda is going to become.

We were – appropriately, one might say – in *Mirantes do Talatona*. When we drove in from a stone's throw away, the compound did not strike me as extravagant or opulent as many of its counterparts. While Lourenço exchanged joyful greetings with the security guard at the gate, I gazed at the monotonous sequence of single-family houses in front of us. Not only did they look smaller, their building materials and workmanship appeared to be relatively frugal when compared to the other *condomínios* I had visited in Talatona. But the lushness of the vegetation was quite remarkable and I asked Lourenço about it as we drove through a nicely shaded street lined up with trees. His answer was prompt and ended up providing an explanation for both my concerns. After all, *Mirantes do Talatona* had been one of the first real estate projects to be completed under the Luanda Sul Program.

This was fitting. I had come to talk to Lourenço about the history of the initiative that has made the development of Talatona possible and there we were, beers in hand, idly enjoying our Saturday at a corner of one of its early outcomes. And it was not just any corner. It was where Prado Valladares, his namesake firm and the company he himself had brought from Bahia to become one of the main protagonists in developing and managing the Luanda Sul Program, reserved a small cluster of houses for its in-country executives. Most of the people living in those houses around us, Lourenço exultingly told me, had played a fundamental part in the tremendous joint effort that the Talatona of today concealed. With hard work and dedication they had been able to radically transform the city. Not with blueprints and grand master plans, he had been relentlessly insisting since earlier in the day, but by *stimulating market forces*.

In the morning, during the more formal interview in his office, Lourenço Prado Valladares had declared capitalism in Angola to be still incipient. The reason why that is so was easy grasp. Those in power had attained it during the socialist period. Too many generations had been dwarfed from their innate entrepreneurship. The problem, of course, was not in the people. What drew the country back was its history. But this was changing, he guaranteed. From those *mirantes* where we were now, Lourenço seemed to be suggesting, I could afford a view into how Talatona and the Luanda Sul Program had contributed for liberating Angola from the shackles of that history.

Luanda Sul: "Conheça uma Nova Realidade"

The brochure summoned the people of Luanda underneath the rather intriguing image of a baobab tree. "Meet a New Reality," it encouraged them, "You must meet a new reality in the life of all Luandans." Everyone was invited to check on the ongoing works. "Go to Kikuxi, to Viana II and to Golfe and meet this reality. See it with your own eyes." Intended to put a halt on urban disorder and anarchic growth while providing a "standard of living similar to that of the most modern urban projects in the world," that new reality was said to be inaugurating "a new concept of living in Luanda."[1]

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[1] Bearing the names of Odebrecht and the Provincial Government of Luanda, this undated brochure must have circulated in Angola around 1995. Reading between its lines, it seems to have been produced soon after the first construction works to take place under the Luanda Sul Program were initiated. While the printed leaflet is addressed to "all Luandans," it is unclear how far it circulated. I found one copy only, on the personal archives of an Angolan planner who had been peripherally involved in the program. Governo Provincial de Luanda and Odebrecht, Promotional Brochure (Luanda, *n.d.*).
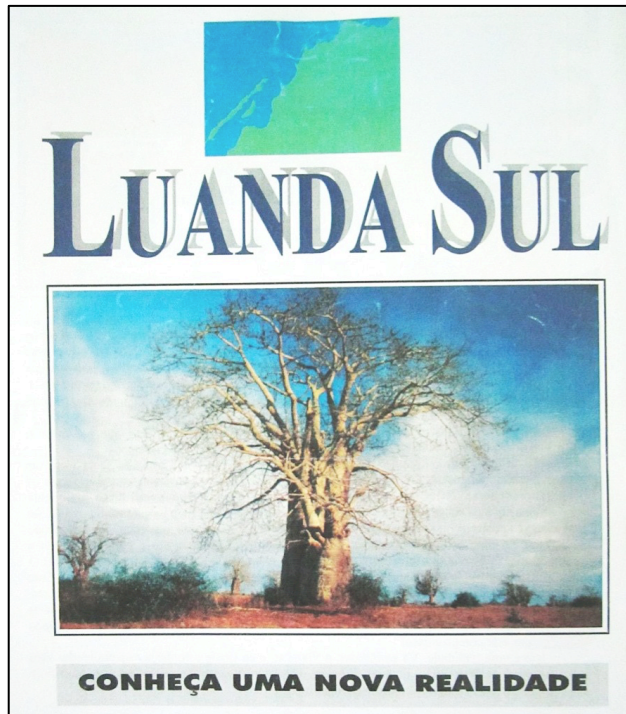
Fig. 1.1 Luanda Sul: Meet a New Reality.
In GPL and Odebrecht, Promotional Brochure (Luanda, *n.d.*).

Whether or not the promises of this twenty-year old brochure were fulfilled (and despite any objections to Lourenço's celebratory views or his take on urbanism), it would be deceitful to deny the importance that both Talatona and the Luanda Sul Program have had on development practices and modes of living in contemporary Luanda. For the former came to epitomize the local rise of a new urban form, and the latter was indeed a foundational urbanization scheme in the Angolan context. With origins dating back to the period leading up to the 1992 elections and official launch as an initiative to "strengthen the market economy by solidifying formal land transactions" in November 1994, the Luanda Sul Program was the first major attempt to control and regulate urban development under the putative precepts of capitalism and democracy.[2] Set to be part of a sweeping urbanization strategy envisioned for the whole of Luanda, the program was fundamentally aimed at promoting the southern expansion of the city. Its novelty, however, was not so much of purpose as it was of principles, methods and leadership.

If the general intention of the program was far from new, the approach to attain it was unlike any that could have been conceptualized up until a few years earlier. Similarly and relatedly, its main institutional protagonists were given responsibilities considerably beyond the roles they previously held. As we will see below, while the ever-growing prevalence of irregularity had been a motivating concern of urban policy and planning since the late colonial period, the proposed means for overturning it in the Luanda Sul Program were certainly at odds with what had been the political and economic status quo just before its establishment. In the wake of economic liberalization and the rise of a new constitutional order, after almost two decades of professed zeal toward central planning and the administrative allocation of resources, the Provincial Government of Luanda partnered up with two Brazilian companies in creating material and institutional conditions for the formation and development of a real estate market.

A crucial part of this effort was the establishment of a public-private partnership to manage and oversee the Luanda Sul Program. The Urban Development Company, or EDURB, was the association of two companies specially created to promote it and fulfill its administrative

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[2] The Luanda Sul Program is quite often presented as both consequence and cause of the transformations Angola was going through in the beginning of the 1990s. In the November 1994 government act that made it official, where the "Contract for Self-Financed Urban Development" signed between the Provincial Government and Odebrecht in June of that same year was ratified, the program was said to constitute an initiative whose objectives included "to reverse the tendency for the disorderly occupation of land" as well as "to strengthen the market economy by solidifying formal land transactions." See *Resolução n° 30/94* of November 10, 1994.

demands. The public company EPRO-URBE equipped the Provincial Government with a "business-like organization" endowed with legal mandate to operate it.[3] Prado Valladares, which had been involved in the project since the early design stages, set up a local company capable of providing services and expertise to support its implementation. But if the Provincial Government took political responsibility over the Luanda Sul Program and Lourenço's company played an important role in designing and implementing it, it was another Brazilian firm that rallied to push for it.

Odebrecht, the construction-based conglomerate, had at that point been in Angola for almost a decade and it was indeed the main proponent of the program in Luanda. Not only were they fierce advocates of its establishment, they took leadership in designing it (including bringing Prado Valladares over from Brazil) and supported it financially in its earliest stages. And while Odebrecht formally stayed away from management duties during the implementation phase, they also became the program's prime contractor for infrastructure development.

This was no small assignment. Infrastructure deficiencies were immense and its absence was the focal point of the Luanda Sul Program. If the most pressing economic challenge was understood to be the conversion of "virgin land, a plentiful natural resource with no market value, into a productive resource that can generate moral and material wealth,"[4] the key to enable such transformation was set to be the provision of water, sanitation, energy and roads. But the country was facing severe economic hardships, a former responsible for the program told me, and the public purse could not cover the cost of the required infrastructure. Experiencing great difficulties to run and maintain the physical and organizational structures in place, he added, the state budget had no room to even consider the possibility of expanding them. The proponents of the program had to find alternative ways to finance their development. While Odebrecht mobilized some of its own resources, what determined the viability of the initiative was its capacity to generate revenues upfront. Bound to pay for itself in advance, the Luanda Sul Program was built upon a self-financing apparatus that gave it its full name.

Inspired by the achievements of the Angolan oil sector, the "basic flux" (see Fig. 1.2, below) of the Luanda Sul Self-Financed Urban Infrastructure Program was fueled by the transferability of land surface rights. If the business accomplishments of the Angolan state were predicated on tight control over all oil reserves in the country, the Luanda Sul Program asserted itself when in April 1995 the Provincial Government received the rights over all state land within the defined perimeter of the initiative.[5] But the parallels with the model for oil exploration do not stop here, Lourenço told me. Just like Sonangol became the cornerstone of the oil business in postcolonial

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[3] Formally created in March 1995 as an "*ad hoc* Mixed Technical Group," but only legally established in May 1996, EDURB stands for *Empresa de Desenvolvimento Urbano* or Urban Development Company. Its formal creation took place when *Resolução nº 5/95* of April 14, 1995 gave the Ministry of Economy and Finance authority to constitute EPRO-URBE (*Empresa de Participação em Programas de Desenvolvimento de Luanda*), but its legal establishment had to wait for the actual creation of EPRO-URBE through *Decreto Executivo nº 2/96* of January 12, 1996.

[4] On the occasion of EDURB's fifth anniversary, a retrospective brochure was published to commemorate and publicize the Luanda Sul Program. The publication provides an historical overview of the initiative, detailed explanations of how it operated as well as reflections on the challenges ahead and statements from various dignitaries. This excerpt is taken from the section on the "company's origin". Much of the information on the paragraphs below is taken from this this brochure as well as the company's website. See also EDURB, "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano: EDURB 5 Anos (1996-2001)" (Luanda, 2001).

[5] This "land transfer" took place by means of *Resolução nº 8/95* of April 14, 1995, a central government decree published on the same day that the Ministry of Economy and Finance was given authority to constitute EPRO-URBE (see above).

Fig. 1.2 Luanda Sul Self-Financed Program: The Basic Flux.
In EDURB, "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano" (Luanda, 2011).

Angola, the institutional centerpiece of the Luanda Sul Program was to be EDURB. Drawing on the principle that land values capitalize the benefits of public works, its main purpose was to enable the construction of infrastructure on land made available for investment. This entailed land use planning and the establishment of urban management systems, but most importantly it required clients. Similar to Sonangol, EDURB's central activities were the contractual negotiations with companies willing to develop projects within its area of jurisdiction. Once these were brought into the program and land parcels were determined, EDURB would sell them the corresponding concession rights and the resulting capital inflows would feed into an execution fund. This would then generate resources for the required infrastructure works, which were handed over to Odebrecht and overseen by EDURB. The final stage in this scheme was the very inception of the real estate market. The Provincial Government was given back the land that it always owned (plus the infrastructure that made it into a generative urban asset), while the clients received the surface right deeds to their parcels as well as the exceptional opportunity of developing their own real estate and housing projects on serviced land. The program fulfilled its mission and the virtuous process that would purportedly transform Luanda, the same that Lourenço assured me to be unfolding before us on that Saturday afternoon, was set free.

The ambition of the Luanda Sul Program, however, was much broader than the mere establishment and encouragement of a real estate market. Encompassing a total area of nearly ten thousand hectares, it included building urban infrastructure in Talatona but also in two other sectors in the south. Moreover, it went well beyond the southern expansion of the city. Financed by the sale of land titles in Talatona, those two other expansion areas were imagined with different purposes. While in Novos Bairros the plan was to generate appropriate conditions for families to build their own houses in orderly fashion, in Projecto Morar the intention was to provide infrastructure for official initiatives aimed at promoting social housing and public facilities.[6] The initial intention was to make 10,000 land plots available in Novos Bairros and

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[6] All of my interlocutors on the subject of the Luanda Sul Program, in particular those connected to EDURB, insisted on calling attention to its different dimensions. Likewise, Odebrecht made sure to spell these out on the brochure that provides the title to this section (see above) as well as on the pages of *Odebrecht Informa*. In Novos Bairros, the Provincial Government was going to "promote auto-construction [auto-construção] in pre-demarcated plots" provided by the program in order "to avoid disordered urban growth." The objective was to settle those 10 thousand families in the area between Golfe and Camama. In Projecto Morar, the plan was to build "social houses [casas sociais or moradias populares] in 6,900 plots" as well as schools, community centers, health clinics and recreational areas. The Luanda Sul Program would be responsible for building all required infrastructure in the 653 hectares located in Viana II. *Odebrecht Informa* said that "about 40 thousand people" were expected to move in but elsewhere was advertised that Morar was designed for 25,000 only (in Gastrow, "Negotiated Settlements," 88). See GPL and

another 6,900 in Morar. By developing these away from the most densely occupied territories, the objective was also to lessen the demand for infrastructure in the existing city. "Only then," the chief political representative of the project once put it, "was its renewal possible." If the need to prevent the complete preclusion of urban development justified the prioritization of urban expansion, the minds and aspirations of those responsible for the initiative were much broader than Talatona, Novos Bairros and Morar. As they saw it, Luanda as a whole would eventually be transformed under a three-tiered urbanization strategy aimed at "rehabilitating the city center, integrating the *musseques* and expanding towards new areas."[7]

These all-encompassing intentions, however, were little more than just that. While any comprehensive and long-term targets were rapidly pushed outside the purview of the program, in the southern periphery the gap between what was proposed and what was actually implemented was enormous. Novos Bairros never really moved much beyond the conceptual stage and Morar fell far short of what was once expected. Only in Talatona, where land concessions were largely intended for the upper end of the residential market, did the program fulfill its goals. So much so that its jurisdiction ended up following what rapidly had become the public's perception. Luanda Sul was Talatona and Talatona was Luanda Sul.

Fig. 1.3 Sectors Lined Up for Development in the Luanda Sul Program.
In GPL and Odebrecht, Promotional Brochure and *Odebrecht Informa* 69 (p. 12). Note how the two images have different labels for the area marked in yellow. This small inaccuracy is not necessarily insignificant. At the very least, it is a prescient one.

But I am not interested in cataloguing the failures and missteps of the program. Nor

Odebrecht and GPL, Promotional Brochure and "Tempo de Construir," *Odebrecht Informa* 69, May/June 1995, pp. 12-13, where the quotes below can also be found.

[7] During my interviews and conversations about the initiative, the quotation in this sentence was often presented to me as a sort of unaccomplished mantra that once gave the Luanda Sul Program a purpose. For a written articulation of it see, for example, EDURB, "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano." In what concerns the pressing need to intervene, *Resolução n°* 30/94 of November 10, 1994 leaves no room for doubt. The Provincial Government thought necessary to quickly launch an urban initiative and determine it as an "emergency program." See also EDURB, "Luanda Sul Self-Financed Urban Infrastructure Program: An Experimental, Innovative, and Successful Partnership between the Public and the Private Sectors," Dubai International Award for Best Practices Database (UN Habitat, 2000) and EDURB's website.

am I drawn to a discussion of market fundamentals, or the extent to which they are met in the case of Luanda. Instead, I am much more concerned with the productive character of the initiative and the ways in which its flaws and achievements contributed for establishing urban land and real estate as officially recognized marketable goods in postcolonial Luanda. For Talatona and the Luanda Sul Program sit right at the core of contemporary Angolan urbanism. Not because they have had widespread repercussions in a city where the vast majority of land and real estate transactions continues to occur outside the purview of the law and formal regulation, but since they have created institutional and material conditions for the development of a fertile repertoire of sites, practices and experiences, as well as a modern spatial lexicon for state-sanctioned interventions in the Angolan capital. In fact, introducing specific market-based structures for the production and distribution of urban land and real estate along with new residential types and land use arrangements, the Luanda Sul Program has forged the emergence of some of the commanding models of urban development in the Luanda of today.

The program, however, did not spring up out of thin air. The "new reality" announced in the brochure pictured above did not develop in a vacuum. It was carved out of thick layers of history and culture. For the Luanda Sul Program, its socio-spatial imprint and the markets it helped generating were formed in political and economic circumstances laid out well before any formal opening to the market economy. Because if history has been a hindrance in the emergence of capitalist institutions and relations in Angola, as Lourenço had suggested during our conversation and many others would concur, it has certainly also equipped it with specific and arguably advantageous conditions for their development.

It is with this in mind that this chapter takes an ostensible detour. It stretches all the way back to the first years of independence, it delves into broad political-economic considerations and it looks over geographical, institutional and social spaces that go well beyond the south of Luanda or EDURB. The goal is to unravel some of the key historical threads that have given shape to the Luanda Sul Program as a way of mapping lineages of real estate development, land market formation and urban form in postcolonial Angola. Providing genealogical tools for the analysis of contemporary experiences, the following section aims to look into the institutional arrangements, spatial histories and socio-political connections from which the founding initiative descends. That is why it is centered on Odebrecht, a company that was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Luanda Sul Program.

"A ODEBRECHT EM ANGOLA"

Odebrecht arrived in Angola through Moscow. It all began in the early 1980s, after a project in northern Peru for which the Brazilian company was preparing to partner up with a Soviet counterpart was deemed unfeasible.[8] In alternative to what would be a considerable operation,

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[8] First conceptualized in the 1920s, the Olmos Project was considered technically viable after a study made by Technopromexport in the 1970s. Its central idea was to divert water for use in irrigation and power generation through a 20Km tunnel across the Andes. In addition to building one of the world's deepest tunnels, this required the construction of a 43m high dam in the Huancabamba River. Odebrecht, which at the time was starting to build another dam in the south of the country, was summoned up for the project but works were soon suspended. In a 1994 issue of the company's magazine ("A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, January/February 1994, pp. 22-30, 24) it is stated that the project was considered "unviable due to global political interests". In a more recent account of the events it is said that works "were suspended because of insufficient funds" (in Olmos Project's website). There was another failed attempt to take up the project in the 1980s but it was not until 2004 that the Peruvian government opened up an international bid to resume it. Odebrecht won the bid.

Technopromexport invited Odebrecht to participate in another sizable construction project.[9] This time around, however, it would take place in Angola. Expected to be able to generate 520MW of electricity, the 120m high Capanda Hydroelectric Dam was going to be located more than 400Km away from Luanda. The plan was ambitious. In addition to the dam itself, a great deal of auxiliary infrastructure was to be built. The proposal was for Odebrecht to take charge of all civil construction works involved in the project. Together with Technopromexoprt, they would constitute the Capanda Consortium.

It was an enticing opportunity. From the Brazilian company's perspective, that which was to become the largest – and practically only[10] – public investment in Angola at the time represented much more than just a potentially lucrative project. Beyond the immediate benefits it would generate, it was a major stepping-stone for extending its nascent internationalization efforts across the Atlantic. Moreover, and perhaps of crucial importance, the company received full backing from Brasília.[11]

This was a time of important transformations in Brazil. In particular, as a result of the 1973 oil shock and the subsequent crisis in the country's balance of payments, the military regime sought new alliances to meet its changing economic needs. While its diplomatic representations never took a strong position against Portuguese colonial occupation in Africa, Itamaraty, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, opened a special representation in Luanda as soon as the liberation of Angola became inevitable. Months later the Brazilian government would be the first to officially recognize the Popular Republic, and less than six months after independence a commercial mission was sent to Luanda.[12] This was followed and solidified by a series of economic

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[9] Technopromexport is a Russian engineering company founded in 1955, by the Government of the Soviet Union, to "provide assistance to foreign countries in the construction of power engineering facilities under government-to-government bilateral cooperation agreements." Its headquarters are in Moscow. See in Technopromexport's website.

[10] See Tony Hodges, *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State* (Oxford and Bloomington: James Currey and Indiana University Press, 2004), 108-109. Also World Bank, *Angola: Issues and Options in the Energy Sector*, Report Nº 7408-ANG (UNDP/World Bank Energy Sector Program, 1989).

[11] Odebrecht was, at the time, taking its first steps outside Brazil. Secured in 1979, the dam in southern Peru mentioned above had been one of its first international contracts. See "40 Anos de Desafios," *Odebrecht Informa* 37, December 1985, pp. 20-35; "A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, January/February 1994, pp. 22-30; "Um Líder Que Não Para de Se Desafiar," *Odebrecht Informa* 130, May/June 2007. In what concerns the support given by the Brazilian government, it is nothing that the company was not used to. On an article recently published on the Brazilian edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, Anne Vigna shows how Odebrecht has always been "a transnational fed by the State". See Anne Vigna, "Odebrecht, uma transnacional alimentada pelo Estado," *Le Monde Diplomatique Brasil*, October 2, 2013.

[12] Importantly, as we will see below, such recognition also meant sanctioning the MPLA as Angola's rightful ruling authority. In the recent words of José Eduardo dos Santos on the occasion of Odebrecht's 25th anniversary of their presence in the country, this was seen in Luanda as a "bold action" that gave Angola "diplomatic legitimacy" and it is something that "Angolans do not forget." In Odebrecht Angola, *O Futuro em Contrução: Odebrecht e Angola / 25 Anos de Parceria* (Luanda and Rio de Janeiro: Odebrecht, 2009). On the relationship between Brazil and Angola see Sílvio Umberto dos Passos Cunha, "As Relações Econômicas Brasil-Angola (1975-1988)," *Caderno CRH* 36, 2002: 137-164; Jerry Dávila, *Hotel Trópico: Brazil and the Challenge of African Decolonization, 1950-1980* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), especially Chapter 8; José Vicente de Sá Pimentel, "Relações entre o Brasil e a África Subsaárica," *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 43(1), 2000: 5-23; Cláudio Ribeiro,"La Politique Africaine du Brésil et le Gouvernement Lula," *Politique Africaine* 113, 2009: 71-91; Ivo de Santana, "O Despertar Empresarial Brasileiro para o Mercado Africano nas Décadas de 1970 a 1990," *Contexto Internacional* 25(1), 2003: 139-195; Kamilla Raquel Rizzi, "Relações Brasil-Angola no Pós-Guerra Fria: Os Condicionantes Internos e a Via Multilateral," Master Thesis. Universidade Federal de Rio Grande do Sul, 2005. See also Sylvia Croese, "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," in *Strengthening the Civil Society Perspective. Series II: China and the Other Emerging Powers in Africa*, 7-29 (Cape Town: Fahamu, 2010) and Sylvia Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola: The Zango Housing Project in Luanda as a Case Study" (PhD Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2013), 93-94.

cooperation agreements and in 1979 Sonangol and Petrobrás established the first oil export arrangement between the two countries. It was in this context that Odebrecht received wide support from its home government.[13] Willing to further its commercial partnership with Angola and guarantee what would become the largest Brazilian investment in the African continent, the military government was present in the most crucial rounds of the lengthy negotiation process that would ensue.

In fact, the significance of the Capanda contract for both Odebrecht and Itamaraty seems to have been matched only by the challenges faced to secure it. With several different interests at play, it took almost four years and numerous trips between Luanda, Moscow and Rio de Janeiro to negotiate a deal suitable to all parts involved. The first official signatures were put on paper in September 1982. In addition to a formal agreement between the Angolan Government and its Soviet counterpart, a preliminary contract for the construction of the dam was established between the Angolan Ministry of Energy and what from then on became officially sanctioned as the Capanda Consortium. Less than two months later, a joint dispatch by the Angolan Ministries of Planning, Finance, External Commerce and Energy created GAMEK, the agency that would be responsible for coordinating the construction of the dam and for preparing further hydroelectric and irrigation projects in the Kwanza River basin.[14] The basic institutional foundations for building Capanda were laid in, but the financial arrangements that would enable it had yet to be established. That became the main object of the negotiations throughout 1983.[15]

All electromechanical equipment was to be provided by Technopromexport and purchased via a low-interest rate loan from the Soviet Union, but the largest slice of the budget was earmarked for Odebrecht's construction works.[16] With this in view, the Brazilian Government stepped in by mobilizing some of the companies it controlled. Perhaps most decisively, Petrobras took on the responsibility of paying for the goods and services provided by Odebrecht (and other Brazilian companies) in exchange for Sonangol crude oil shipments.[17] On December 14th the two national oil companies signed an agreement in Luanda to consolidate and amend their ongoing

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[13] In this respect it is instructive to take note of who gets to be acknowledged in the press release to announce its arrival in Angola (see below): "The stimulus of the Hon. President of the Republic, and the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the SEPLAN, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Trade Promotion Department of the MFA, CACEX, Petrobras, Electrobrás and of the Brazilian Embassy in Luanda, were indispensable to achieve this result." In "A Odebrecht em Angola," *Odebrecht Informa* 35, 3, January 1985.

[14] GAMEK stands for *Gabinete de Aproveitamento do Médio Kwanza,* or Office for the Harnessing of the Middle Kwanza. The agency was created by ministerial act on November 1982 (*Despacho Conjunto* of October 18, 1982). Its organic statute would be approved in *Despacho Conjunto nº* 14/86 of March 7, 1986.

[15] For an overview of the contracts and agreements established between 1982 and 1984 see Articles 1 and 2 of *Decreto nº* 26/84 of December 1, 1984. Odebrecht's account of the negotiations can be found on "A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, January/February 1994, pp. 22-30, 25. See also, World Bank, *Angola: Issues and Options in the Energy Sector*, 97-98.

[16] This included the construction of the dam itself as well as access roads, industrial plants, maintenance facilities, office buildings and residential compounds in both Luanda and Malanje. See "Hidrelétrica de Capanda: Uma Nova Etapa nas Relações com Angola," *Odebrecht Informa* 35, January 1985, pp. 4-5, 4.

[17] See "A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, January/February 1994, pp. 22-30, 25; "Hidrelétrica de Capanda: Uma Nova Etapa nas Relações com Angola," *Odebrecht Informa* 35, January 1985, pp. 4-5, 4; World Bank, *Angola: Issues and Options in the Energy Sector*, 98. See also the agreement between the Government of Brazil and Angola of April 12, 1983: Governo da República Federativa do Brasil e Governo da República Popular de Angola. "Ajuste Complementar ao Acordo de Cooperação Econômica, Científica e Técnica entre o Governo da República Federativa do Brasil e o Governo da República Popular de Angola" (Brasília, April 12, 1983), in particular Article 2.

partnership.[18] A couple of weeks earlier, another crucial pact was established between the Angolan Ministry of Energy and the Bank of Brazil. Under this covenant underwritten by the National Bank of Angola (or BNA), the Brazilian bank committed part of its foreign trade portfolio towards a credit line specifically designed to finance the importation of raw materials, consumer goods and food products for the Capanda project. Its operations could be guaranteed by BNA promissory notes, but the most assuring and reliable collateral was to be provided in the form of oil.[19]

On November 21st 1984, Norberto Odebrecht signed the final version of the Capanda contract in a ceremony held at the central bank's headquarters in Luanda. The event was presided by the Minister of Energy and Petroleum, and attended by the Brazilian Minister of Industry and Trade as well as all the highest representatives of the various companies and public authorities involved in the project.[20] From Luanda's Marginal, where BNA is located, the signatories of the different contracts headed to the presidential palace, where they were received by José Eduardo dos Santos. Ten days later an official decree approved and ratified all agreements, covenants and contracts made for the Capanda project since 1982 as well as a "special statute" establishing legal and fiscal structures especially designed for all of those working in it.[21] With a month left in 1984, a statement released by Odebrecht to the Brazilian press acknowledged the "indispensable and decisive" assistance provided by the federal government and announced that the company was now officially in Angola.[22]

But that was only the beggining. Reading between the lines of that very same statement, the company's prescient ambition for its own operation in Angola becomes publicly apparent before it even begins. That which was "the largest project ever undertaken in that country," it was proclaimed with pride and premonition, would make of Brazil its leading commercial partner and therefore open "numerous new opportunities for interchange." Odebrecht's aspiration was to seek and seize those opportunities. Or, as Emílio Odebrecht himself suggested in celebration of his company's 25th year in the country, "to establish roots in order to settle in."[23] And so it did. From 1984 till present times, the Brazilian conglomerate has taken on multiple "business challenges" and holds now a diversified operation throughout the country. In fact, in addition to currently being the single largest private employer in Angola, many of its numerous endeavors have contributed quite significantly for shaping a wide range of emerging markets during periods

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[18] This was soon followed by the establishment of a production sharing agreement between Sonangol, Braspetro (at the time, Petrobras' procurement and production company outside Brazil) and Petrofina, the Belgian oil company. See *Decreto n⁰ 3/84* of March 27, 1984.

[19] See "A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, January/February 1994, pp. 22-30, 25 and World Bank, *Angola: Issues and Options in the Energy Sector*, 98. See also the 1983 agreement as well as the joint declarations made by the governments of Brazil and Angola in 1988, 1989 e 1991. The centrality of crude oil shipments between Angola and Brazil was only reinforced in the complementary bilateral agreements dedicated to Capanda that would follow throughout the decade.

[20] It is worth mentioning that, in addition to the contract signed between the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum and the Odebrecht/Technopromexoprt Consortium, the other set of contracts signed on that day were consultancy and technical assistance agreements between GAMEK and Furnas Centrais Elétricas, a subsidiary of Electrobrás, another company controlled by the Brazilian Government.

[21] *Decreto n⁰ 26/84* of December 1, 1984.

[22] On December 7th 1984, Odebrecht published a press release to announce its arrival in Angola. This was reproduced in *Odebrecht Informa* 35 (1985, pg. 3) with great fanfare and a plain title: "*A Odebrecht em Angola*," or "Odebrecht in Angola".

[23] In Odebrecht Angola. *O Futuro em Construção.*

of great transformations. With the Luanda Sul Program, it is argued here, Odebrecht has helped molding some of the most crucial ways in which space is produced in contemporary Angola.

In the remainder of this chapter we will look into why and how Odebrecht invested in Luanda Sul as a means to better understand the specific nature of institutionalized land and real estate markets in contemporary Luanda. In order to do so, however, we must begin by making sense of the local conditions, or the context in which the company set up shop across the Atlantic. For the particular political-economic circumstances framing its establishment in Angola determined the texture of its undertakings in Luanda Sul and the ways in which they have given shape to the official urban practices of present-day Luanda.

Odebrecht arrived in Angola at a time of notable political and economic turbulence. While the negotiations described thus far took place under the aegis of a boisterously declared centrally planned economy, its early years in Capanda caught the initial transition to a market-based economic system.[24] This has been extensively characterized in the literature as an important turning point in the country's postcolonial history.[25] In order to understand the intricacies of such transition and make sense of what it actually meant for Odebrecht's establishment in Angola some of the following sections provide a brief overview of the transformations the country went through in the first two decades of independence. Drawing on the reasonable scrutiny to which economists and political scientists have been subjecting these transformations over the years, my aim is not to engage in a thorough review of the literature or any kind of meticulous reassessment of the occurrences analyzed in it.[26] Instead, the objective is to provide a sketch of Angola's postcolonial political economy that is sufficiently detailed for us to be able to contextualize Odebrecht's role in devising the particular characteristics of land and real estate markets in contemporary Luanda.

Scaffolds of Socialism: Dissent and Development in the Late 1970s

Angola became an independent nation on November 11th 1975. After a War of National Liberation fought by competing movements since the beginning of the 1960s, the decolonization process followed the democratic revolution that overthrew the Portuguese dictatorship in April 1974. Forged in the midst of great political turmoil in both Lisbon and Luanda, the peace and constitutional agreements of January 1975 were signed in southern Portugal by an indecisive colonial power and a severely fragmented (and only partially representative) nationalist platform. According to most analysts and observers, it so happened that neither the Portuguese were prepared to leave in an orderly fashion, nor the three nationalist movements present at the various negotiation meetings taking place in the lead up to independence – FNLA, MPLA and

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[24] According to Tony Hodges (*Angola*, 11), "*the* ideological shift" took place between 1985 and 1991. Christine Messiant affirmed it more categorically by saying that "it was around 1985 that Angola's political economy changed." See Christine Messiant, "The Mutation of Hegemonic Domination: Multiparty Politics Without Democracy," in *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) pp. 93-123, 95.

[25] Most literature is rather caustic in describing this transition. David Birmingham, for example, sarcastically describes such transition as a "shift from nominal socialism to theoretical capitalism." David Birmingham, "Angola," in *A History of Postcolonial Lusophone Africa*, Ed by Patrick Chabal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), pp. 137-184, 156.

[26] To be sure, there are different nuances in the interpretations that each of these authors makes of this and other periods in the history of postcolonial Angola. While my intention is not to erase what sets them apart, I read across their different analyses in order to provide a sketch that is sufficiently detailed for the purposes of this chapter.

UNITA[27] – seemed actually willing to share power and foster a peaceful transition. Exacerbating the institutional precariousness of the decolonization process, a great deal of diplomatic and military maneuvering took place at the international and regional levels during that period. If geopolitical alliances had helped shape the nationalist landscape, Angola was then notoriously thrown in the middle of the Cold War. FNLA and UNITA received support from the CIA as well as military boosts from Zaire and South Africa. The MPLA was backed up by the Soviet Union and Cuban combat troops. When the last Portuguese high commissioner transferred sovereignty to the "Angolan people" in a quick ceremony with no Angolans present, an internationalized civil war was in full swing. Independence was proclaimed in two different cities. FNLA and UNITA announced the establishment of a Democratic Republic in Huambo, while in Luanda the MPLA declared the constitution of a Popular Republic.[28]

The hostilities were briefly put on hold, but the celebratory truce did not last long. Soon after independence, the Cuban contingent was reinforced and the Soviet Union provided more arms to the MPLA. On the other side of the conflict, the US Congress banned covert aid to operations in Angola. In less than a couple of months the MPLA controlled the north of the country and the Cubans were pushing the South Africans back to the south. The alliance between FNLA and UNITA collapsed. By the end of March 1976, Pretoria withdrew its last army units from Angolan territory. The Popular Republic had prevailed in what became known amongst MPLA supporters as the second War of National Liberation.

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[27] These are the *Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* or National Liberation Front of Angola, the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* or People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola, and the *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* or National Union for the Total Independence of Angola. Notably left out of these negotiations was the *Frente de Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda* (FLEC) or Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda. On FLEC see Kristin Reed, *Crude Existence: Environment and the Politics in Northern Angola* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2009), 45-49, amongst others.

[28] Concerning the specific period of Angolan history covered in this section, much of the focus in the literature has been on geopolitical alignments, diplomatic maneuvering and the minutiae of international involvement. In this respect see Fernando Andresen Guimarães, *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War: International Politics and Domestic Political Conflict, 1961-76* (New York: Macmillan, 2000), 85-195; Gerald Bender, "Angola, the Cubans and American Anxieties," *Foreign Policy* 31, 1978: 3-30; Gerald Bender, "Angola: Left, Right and Wrong," *Foreign Policy*: 43, 1981: 53-69; Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 246-346; Franz-Wilhelm Heimer, *The Decolonization Conflict in Angola, 1974-76: An Essay in Political Sociology* (Genève: Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales, 1979); W Martin James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola*. (Piscataway: Transaction Publishers, 1992), 63-78, 143-145 and 189-199; William Minter, *Apartheid's Contras: An Enquiry into the Roots of War in Angola and Mozambique* (London: Zed Books and Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994), 18-35; and Stephen Weigert, *Angola: A Modern Military History, 1961-2002* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 55-68. See also Birmingham, "Angola," 145-155; Victoria Brittain, *Death of Dignity: Angola's Civil War* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1998), 1-14; Hodges, *Angola*, 8-9; Gilbert Khadiagala, "Negotiating Angola's Independence Transition: The Alvor Accords," *International Negotiation* 10, 2005: 293-309; Assis Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers: Violence in Post-Colonial Angola* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007), 38-39 and 72-90; Christine Messiant, "De la Guerre d'Indépendance à la Guerre Civile et Régionale 1974-1999," in *L'Angola Postcolonial. 1. Guerre et Paix sans Démocratisation*, Eds by Briditte Lachartre and Michel Cahen (Paris : Éditions Karthala, 2008), pp. 175-199, 175-183; Oye Ogundadejo, "Angola: Ideology and Pragmatism in Foreign Policy," *International Affairs* 57(2) 1981: 254-259; Keith Somerville, *Angola: Politics, Economics and Society* (London: Frances Pinter and Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1986), 40-45; Douglas Wheeler and René Pélissier, *História de Angola* (Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2009), 358-363. For other historical perspectives on this period of transitions see, for example: Gabriel García Márquez, "Operation Carlota." *New Left Review* I /a 101-102, 1977: 123-137; Ryszard Kapuściński, *Another Day of Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1987); Marissa Moorman, *Intonations: A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda, Angola, from 1945 to Recent Times* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), 167-171; and Jean-Michel Mabeko Tali, *Dissidências e Poder de Estado: O MPLA Perante Si Próprio (1962-1977)* (Luanda, Nzila: 2001).

It was this triumph that gave the MPLA formal control over the political system and the remnants of the colonial economy. According to the Constitutional Law[29] approved by its own Central Committee on the eve of Independence Day, the movement held the responsibility of providing "political, economic and social guidance to the Nation" as the "legitimate representative" of the Angolan People. One of the primary objectives of the Popular Republic of Angola as a sovereign state was to ensure the "construction of a prosperous and democratic country, completely free of any form of exploitation of man by man." Its President was the President of the MPLA – Agostinho Neto – but the "the supreme organ of State power" would be the Council of the Revolution. Constituted by the top echelons of the MPLA (and in particular, its military wing) this too was to be presided by the President. In order to promote development and achieve prosperity, the State would "guide and plan the national economy" while "protecting private property and activities" as long as they benefited it.

The challenges, however, were enormous. On the military front, the situation was far from stable.[30] Left out of all major negotiations towards independence, FLEC separatists were a continuous source of insecurity in the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda. Whereas the FNLA vanished from the political-military landscape at the same time as the tensions between Luanda and Kinshasa diminished, UNITA returned to guerrilla warfare and reorganized its forces for ambushes and hit-and-run attacks in the central and southern hinterlands of the country. This was to a great extent made logistically possible by the South African apartheid regime, whose immediate reaction after defeat was to greatly reinforce its military capacity to hold back the liberation movement in Namibia. Since the MPLA had allowed SWAPO to set up camps in the south of the country, the South African Defense Force never really disengaged from the region and it would start launching occasional raids inside Angola after 1978. Its massive presence in northern Namibia and its continued support of UNITA also posed a more than an imminent threat to the MPLA. During those last years of the 1970s, FAPLA and its Cuban supporters were generally capable of containing continuous assaults throughout the southeast, but were never able to inflict complete military defeat on Jonas Savimbi's troops.

But while both internal and external enemies were cause of great concern, the most daunting test to Agostinho Neto's executive during those first years of postcolonial rule seems to have been the development effort. Most political and economic analysts tend to agree on this.[31] Not only

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[29] While the fundamental principles of the 1975 Constitutional Law (*Lei Constitucional* of November 11, 1975) were laid out in its first sixteen articles, both quotations in this sentence are extracted from article 2. The one that follows is from article 1. Articles 31 to 52 are concerned with the structure of the State. To be sure, it is the People's Assembly that, in article 34, is preordained as "the supreme organ of State power." But article 35 determines that, while the conditions for its establishment are not fulfilled, it is the Council of the Revolution that takes on such responsibility. Its substructure is defined in articles 35 to 37 and the Government's role is determined in article 40. The excerpts regarding the role of the State in fostering development in the final sentence of this paragraph are extracted from articles 8 and 10.

[30] On the military situation during this period see, especially: James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola*, 144-149 and 189-199; Minter, *Apartheid's Contras*, 27-32; and Weigert, *Angola*, 55-72. See also Birmingham, "Angola," 145-148 and 153-155; Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers*, 38-39; and Hodges, *Angola,* 9-10.

[31] The politics and economics of this specific period have been critically analyzed by a number of authors. See, for example: Manuel Ennes Ferreira, *A Indústria em Tempo de Guerra (Angola, 1975-91)* (Lisboa: Edições Cosmos e Instituto da Defesa Nacional, 1999), 15-22, 179-187, 247-252 and 330-352; Hodges, *Angola,* 8-9 and 47-49 and Tony Hodges, "The Economic Foundations of the Patrimonial State," in *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds by Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 175-199, 179; Messiant, "The Mutation of Hegemonic Domination," 96 and "Angola, le Voies de l'Ethnisation et de la Décomposition. I. De la Guerre à la Paix (1975-1991)," 50-55; Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, "Business Success, Angola-Style: Postcolonial Politics and the Rise and Rise of Sonangol," *The Journal of Modern African*

did the ongoing conflict and a war-torn physical infrastructure undermine the territorial and administrative reach of the state as well as its capacity to implement a comprehensive reconstruction program, the hasty and chaotic departure of white settlers had left the country and its economy in great disarray. The highly centralized and authoritarian public administration system inherited from the Portuguese was almost completely depleted of qualified personnel in little more than a couple of months. The fairly large and diversified economic fabric of the late colonial period was profoundly disrupted by the sudden retreat of business owners and managerial classes alike. Both state bureaucracy and private companies were left abandoned. A huge vacuum was created.

Economists usually look at this as a critical shortage of skilled human resources in both state and economic apparatuses. While this shortage was partially resolved by Cuban and Eastern European technical cadres, it is typically argued that one of the most significant effects of such shortfalls was to provide impulse for the Government to nationalize large portions of the economy and begin adopting a centralized system of control and decision-making to make it run. Most political scientists do not disagree. In fact it is usually maintained that such centralization was well suited to the needs of a postcolonial elite that used the state and its resources to achieve political dominance while guaranteeing privileged access to material benefits and the means of distributing them. Mimicking MPLA affiliation hierarchies and ensuing patterns of influence – it is emphatically argued by some of those analysts – the postcolonial political system was in its inception unmistakably neo-patrimonial and fundamentally partisan.

Given its long history of internal differences and disputes, the MPLA took command of both political-administrative system and economy in less than unified fashion. While there were crackdowns on both internal dissent and the radical left, the ideological scope of the movement was fairly broad and the executive was comprised of opposing factions. This meant that government interventions and legislative decisions were muddled through disparate views of what ought to be done and contrasting understandings of how to go about doing it. Discontent was routine and compromises were relatively common. But the political and organizational arrangements allowing for such multiplicity of opinions within the movement were rather brief. Increasingly challenged throughout 1976, they were completely obliterated after the failed internal coup led by Nito Alves in May 1977.[32]

Studies 45 (04), 2007: 595-619, 597-598 and "Illiberal Peacebuilding in Angola," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 49 (2): 2011, 287-314, 290; Somerville, *Angola*, 131-136; Nuno Vidal, "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa: The Genesis and Development of the Angolan Political System, 1961-1987" (PhD Dissertation, King's College, University of London, 2002), 131-253, "The Angolan Regime and the Move to Multiparty Politics," in *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 124-174, 126-131 and "A Génese da Economia do Petróleo e dos 'Esquemas' Impeditivos do Desenvolvimento," in *Economia Política e Desenvolvimento em Angola*, Eds by Nuno Vidal and Justino Pinto de Andrade (Luanda: Chá de Caxinde, 2011), pp. 12-39; and Inge Tvedten, *Angola: Struggle for Peace and Reconstruction* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 70-72. For a political-economic analysis that is ostentatiously sympathetic to the MPLA see Basil Davidson, "Angola Since Independence," *Race Class* 19, 1977: 133-148.

[32] The range of internal dissent within the MPLA is a common theme in historical analyses of the first years of independence. See, especially: Mabeko Tali, *Dissidências e Poder de Estado*; and Vidal, "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa," 131-153 and "The Angolan Regime and the Move to Multiparty Politics," 128-131. See also: Birmingham, "Angola," 149-153; Moorman, *Intonations*, 165-177; and Somerville, *Angola*: 48-57. In these, like in many other studies of this period, the attempted coup of May 27, 1977 (and the rectification campaign that followed it) is subject to considerable scrutiny. For a detailed analysis of this crucial event in Angolan history see Lara Pawson, "The 27 May in Angola: A View from Below," *Relações Internacionais* 14, 2007: 1-18 and Lara Pawson, *Em Nome do Povo: O Massacre que Angola Silenciou* (Lisboa: Tinta da China, 2014). See also: David Birmingham, *Portugal and Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999), 142-154.

While precise facts concerning what actually happened remain relatively unknown, most scholarly interpretations of what followed tend to converge. Understood by those in charge as a consequence of power dispersal, the attempt to overthrow Agostinho Neto triggered a far-reaching and often violent rectification and reorganization campaign. Unity and cohesion were privileged over plurality. So-called democratic centralism and streamlined decision-making processes prevailed over decentralized autonomy. Strong internal discipline was imposed and an extensive purge was carried out both within the movement and in related mass organizations. In less than a couple of years the number of MPLA members was dramatically reduced, while both political and economic powers were placed under a significantly tighter grip. It was, it is often said, a defining turning point.

In December 1977 the MPLA organizes its First Ordinary Congress and becomes the MPLA/PT. Less than a couple of months later a constitutional revision[33] enshrines the "construction of the Socialist Society" as a fundamental principle of the Popular Republic. As a Marxist-Leninist party, the MPLA/PT was no longer simply the representative of the Angolan People, but the "vanguard of the working class". At the economic level, the Congress had been clear in proclaiming socialism as the only road to development and the renewed Constitution Law left no room for ambiguity in relation to how the country's prosperity was to be achieved. Social and economic development, it was now unequivocally established, would be "guaranteed through centralized planning and direction." The role of the state was to be further reinforced and so was that of the party.

Once again, analysts and pundits tend to agree on what these transformations meant for Angola's political economy.[34] The purge was accompanied by a sharp increase in administrative centralization and the consolidation of power at the top of a much more authoritarian and hierarchical governing structure. At the center of it all was an exclusionary and monolithic organization that only mendaciously could call itself the vanguard of the working class, a party where all key decision-making was even more firmly placed in the hands of very few. The power of the military elite was strengthened. Presidential powers were reinforced and Neto rose further as the dominant authority in both state and party affairs. Angolan patrimonialism, it is said in the literature, became both more elitist and increasingly presidentialist.

In what concerns the country's economic management, the focus of most scholarship lies on the reinforcement of its Soviet underpinnings. Even if no one anticipated an easy and ideologically pure road to socialism, the prevailing economic system was further solidified. State ownership of

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[33] The Constitutional Law was officially altered in February 1978. See *Lei Constitucional* of February 7, 1978. The first two quotations in this paragraph are from article 2. The excerpt on the confirmation of central planning as the means to achieve development is from article 41. The official adoption of Marxism-Leninism had happened at a Central Committee meeting in October 1976. In a subsequent declaration by the Political Bureau it was said: "to defend and advance the Revolution, we must analyze and characterize the different phases and stages of our struggle, and clearly define socialism as the highest aim of our Revolution. We must arm all militants with the doctrine of scientific-socialism: Marxism-Leninism." In Somerville, *Angola*, 49-50.

[34] Most of the authors mentioned above extend their analyses toward this period. See Ennes Ferreira, *A Indústria em Tempo de Guerra*, 22-45, 189-207, 253-259 and 353-372; Hodges, *Angola,* 9 and 50-51; Messiant, "The Mutation of Hegemonic Domination," 96 and "Angola, le Voies de l'Ethnisation et de la Décomposition. I. De la Guerre à la Paix (1975-1991)," 53-55; Soares de Oliveira, "Business Success, Angola-Style," 597-598; Somerville, *Angola*, 83-94 and 136-140; Vidal, "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa," 153-253, "The Angolan Regime and the Move to Multiparty Politics," 129-131 and "A Génese da Economia do Petróleo e dos 'Esquemas' Impeditivos do Desenvolvimento," 12-39; and Tvedten, *Angola,* 71-72. See also Ogundadejo, "Angola," 258-259.

the means of production was extended beyond abandoned capital assets, while central planning and non-market methods became the fundamental instruments of development strategy. Even if the executive was not closing the economy to private initiative and foreign investment, the goals of the Plan were now the undisputed doctrine of a growing public sector. Its initial aim was to reach the production levels of 1973. But what this and subsequent goals managed to reveal was the capricious and illusory intentions of those in charge. Virtually all analysts of the Angolan economy now say it in unison: economic policy was inadequate and incoherent. The targets, policies and efforts of the command economy, they generally point out, were little more than figments of the regime's imagination. The consequences of its suicidal practices, it is claimed without surprise or bewilderment, were disastrous and calamitous. All economic sectors were severely affected. The one infamous and crucial exception was the oil industry.

Building Socialism: War and Political Restructuring in the early 1980s

Agostinho Neto died in Moscow on September 10th, 1979. By then the rectification campaign had achieved substantial results. While the painstaking selection of cadres was far from over, the reorganization crusade had already succeeded in consolidating both party and state structures. With the MPLA/PT transformed into a much smaller and cohesive organization than the MPLA had ever been, the transition following Neto's death was unsurprisingly smooth and uneventful. On September 20th the Central Committee appointed José Eduardo dos Santos to lead the destinies of the party and on the following day he took office as President of the Republic in a simple but solemn ceremony held in Luanda.[35] In his brief inaugural speech dos Santos adamantly pledged to pursue his predecessor's prescient ambition of "building a socialist society based on Marxist-Leninist principles," but it was as Commander-in-Chief of FAPLA that he faced the first major challenges in his new role.

While the conflict with UNITA and South Africa was never close to being settled, as dos Santos took over the internationalized civil war was re-escalating quite drastically.[36] When Pretoria's so-called "total strategy" to destabilize and weaken communist forces in the region came into being, South Africa's incursions in Angola were no longer mere preemptive strikes on SWAPO camps. Conventional attacks took place alongside special operations in what became a sustained and deliberate attempt to damage vital economic infrastructure and undermine the MPLA/PT. From 1981 to 1985 the SADF actually occupied most of the southern province of Cunene. But this was not all. This new strategy also included installing Jonas Savimbi in power. With such massive backup and a much larger and diversified support package, UNITA was able to significantly increase military operations during the first half of the 1980s and spread the territorial reach of its troops to the northern provinces. The Angolan government was at loss. In his first years in power, dos Santos was unable to build an effective defense strategy and resorted to little more than diplomatic maneuvering to try to bring down UNITA and push South Africa out of Angola. Its successes, however, were very limited. It was only after Cuba and the Soviet Union reinforced their military support that FAPLA was able to show enough resistance to force

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[35] Footage of dos Santos inauguration is available on MPLA's YouTube Chanel. For more on the consequences of the rectification campaign before and during the first years of dos Santos presidency, see: Somerville, *Angola*, 94-98 and Vidal "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa," 272-277.

[36] On the military situation during the early-1980s see, especially: James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola*, 149-161 and 200-209; Minter, *Apartheid's Contras*, 37-44; and Weigert, *Angola*, 72-83. See also Birmingham, *Portugal and Africa*, 155-156; Hodges, *Angola*, 10; Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers,* 2007: 39-41; and Somerville, *Angola*, 63-68.

South Africa to the negotiating table. In the beginning of 1984 there was a failed attempt to implement a ceasefire, but by the end of the year the internal military conflict had actually widen.

It is particularly important to take note of this surge in military activity since its repercussions for political-economic practice and the structure of decision-making at the highest levels of governance were very significant. Scholars, journalists and political analysts explain how.[37] If Neto had reinforced presidential controls as a means to defeat internal factionalism, dos Santos aggravated the tendency to concentrate power and centralize decision-making behind the smokescreen of the war. Its re-escalation provided opportunity to build an institutional network that would strengthen his ability to rule unrestrictedly as well as bolster the role of the military in economic, political and judicial affairs. What perhaps represented the most indelible manifestation of this was a series of legal and constitutional adjustments to the formal apparatus of government with indubitable political and economic relevance.

Some took place in 1980, soon after dos Santos came into office. In April, the President's Cabinet was given greater control over foreign economic affairs and was from then on responsible for "establishing, maintaining and developing contacts with both public and private foreign entities."[38] In September, the Constitution was revised and amended to replace the Council of the Revolution by the People's Assembly as "the supreme organ of State power." Five years after independence the Angolan People was (under the supporting guidance of the MPLA/PT) professedly in control of the state, its actions and the construction of the Socialist Society. But even if all public authorities were to be subordinate to the new parliament, the President of the Republic was its Chair and the main responsible for convening its meetings. Furthermore, while the nationwide assembly was entrusted with multiple powers and duties, ordinary plenary meetings were to happen no more than twice a year. In the meantime the President headed a much smaller and judiciously selected Permanent Commission to carry out its functions. A couple of years after the People's Assembly was constituted, this commission signed off a second phase of legal adjustments to the formal architecture of governance that began at a 1982 Central Committee meeting where the President was granted special emergency powers, continued with the creation of the Regional Military Councils in mid-1983 and finished off a couple of months later with the establishment of the Council for Defense and Security.[39]

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[37] While the analysis in this and the following paragraphs owes much to Vidal ("Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa," 272-398, "The Angolan Regime and the Move to Multiparty Politics," 132-138) other authors have identified similar trends in the political system. See, for example: Hodges, *Angola*, 52-53; Christine Messiant, "The Eduardo dos Santos Foundation: Or, how Angola's Regime is Taking Over Civil Society," *African Affairs* 100, 2001: 287-309, 290, "Angola, le Voies de l'Ethnisation et de la Décomposition. I. De la Guerre à la Paix (1975-1991)," 55-57 and "De la Guerre d'Indépendance à la Guerre Civile et Régionale 1974-1999.," 183-184; and Somerville, *Angola*, 109-122.

[38] *Decreto nº* 25-A/80 of April 1, 1980 approved a new organizational structure for the President's cabinet, including new competences. The quote in this sentence is taken out of article 1. The constitutional amendments analyzed in the remainder of the paragraph – see *Lei Constitucional* of September 23, 1980 – modified the whole section concerned with the structure of the State (*Título III: Dos Órgãos de Estado*). The preface is particular instructive in what concerns the spirit of this revision: concerned with the profound social and economic transformations, the objective was to establish the basis for the organization of the state at the level of the political and juridical superstructure. See, especially, articles 41, 42 and 50.

[39] The Regional Military Councils were created by *Lei nº* 5/83 of July 30, 1983. *Lei nº* 3/84 of January 26, 1984 establishes the Council for Defense and Security. The quotations in the following paragraph are all from the prefaces to both these laws. In the subsequent one, the duties and responsibilities of the Regional Military Councils can be found on articles 1 and 5 of *Lei nº* 5/83

With these new decision-making bodies set in place, an undeclared type of military government came to rule under direct control of the President. In fact, while their activities were ratified in law as "exceptional and transitional," their power was far-reaching. In this matter, it is worth retrieving some of the language utilized to validate them. Even if the ongoing "march towards peace, progress and Socialism" was "unstoppable and irreversible" and "National Reconstruction" was advancing with the support of an "unbreakable popular will," it was stated in the preamble to the law establishing the Regional Military Councils, the aggressive actions of imperialism and its puppets were "essentially targeted at paralyzing [the] Revolutionary process." However, the law creating the Council for Defense and Security began valiantly, "History shows unequivocally that the Revolution triumphs in so far as it knows how to defend itself". That is why official bodies with powers to act swiftly were needed, because it was imperative to guarantee that "the State and the structures regulating economic and social activity" were able "to find appropriate responses to the enemy's attacks."

The Regional Military Councils were to assume control over political, military, economic and social affairs within their respective jurisdictions. The Council for Defense and Security would take over (and extend) the authority of the Council of Ministers in weekly meetings between its sessions. The first were subordinate to the second and both their members and territorial boundaries were to be appointed and defined by the President of the Republic. The President also headed the small group of top government officials comprising the Council for Defense and Security. Its specific responsibilities were all-encompassing and included the mobilization of resources according to the needs of national security as well as those of the country's economy, the coordination of economic development and management initiatives, and the control over all financial dealings with the outside world.

While formal and legalistic, these structural transformations at the top of the state apparatus attest for the ways in which, throughout the first half of the 1980s, Angola's official political system was significantly tightened up around the President and almost entirely shielded away from society. Analysts have been unequivocal in depicting it.[40] In a couple of years dos Santos and his restricted entourage ruled over the most relevant political arenas. In doing so, they came to be in charge of all of the significant venues of decision-making within the state while guaranteeing monopoly control of whichever significant sources of income were available. In the meantime the already selective and restrictive party became more acutely subservient to the presidency, and any remaining interdependence between state rulers and popular masses disintegrated swiftly. Social and political fragmentation rose at similar pace. By the mid-1980s Angolan patrimonialism, it is said in the jargon of political science, had become unquestionably presidentialist.

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while the authority of the Council for Defense and Security is specified in article 1 of *Lei n° 3/84* as well as *Decreto n° 6/84* of April 3, 1984, regulating its functioning. On its competences and responsibilities see article 4 of *Lei n° 3/84.*

[40] Like above, while Vidal – see "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa," 272-398, "The Angolan Regime and the Move to Multiparty Politics," 132-138 – stands out as particularly plainspoken in this respect, others described comparable or analogous tendencies. See, especially, Hodges, *Angola*, 54; Messiant, "The Eduardo dos Santos Foundation," 290, "Angola, le Voies de l'Ethnisation et de la Décomposition. I. De la Guerre à la Paix (1975-1991)," 55-57 and "De la Guerre d'Indépendance à la Guerre Civile et Régionale 1974-1999.," 183-184.

With respect to social and economic activity and macroeconomic performance, the first half of the 1980s is commonly portrayed in equally dismal terms.[41] The consequences of the resurgent war are said to have been tremendous. Major reallocation of resources and rising discretionary expenditures for defense purposes were direct effects of the military counter-offensive effort. Food shortages, transport disruptions and massive urban migration were usually described as some of its most devastating repercussions. Faced with continuous economic deterioration and widespread social decline, dos Santos and the MPLA/PT were always ready to blame UNITA and South Africa for obstructing the development process. Imperialist forces, we have seen in a clear-cut illustration above, were recurrently accused of stalling national reconstruction and hindering social and economic progress. But what most critical analyses of Angola's economic history tend to argue is that whilst the internationalized civil conflict constrained productive activity quite significantly, it did not determine its sharp and unrelenting decline. What instead seems to have played a defining role in generating and reproducing the social and economic crisis was the regime's unflinching confidence in the merits of the command economy.

In fact, analysts and pundits emphasize, there was during this period an explicit reinforcement of central planning and non-market methods as the principal means for organizing economic life. Despite its persistent inability to instigate growth (or at least prevent major economic debacles), the National Plan and its policies prevailed as the only way to promote social and economic development. After failing to reach its initial goal of restoring the production volumes of 1973, the emphasis throughout the first half of the 1980s would be on import substitution. Its numerous shortcomings, however, remained unchanged. As the economists would later put it, the unrealistic aims of the Plan continued to couple with the inconsistencies of its multiple policies in condemning the command economy to dramatic failure. The levels of disruption in the agricultural and industrial sectors were tremendously high and domestic production reached historically low levels. Similar to what had happened since the first years of independent rule, oil remained the vital exception to a general rule of persistent decline. In fact, crude oil production rose steadily after 1982 and its relative importance to the Angolan economy soared significantly during the first half of the 1980s. But while its proceeds became the lifeline of an urban economy increasingly dependent on imports, they were not sufficient to prevent the gap between government revenues and its expenditures from widening substantially due to the continuous drop in oil prices that took place during that same period. The money supply grew rapidly and inflation followed suit. It was, the economists have described in multiple different ways, a period of uncertainty and severe macro-economic disequilibria.

"O Futuro em Construção" – Odebrecht finds its Way to Capanda

We now have a better understanding of the circumstances framing Odebrecht's arrival in Angola. While the 1980s economic crisis in Brazil and Latin America has certainly also played a significant role in shaping decisions and actions to cross the south Atlantic, the depiction made so far hints at the extent to which the company's journey intersects with the history of political and economic transformations the African country went through during the first decade of independent rule. More than just the background, the war contributed for creating obstacles and opportunities under which this journey took place. The rapidly rising prominence of crude oil as

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[41] See, especially, Ennes Ferreira, *A Indústria em Tempo de Guerra*, 45-77, 89-102, 211-215, 261-291 and 372-400; Hodges, *Angola,* 103-109; Somerville, *Angola*, 131-151; and Tvendten, *Angola*, 72-73.

both the site of economic opportunity and the means for political agency also played a crucial role in determining its conditions of possibility. More specifically for our purposes in this chapter, the enactment of a new political order during the first couple of years of dos Santos tenure in power seems to have been of particular importance for Odebrecht's arrival in Angola.

We can really only speculate about the intricacies of the negotiation processes, but the fact is that it was during the second adjustment period in the formal architecture of governance described above that some of the most crucial agreements for the Capanda contract were finally completed. Both the oil-collaterized credit line to finance imports for the project and the countertrade agreements permitting Brazilian companies to be paid back via crude oil shipments from Sonangol to Petrobras were finalized after the establishment of the Regional Military Councils and just before the formal creation of the Council for Defense and Security. Is it a mere coincidence? Perhaps. But if any doubts persist as to the constituent powers of this new political order or the specific impact of its very core in creating institutional conditions for the construction of the Capanda dam, it might be sufficient to reiterate what has been alluded to above already. Both the agreements just mentioned and all other technical and financial arrangements established for the contract were legally sanctioned and confirmed in a decree issued by no less than the Council for Defense and Security.[42] But what perhaps is a most expressive illustration of its statutory vigor and the ways in which such drive impacted Odebrecht's arrival in Angola is the regime of exception that was established in that same decree.

With a clear mandate on economic affairs, the Council for Defense and Security considered the construction of the Capanda dam to be of "strategic importance and priority for the development of the country". So much so that it deemed necessary to suspend both legal and fiscal orders. The exclusive import channels that had already been established or the insulated financial arrangements that made all of this possible in the first place were seemingly not enough. Avowedly looking to ensure the successful completion of the project, dos Santos and his restricted entourage created a "special statute" for every company, agency or professional involved in it. Not only were all of their activities exempt from any taxes, fees or other government charges (despite the fact that the Constitution in force placed the strictest of restrictions on fiscal privileges of any sort),[43] Odebrecht and everyone else working in the Capanda project were also provided with enough legal and bureaucratic facilities to virtually circumvent the administrative and economic debacle that the country was notoriously experiencing.

It was then by carefully sidestepping the widely recognized mayhem that Odebrecht made its way to Angola. By the end of 1984, Capanda was rising to become its top priority and in January 1985 the first technical delegation arrived in Luanda. Everyone at Odebrecht seems to have been

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[42] I am referring here to the above-mentioned *Decreto nº* 26/84 of December 1, 1984 to which "Special Statute for the Capanda project" was appended.

[43] Article 12 of the Constitutional Law in force at the time – the *Lei Constitucional* of February 7, 1978 – was very clear about it. "The fiscal system," it determined, "will be guided by the principle of progressive taxation, not being allowed fiscal privileges of any sort." Note the contrast with the provision on the 1991/1992 Constitution analyzed below, where article 14 establishes not only that "the fiscal system shall aim at meeting the economic, social and administrative needs of the State and ensuring the fair distribution of income and wealth," but also that "taxes may he created or abolished only by law, which shall determine applicability, rates, tax benefits and guarantees for taxpayers." See *Lei nº* 12/91 of May 6, 1991.

ready for all that an adventure in Africa entails, but the "pioneers that left Brazil to build a dam in a region full of exuberant nature" would mostly stay in the capital during the following couple of years.[44] Before getting to Capanda it was necessary to create infrastructural and logistical conditions for an operation that, due to its high dependence on imports, was to be almost entirely funneled through the capital. The company also needed to organize its in-country workforce, both by hiring and training local workers and by bringing its own staff from Brazil. In addition to constructing both the project's logistical facilities and GAMEK's headquarters, an important part of Odebrecht's responsibilities during those first few years in Luanda was to build a small hospital to service the project and suitable accommodation for the growing contingent of expats and their families. One of the earliest outcomes of Odebrecht's presence in Angola materialized in mid-1986. More than two hundred prefabricated houses (and a school) brought in from Brazil were assembled together in the south of Luanda to constitute the first phase of the residential complex that later came to be known as *Vila do Gamek*.

With the Luanda base getting in place, "mobilization towards the hinterlands" began in October 1986.[45] Setting up a delegation in Malanje, Odebrecht was finally getting closer, but the projected location for the dam was still about 100Km away. Nonetheless, while it would take the company another one and a half years to completely pave its way to Capanda, the construction site was inaugurated, even if with minimal infrastructure, in February 1987. "We drank water directly from the Kwanza River," recalled the contract manager at the time in the pages of *Odebrecht Informa*. Perhaps more encumbering, during that initial phase in the midst of "exuberant nature" it took one entire day to drive from the construction site to the nearest town and the crew had to be helicoptered in together with all its imported provisions. But that was not all, some of the "pioneers" would later convey in celebratory retrospect. As if the lack of infrastructure was not enough, the "500 Men" team had to endure even more severe problems. "We suffered attacks from UNITA and there was the risk of minefields", remembered one of those men. In addition to the prevalence of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, he continued, "we were also attacked by African bees."

"It was a difficult period", the contract manager at the time explained.[46] The "serious internal conflicts" were a tremendous obstacle to the progress of Odebrecht's civil works and a robust shielding apparatus had to be put in place. An army unit guarded the building site. In order to bring in machinery or construction materials a military column with more than 150 soldiers had to open the way for the 20 or 30 trucks coming from Luanda. Whenever this could not provide

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[44] Odebrecht's activities and self-proclaimed accomplishments in Angola are well described in its own publications. The quotation in this sentence, like the section's heading is taken from a book published to celebrate the company's 25th year in the country – see Odebrecht Angola, *O Futuro em Construção* – the remainder of this section draws from the texts in it as well as multiple *Odebrecht Informa* articles, namely: "Capanda: Uma Oportunidade de Desenvolvimento para Angolanos e Brasileiros," *Odebrecht Informa* 38, 8-9, June 1986; "Capanda: A Cooperação de Angolanos, Brasileiros e Soviéticos," *Odebrecht Informa* 39, 14-17, November 1987; "Projeto Capanda e o Desenvolvimento de Angola," *Odebrecht Informa* 43, 2-6, June 1989; "A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, 22-30, January/February 1994; "Vitória da Persistência," *Odebrecht Informa* 106, 44-53, October/December 2002; "Um Líder Que Não Para de Se Desafiar," *Odebrecht Informa* 130, May/June 2007; "É no Desafio que se Creche: Entrevista com Paulo Lacerda," *Odebrecht Informa* 135, March/April 2008.

[45] All quotations in this paragraph are extracted from "Vitória da Persistência," *Odebrecht Informa* 106, 44-53, October/December 2002, 47. See also "Projeto Capanda e o Desenvolvimento de Angola," *Odebrecht Informa* 43, 2-6, June 1989.

[46] The quotations are taken from "A Organização Global," *Odebrecht Informa* 61, 22-30, January/February 1994, 24. See also "Vitória da Persistência," *Odebrecht Informa* 106, 44-53, October/December 2002; and "É no Desafio que se Creche: Entrevista com Paulo Lacerda," *Odebrecht Informa* 135, March/April 2008.

sufficient protection, or on any other occasion deemed necessary, materials and equipment were flown in together with people and food supplies. The 2Km runway next to the building site was one of the first components to be completed by Odebrecht in Capanda.

These difficulties run deep in Odebrecht's imagination of its more than "25 years alliance" with the Angolan Government.[47] Recalling the predicaments and hardships of their arrival, Emílio Odebrecht stresses that the country was at the time living through years of great instability and war. Persistent shortfalls and insufficiencies of every sort, he asserts, were ubiquitous. The company, nonetheless, persevered. Despite the ominous conflict, Odebrecht stood united and firm against multiple difficulties and all kinds of limitations. According to its in-country founding mythology, it took its managers and workforce great courage and dedication to be able "to carry out building works against a backdrop of great complexity," in an effort that not only contributed decisively to address Luanda's energy needs but was also "important for the development of Angola in a broader sense."

But this is not the whole story. Not only did Odebrecht's response to adversity during those first years in Angola occur in the particularly tailored context described so far, below we will see how the company and its managers were also able to capitalize on the wider transformations the country was going through whilst settling in. It took more than what Emílio Odebrecht described as an "entrepreneurial culture" that values risk and uncertainty as means to promote commitment and creativity, for the company to succeed in establishing its roots in Angola. It took the creation of a selective political order. It took a variety of material and institutional seclusions. And it took as well a range of socio-political and economic changes. For it were the transformations the country went through during the late 1980s and well into the 1990s that provided the conditions for the particular social and institutional arrangements which would allow the company to settle in. Just as the specific ways in which Odebrecht chose to expand its operations shaped decisively the political and economic trajectories that we now turn to again.

Staging Capitalism: Conflict and Economic Transition between 1985 and 1992

Odebrecht settled in Luanda during a period of great significance in Angolan history. There are many dimensions to such momentousness, but the intensification of the civil war typically transpires in historical portrayals as one of the most conspicuous.[48] 1985 and 1986 were in fact years of escalating conflict. Coinciding with the beginning of the final stretch of the Cold War, it was also a phase of growing international involvement in what had never been a strictly domestic conflict. In May 1985 a South African commando unit was caught by FAPLA troops in the middle of a sabotage mission to blow up Chevron's complex in Cabinda, an undertaking that had been designed as a major propaganda exercise on behalf of UNITA. This led to tensions between Washington and Pretoria but it did not stop the US Congress from repealing the 1975 ban on covert intervention in Angola less than a month after the failed attack. In spite of the fact that support for anti-apartheid sanctions was gathering steam amongst Washington lawmakers, both

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[47] This paragraph draws mostly from Odebrecht Angola, *O Futuro em Construção*. In addition to the introduction mentioned above, the volume includes texts by Emílio Odebrecht (*25 Anos de Aliança*, or 25 Years of Alliance) and José Eduardo dos Santos (*Laços de Confiança*, or Bonds of Trust).

[48] On the military situation during this period see, especially: James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola*, 161-170 and 210-211; Minter, *Apartheid's Contras*, 45-47; and Weigert, *Angola*, 83-86. See also Birmingham, "Angola," 166-170; Brittain, *Death of Dignity*, 20-33; Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers*, 41-44; and Hodges, *Angola*, 10-11.

UNITA and South Africa continued to be perceived by most as fundamental pieces in the ongoing ideological battle against Cuba and the Soviet Union. From such standpoint, the MPLA/PT government posed a threat to be neutralized and within months the newly reelected Reagan administration was granting new covert aid to the Angolan rebels. While this was at first fairly negligible in comparison with South African, Cuban or Soviet involvement in the civil war, it seems to have had considerable repercussions for what commentators have described as an intensifying war of ideology. On the one hand it encouraged a more aggressive stance by the SADF. From 1985 onwards South Africa responded directly to offensives made against UNITA and engaged in much larger conventional battles inside Angola. On the other it led to the reinforcement of FAPLA by the Soviet Union and the consolidation of Cuban military presence in the country. After years of a less than effective defense against the guerrilla warfare, the MPLA/PT was now mounting sizable attacks in the southeast.

But this is not the only reason why Angola is said to have undergone important transformations by the time Odebrecht was getting ready to go to Capanda. In fact, that which was indeed a blatant intensification of warfare along geopolitical alignments falls somewhat short of intuitive logic when considering certain shifts taking place within the MPLA/PT at the time. For in 1985 the country was also about to enter a period of important political and economic adjustments. In this respect, two key party events took place in that very same year, two meetings held under the general thrust of a deep-seated and continuing commitment to socialism but during which voices calling for a shift away from central planning began to be raised. According to the history now told by the MPLA, the "fundamental principles" upon which the ensuing economic reforms would be built on were inscribed into the political landscape during its National Conference in January and officially adopted by the party's Second Ordinary Congress in December.[49] Most economic commentators, however, are ready to point out that the measures then taken amounted to little more than statements of intent. While the loathed idea of "economic stabilization" was publicly endorsed for the first time, any reorientation in economic policy was to take place within the framework of the centrally planned economy or as a means to reinforce the socialist management system. The role of the Plan, those same economists say, was not yet under real scrutiny. Nevertheless, from a strictly political perspective, the Second Congress also saw some critical changes at the very top of the party's command structure. Most notably, the political analysts stress out, there was a tendency to replace an older, pro-planning and resolutely anti-capitalist generation by a group of younger cadres that regarded Washington and Western economic institutions with much less contempt.

With the economy on the brink of collapse due to the continued rise of imports to feed the burgeoning war effort and an even steeper fall in oil prices throughout 1985 and 1986, the restoration of macroeconomic stability was more firmly brought forward as a fundamental goal of economic policy in the years following the Second Congress. Most prominently in this respect SEF, or the *Programa de Saneamento Económico e Financeiro,* was launched in August 1987. Largely drawn upon the monetarist paradigm underpinning the Structural Adjustment wave

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[49] On these key events see: Somerville, *Angola*, 103-106; Ennes Ferreira, *A Indústria em Tempo de Guerra*, 77-88 and 216-218; and the MPLA's own take on them at their website. For the analysis of the subsequent economic reforms, especially: Ennes Ferreira, *A Indústria em Tempo de Guerra*, 105-154, 222-239, 292-309 and 403-449; Hodges, *Angola*, 109-116; and Tvendten, *Angola*, 74-75. On the political implications of these transformations see: Brittain, *Death of Dignity*, 26 and Vidal, "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa," 296-303. See also António Tomás, "Refracted Governmentality: Space, Politics and Social Structure in Contemporary Luanda" (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2012), 161-171.

sweeping much of the Global South at the time, this recovery program has been generally characterized by analysts and pundits as yet another failed attempt to instigate some sort of meaningful transformation in the Angolan economy. In their view the program was a fairly comprehensive reform package primarily designed to reduce the role of central planning and initiate the transition to a market-based economic system, but which in practice led to slow, cautious or very little change beyond laying some legislative groundwork for later privatization measures. What undoubtedly was a much more salient development in 1987 was the further escalation of the war.

Following a relatively lull period throughout most of 1986, in 1987 Angola went through the most ferociously fought battles in the history of the conflict up until then. During the first half of the year, while the United States established a Zaire-based supply pipeline to help UNITA spread away from its traditional areas of support towards the north of the country, South Africa improved significantly its military infrastructure in northern Namibia in order to respond to rising FAPLA offensives against UNITA in the southeast as well as prepare for the major showdown that would follow.[50] On the government's side, the Soviet Union extended its ongoing support to the MPLA/PT while Cuba brought in several thousands more troops to counter South Africa's increasingly aggressive posture. From July onwards and into the first months of 1988, some of the fiercest conventional battles ever fought in African soil took place in the Lomba River and especially Cuito Cuanavale. By the end of these, the war with South Africa started winding down and a long period of negotiations began. After many meetings and agreements, the talks culminated in the New York Accords of December 1988. Signed between Angola, Cuba and South Africa these established a plan for the independence of Namibia and the withdrawal of FAR from Angola. What they did not in any way do was to temper the conflict between the MPLA/PT and UNITA. In June 1989 a ceasefire was agreed upon in Gabdolite, only to be undone days after it began.

In the meantime, the non-oil economy remained in shambles and a different recovery program, the *Programa de Recuperação Económica*, was brought forward in the beginning of 1989. The new reform package followed the general thrust of its predecessor and like SEF translated into very few tangible actions. In fact, Angola's admission to the IMF and the World Bank in September, despite objections and a negative vote by the United States, was for economic analysts a considerably more relevant event. It was not until August 1990 that a much more emphatic attempt to restore macroeconomic stability and introduce liberalization reforms effectively took form. Employing the procedures of shock therapy, the *Programa de Acção do Governo* began with a currency changeover and carried forward with devaluation measures. It also included the full monetization of wages, a partial dismantlement of the price setting system and the privatization of state enterprises. But if these actions might have represented an increased commitment towards market reforms, the program stood short of what was initially expected. Most notably, economic analysts and the World Bank itself have pointed out, budgetary policy was manifestly insufficient. Just as inflationary tendencies persisted, the fiscal deficit continued to increase. Similar to the ongoing stalemate at the military level, the economic crisis would remain virtually unaltered by yet another round of reforms.

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[50] On this see, especially, James III, *A Political History of the Civil War in Angola*, 171-180 and 211-219; Brittain, *Death of Dignity*, 34-43; Minter, *Apartheid's Contras*, 47-50; and Weigert, *Angola*, 86-99.

What undoubtedly was changing at a much higher pace was the external context. When in December 1990 the MPLA/PT gathered for its Third Ordinary Congress, the geopolitical landscape upon which the political economy of Angola unfolded in the 1980s was undergoing important transformations. Not only was Namibia finally independent, the negotiations to end apartheid in South Africa were in already progress. Much further away from Luanda but nonetheless of crucial significance to what was happening in Angola, socialism was collapsing in Eastern Europe and the Cold War was winding down at the rhythm of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In addition to this, after many months of unrestrained belligerence following the Gbadolite fiasco in June of the previous year, negotiations with UNITA had resumed in April. While the hostilities persisted, the prospects for peace seemed ever more encouraging. It was in this context that the Congress officially endorsed the establishment of a multiparty democracy in Angola and adopted "Democratic Socialism as the Party's strategic objective."[51] The days of central planning were almost over.

The months following the Congress, the first few of 1991, were rife with what are normally portrayed as events of utmost relevance for the political economy of Angola. In March UNITA proclaims itself as a political party in its own Congress. In the following month, the MPLA/PT convenes again in an Extraordinary Congress, where it officially abandons its Marxist-Leninist credentials and confirms the market economy into its own array of aspirations for the country. This comes with the loss of the PT addendum, as the MPLA/PT becomes again the MPLA. The following significant development in Angolan historiography is the revision of the Constitutional Law that took place in the beginning of May.[52] The Republic was still Popular, but its fundamental objective was now to ensure "the construction of a free and democratic society" while promoting "peace, justice and social progress." No one party was to singlehandedly provide guidance to the Nation and the Angolan people would now "exercise political power through universal suffrage to choose their representatives, by means of referendums and other forms of democratic participation in national life." In addition to this, the "socialist property" of the previous Constitutional Law would cease to be the foundation for the national economy and the State would no longer "guide and plan" it but simply "guide [its] development" by "encouraging participation in the economic process of all agents and forms of property, creating conditions for them to function efficiently." And finally, a couple of weeks after the constitutional revisions were published, the Bicesse Peace Accords were signed.[53] This included a ceasefire agreement, paving the way for a period of truce between MPLA and UNITA, and a protocol laying the framework for the electoral process. Angolans would vote to elect both their legislative representatives at what would later be renamed the National Assembly and the President of the Republic on September 1992.

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[51] In *Resolução Geral do III Congresso do MPLA/PT*, cited in Ennes Ferreira, *A Indústria em Tempo de Guerra*, 147.

[52] The Constitutional Law was officially revised in May 1991, when *Lei nº* 12/91 of May 6, 1991 was published, but suffered further amendments, including dropping the designation of "popular" in the official name of the country as well as in the title of the parliament, after a second revision in September 1992, when *Lei nº* 23/92 of September 16, 1992, weeks before the elections. The following excerpts, maintained in both versions, are from articles 1, 3, 9 and 10.

[53] For more on the Bicesse Peace Accords see: Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers*, 148-164. See also Human Rights Watch, *Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War Since the 1992 Elections* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994).

"Diamantes no Coração da África" – Odebrecht Branches Out to Luzamba

It was in this context that Odebrecht began its diversification and expansion campaign in Angola. In a retrospective interview to *Odebrecht Informa*, the country director at the time remembers how the Capanda Project was well on its way to completion when in the beginning of the 1990s the aura of peace and democracy allowed his management team to think beyond it.[54] The Brazilian company, as we have already seen, had crossed the Atlantic for much more than the dam. It had come to Angola willing to seek and seize new business opportunities and diamond mining was at that moment understood to be just the right challenge to take on. The sector had gone through ups and downs after independence, but was expanding steadily since the mid-1980s and saw further developments in the beginning of the 1990s.

Two important diamond-prospecting projects fell under Odebrecht's wing during this period. One was for the exploration of kimberlite pipes in the province of Lunda Sul. First discovered during the last decade of colonial rule, the Catoca mining fields had been under Soviet technical jurisdiction since 1980 but it was not until 1990 that a full-on feasibility study was provided to Endiama.[55] This was reviewed throughout 1991 and in April, not more than a couple of weeks before the basic principles of the market economy were enshrined in the Constitutional Law, Odebrecht was brought in to negotiate a three-party partnership that could enhance the viability of the project. But while this would take some more years to materialize, Endiama signed off another Odebrecht project in that very same month. Located in Lunda Norte, that which effectively became Odebrecht's first mining project in Angola immediately turned into one of the most prominent in the burgeoning sector. With a significantly longer time span than all other agreements that Endiama had made with foreign companies up until then, the Luzamba Project was expected to generate revenues of more than 1.3 billion dollars during the seven and a half years of its contracted duration. This was quite significant. As Forbes magazine put it rather succinctly on a 1993 profile piece on Emílio Odebrecht, while Capanda was going to supply electricity to Luanda, Luzamba would be "supplying the capital with capital."[56]

One additional aspect that made the Luzamba Project stand out from other initiatives at the time concerned the ways in which, in the words of the project manager, "diamonds themselves were used to guarantee its feasibility." This seems to have been a particularly far-reaching device. Building on the portfolio of financial circumventions upon which the Capanda Project had been made possible, Odebrecht and Endiama found in it the means necessary to revive and expand mining operations along the Cuango River valley despite the economic turmoil the country was experiencing. By bringing diamond-trading companies and financial agents into the contract negotiations, they were able to raise the capital necessary for developing the infrastructure

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[54] This interview was published as "É no Desafio que se Creche: Entrevista com Paulo Lacerda," *Odebrecht Informa* 135, March/April 2008, but this section draws mostly on "Diamantes no Coração de África," *Odebrecht Informa* 49, 8-10, September/November 1991 and "Os Frutos Começam a Brilhar," *Odebrecht Informa* 53, 13-16, September/October 1992. See also Christian Dietrich, "Inventory of Formal Diamond Mining in Angola," in *Angola's War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds*, Eds. by Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich (Pretoria; Institute of Security Studies, 2000).

[55] Endiama is the *Empresa Nacional de Diamantes de Angola*, or the National Diamond Company of Angola. The Soviet mining company first responsible for Catoca was Iakutalmaz, but this was in 1992 incorporated in what is now Alrosa. For more on the history of the Catoca Mining Society see its website.

[56] See Joel Millman, "You have to be an optimist," *Forbes*, May 24, 1993.

required for such mining operations in exchange for the opportunity to purchase the stones that were to be extracted.

Everyone seemed pleased with what had been achieved. Talking to *Odebrecht Informa* for their first article after the deal was closed, the Chairman of the Board of Directors at Endiama boasted proudly that "Angola is the best guarantee for any foreign investor, a country that always knew how to and could meet its external commitments, even during periods of internal belligerency." For the Brazilian project manager, the particular characteristics of the Luzamba Project also meant that what Odebrecht had in hands "was not an engineering project in its pure sense." With its focus on the extraction of a specific product, he explains in the same article, it was more like an industrial undertaking. In fact, the inevitably laudatory article continued, the Luzamba Project relied on a financial model characteristic of the oil industry. Not only were "no loans from Brazil or any other countries" necessary, the fact that "all of the investments [were to be] paid exclusively in diamonds" provided a particularly strong assurance of its viability.

Promises, however, are not accomplishments and such confidence could not translate into actual diamonds without a complementary set of circumventions. Similar to what had been happening in Capanda, the seclusions that made the Luzamba Project possible were as assuredly corporeal as they were financial and institutional. While the mobilization of human and material resources towards Luzamba took less time to prepare, Odebrecht's second project in Angola was put in motion with many obstacles to surpass. But once again, the company seems to have not faltered at the prospect of adversity.

In an article published little more than a year after Odebrecht had began working in Luzamba, *Odebrecht Informa* celebrates the way in which the challenges of this new project had been overcome and its "fruits [had began] to shine." "Ten days," the article opens dramatically with a two-word sentence, "this was the time spent by the first 15 trucks carrying supplies to initiate the project to travel the 700Km between Luanda and Luzamba." After less than four months of intensive road works, however, the many supplies arriving to Luanda from every corner of the world would travel those same 700Km in no more than three days. And if urgency was needed, they could also be flown in. In fact, this account of how the company had began extracting diamonds from the Cuango River valley provides the impression that much of its efforts were directed at shortening the distance between Luzamba and the world. Of particular importance seems to have been the satellite communication system set up to remotely connect project facilities in Luzamba to offices in Luanda, Johannesburg and Rio de Janeiro and from those locations plug into global supplier networks and international markets for machinery and maintenance.

Under the contract signed with Endiama, Odebrecht would spend the first few months of the project developing infrastructure and creating conditions to bring workers in. Luzamba was a small town "virtually frozen in time" and much work was needed in order for it to be able to host the project facilities. According to what was initially planned, mining operations would actually not start until the ninth month. But not more than a couple of months into the project, Endiama started putting pressure on Odebrecht to accelerate the procedures and begin extracting diamonds. A provisional solution had to be found. For a limited period, managerial staff and workers would stay in trailers and military tents, while offices and warehouses would be set up in shipping containers. This, however, was a temporary arrangement. It could not be sustained in

the long run. Several thousand more workers were expected to eventually move in to the region and a much more solid foundation was imperative. A spatial development plan for Luzamba was deemed necessary. Or, as Lourenço Prado Valladares put it to me in one of our conversations, an entirely new mining town was needed.

That was how it all began, he told me with a nostalgic grin on his face. Looking for ideas on how to develop the town of Luzamba, Odebrecht invited him and his company to think about how they could meet their specific requirements. When he first visited, in 1991, their main concern was to find a solution that would take into account the exhaustibility of the diamond reserves and the fact that the mining operations would have to move along the river during the duration of the project. Flexibility was a key principle. Many were playing with the idea of a portable city. But Lourenço was not convinced. Instead he and his colleagues came up with what he proudly described to me as a "philosophical principle," a propositional foundation for the development of Luzamba based on the idea of sequential functions. Rather than moving the town along the river, he explained, they would plan for a type of settlement that could hold different activities throughout time. In 1992 he came back to Angola to present their proposal and in October, soon after the elections, Prado Valladares was granted a contract to implement it. It was a marvelous agreement, Lourenço admitted. Back in Bahia, everyone was very excited. And then, he said as he switched to a graver tone, the war came back. Both Capanda and Luzamba were invaded by UNITA and his contract vanished into the thick messiness of the Angolan strife.

"You Have to be an Optimist" – Odebrecht Retreats Back to Luanda

Emílio Odebrecht's 1993 profile on Forbes magazine starts in Angola.[57] The praising article goes on to describe his company's impressive growth and expansion in the preceding two decades, but it begins with his worries about "political events 4,000 miles across the Atlantic." He is said to have been thrilled when in the last days of September 1992 Angolans voted for the first time in their history. The internal conflict had finally come to an end with the Bicesse Accords and his company's in-country representatives had lived the period leading up to the elections with a considerable degree of optimism. In addition to the achievements of the Luzamba Project and the ongoing works in Capanda, the Catoca Mining Society had been constituted in the last days of September.[58] This must have been encouraging for Odebrecht. Despite the unabating tensions between MPLA and UNITA, the systematic violations of the peace agreement and the broad failure of the military demobilization plan, hopes and expectations during the campaign period seem to have been high amongst its managers.[59] Even the widely held belief that Jonas Savimbi was in a better position to win the presidency did not seem to prevent both them and their

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[57] Published in May 24 1993, the profile written by Joel Millman is entitled after a quote from Emílio Odebrecht. "You have to an optimist", he reportedly said during a conversation about his company's presence in Angola. See Joel Millman, "You have to be an optimist," *Forbes*, May 24, 1993.

[58] The *Sociedade Mineira da Catoca* is constituted through *Resolução nº* 10C/92, of September 9, 1992.

[59] For an overview on the campaign period and the demobilization plan see, for example: Britain, *Death of Dignity*, 44-57 and Karl Maier, *Angola: Promises and Lies* (London: Serif, 2007), 53-73. See also Human Rights Watch, *Angola*, 10-17. The ballot and the post-electoral period briefly depicted in the following paragraphs and the beginning of the next section are equally described on the pages of those publications: Britain, *Death of Dignity*, 58-79, Maier, *Angola*, 74-96 as well Human Rights Watch, *Angola* 18-23 and 65-89. For a critical analysis of this period, the failures of the peace processes and the reenactment of the war see Christine Messiant, "The Mutation of Hegemonic Domination: Multiparty Politics Without Democracy," in *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds by Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 93-123 and Alex Vines, "La Troisième Guerre Angolaise," *Politique Africaine* 57, 1995: 27-40.

superiors back in Brazil from thinking positively about the future of the company in Angola. Any outstanding elation, however, did not last long after the ballot.

The aura of warfare started creeping in as soon as the very first polling results were announced on government-controlled airwaves. Even if mostly based on constituencies around the capital, the predictions were clear and incisive. Both José Eduardo dos Santos and the MPLA would win by comfortable margins. This sounded improbable to many, but for UNITA and its officials, anything short of a definitive Savimbi win was way far from the anticipated outcome. They immediately condemned those first announcements as manipulating projections and Jonas Savimbi himself addressed the Angolan people on October 3rd. In a speech broadcasted by the Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel, or Radio Vorgan, he accused the MPLA of rigging the vote and guaranteed that his party was going to remain vigilant. Belligerent tensions rose up fast and hard throughout the country.

In less than a few days UNITA withdrew from the joint army and an arms depot was dynamited in Menongue. On October 8th Savimbi's troops took over a small municipality in Huíla and a week after another weapons depot exploded on the road south out of Luanda. When on the 17th the National Electoral Council announced the official results, UNITA was raiding Huambo. After a final reassessment of the votes and the sufficiently positive appraisal made by the UN Special Representative in charge of overseeing the electoral process, the outcome was clear. The MPLA had won a large majority in the National Assembly while dos Santos, who clinched just under fifty percent of the votes, would have to face Savimbi on a run-off to elect the President. But this second round never took place. The rebel forces continued to advance over vast expanses of territory and, on the last day of October, the conflict exploded beyond hope and doubt in intense street battles across Luanda. UNITA was driven out of the capital after three days of ferocious clashes but their grip over the rest of the country was everyday growing stronger and wider. Regardless of all efforts made to foster reconciliation, the war was back on in full force.

The consequences of such resurgence on Odebrecht's activities were tremendous.[60] UNITA troops moved into Luzamba before the end of October, forcing the Brazilian company to pull out its staff from the region without much warning or preparation. Capanda became under threat soon after and ended up being equally invaded in November. Managers on both sides of the Atlantic rushed and hustled to pull together a rescue operation to evacuate more than five thousand people from both projects. One of its top directors flew in from Brazil, arriving right in the middle of the Luanda battles to what he later described in a memoir as the most unnerving 24 hours of his life.[61] Emílio Odebrecht himself, the *Forbes* article said, "worked the phones in a furious effort to move his employees out of the war's way."[62] With at least five DC-10s leased by VARIG, two Brazilian Air Force C-130s and more than 300 flight hours to Brazil, Namibia and the Congo, the company was able to bring everyone to safety in less than 48 hours.

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[60] These were documented on *Odebrecht Informa*, issues 55 (1993), 130 (2007) and 135 (2008).

[61] See Renato Baiardi, *Vinte e Cinco Anos em Vinte e Quatro Horas* (Rio de Janeiro: Self-Published, 1997).

[62] See Joel Millman, "You have to be an optimist," *Forbes*, May 24, 1993.

This was, Emílio Odebrecht guaranteed a couple of months later on the first pages of *Odebrecht Informa*, "one of the most difficult moments" in his company's history.[63] While celebrating the success of the evacuation procedures, his editorial was sober. The defense of human life, he wrote earnestly, had been given "absolute priority." At the moment in which he was writing, in the early months of 1993, he and his company could only "hope for peace to resume soon." So that the Angolan people were able to safely take up again "the path of reconstruction and development;" a process, he concluded in atypically circumspect fashion, for which Odebrecht "[had] been contributing decisively" since 1984.

But if in this early 1993 editorial Emílio Odebrecht seemed to harbor some precautionary doubts in relation to his company's future prospects in Angola, it would not take long for him to loosen up. When in May he met with *Forbes* in São Paulo, his posture seems to have been crucially different. His assets were still in rebel hands but he was said to have been "taking the setback philosophically." Reportedly sighing to his interviewer, he is quoted as suggesting that "a man has to look far into the future to withstand the present." Such forward-looking optimism was fraught with what might have been unintentional, but was certainly not coincidental, prescience about Odebrecht's future in Angola. Soon after that interview, mere months after their precipitous departure, many of its in-country managers were back in Luanda and their *Vila do Gamek* houses.

Their return, of course, was not without purpose. Even if the war was going through a particularly devastating period, the kimberlite project in Lunda Sul picked up where it had been left off before the elections and the Catoca Mining Society managed to secure their mining concession rights in October 1993.[64] It would, however, take another two years for the first construction works to take place and seventeen more months after that for the mine to be inaugurated. In the same vein, Luzamba and Capanda would be out of Odebrecht's reach for some years to come.[65] But this was not a dead end for the Brazilian company. While the war kept dam and diamonds at bay, much of what seems have occupied its managers' imagination after returning to Angola was their own backyard. For much of the Luanda Sul Program gestated within the confines of their south of Luanda compound.

THE LUANDA SUL PROGRAM

The period following the elections was brutal. Revived as a so-called war of cities, the conflict is estimated to have caused more deaths in the two years until the Lusaka Protocol than in the sixteen that preceded the Bicesse Accords. Less than ten months into the new war, UNITA controlled more than two thirds of the country, including the second largest city and many strategic areas outside the capital. In Luanda, however, dos Santos and the MPLA were in full control shortly after the street scuffles of early November. Rapidly reinstated as a government stronghold and a relatively safe haven, the capital and its tremendous infrastructural challenges were brought forward to the public agenda in the months following the post-electoral debacle.

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[63] Editorial, *Odebrecht Informa* 55, 1, January/February 1993.

[64] *Resolução n° 8/93* of October 22, 1993 reiterates *Resolução n° 10C/92* of September 9, 1992 and adds a provision to approve the concession contract.

[65] Construction works in Capanda would not restart until 1997 and the Luzamba project was only revamped with the constitution of the *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento Mineiro*, the Mining Development Society, in August 1995. See *Decreto n° 22/95* of August 25, 1995. Also *"Integração na África Austral," Odebrecht Informa 70, 19-22, July/August 1995.*

But if such attentiveness towards urbanization issues had perhaps been made more incisive due to the increased rates of urban migration noticeable during the pre-electoral truce, the articulation of developmental ambitions in the realm of city making was nothing really new.

In fact, as the primary destination for thousands upon thousands of families looking for safety and livelihood opportunities since before independence, Luanda and its mounting predicaments had forcefully become a major preoccupation of Angolan policy makers for quite some time at that point. Watchful witnesses to continuous and exponential population growth over the years, local planners and urbanists had long acknowledged that the constant influx of people to the capital was bringing the city down to its knees. Since the first few years of independent rule, the National Directorate for Physical Planning and its Cuban and Bulgarian advisers aimed at being able to control and steer settlement patterns in both Luanda and the rest of the country. Most of their intentions, however, did not materialize into concrete interventions. While multiple plans were drafted, very rarely were any of their guidelines for orderly urban growth enforced or implemented. What has been widely depicted by scholars and policy makers as "urban informality" became both norm and expectation in the rapid expansion of Luanda.

Juridical Foundations for the Luanda Sul Program

Uncovering the reasons for the lack of public investment in the built environment during the late 1970s and the 1980s goes beyond the specific purposes of this dissertation, but it is important to notice that all such attempts to intervene in urban development took place under a statutory regime that was significantly altered in period leading up to the 1992 elections. Not only did the wave of economic liberalization modify the landscape of political opportunities available for such interventions, the constitutional changes of the early 1990s transformed the juridical underpinnings of urban policy and planning in unquestionably meaningful fashion. If the post-independence Constitutional Law had stipulated all natural resources as property of the State but made no explicit references to land or its transferability, in the 1991 constitutional revision land was specifically defined to be "property of the State by origin" as well as something that "may be transferred to individuals or corporate bodies".[66] This provided the general framework upon which, in the month just before the elections, *Lei nº* 21-C/92 and *Decreto nº* 46-A/92 were approved and ratified.[67] Published in the end of August, the first established basic terms and

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[66] On the *Lei Constitucional* of 1974 this comes specified in article 11, whereas on the 1991 revision, approved by *Lei nº* 12/91, article 12 is the one dedicated to natural resources.

[67] It is at this point that land surface rights, or what in the Portuguese and Angolan legal systems is called *direito de superfície*, reemerge as the main device upon which a system to develop land was to be operationalized. In *Lei nº* 21-C/92 of August 28, 1992 the state recognized the right of all to "use and benefit from" land and vowed to enact that right through concession whenever certain conditions were met (see articles 3 and 4). But if in what concerns urban management, the provisions of this legislative document represented little more than a symptom that land was seen as a building block of the nascent market economy, *Decreto nº* 46-A/92 of September 9, 1992 was specifically approved to revive the power of local authorities to enact and grant land surface rights. Interestingly, nothing really new was introduced. As it is explained in the preamble, the administrative transformations that took place after independence led to the non-enforcement of what were valid norms in the realm of urban management. Very few rules were actually needed. In addition to giving the provincial governments the right to grant surface rights (article 1), it simply determined these were to be conceded for a minimum of 25 and maximum of 60 years, renewable (article 2). See also Jenny Clover, "Land Reform in Angola: Establishing the Ground Rules," in *From the Ground Up: Land Rights, Conflict, and Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Eds Chris Huggins and Jenny Clover (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), 347-380, Development Workshop, *Estudo para uma Estrutura Legal e Institucional para a Melhoria dos Direitos à Terra e Habitação em Áreas Peri-Urbanas de Angola: Gestão de Cidades e Segurança na Posse de Terrenos nas Áreas Peri-Urbanas* (Luanda: Development Workshop, 2002) and Development Workshop, *Terra: Urban Land Reform in Post-War Angola: Research, Advocacy and Policy Development* (Luanda: Development Workshop, 2005).

conditions of land concessions for agricultural use. Less than a couple of weeks later, the second had more explicit implications for urban management. Rekindling a set of colonial rules that had fallen into disuse, it conferred all Provincial Governments the power "to enact the surface right" over land that they owned.

It was in the context of these transformations, in consideration of the political and economic possibilities open by such legal stipulations, that the Luanda Sul Program was first envisioned.[68] Primordially intended to enact and substantiate those new rules, in particular those concerning the reviving of land surface rights, the initiative was led by the state and fell within the jurisdiction of its local branch. On October 1993 the Provincial Government approved the "Juridical Regime for the Concession of Land in the Province of Luanda"[69] and little more than a month later the need to "improve social conditions" in the capital and the "complexity of the problems" faced by the burgeoning city drove the Central Government to intervene in the administrative architecture of public investments in the province. By transferring responsibilities over local interventions to the Provincial Government, *Decreto nº 37/93* signaled an organizational restructuring that was key for the establishment of the Luanda Sul Program.[70] But if the initiative was indeed a product of all such constitutional, legal and administrative transformations, the details of its operating scheme took form and shape under Odebrecht's consulting guidance. In fact, as we will now see, the Brazilian firm assumed a most prominent role in delineating the principles and methods through which the transferability of land surface rights was constituted as the "backbone" of the Luanda Sul Program.

Odebrecht (and Prado Valladares) in Luanda Sul

In retrospect, considering the aforementioned historical conditions and the ways in which Odebrecht navigated through the political and economic structures of postcolonial Angola, this seems far from surprising. While its main projects were located quite far from Luanda, the company had a considerably strong presence in the capital. Not only were its upper cadres well connected in some of the most relevant centers of decision-making, their awareness towards what were understood to be the development challenges faced by the city was both concrete and tangible in its own way. In the perspective of its managers and collaborators, the long-standing anxieties of Angolan policy makers and the tropes of order and control with which they engaged

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[68] In one of our conversations, Lourenço evoked Hernando de Soto in explaining to me what these possibilities were. By establishing all unclaimed land as inalienable property of the State, he told me, the first Constitutional Law after independence had endowed the Angolan Government with an "extraordinary land stockpile" throughout the country. For almost two decades this sat still as "dead capital" in the Government's hands, but once the above legal stipulations made its usufruct exchangeable in the marketplace, transforming it into an impending capital asset, the developmental possibilities provided by land were unlocked. EDURB – in "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano" – clarifies it. Being "transmissible, mortgageable, renewable and subject to compensation", the *direito de superfície*, became "an almost currency," a reserve of value and a form of exchange that provided the means for the Luanda Sul Program to operate.

[69] First approved at the local level in October 1993, this regime provided a regulatory infrastructure for the execution of *Decreto nº 46-A/92* in the province of Luanda and was sanctioned by the Central Government as an "integral part of the documentation" (in Odebrecht Angola, "Programa Luanda Sul: Relato de Reunião," Luanda, June 27, 1995.) supporting the "Contract for Self-Financed Urban Development" certified by *Resolução nº 30/94* of November 10, 1994. After some adjustments, the regime was officially ratified by *Postura nº 1/96* of July 5, 1996. See also Development Workshop, *Estudo para uma Estrutura Legal e Institucional para a Melhoria dos Direitos à Terra e Habitação em Áreas Peri-Urbanas de Angola*, 38-39 and Development Workshop, *Terra*, 71.

[70] While *Decreto nº 37/93* of December 17, 1993 did not explicitly mentioned the Luanda Sul initiative, a reinforced provincial government was fundamental for its establishment. See also *Decreto nº 27/93* of August 6, 1993.

in the quest for urban development, were far from outlandish. After all, the mostly unoccupied surroundings of their own *Vila do Gamek* had grown "into a gigantic *musseque*" under their very own watch.[71] For on their trips back and forth to the gated residential complex that in 1986 had been set up beyond what then were the southern limits of the city, one of my interlocutors told me as if reading *Odebrecht Informa* out loud to me, they would routinely see "irregular constructions arise overnight."

In face of such clear and unequivocal challenges, Odebrecht's solutions were rather uncomplicated. Transpiring through the drafts and working documents produced during the initial months of its collaboration with the Provincial Government, and later publicly cemented on the pages of its own corporate magazine, the company's diagnostic efforts were as straightforward as logically self-serving.[72] The most urgent goal of any intervention and what the Vice-Governor had told *Odebrecht Informa* to be the "biggest aspiration of all Luandans," was to improve water and sanitation access. "With infrastructure for 400 thousand people," the article resorted to an often-repeated truism about Luanda, "the capital of Angola is now home to nearly 2,5 million inhabitants." The sheer absence of the most basic urban facilities was a major public health concern and "a threat that looms over the entire city." The Luanda Sul Program was therefore presented as a societal response to the perils of relentless urban migration. In the words of the company's Director for Southern Africa at the time, the initiative was a demonstration of how "society, by its own means, is contributing for development." Odebrecht was, in that picture, "nothing other than an agent in that process." Its role in it, however, was certainly not passive.

Upon returning to Luanda, throughout the second half of 1993 and well into 1994, Odebrecht became fully involved in conceiving and establishing the fundamental provisions of what would turn into the Luanda Sul Program. It was in such context, as part of its lobbying efforts across the state legislature, that in August 1993 Lourenço was invited back to Angola. He remembers it well. While his first visits to the country had been as an ordinary subcontracted consultant, this time around he came to Luanda as a professor and specialist in urban planning. The invitation letter written by Odebrecht and sent out to the Ministry of Public Works and Urbanism made it quite clear. Brought in to lead a series of meetings organized with the purpose of "debating and exchanging experiences" with public officials in different governmental organizations, he was in town to advocate for urban reforms and infrastructural improvements in the capital as well as convey his own "Urban Planning Strategies for Developing Cities." But he also came back as a businessman. His company had seen a great contract disappear abruptly in Luzamba and he was determined to seize new opportunities in the country. If Odebrecht's interest in the emerging initiative was essentially motivated by the possibility of securing new infrastructure development

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[71] While this language comes from "Tempo de Construir," *Odebrecht Informa* 69, 12-13, May/June 1995, an Odebrecht staff member that had lived in *Vila do Gamek* in the late 1980s and early 1990s conveyed to me a certain sense of perplexity and dismay with the intensity with which the city grew before his eyes during that period. When they moved in, another former resident told me, *Gamek* was "far away from everything."

[72] The citations used on this paragraph are all from *Odebrecht Informa* 69, but much of my insight into the first few months of Odebrecht's work in the Luanda Sul Program and the evidence material used to write the following two paragraphs comes from the personal archive of one of my interviewees. For the selection of documents utilized with that purpose, see all archival material entries listed under Odebrecht Angola for the year 1993 and OSEL and PVA. See also "Casa para Todos," *Odebrecht Informa* 99, 2-3, January/March 2001 and "Vitória da Persistência," *Odebrecht Informa* 106, 44-53, October/December 2002.

contracts, Prado Valladares was hoping to sell its knowledge and expertise in matters of urban development. In the end, their efforts were not in vain.

Before the end of August, while Lourenço was still in town, Odebrecht managers met with Provincial Government representatives to lay the foundations for a protocol of understanding between the two organizations. Little more than a month later, another meeting was held to discuss the draft of an agreement whose goal was "to define joint actions" with a view of "preparing a Pilot Program to substantiate the Policy of Surface Rights Concessions in Luanda Sul" as well as "devising the structure of the Provincial Management Company" that would assume charge of those concessions. After the Provincial Government approved the regulatory regime for land concessions mentioned above, Odebrecht continued working on creating the conditions for the development of the program. In the last few months of 1993 and into 1994, further specialists were called to provide advice on different aspects of its conception, guidelines for a dedicated body to manage its implementation were advanced, and a set of proposals for the different contracts and regulations required for its establishment were drafted.

These were crucial arrangements in the history of the Luanda Sul Program. Not only did they lead to the Contract for Self-Financed Urban Development that in June 1994 signaled its formal establishment, they also paved the way for the subsequent selection of Prado Valladares as the private partner in what later became EDURB.[73] This does not mean, however, that Prado Valladares had to wait until May 1996, when the public private partnership was legally established, to return to Angola. In fact, Lourenço and his company were officially onboard much before that. Not long after that first visit as an invitee of Odebrecht, before even the end of 1993, he and some of his colleagues took over much of the conceptualizing and drafting duties of those early days of the project. Spending long periods in Luanda, they too lived in *Vila do Gamek*.

Cultivating a Spatial Vocabulary for Urban Development

With 290 houses spread through more than 25 hectares, *Vila do Gamek* was often compared to a small town. Run by Odebrecht, the residential complex even had its own *prefeitura*.[74] On a 1989 *Odebrecht Informa* profile of its manager, someone for whom residents were referred to as clients, *Vila do Gamek* was proudly described as offering "all the services typical of any city." In what concerns basic infrastructure, the compound had its own water and sewage treatment plants, an independent electrical grid powered by diesel generators and an exclusive garbage collection system. Beyond these essential amenities, it offered its residents and those allowed through its gates access to a recreation center, a soccer field and a swimming pool. They could also shop from a rare selection of imported grocery products at the compound store or eat out at the intramural restaurant. In addition to all this, there was an elementary school within the premises as well as a medical clinic. Surveillance and 24/7 security were obviously also ensured. As a former resident told me, "back then *Gamek* was a luxury."

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[73] As we have seen above, while this contract was signed in June, it was only officially ratified in November 1994, with *Resolução nº* 30/94.

[74] In Brazil the *prefeitura* is the executive branch of a municipal government. *Vila do Gamek*, of course, did not really have one, but its manager, or the person in charge of making sure that everything ran smoothly in the complex, was presented as a *prefeita* on "A Perfeita Miriam," *Odebrecht Informa* 43, 4, June 1989.

Vila do Gamek and its amenities are commonly portrayed by Odebrecht as no more than necessary arrangements for the Capanda project. By providing housing for managers and other executives involved in it, the complex is said to have created fundamental conditions for the construction of the dam. But while this is certainly true, the private compound had important effects beyond its original purpose. Between its establishment and the period leading up to the elections, not only did *Vila do Gamek* become a pivotal location in Odebrecht's efforts to diversify its presence in Angola, the houses and self-reliant facilities of what is often referred to as Luanda's first gated community turned out to be quite desirable amongst the local elite.[75] But that was not all. It was not just in prompting an unbinding kind of urban aspiration that *Vila do Gamek* reverberated into the future of the city. For it was too from within its precursory walls that a specific lexicon of urban form was imagined and developed for the Luanda Sul Program, a spatial vocabulary that had been cultivated there with noticeable success and was at that juncture employed for unlocking the market potential of land.[76]

Self-Financing Urban Development

From the determination to ward off social and ecological ills to the emerging yearning for infrastructural autonomy and self-reliance, this lexicon of detachment and the practices of segregation associated with it extended out to the financing mechanisms upon which the Luanda Sul Program was conceived. In addition to articulating usual suspects such as comfort or security, the initiative relied heavily on the premise that the cost of providing infrastructure "should be borne by its future users."[77] We went through this already, but it is worth paying particular attention to some of the language utilized by EDURB to build upon such assumption. In order to "generate synergies amongst the different economic agents" involved in the program and launch a market for land and real estate within its perimeter, "an *auto-sustainable* process" to mobilize finance from surface rights transactions and convert land assets into the development of infrastructure was designed and implemented. The key concept was that of *autofinanciamento*. If the backbone of the initiative was the ability to trade in land surface rights, its strength and vitality depended on the devices of self-financing for which EDURB was responsible. But such vigor was not without extra-economic implications. While collecting funds from prospective clients promised a more efficient allocation of resources, its effects on equity and urban form were very clearly inscribed in its underlying assumptions. For when analyzing the provisions of *autofinanciamento* in relation to the three sectors originally envisioned for the south of Luanda, a not so hidden layer of socio-spatial compartmentalization becomes more clearly apparent in the very conceptualization of the program.

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[75] As Rafael Marques puts it on a report "to denounce the maintenance of blood diamonds in Angola" in which the *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento Mineiro* (see above) was subject to scrutiny, "Odebrecht has been providing accommodation to the Angolan nomenclature, in prefabricated wooden houses at its compound in Vila do Gamek". See Rafael Marques de Morais, *Operation Kissonde: The Diamonds of Humiliation and Misery* (Amsterdam: Nederlands Instituut voor Zuidelijk Afrika, 2006), 25.

[76] This transpires quite clearly in one of the preliminary evaluations done by Odebrecht's juridical advisors in preparation towards the establishment of the aforementioned protocol of understanding with the Provincial Government (see Odebrecht Angola 1993c). Despite the convoluted language, the idea is clear. In introducing what then was still referred to as the Luanda Sul Project, the urban initiative was said to consist of a high-end residential development with an idealized configuration; a spatial arrangement that enabled the establishment of private land parcels with restricted accessibility in order to ensure the comfort, privacy and security of those living within them.

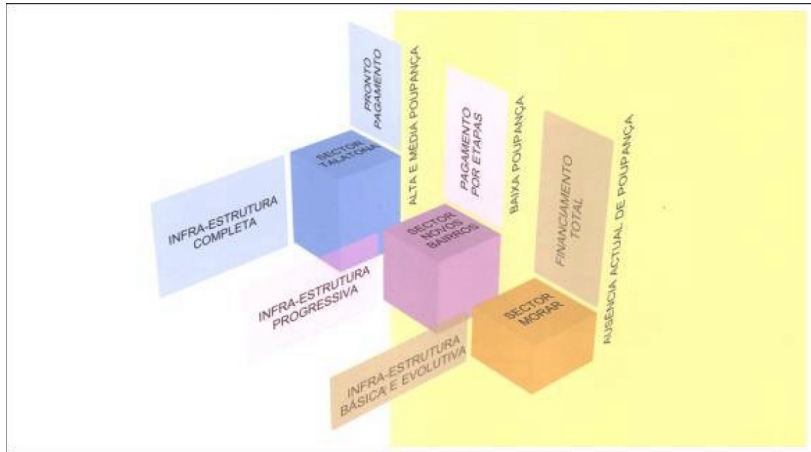[77] In EDURB, "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano."

Fig. 1.4 Target Populations, Modes of Financing and Levels of Provision.
Excerpt from EDURB 2001.

Sidestepping the procedures of public budgeting by tapping into the savings of its clients, EDURB was to manage the development of infrastructure across those three different sectors in accordance with the income level of the target population. One of its main priorities was "to fulfill the needs of those possessing savings, those forming their savings and those yielding no savings at all."[78] Those able to afford the prices defined by EDURB would receive "fully" infrastructured plots in Talatona.[79] For those with enough saving capacity to pay for their land in installments, infrastructure at Novos Bairros would be "progressive". Available only to low-income families with no savings whatsoever, the infrastructures at Morar would be "basic and evolutionary" and entirely financed by the profits of surface land rights sales in Talatona. Before the program started to be implemented, a process of segmentation was already underway. After 1995, as expansion unfolded under its auspices, the fragmented nature of urban development in contemporary Luanda began to take shape.

But this, of course, was not due to the Luanda Sul Program alone. Of all occurrences and circumstances that during the late 1990s and early 2000s have contributed to delineate the specific parameters for urban transformations in the Angolan capital, one seems to stand out quite distinctly. Beyond (but also because of) its interference in the Luanda Sul Program, the creation of the Office for Special Works played a most crucial role in configuring and solidifying those fragmented forms of development.[80]

The Office for Special Works and the Erosion of the Luanda Sul Program

Commonly known by its Portuguese acronym, the GOE was established "under direct dependence of the President of the Republic" in August 1998. Its main purpose was to take over the project to rehabilitate the seat of the former colonial government in Cidade Alta into the

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[78] In UN Habitat Best Practice Database, under the tile "Luanda Sul Self-Financed Urban Infrastructure Program: An experimental, innovative and successful partnership between the public and private sectors."

[79] The program's "equation" determined that the price to pay for the usufruct rights in a plot of land would be the sum of the cost of its share in infrastructure plus a so-called social contribution "to fund compensations, resettlements and complementary investments in the public interest." See EDURB, "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano."

[80] Providing a detailed analysis of its establishment and one that also stressed the overlaps with the Luanda Sul Program, Gastrow ("Negotiated Settlements," 84-89) points out that the Office for Special Works "would play a fundamental role in shaping Luanda's future." In her genealogy of Zango, Croese ("Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," 94-96) also points at the ways in which this office superimposed itself on parts of the Luanda Sul Program. My own first insight into these institutional interferences came during one of my interviews with Lourenço, who at some point made reference to some "powerful forces from up there" when explaining the reasons why the initiative had been downsized. I did not pursue an explanation of what those were during our conversation, but later analysis of the documentation that I had gathered revealed that the Office for Special Works had had an important and interfering role in the Luanda Sul Program.

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country's Political Administrative Center.[81] With origins dating back to the early days of dos Santos presidency in 1979, this plan had been on halt throughout the 1980s but gained significant momentum after the 1992 elections. A specifically designed and technically equipped Interministerial Commission was put in charge of it and as soon as the aforementioned negotiations between Odebrecht and the Provincial Government started to consolidate, the project became the very first initiative to tap into the Luanda Sul Program.[82] From the latter's perspective, "clearing the areas intended for Political Administrative Center and occupied by about 1200 families" became one of its founding priorities. Fast-forwarding back to 1998, this means that the GOE had a non-negligible stake in the Luanda Sul Program from the very beginning.

But while the actual establishment of the new agency seems to have stalled for quite a while, the Luanda Sul Program was moving onward. In terms of the macro-infrastructure, the construction of the crucial 24Km water pipeline from Kikuxi to Talatona had been completed since mid-1996, and the duplication of the road connecting Talatona to the city center was well in progress.[83] Within each sector, Novos Bairros was falling behind schedule but the different supply networks in both Talatona and Morar were advancing, albeit in the anticipated differentiated fashion, at a good pace. Above ground, things were also evolving. The total value of concession contracts for Talatona reached the $100 million mark by the end of 1998 and the roads were starting to get busy with construction trucks. At the other end of Luanda Sul, the President is said to have "opened facilities at Morar" in October 1999. By then, however, a new and more forceful push towards the operationalization of GOE had already been given.

Five months earlier, in May 1999, a presidential dispatch had at last dissolved the technical support group of the Interministerial Commission for the Political Administrative Center and created a new Installing Commission to manage the daily activities of the project as well as draw up a set of documents and proposals "to be submitted to the President in 30 days."[84] These included preparing guidelines for GOE's activities, but also defining the management structure for a rehousing initiative in Viana II as well as studying the creation of a company to develop the Futungo de Belas into a tourist complex. From EDURB's perspective, this had to be significant. If until then the Office for Special Works stayed mostly at bay of the Luanda Sul Program, with this new tasks the imbrications between the two entities were starting to unravel. After all, the

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[81] See *Decreto nº* 24/98 of August 7, 1998, where GOE was officially created and given financial and administrative autonomy (article 4) to manage all dimensions of the project (article 3) in collaboration with all relevant state entities (article 5). Article 6 established a deadline of 60 days for the approval of its organizational structure and rules of procedure, but these would not be made official until September 2001 (see below).

[82] Established in 1992, soon after the elections, the *Grupo Técnico de Apoio à Comissão Interministerial de Supervisão do Programa Novo Centro Político Administrativo* coordinated the renovation of the Presidential Palace as well as some adjacent buildings. This technical support group also collaborated closely with the negotiators of the Luanda Sul Program during its inception days. See the annex to *Resolução nº 12/01* as well as EDURB 2001, where the quotation in the following sentence can be found.

[83] See Fig. 1.3, above. Bringing in 300 liters of clean water per second, via Morar and Novos Bairros, this pipeline had always been viewed by the proponents of the Luanda Sul Program as the key factor in its success and the very first step to be taken towards its implementation. In fact, it was so important that Odebrecht had given a loan of $14 million towards a total construction cost of $15,4 million. The other undertaking prioritized "in order to increase the attractiveness of Luanda Sul by improving the access to Talatona" was the construction of additional lanes in Av. 21 de Janeiro. Representing an investment of $8 million, the initial construction works took place across a 5.7 Km extension, between the Airport and Gamek (the intersection popularly named after its proximity to *Vila do Gamek*). See EDURB, "Grandes Realizações tem Feito o Povo Angolano."

[84] See *Despacho nº* 5/99 of May 21, 1999.

area covered by the Viana II initiative included Projecto Morar and the Futungo de Belas had to be promptly "detached" from the perimeter of the Luanda Sul Program.[85]

But it was not until September 2001, when the GOE had its organic statute and program finally approved, that the turf wars between the all-powerful agency and the Luanda Sul Program became more explicitly written in the changing institutional landscape of urban development in Luanda.[86] Comprising a whole department dedicated to rehousing while specifying three different projects for that purpose, the first operative configuration of the GOE seems to have absorbed much of EDURB's obligations in both Projecto Morar and Novos Bairros.[87] In the case of Morar, where the new program proposed to build 1000 affordable houses as well as other facilities, there simply is not much evidence of significant EDURB involvement after GOE's arrival.[88] In Novos Bairros, where not a lot had been materially accomplished until then, the erosion of the Luanda Sul Program might have happened even more severely.[89] A crossed analysis comparing EDURB's initial intention for this sector and GOE's new rehousing projects suggests that the latter might have taken up the responsibility of the former in committing to prepare 10,000 land plots to alleviate the housing problem in Luanda. Novos Bairros remained on the books but advanced at a much slower pace than what was once indented.[90]

The repercussions of such corrosion were felt differently across the board. For Lourenço and those who saw the ambitious and all-encompassing intentions of the Luanda Sul Program lacerated in the process, it was evidence that political power had superseded the logics of governance.[91] From the point of view of the Provincial Government, it signified a clear deterioration in its ability to regulate and intervene in spatial development.[92] From Odebrecht's perspective, it cannot have represented much more than a mere hiccup in what was a rapidly

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[85] Published less than a month after *Despacho nº 5/99*, *Decreto nº 10/99* of June 18, 1999 makes this detachment official.

[86] *Decreto nº 57/01* of September 21, 2001 approves the organic statute and *Resolução nº 12/01* approves the program.

[87] The Rehousing Department was subdivided in three divisions (see *Decreto nº 57/01*): one dedicated to Projecto Viana II, one other dedicated to Projecto Novos Loteamentos and a third comprised of a Center for Inspection, Register and Rehousing. Its program included three projects (see *Resolução nº 12/01*): Projecto Morar in Viana II, Projecto SAPU and Novos Loteamentos.

[88] While I could not obtain precise information on this, EDURB's distancing from Projecto Morar is made evident when comparing its own quantifications of "tangible benefits". Summary tables listing the amount of infrastructure built in each sector can be found for 2001 (in EDURB 2001) and 2007 (on the company's website). According to its own numbers, a total of 25.93Km of water pipes were installed in Morar until 2001, whereas in 2007 the figure goes up to 27.66Km only. For the electricity grid the number are respectively 49.16 and 49.88. As it had been decided beforehand, roads, drainage and sewage systems were at zero in 2001 and remained as such in 2007. While the Luanda Sul Program was active in Morar, 14 thousand people are said to have benefitted from the project. This is significantly less than what was once anticipated (see above).

[89] On the 2001 summary table mentioned on the footnote above, only 3.61Km of water pipes and 5.14 of electric grid come listed under Novos Bairros, whereas in Talatona – to put it in further context – the figures were 42.65 and 91.90.

[90] While Croese ("Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," 95) affirms that GOE was given responsibility over land in the area of Novos Bairros, I could not confirm whether or not the 10,000 land plots under GOE's authority correspond to the 10,000 land plots originally intended for auto-construction in Novos Bairros (see above). In addition, EDURB and Odebrecht have been responsible for building infrastructure in the sector between 2001 and 2007. Nevertheless, further analysis of the tables mentioned in the footnotes above suggests that the sector continued to develop rather slowly after 2001. The extensions were only of 4.34Km on the water supply network and 5.79Km on the electric grid. As a point of reference, in Talatona, during that same period, the water pipes expanded 63.82Km while the power system increased in 137.63Km.

[91] As I have mentioned above already Lourenço blamed "powerful forces from up there" for the erosion of the Luanda Sul Program. Later in the same conversation he conveyed to me that what was lost was the opportunity of a fruitful partnership between the public and the private, what he understood to be "the logics of governance."

[92] See Chapter 2 as well as Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," 2013: 96.

expanding operation in both Luanda and elsewhere throughout the country.[93] But it was for those who never came to be beneficiaries of Morar or Novos Bairros that the ramifications of the institutional readjustments instigated by GOE were more damaging. In the latter case, for example, the "low savings" families that would build their own houses in plots with "progressive" infrastructure were simply left forgotten after those transformations.[94] If Novos Bairros was originally intended for this segment of the population, what now was called Novos Loteamentos seems to have been entirely envisioned for the construction of private developments.

Talatona and the Inception of a Real Estate Market

From what has been discussed thus far, it is already apparent that the disintegration of the Luanda Sul Program was not only inscribed in its own early on arrangements, but it was also far from uniform. While the advent of GOE signaled the decline of Novos Bairros and Morar, in Talatona the course of events did not follow the same pattern at all. There, where a real estate market was taking shape, the story was remarkably different.

It all started with Sonangol. Because of the way in which the self-financing scheme was structured, the initiative dangled on its capacity to raise enough capital to plough through the early stages of infrastructural development in Talatona. Odebrecht loaned most of the necessary capital to build the pipeline that would bring clean water from Kikuxi, but it was the concession agreement signed between the Provincial Government and Sonangol days after the official launch of the program in November 1994 that ultimately enabled its actual establishment. Disbursing $30 million for the surface rights to what later became ZR1 (see Fig. 1.5, below), the national oil company expected to build "about four hundred houses" under what *Jornal de Angola* described at the time as "a social program aimed at minimizing housing shortages amongst the company's employees."[95] The Provincial Government, in the meantime, was hoping to have set the wheels of the Luanda Sul Program in motion. As the daily put it in the same article, from that moment onwards "all interested companies could request land in that area for the construction of a *kind* of new city in the capital." Praising Sonangol's decision to take part in the initiative, the Governor of Luanda called upon both oil and non-oil firms to follow suit "in order for Luanda Sul to become *a reality*."

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[93] Between 2007 and 2008, for example, the company worked on more than 30 contracts in multiple sectors all over the country, including infrastructure development in various locations throughout Luanda, ten different projects in Talatona (seven gated communities plus a shopping mall, a business center and a private school) and the "construction of 1000 economic houses in Sapú". See Odebrecht annual reports for 2007 and 2008 as well as "Os pioneiros de Luanda Sul," *O País*, November 29, 2010. By then the Brazilian company was also already building both infrastructure and houses in Zango, the largest social housing project in Luanda. See Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola."

[94] My explorations of the perimeter originally intended for Novos Bairros were rather instructive in this respect. A great percentage of the area is now covered by large-scale private developments and the one reference to the initiative is a Sonangol gated community now called *Condomínio das Acácias* but initially known as *Condomínio Novos Bairros.* This project was inaugurated, under the auspices of *Cooperativa Cajueiro*, Sonangol's housing cooperative, in February 2006.

[95] "GPL cede terreno à Sonangol," *Jornal de Angola*, January 12, 1994. See also EDURB, "Luanda Sul Self-Financed Urban Infrastructure Program: An Experimental, Innovative, and Successful Partnership between the Public and the Private Sectors." *Cooperativa Cajueiro* handed in the first keys to houses in *Condomínio ZR1*, also known as *Cajú*, in 2008. As described on a 2008 issue of the cooperative's magazine, the new gated community provided "innovation, refinement and well-being" to the "class 5" members – the highest in *Cajueiro*'s structure – that could make "the dream of a lifetime become a reality." In "Condomínio Cajú: a nova proposta de bem-estar," *Saber Viver* 7, 16-18, May/June 2008.

They must have heard him. Some months after the appeal, it was that very same reality that the brochure depicted in the beginning of this chapter enthusiastically encouraged everyone to see. Just like the governor wished for on the day Sonangol became the first official client of the program, other companies stepped forward to invest in it. Looking to build suitable accommodation for its personnel, Chevron's Cabinda Gulf Oil Company signed a concession agreement not long after Sonangol. Perhaps unsurprisingly, two of the first companies to develop projects for the open market were Odebrecht and Prado Valladares. As part of their collaboration with the Provincial Government, both companies had been amassing land surface rights in Talatona since the early stages of the initiative and in 1997 decided make use of them.[96] Odebrecht officially spread its wings into the real estate business by launching the construction of *Atlântico Sul*, a small *condomínio* that *O País* recently guaranteed to be "still a reference for the upper class."[97] Prado Valladares opened a subsidiary company dedicated to real estate development and began working on *Mirantes do Talatona* amongst others. But these were not the only companies to come forward in the first few years of the program. In 2000, when the initiative won the Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment, the total value of concession contracts was over $130 million.[98] In the last few years of the 1990s, the walls between the different projects started springing up but nothing compared with what would come. Following the rising demand at the upper end of the housing market, the building craze in Talatona would really only take off throughout the 2000s.[99]

It was also in the first few years of the 2000s that the Luanda Sul Program was formally readjusted. Perhaps as a consequence of the aforementioned transformations and the overlaps with GOE, in 2003 the initiative was "resized."[100] The rearrangements were significant. While, as we have seen already, Morar and Novos Bairros gradually vanished away, two new areas in the vicinity of Talatona were formally brought into the program.[101] In Morro Bento, where EDURB had began intervening in the late 1990s as a side effect of the infrastructure works for Talatona, the "master plan foresaw a phased and ordered development of infrastructures." In M'Bonde Chapé, an "auto-constructed neighborhood" promoted by the Provincial Government, the program was to provide "technical" assistance. However, as with Morar and Novos Bairros, their progress seems to have been rather sluggish.[102] Particularly when compared with that of Talatona.

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[96] See Odebrecht Angola, Minuta do Protocolo de Entendimento entre o GPL e a Odebrecht, October 5, 1993.

[97] In "Os pioneiros de Luanda Sul," November 29, 2010.

[98] The Dubai Municipality promotes this award in partnership with UN Habitat, whose website hosts the Best Practice Database. See UN Habitat Best Practice Database and the Dubai International Award for Best Practices website.

[99] The growth of Odebrecht Real Estate provides a good example of this. If *Atlântico Sul* was its only real estate project in Luanda before the turn of the century, after 2005 its activity picked up very fast. In two or three years *condomínios* such as *Riviera Atlântico, Morada dos Reis, Mansões do Vale, Monte Belo, Noblesse Residence, Residencial Arte Yetu* and *Vivendas São Paulo de Loanda* became part of the company's Talatona portfolio next to anchor projects such as *Belas Shopping* and *Belas Business Park*. See "Os pioneiros de Luanda Sul," November 29, 2010 and Odebrecht, *Relatório Anual 2007* (Rio de Janeiro: Odebrecht, 2008) as well as Odebrecht, *Relatório Anual 2008* (Rio de Janeiro: Odebrecht, 2009).

[100] In EDURB, *Plano Geral de Gestão e Realização 2004* (Luanda: EDURB, 2004).

[101] See EDURB's website.

[102] The "tangible benefits" of the Luanda Sul Program in Morro Bento come specified in both tables I had access to. In 2001, the only infrastructure listed was water supply. 9.03Km had been built. In 2007 this figured rose in little more than 1Km. M'Bonde Chapé only shows up in the second table. Little more than 5Km of water pipes had been built under the program, but more than 300 roads were open. "Unpaved roads," an asterisk adds discreetly. See above to compare to the advancements in Talatona.
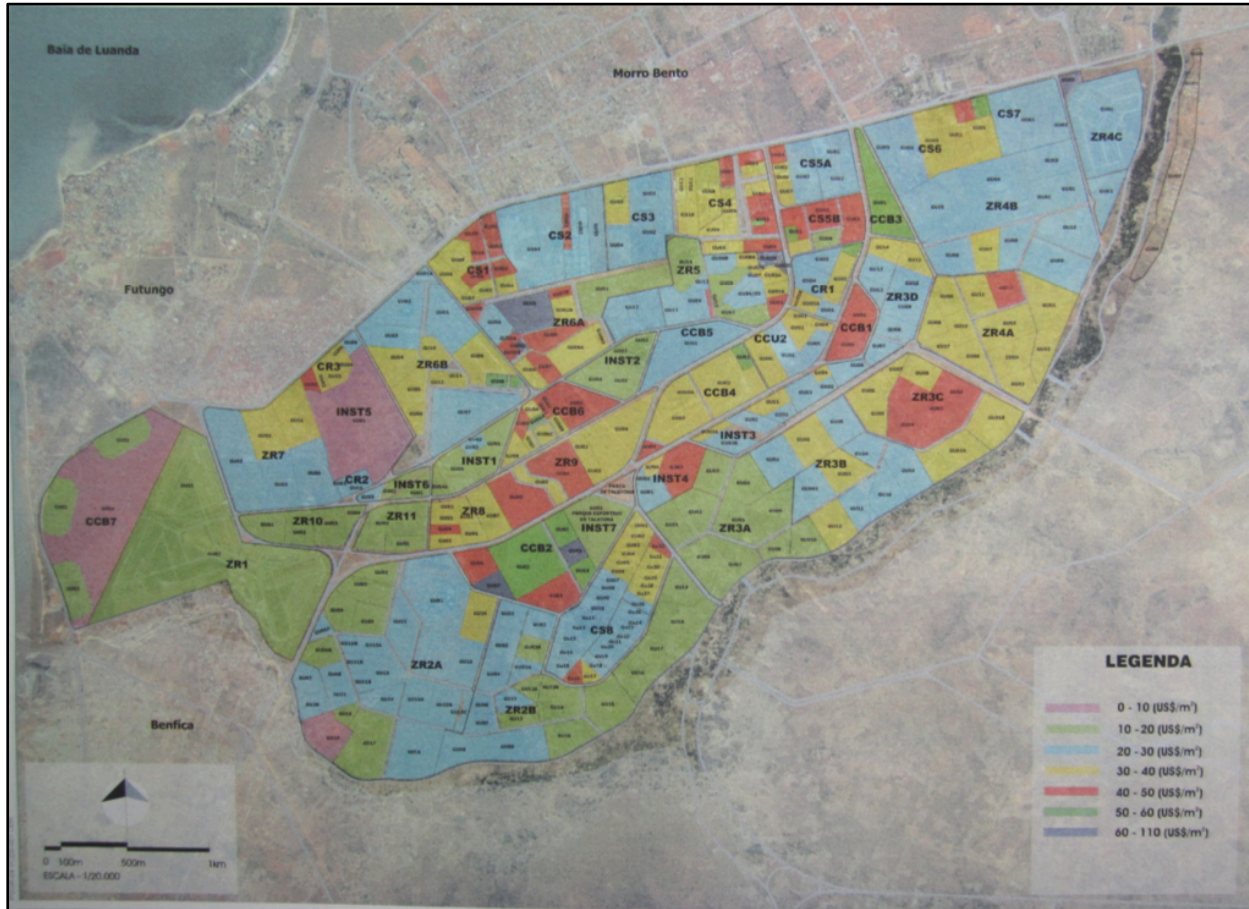
Fig. 1.5 Sector Talatona: Land Values Map.
Excerpt from EDURB, *Plano Geral de Gestão e Realização 2004*.

If public opinion might have been too quick in identifying Luanda Sul with Talatona, the reality on the ground did not contravene it. Even EDURB's own figures make it quite explicit. Building on a disposition that predicated its establishment and a trend that was made stronger throughout the years of its implementation, the Luanda Sul Program was in actual practice shrunk down to the area covered by Talatona. Ten years after the initiative was made official, the accolades of being the founding stone of a new Luanda were now reserved to the "pioneering urbanization sector" of Talatona.[103] There, where "land use had been planned according to regularization standards" and "the process of building full infrastructure was expected to continue," the program was fulfilling its promise. Periodically reviewing the Land Surface Concession Value for each of the predefined plots within the perimeter of intervention according to the additional infrastructure costs that must be incurred to deliver basic services to new investment locations, the Management and Execution Plan helped to steer growth to where it could be more efficiently accommodated. With economic growth rates going through the roof in the first few years after the end of the war in 2002, private developers were almost solely encouraged to build high-end housing and commercial spaces to meet the demands of the upper echelons of the national society as well as the requirements of the rapidly increasing number of expatriates moving into

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[103] In EDURB, *Plano Geral de Gestão e Realização 2004*.

the country. A real estate market was being formed under the mythical dictums of economic equilibrium, albeit one with engraved with particular characteristics.

Some of the most enduring specificities of this market in formation were derived from the long history of institutional and physical enclosures upon which the Luanda Sul Program was predicated. In attempting to provide a genealogy of how that market came about, this chapter has offered an overview of the circumventions and seclusions through which Odebrecht and Prado Valladares, the two companies that together with the Provincial Government designed and implemented the Luanda Sul Program, found their way around in Angola. With oil circulating through the innermost workings of how they did it (and the extraction of natural resources serving as the stimulus for keeping at it), the very element that makes the contemporary world possible ended up providing both inspiration and material sustenance for the development of the initiative. This is not to argue that oil magically determined the course of urban development in Luanda. It is, however, to contend that oil worked as both fuel and lubricant for the transformations instigated by Prado Valladares and Odebrecht in Luanda Sul. Direct successors to their particular engagements with the Angolan state, its distinct political and economic itineraries and the range of possibilities dictated by the internationalized civil war, both the Luanda Sul Program and the real estate market propelled in its implementation carry the indelible mark of differentiated development.

"UMA NOVA VIDA COMEÇA AQUI" – A *TRENDSETTER MODEL* FOR CONTEMPORARY LUANDA

Listing Odebrecht's director for Luanda Sul as the contact for enquiries, the Luanda Sul Program entry in the Award Winners section of the abovementioned UN Habitat Best Practices Database begins with great ambition. "Luanda Sul is a trendsetter model," it is said. Praised for its self-financing provisions, the initiative is presented as an innovative approach to deliver public services and promote urban development. The language is as unwavering and enthusiastic as the praising speeches I heard during my conversations with Lourenço and his colleagues at Prado Valladares. In fact, it is claimed in the very last sentence of the database entry, "more than a solution for Angola, Luanda Sul is a model for the world."

In this chapter I have attempted to make sense of how that solution came about. By untangling some of the key genealogical threads that have given shape to the Luanda Sul Program, this chapter contributes for an understanding of the social histories, institutional arrangements, and political connections in and through which land and real estate have been formed as officially recognized marketable goods in postcolonial Luanda. When analyzed in relation to the specific historical and geographical context of Odebrecht's arrival to Angola, from the scaffolds of socialism to the early stages of capitalism, the Luanda Sul Program and the market it devised become distinctly characterized not so much by the precepts of economic equilibrium, but by a set of enclosures, circumventions and seclusions where the modes of regulation of the Angolan "oil assemblage" (see Introduction) provided both fundamental imaginaries and crucial material sustenance for political agency. Furthermore, I argue in this dissertation, the Luanda Sul Program, its outward looking ambitions and the particular way in which the market was introduced as a means for organizing the city and promoting urban development all became fundamental pieces for the making of a new Luanda.

For the sites and experiences of the Luanda Sul Program have created a repertoire of spatial practices for state-sanctioned interventions in the Angolan capital. In fact, as I have contended above already, the public-private initiative forged the emergence of some of the commanding models of urban development in the Luanda of today. More than a mere prelude to official forms of reconstruction,[104] this initiative contributed for setting their tempo and textures. In other words, the Luanda Sul Program provided a range of devices and expectations for urban development initiatives in Angolan capital and Talatona now stands for an often-desired mode of living. At the same time, if the limitations of Projecto Morar might have provided a first glimpse at how the question of relocations and social housing would be dealt with in the following years, one could say that the failure of the Novos Bairros sector anticipated the missteps of urban policy in what concerns the vast majority of the population. Perhaps indeed, as the promotional brochure for the Luanda Sul Program depicted in the beginning of this chapter announced in its closing footer, a new life started with it.

Fig. 1.6 A New Life Starts Here.
GPL and Odebrecht, Promotional Brochure (Luanda, *n.d.*).

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[104] See Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," 93-96.

PLANNING CONFUSÃO
IPGUL AND THE VOLATILITY OF THE STATE

It had rained the whole morning and the road in front of *Portugália*, the restaurant-patio once occupied by an offshoot of Lisbon's popular beerhouse, was again buried under a thick layer of black slush. "The government is working well," I heard one of the *gira-bairro* drivers announcing sarcastically. He had a blithe smile on his face but no one around us was showing signs of being amused. Scorning at his good spirits with a distinctly angry look, the young woman from whom I was buying phone credit was certainly not happy with the mess beneath her feet. Handing me the refill card without a word, her vexed attention was all on the taxi driver. "Look at this," he continued amusingly while helping a customer hop over a pothole of viscous dark muck, "Sonangol has found oil in Chicala!"

It happened every time. Every time there was a downpour – and there are quite a bit of those in Luanda – those five hundred meters between the end of the road pavement and the beach scrapyard turned into a gigantic mud puddle that would only turn filthier and filthier throughout the following days. "It has been like this ever since those trucks started coming in," a neighbor once told me as we watched the cars zigzagging their way around the concealed potholes. It was probably true. The weight of the semitrailer trucks that everyday brought infill for land reclamation at the construction site located north of the scrapyard was clearly just too much for that road. Without restoring and reinforcing the asphalt that my neighbor affirmed to have existed already, the dirt under those heavily revolving wheels would only turn into more dirt. And the potholes, he added before crossing the street, would grow deeper and deeper.

I would usually walk home from that point, but the muddy scenery before me was exceptionally dire on that day. The simplest way to avoid it was to be driven through its five hundred meter extension. I was then already inside the next *gira-bairro*, waiting for more people to fill it up, when I heard someone calling out for an architect. "*Arquiteto*!" I did not react at first. But the second shout was much louder. "*AR-QUI-TETO*!" I looked up from the crumbling old car and I saw Olímpio smiling at me from a sparkling pickup truck, the immense Toyota he had once introduced to me as his Tundra. Well of course, I thought to myself as I opened the taxi's rusty door. "Come on in," he invited me, "I'll give you a ride."

I knew Olímpio – *Arquiteto* Olímpio, to be precise – from IPGUL, the Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management. This is where he had been working as a planner since 2008 and where I too enjoyed the title of "architect" for over three months in 2012. Even though I had only been at the institute as a mere observer, peddling my questions from office to office with a notebook, everyone who knew who I was addressed me as *Arquiteto* Ricardo. And those who had no idea what my business was there everyday would generally stick to *Arquiteto*. I had never presented myself as such, but I was always too embarrassed to deny the underserved title or the design credentials that come with it. Regardless of all this, the truth is that I had never come clean about my lack of degree in architecture and I was not going to do it then.

"But I live just over there and I'm going to bring all this filth inside your car," I said while trying not to fall in the slippery mud. "Don't worry. Just jump in!" Excusing myself to the taxi driver,

who responded with complete indifference to my apology, I took out my sandals and opened the passenger door. Wearing a perfectly fitting suit as he does most days, Olímpio looked at my dirty shorts with incredulity and a mocking smile. "It ain't easy, my friend." Embarrassed by my sloppy clothes I could only sigh in agreement as I tapped the sandals against each other. "You know, *Arquiteto*," he continued more seriously after I sat on the Tundra's freezing cold, "there is a reason for all this mess."

There are major street drainage problems almost everywhere in Luanda but the explanation for the appalling condition of that stretch of road after rainfall was first and foremost grounded in planning. Or, to put it better, the lack of a truly technical approach to planning. Specifically, the main culprit was the skeleton of a building behind some beaten up hoarding panels – that seemingly abandoned structure casting its shade on us as the Tundra advanced impervious through the mud and slush. The seven or eight floors had gone up quite quickly a couple of years before, and in the previous months they had been enlarging the beach behind it. Shaped like a full-sized transatlantic cruise liner, the unfinished development had berthed in an outrageous beachfront location, fueled by what Olímpio told me to be "purely political means." He intimated that there was no impact assessment, no project appraisal, no standard procedures, no nothing. Someone "up there" had given permission for all that to be built and there was nothing us planners could do about it. "Planning is destined to fail in this city," I heard once at IPGUL. The irony seemed to be that the headquarters of the provincial body nominally responsible for urban planning and management, and where Olímpio was headed to complete the workday, was little more than five hundred meters ahead of the ship's prow. Before that, however, we reached my house. "You live so close to us!" Olímpio exclaimed. "It must have been the gods of urbanism that put you here," he concluded jocosely as I put my sandals back on.

FROM ACT TO ACTION: THE STATUTORY FOUNDATIONS OF IPGUL

IPGUL – in Portuguese, the *Instituto de Planeamento e Gestão Urbana de Luanda* – is "*the* technical-operative organ of the Province of Luanda." Officially created by the Council of Ministers in early 2007, the public institute is constitutionally set up as an autonomous agency under the tutelage of the Provincial Government. Its overall mission, as ratified into law by the organic statute I was given to read on the very first day of my internship, is "to promote and coordinate *all* urban planning and management activities" in the Angolan capital and its province.[1]

Devised during a period of important transformations in the juridical bedrock of planning and urban management in Angola, IPGUL was primarily designed as an apparatus for the implementation of the Spatial Planning Law, the framework act that in 2004 outlined the structure of the national spatial planning system and delineated its fundamental purposes and

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[1] The juridical nature of IPGUL is defined in Article 1 of its organic statute, where the quotes in this paragraph are extracted and translated from (emphases are mine). On the same article, the public institute is defined as an entity with "juridical personality" and "administrative, financial and patrimonial autonomy." Article 2 establishes that IPGUL is subordinate to the Provincial Government of Luanda and "depends methodologically from the organs of the central administration that intervene in its action." This issue of tutelage is clearly important for the lawmakers, who reinforced it in the main body of *Decreto* nº 6/07 of February 6, 2007, the four articles long Council of Ministers act creating IPGUL and approving its organic statute. See below.

principles of operation.[2] Accordingly, in order to fulfill its overall mission many of the institute's statutory assignments and guidelines are fairly generic stipulations that literally reproduce the modernizing aspirations of official planning reforms in contemporary Angola.[3] IPGUL has to ensure the rational use of land and to provide adequate conditions for sustainable development. IPGUL must strive to guarantee equal opportunities for all citizens to access infrastructure and public facilities. And IPGUL is constitutionally required to preserve, protect and defend the built heritage as well as all natural resources and ecosystems. But these were not the only functions delegated to the provincial body at the moment of inception. The institute was also assigned a fairly wide range of specific tasks and capabilities to be applied across the entire province and its municipalities. Most significantly, IPGUL was made officially responsible for *all* spatial planning instruments within its territorial jurisdiction.

The Angolan spatial planning system is structured in three hierarchical levels and encompasses two types of instruments: spatial plans (*planos territoriais*) and planning operations (*operações de ordenamento*).[4] Officially regulated in early 2006, the spatial plans are organized across the three tiers of the system.[5] The highest level comprises all nationwide spatial planning devices: the frame of reference to which every plan is subordinate; sector-specific plans; and special plans for areas of national interest.[6] Correspondingly, the intermediate tier carries provincial-level spatial plans: these are foreseen in the law as coordination devices containing strategic and generic guidelines for the development of one, two or more provinces.[7] Finally, the lowermost level of the planning system includes three categories of spatial plans: the intermunicipal plans, which extend over two or more municipalities, and encompass general master plans for large cities as well as special plans; the municipal master plans, which cover one municipality in its entirety; and the partial municipal plans, which include urbanization plans as well as urban detail plans.[8] It is also mostly at this level that the planning operations, or the processes through which the execution of spatial plans is to take place, are to be put into use.[9] Dividing them in general and special, the Spatial Planning Law provides mechanisms such as eminent domain and zoning procedures as well as a range of city-specific actions. The regulation for these so-called urban

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[2] See the preamble to *Decreto nº 6/07*, the official act for the creation of IPGUL. The Spatial Planning Law, or *Lei do Ordenamento do Território e Urbanismo* (LOTU), is *Lei nº 3/04* of June 25 2004. While this is not mentioned in the preamble to *Decreto nº 6/07* another important act approved in 2004 was the Land Law, or *Lei de Terras* (*Lei nº 9/04* of November 9, 2004).

[3] See correspondence between IPGUL's assignments and competencies in Articles 4 and 5 of the organic statute (in *Decreto nº 6/07*) – from which the next sentences are paraphrased extracts – and Articles 4 to 24 of LOTU.

[4] The notion of the spatial planning system, which encompasses more than its instruments, is introduced in Article 3 of the Spatial Planning Law (LOTU). In Chapter II (Articles 25 to 42) of the same law, the "structure of spatial planning" is laid out. It is in this chapter that the three levels of the system – national, provincial and municipal – are defined (see especially Articles 26 and 28) and the two types of instruments are characterized.

[5] The General Regulation for Urban and Rural Spatial Plans, or *Regulamento Geral dos Planos Territoriais, Urbanísticos e Rurais* (REPTUR), was published in *Decreto nº 2/06* of January 23, 2006. This expands on the notion of the spatial planning system (see Article 3 for an extended definition) and in Chapter II (Articles 29 to 119) organizes the different plans in its three levels as delimited in LOTU.

[6] See LOTU (Article 29) and REPTUR (Articles 31 to 51).

[7] See LOTU (Article 30) and REPTUR (Articles 52 to 62).

[8] To be sure, this is only a partial list of all the municipal spatial plans. See LOTU (Articles 31 to 33) and REPTUR (Articles 63 to 111).

[9] See LOTU (Articles 35 to 42).

operations (*operações urbanísticas*) was approved by the Council of Ministers on July 5th 2006, exactly one week prior to sanctioning the establishment of IPGUL.[10]

The institute was henceforth given constitutional and organizational capabilities for not only preparing all intermediate and lower level spatial plans in the Province of Luanda, but also administering the necessary planning operations for their implementation. Nowhere is this more evident than in its devised bureaucratic structure. In the letter of the law (i.e. the organic statute ratified by the Council of Ministers), IPGUL is organized in three functional clusters.[11] Led by the office of the General Director, the uppermost of these holds managerial and supervisory duties and comprises the Governing Board, the Fiscal Board and the Technical-Consultative Board. The whole second cluster is under the direct responsibility of the General Director and is constituted by three executive services: the Legal Office is in charge of the institute's juridical affairs; the Office of Information and Public Relations is in control of documentation procedures and communication matters; and the Office of Urban Buildings Inspection and Stopping Anarchic Constructions [*sic*] is the service responsible for development compliance the protection of land reserves.[12] These are all important bodies for supporting IPGUL's activities and safeguarding its institutional autonomy, but the core functions of the agency sit elsewhere in its organizational configuration. At the bottom of this structure, in the lowermost level of the institute's bureaucratic services, is where the means for preparing spatial plans and administering planning operations are more explicitly laid out.

Three departments constitute the third functional cluster in IPGUL's statute. In charge of logistics, human resources and budgetary control, the Department of Administration and Finance provides crucial support to the day-to-day activities of the institute, but it is in the remaining makeup of the cluster that IPGUL's mission comes to constitutional fruition. In order to undertake the fundamental tasks of planning and management, the statute devises two departments: DEPTUC and DPGUT. The first, the Department of Research, Spatial Planning, Urbanism and Cadastre, is primarily conceived to congregate research, planning and registering capabilities in order to coordinate, undertake or ensure the preparation of all spatial plans. The

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[10] The *Regulamento de Licenciamento das Operações de Loteamento, Obras de Urbanização e Obras de Construção* was promulgated and enacted by *Decreto nº* 80/06 of October 30, 2006, but the Council of Ministers had reviewed and approved it on July 5th. In the same way, the creation of IPGUL was approved on July 12th, but it would not be officially announced until January 2007. Two other important regulations also approved around this time were the *Regulamento Geral de Concessão de Terrenos* (enacted by *Decreto nº* 58/07 of July 13, 2007 but approved in the Council of Ministers on August 23, 2006) and the *Regulamento Geral de das Edificações Urbanas* (enacted by *Decreto nº 13/07* in February 2007 but approved in the Council of Ministers on September 27, 2006)*.* To be sure, *Angola Press* reported that IPGUL was actually created on the August 23rd meeting of the Council of Ministers. See "Regulamento de Concessão de Terras estabelece bases definidas na Lei," *Angola Press,* August 23, 2006.

[11] This is the subject of Chapter III (Articles 11 to 27) in IPGUL's organic statute (in *Decreto nº* 6/07 mentioned above). After clearly demarcating these three clusters in Article 11, the chapter proceeds by delineating the roles and responsibilities of each body. The General Director (*Director Geral*) is assisted by two Adjuncts in coordinating the means for IPGUL to achieve its goals and running day-to-day operations (see Article 12). The Governing Board (*Conselho Diretivo*) is the institute's collegial decision-making body (see Articles 13 and 14). The Fiscal Board (*Conselho Fiscal*) is entrusted with supervising IPGUL's activities (see Articles 15 to 18) and the Technical-Consultative Board (*Conselho Técnico-Consultivo*) fulfills an advisory role on technical matters (see Articles 19 and 20).

[12] The roles and responsibilities of each of these three services are delineated in the following articles of IPGUL's organic statute: Article 24 is dedicated to the Legal Office (*Gabinete Jurídico*), Article 25 to the Information and Public Relations Office (*Gabinete de Informação e Relações Públicas*), and Article 26 to the Office of Urban Buildings Inspection and Stopping of Anarchic Constructions (*Gabinete de Fiscalização das Edificações Urbanas e Estancamento das Construções Anárquicas*). The statute also foresaw the establishment of Local Services in each municipality (Article 29).

second, the Department of Projects, Urban Management and Traffic, is statutorily endowed with powers to oversee land development and urbanization initiatives (as well as capabilities to monitor traffic flows throughout the province) as means to guarantee the observance of those plans and the general compliance with their norms.[13] As the statute has it, it is then through the work of DEPTUC and DPGUT that IPGUL would fulfill its most significant responsibilities as the chief provincial apparatus in the spatial planning system. It would provide support for the elaboration and implementation of the different municipal master plans. It would take the lead in any specific plans for both the "regeneration of degraded urban areas" and the "urbanization of new areas". And, most importantly, it would prepare and execute the General Master Plan for the City of Luanda.[14]

This seems especially relevant for two key reasons. The first might be seen as strictly legalistic, while the second is afforded by ethnographic and historical insight. The General Master Plan, or *Plano Director Geral*, is envisioned in the Spatial Planning Law as the main structuring device for the development of large cities.[15] Beyond any discrepancies between written law and official action, the indisputable fact is that IPGUL is statutorily in charge of the chief governing apparatus for land use planning and urban management in the province. Perhaps more significant, however, is the enduring dominance of the modernist developmentalist project in the Angolan context. For the institute's assigned authority over the General Master Plan gains added relevance when considering the perfunctory and somewhat mythical reputation of the *Plano Director* as both the solution for the perceived chaotic present and the main modernizing thoroughfare in the direction of Luanda's urban future.[16]

In Luanda, both planning efforts and debates around them have more often than not revolved around *the* Master Plan. While there is certainly no agreement on what exactly this instrument is to determine, public and professional opinions tend to converge on its urgency. Despite even the countless unfulfilled promises of many earlier attempts to produce master plans or their recurrent failure to keep up with reality, convictions remain fairly unflinching. Without *Plano Director,* one also hears regularly amongst politicians and decision makers, the burgeoning city cannot escape its multiple crises. Deprived of orientation or a sense of direction, the activities of state planning are often undertaken as merely remedial mechanisms and rarely perceived as potentially transforming practices. But this enthusiasm for master planning is not new. In fact, it predates the independence of the country;[17] it persisted through almost three decades of war-led

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[13] The roles and responsibilities of each of these three departments are delineated in the following articles of IPGUL's organic statute: Article 21 is dedicated to the Department of Administration and Finance (*Departamento de Administração e Finanças*), Article 22 to DEPTUC (*Departamento de Estudos, Planeamento Territorial, Urbanismo e Cadastro*) and Article 23 to DPGUT (*Departamento de Projectos, Gestão Urbana e Tráfego*; Article 23).

[14] To be sure, the statute foresaw a body with many more responsibilities and, in particular, many more plans under its wings. IPGUL was, for example, to elaborate (or ensure the elaboration) of the Provincial Spatial Plan, rural plans or rehousing initiatives (See Articles 4 and 5). Nevertheless, the General Master Plan features quite prominently in the statute and is – in the letter of the law – unambiguously entrusted to its sole authority. See, for example, the very first paragraph of Article 4.

[15] See *Decreto nº* 2/06 of January 23, 2006, Articles 71 to 75.

[16] This feitishization of the master plan is, of course, far from being exclusive to Angola. See, for example, Flávio Villaça's work on the "illusions of the master plan" in the Brazilian context. Flávio Villaça, *As Ilusões do Plano Diretor*. São Paulo: Self-Published, 2005. See also Teresa Caldeira and James Holston, "Participatory Urban Planning in Brazil," *Urban Studies* 52 (11), 2015: 2001-2017.

[17] A number of plans and studies were produced in the last three decades of colonial rule. In 1942 Étienne de Groër and David Moreira da Silva designed the first Urbanization Plan for the City of Luanda. Between 1947 and 1949 João António Aguiar

migration and uncontrolled urban growth;[18] and it grew stronger in the current era of post-war modernization and unyielding rates of urban expansion.

From Legal Acts to Routine Actions: A Plan for a Chapter on Planning

This chapter is about the Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management. It is also about law, planning and the practices of the state. Considering the importance of *the* Master Plan in the context of the Angolan capital, it makes sense of IPGUL as the body nominally in charge of coordinating its elaboration. In doing so, it takes flight in the mid-1990s and it lands in its recent past. Once on the ground, with two feet in its Chicala headquarters, it delves briefly into the nuances of state formation and the humdrum of planning practices in contemporary Luanda.

Now that we have a general understanding of the institute's statutory mandate, the subsequent section charts the legal and institutional arenas out of which IPGUL emerged while providing a general overview of the main efforts to envision and frame the development of Luanda up to its creation in 2007. This gives insight into the highly contested institutional grounds in which IPGUL operates and opens way for the analysis that follows. Looking into some of the bureaucratic turf wars IPGUL was involved in between the mid-2010 and late 2011, the third part of this chapter offers an overarching interpretation of a time period during which the institute's authority was challenged, its statutory mission went unfulfilled and its responsibilities over urban development and the *Plano Director* arguably faded away. The objective here is to make sense of the volatility of particular forms of the state in striving to plan contemporary Luanda.

Which take us to the title of this chapter. *Confusão,* a descriptor commonly used in Angola to portray societal commotions and situations of turmoil with particular underpinning logics, is used here not as an indicator of disorder but as a means for capturing the perennial entanglement of law and bureaucratic ruling as well as the highly unstable conditions in which state planning operates in contemporary Luanda. Seen in this way, Luanda's planning *confusão* – like the torrent of decrees that sustains it – is not a dysfunctionality of the modern Angolan state but rather what makes it function in the way it does. Uncovering its specificities and repercussions

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headed a team from the Colonial Urbanization Office to prepare the General Plan for the Urbanization of Luanda. Between 1952 and 1964 at least four major studies for master planning were produced. In 1973, the last colonial plan was produced by OTAM, a French architectural consultancy. For an analysis of these plans see Tomás "Refracted Governmentality," 66-72. As he points out "although these plans were only partially implemented, looking at them comprehensively gives us a clear idea of how the city was imagined, the amount of planning that was executed, and the subsequent challenges to contemporary Luanda that they produced." (p. 71). For a comprehensive analysis of how Portuguese and European planning thought was reflected in the development of Angola see Maria Manuela da, Fonte, "Urbanismo e Arquitectura em Angola – de Norton de Matos à Revolução," (PhD Dissertation, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, 2006), 67-136. See also Leiria Viegas, "Luanda, Cidade (im)Previsível?" 53-70; and Isabel Maria Martins, "Luanda – a Cidade e a Arquitectura," (PhD Dissertation, Universidade do Porto, 2000), 261-265.

[18] In the first two decades of independent rule and the heyday of central planning, the idea of designing comprehensive and all-encompassing physical blueprints for the city was certainly not frowned upon amongst planners and urbanists. As I was able to verify in my research at the archives of the National Institute of Spatial Planning, in 1979 the National Directorate for Physical Planning received technical assistance from Cuba and other Soviet-bloc allies to produce a series of studies and preliminary proposals for a *Plano Director* that would replace the OTAM plan. But neither was its final elaboration ever carried out, nor were any of those suggestions implemented in any meaningful fashion. With the end of one-party rule, the formal inception of multiparty democracy and the liberalization of the economic system nothing changed in this respect. Even the Luanda Sul Program, despite a certain pro-market rhetoric of anti-planning had to adopt a master plan. If anything, as we will see below, the eagerness to produce a master plan seems to have only amplified in the 1990s and then more after the end of the civil war.

for planning practice is then an essential task for the analysis of urban development in contemporary Luanda.

With this in mind, the second half of this chapter descends from the legal entanglements upon which state planning is constituted to the particular logics of its forms and actions (or lack thereof). If the following two sections are filled with widely known characters and high-level administrative changeovers, the scope of the storyline in the later parts becomes more mundane and ordinary. Turning the spotlight from legal acts to routine actions, the analysis is distinctly informed by ethnographic research. The aim is to provide concise insight into the actual workings of the Angolan state. In that sense, the chapter departs from what the Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management is supposed to be doing to finish on what it actually does.

IN SEARCH OF THE MASTER PLAN: THE LONG FOUNDATION OF IPGUL

IPGUL was created during 2006, but its institutional memory predates the turn of the millennium. In an often-retold origin story, it all started when José Eduardo dos Santos visited Curitiba in the 1990s. Details and precise dates are never part of this founding myth, but there is indication of a 1996 visit to the Brazilian city. While its circumstances might be vague, it seems like the President travelled to Paraná with an entourage that included two prominent Angolan urbanists: Sita José, who at the time was Luanda's Vice-Governor for Technical Affairs and the then Vice-Minister of Public Works and Urbanism, Puna Zau.[19] Besides this rather circumstantial evidence, one thing we know for sure is that the Brazilian city was then already widely celebrated for its innovative urban solutions and could easily have caught the attention of a President openly worried with the "difficult situation" the Angolan capital was in.[20] According to what I have heard one too many times at IPGUL, not only was he well impressed with Curitiba's development accomplishments, he also took note of the fundamental role played by its Research and Urban Planning Institute in organizing, coordinating and monitoring the planning process. Or so the tale goes. Upon returning to Luanda, the story continues, dos Santos called in

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[19] I heard this story multiple times when I was at IPGUL and I saw it very succinctly reiterated on a USA Today supplement article about the institute (See *United World*, "Angola: Unlimited Potential, Bountiful Resources," One World Insert: Supplement to USA Today, February 208, 2011; see below for more on this piece), but I never attained specific information on it. Nevertheless, although online documentation is rather scarce, it seems like José Eduardo dos Santos did go to Curitiba in 1996. The evidence I was able to obtain is arguably not authoritative but it suggests that a visit did occur. On his website, a Brazilian historian remembers meeting him twice between 1995 and 1996: once in Rio and the other in Curitiba (see Jorge Ferradeira, "Angola a Recepção na Villa Rizzo," *Ferradeira Historiador* (blog), October 25, 2012). In addition to this, commenting on a AngoNotícias news report on Sita José, an engineer from Paraná recalls having met him alongside Puna Zau back in 1996, during a visit dos Santos had made to Curitiba (see Valdir Izidoro Silveira, comment on "Acreditado novo embaixador de Angola na UNESCO," *AngoNotícias*, October 6, 2009). There is also another set of facts that can be read as both giving credence to the story and adding another layer to it. 1996 was the year in which FESA (*Fundação Eduardo dos Santos*), the Eduardo dos Santos Foundation, was created; and FESA, of which both Sita José and Puna Zau have always been distinguished members (see *Órgãos de Gestão* on FESA's website), has had strong connections in Brazil since its early beginnings (in 1996, its president, Ismael Diogo da Silva was Angolan consul in Rio). Moreover, as a an organization that claims to devote itself to the pursuit of social, cultural and scientific progress in Angola, FESA has in fact had contacts with the IPPUC (*Instituto de Pesquisa Planejamento Urbano de Curitiba*), the Curitiba Research and Urban Planning Institute. In 2000, one of its directors was in Luanda to discuss the "problematic of urban planning and management in the context of economic and social development in Angola" during FESA's annual "technical-scientific meetings" (see No Title ["Os participantes nas quartas jornadas da Fundação Eduardo dos Santos..."], *Angola Press,* August 23, 2000). For more on FESA see Christine Messiant, "The Eduardo dos Santos Foundation: Or, how Angola's Regime is Taking Over Civil Society," *African Affairs* 100, 2001: 287-309; and Rafael Marques de Morais, "Presidential Self-Dealing Has Corrupted Society," *Maka Angola*, November 10, 2009.

[20] José Eduardo dos Santos preoccupation with Luanda in the mid-1990s is attestable in many ways. One particularly incisive is the speech with which this dissertation begins. See Introduction, above.

a meeting of urbanists at his Futungo compound and "set the wheels in motion to create IPGUL."[21]

The Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan

But Luanda was not untouched by planning efforts when President dos Santos allegedly marveled at the achievements the Curitiba Research and Urban Planning Institute. The Luanda Sul Program, as we have seen in the previous chapter, had been officially launched in November 1994 and in 1995 the World Bank committed to fund the preparation of a comprehensive land use plan for the burgeoning metropolitan area as well as define an institutional framework for its implementation. Commissioned to Dar Al-Handasah, a Lebanese design and engineering consultancy firm present in Angola since the late 1970s, the Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan was elaborated over a period of about two years and concluded in July 1997.[22] Prescribing general land use guidelines to regulate urban development up to 2010, the plan prioritized the establishment of an Urban Development Commission capable of specifying and enforcing the necessary procedures to manage urban growth. The new body would be directed by the Provincial Government and include the participation of different Government Ministries. But none this was made official when Dar Al-Handasah presented the final proposal. The top tiers of the local administration were in transition just as the Lebanese firm was wrapping up and the plan was shelved away in the midst of the renewal process.

Initiated under the governorship of Justino Fernandes, the preparation of the Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan was completed three months into Aníbal Rocha's tenure in office. If Sita José, who had collaborated closely with Dar Al-Handasah, was still at the helm of the province's Technical Affairs, a couple of months after the plan was presented he and the other two Vice-Governors were also substituted.[23] Perhaps more significantly, Aníbal Rocha's very first Program for the Provincial Government made no acknowledgment whatsoever of any endeavors to produce a general blueprint for the growth of the city. This was despite being approved by the Council of Ministers in June as set of priorities to address the challenges of "urban degradation" in the city center and the "anarchic use of land" in its peripheries; and despite pledging to take measures to "discipline" urban development as well as vowing "to

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[21] In *United World*, "Angola," 12.

[22] I was never able to access the seemingly "vast materials" produced in preparing what in Portuguese was called *Plano de Gestão do Crescimento Urbano de Luanda*, nor could I find the final report "published in July 1997." In any case, the abridged version of the plan published in *Resolução nº 27/00* of November 24, 2000 is the legally binding one. In addition to this, three other sources were used in this brief summary. The overview of "regional, city and local area development plans" made by Dar Al-Handasah in preparation for the Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo (see below) includes a short description of the plan as well as a "critical evaluation" of it in Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah, "Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo, Stage 1: Updating of Existing Situation and Review of Viable Alternatives" (Luanda, London and Cairo, July 2008), 37-39; the "prospective diagnosis" of the Strategic Charter of Luanda (see below) contains a summarizing table in Governo Provincial de Luanda and Intersismet, "Carta Estratégica de Luanda: Diagnóstico Prospectivo" (Luanda, November 2001), 66; and Jenkins, Robson and Cain devote some words to it on their 2002 city profile ("Luanda, 143). All non-assigned quotes on the following paragraph are taken from *Resolução nº 27/00*, where the never constituted Luanda Urban Development Commission is referred to with its English acronym: LUDC.

[23] Governor since March 1994 (*Decreto Presidencial nº 18/94* of March 18, 1994), Justino Fernandes was replaced by Aníbal Rocha in April 1997 (*Decretos Presidenciais nº 53* and 54/97 of April 10, 1997). Sita José was officially discharged of the Vice-Governor's office in October (*Decreto Presidencial nº 77/97* of October 3, 1997).

prepare the Master Plan for the Province."[24] While the politics behind such striking obliteration remain unexplained, the fact is that the official ratification of the 1997 Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan did not take place until much later.[25]

In fact, it took almost three years for the final version of the plan to reach the Council of Ministers and it was only seven months later – in November 2000 – that an abridged version made it to the country's Official Gazette, the *Diário da República*.[26] Downgrading it to a "study" while considering the "need to make it legally binding," the resolution issued by the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers approved its
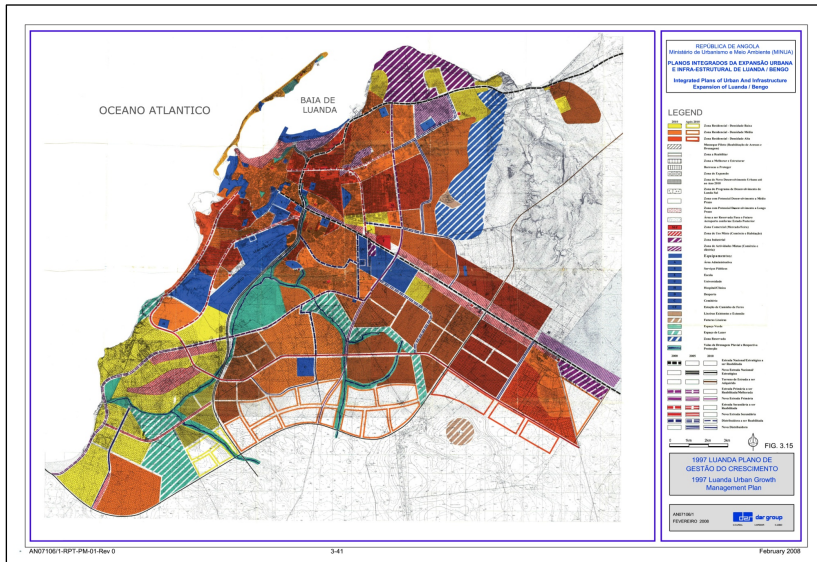

Fig. 2.1 1997 Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan.
In Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah 2008: 42.

land use guidelines for Luanda (and its expected expansion) as both the "basis for the elaboration of its Master Plan" and the code to be "observed" until its ratification. According to the Central Government's stipulations, all infrastructure and urbanization projects were from then on to follow the Urban Growth Management Plan's directives and the Provincial Government was made "accountable to the Council of Ministers" on their overall compliance. No Urban Development Commission was established, but the institutional responsibility stayed with the Provincial Government.

This, however, did not explain the delays or the apparent volte-face in the Governor's initial indifference towards the plan. Providing a reason for reviving a document that was aging fast in Dar Al-Handasah's offices might not have been seen as necessary at the time, but a justification was given to me in passing by a planning official in the former Directorate for Planning and

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[24] Approved by the Council of Ministers in June 4th 1997, this program opens with a description "brutal process of human aggression" that Luanda went through in the preceding 30 years. This depiction is quite instructive. For the purposes of this chapter, it provides insight into what the Provincial Government considered to be the problems that the city was faced with. The issues of urban degradation, infrastructural insufficiency or the so-called disordered/anarchic growth feature there quite prominently. See Governo Provincial de Luanda, "Programa do Governo Provincial de Luanda" (Luanda, June 1997), 5. See page 21 for the specification of measures in the realm of urban development and prioritization of the Master Plan.

[25] This does not mean that all of Dar Al-Handasah's plans were ignored. In fact, its so-called Plan for a Pilot Musseque in Sambizanga and Hoji-ya-Henda (see Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah, "Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo, Stage 1," 47-49), a project that was bundled together with the Urban Growth and Management Plan when this was later approved (see below), was sanctioned as a priority. See Governo Provincial de Luanda, "Programa do Governo Provincial de Luanda," 23-24.

[26] Through *Resolução nº* 27/00 of November 24, 2000.

Urban Management Services.[27] "It might have had something to do with what happened in the Boavista neighborhood," I was told.

In September 2000, after one of those downpours with which this chapter begins, three children died as a result of landslides in Boavista, one of the oldest and most central *musseques* in Luanda. The Provincial Government reacted immediately. According a press release issued hours after the incident, the consternation was profound and a dedicated team was set up to support the victims. In the same note, however, the local executive "took the opportunity" to urge all residents to comply with its building standards. The area where the landslide occurred was considered to be of risk by the authorities and any constructions in its vicinity had been prohibited. Speaking to the press on the day following the tragedy, Governor Aníbal Rocha reiterated the message. The accident had occurred, he explained, due to failure to observe the Provincial Government's guidelines. In addition to that, he pledged to fast-track projects to allocate land for "directed auto-construction" in order to prevent its encroachment and anarchic use.[28] While the April 2000 approval date on the official version of the Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan does not necessarily confirm my interlocutor's hypothesis, the fact that its publication only happened in November hints at it as a conceivable explanation for an otherwise unexplained "need" to transform an already outdated "study" into a legally binding document. Another possible reason could just be that, despite the unbroken commitment of the Provincial Government, no advancements had been made towards the preparation of an alternative plan.[29]

The Strategic Charter of Luanda

Be that as it may, Aníbal Rocha remained unsatisfied with what Dar Al-Handasah's land use guidelines had to offer. What he wanted, one of his collaborators told me in retrospect, was "a strong development agenda" for the region, a document that could provide "direction and guidance" to the Provincial Government. Having seen some of his longstanding demands for improved jurisdictional clarity and the decentralization of resources partially addressed by the nationwide institutional reforms of the preceding year, the Governor rounded up resources for

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[27] One issue that illustrates both the invalid premises of the plan and the differences with the Provincial Government's perspective has to do with population projections. Estimating a total population of 2.1 million in 1995, the Urban Growth Management Plan was drawn on a maximum projection of little more than 3 million in the year 2000, when it was actually published (see *Resolução nº 27/00*). But in early 1999, the Provincial Government was already talking about Luanda as a city that "in the last few years went from 2 to with 4 million inhabitants" (Governo Provincial de Luanda. "Programa Especial de Choque de Acção Social da Província de Luanda." Luanda, February 1999, 2). As we will see below, the idea that the Urban Growth Management Plan was manifestly outdated became widely accepted soon after it was approved.

[28] This incident set the stage for a wave of mass forced evictions in Luanda. According to Amnesty International, after the landslide "107 houses were reportedly registered for demolition, but as nowhere could be found to re-house the families they remained in Boavista." See Amnesty International, *Angola: Mass Forced Evictions in Luanda – a call for a human rights based housing policy,* AFR 12/007/2003 (London: Amnesty International, 2003), 7. When, however, new landslides occurred a location was rapidly secured (more on this below). For a media account of these landslides and the Provincial Government's reaction to them see No Title ["Pelo menos três pessoas morreram..."] and No Title ["O governador de Luanda, Aníbal Rocha..."] both published by *Angola Press* or September 7, 2000 (where all quotes in this paragraph are taken from). I should also add that the concept of "directed auto-construction" (in Portuguese: *autoconstrução dirigida*) is an often-repeated trope in Angolan urban policy making circles and part of the state's attempts "to bring informal construction under the administration's formal control" (in Gastrow, "Negotiated Settlements," 63) since the early 1980s.

[29] In its 1999 Budget Proposal, the Provincial Government once again included the intention of preparing a Regional Development Plan. See Governo Provincial de Luanda, "Proposta de Orçamento / 1999" (Luanda, February 1999).

preparing a strategic development program for the city.[30] The responsibilities of the Bureau for Research and Planning were revived and Intersismet, a Portuguese public management consulting company, was brought in to draft it in January 2001. Building on the physical parameters of the Urban Growth Management Plan, the Strategic Charter of Luanda would outline a set of priority programs to guide social and economic development, and shape further planning activities in the province.[31] Its elaboration, however, took place during a momentous and defining period in the recent history of the city. In the words of the BBC correspondent at the time, "the biggest *confusão* that Luanda had seen in years."[32]

On Sunday, April 15th another heavy downpour hit Luanda and Boavista was once again afflicted by tragedy. Eleven people were reported dead, eight of which due to further landslides in that neighborhood, and the authorities reacted promptly and more energetically than they had the year before.[33] On the following day the President himself created a dedicated commission to deal with the calamity and before the end of the month the Provincial Government began "preparing 250 hectares of land in Viana" to provide shelter for "nearly six thousand families" then living in Boavista. The registration process began in June and between July and September an estimated four thousand families were forced out of their houses and taken to a location more than 30Km away from central Luanda. Once in Zango, the Provincial Government gave them tents and promises of development jam-packed in kits of building materials.[34]

Faced with a rapidly contained and yet fairly unprecedented type of internal contestation as well as a rising international outcry, in mid-October President dos Santos gathered up a working group to organize an alternative scheme to house the displaced families and in early November the Emergency Housing Program was established.[35] Although the Provincial Government was officially kept in charge of it, two other organizations were brought in to facilitate a speedier response and expand its scope. The Eduardo dos Santos Foundation took a leading role in contracting building companies to fulfill its objectives, while the Office for Special Works

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[30] The *Decreto Lei nº 17/99* of October 29, 1999 and the *Decreto nº 27/00* of May 19, 2000 provided new legal groundings for restructuring the Provincial Governments.

[31] See Governo Provincial de Luanda and Intersismet, "Carta Estratégica de Luanda: Diagnóstico Prospectivo" (Luanda, November 2001) and Governo Provincial de Luanda and Intersismet, "Carta Estratégica de Luanda: Estratégia de Ordenamento e Desenvolvimento." (Luanda, February 2002).

[32] In Justin Pearce, *An Outbreak of Peace: Angola's Situation of Confusion* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2005), 15.

[33] See No Title ["Pelo menos onze pessoas morreram..."], April 15, 2001, *Angola Press* and No Title ["Vinte e oito famílias, das 117 que correm perigo na zona da Boavista..."], *Angola Press*, April 16, 2011. See also No Title ["O governo da província de Luanda esta a preparar 250 hectares de terra em Viana..."], *Angola Press*, April 28, 2011, where the quotes on the following sentence are taken from. The beginning of the registration process is reported on No Title ["O governo da província de Luanda registou já cerca de duas mil e 500 famílias..."], *Angola Press* June 2, 2001.

[34] The registration and relocation process was highly contested and those contestations were strongly repressed. For a first-hand account of the forced evictions see "Luanda's evicted neighborhood," *BBC News*, July 30, 2001; and Pearce *An Outbreak of Peace*, 15-19. See also Amnesty International. *Angola: Mass Forced Evictions in* Luanda, 6 and Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," 96-97. For *Angola Press*'s accounts on the conflicts, contestations and the relocation process see No Title ["O Vice-Governador de Luanda para a área social, Simão Paulo..."], *Angola Press,* July 1, 2001 and No Title ["O governo prosseguirá o realojamento dos moradores das barrocas da Boavista..."], *Angola Press,* September 7, 2001.

[35] See Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," 97-99. See also No Title ["O presidente angolano, José Eduardo dos Santos, defendeu..."], *Angola Press,* October 30, 2001 and No Title ["Cerca de 20 casas serão brevemente construídas por dia no Zango, Terra Nova II, Bita e Sapú..."], *Angola Press,* November 26, 2001.

magnified its reach by adding in the rehousing goals of the Cidade Alta rehabilitation project.[36] According to a press release issued on the day of its approval, the Emergency Housing Program pledged to build 7500 houses in four different locations over a period of 18 months.[37]

These numbers would not be observed, but the changes significantly transformed the landscape of urban development. Most noticeably, the first stone was set for what would become the largest social housing project in the country as well as one of the most significant components in the socio-spatial reorganization of Luanda.[38] Perhaps less prominently, the Office for Special Works, which in the lead up to the establishment of the Emergency Program saw its organic statute and program finally ratified into law, received a critical boost just as the "prospective diagnosis" for the Provincial Government's Strategic Charter was being finalized.[39] If, as we have seen in Chapter 1, the agency commonly known as GOE[40] contributed decisively for the erosion of the Luanda Sul Program, its consolidation across the institutional apparatus of planning and urban development in the capital advanced the demise of the Provincial Government's authority over key decisions for the future of the city.
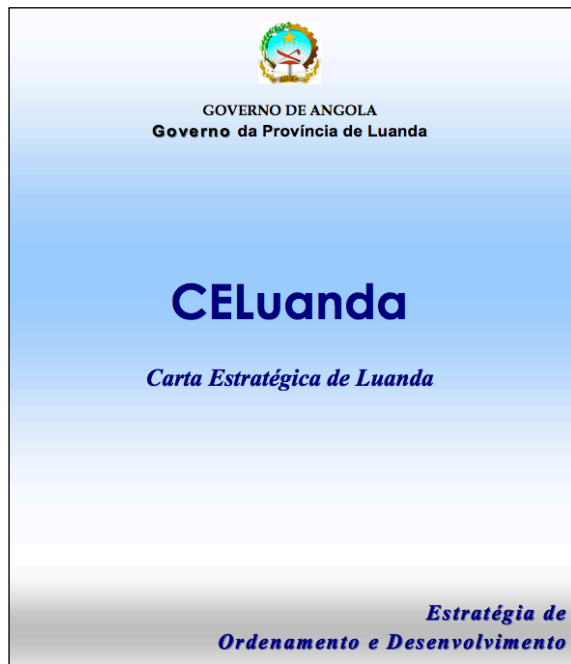
Fig. 2.2 2002 Strategic Charter of Luanda.
Selection from cover on GPL and Intersismet 2002.

In order to understand how GOE carved its space in the domain of plan making in contemporary Luanda, let us consider the following. After the Boavista disaster, between the end of 2001 and the beginning of 2002 (and just as the civil war was finally drawing to a close), two interconnected working groups were created to deal with spatial planning issues. Officially established by Eduardo dos Santos in January, the first was entrusted with "the harmonization of the draft laws on land and spatial planning" as well as the elaboration of complementary regulations and the formulation of guidelines for new governmental bodies to oversee and enforce their implementation. This was coordinated by Carlos Feijó, the Presidential Advisor for Regional and Local Affairs and constituted by four representatives of the Central Government, one member of the Provincial Government of Luanda, and two others from

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[36] See Chapter 1 for more on the Office for Special Works. Its director at the time was Puna Zau, who – as we have seen above already – was a member of the Eduardo dos Santos Foundation. See *Despacho nº 5/00 of October 17, 2000.*

[37] See Comissão Permanente do Conselho de Ministros, Press Release, November 07, 2001.

[38] See Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola," for a comprehensive study of the Zango project.

[39] The Strategic Charter's Prospective Diagnosis was concluded in November (see Governo Provincial de Luanda and Intersismet, "Carta Estratégica de Luanda: Diagnóstico Prospectivo"). The referred ratifications happened through *Decreto nº 57/01* and *Resolução nº 12/01 of September 21, 2011.* To be sure, both government acts had been approved by the Council of Ministers in mid-May.

[40] *Gabinete de Obras Especiais.*

GOE.[41] More elusive and much less talked about, the Technical Group to Reflect on Urban Planning in the City of Luanda was established under the auspices of the Office for Special Works. This group fell under the responsibility of Sita José, the former Vice-Governor who had accompanied José Eduardo dos Santos to Curitiba in 1996 and one of GOE's representatives in Carlos Feijó's working group.[42] The aim here was to update the Urban Growth Management Plan, to redefine the main tenets of land use planning and to eventually elaborate the Master Plan of Luanda. From the perspective of Aníbal Rocha's efforts to build a developmental agenda within the Provincial Government, this was undoubtedly debilitating. These emerging formations at the very top of the state hierarchy, particularly the establishment of a Luanda-focused team, meant that when in February 2002 the final draft of the Strategic Charter was ready to go up the chain of command, the preparation of an entirely different regional scheme was already underway.

The Strategic Plan for the Luanda Metropolitan Area

Regardless of what GOE began plotting for the future of the capital, Aníbal Rocha always stood by the Strategic Charter. He pushed for its draft to be finalized in the beginning of 2002. When in early April the President discharged him of his duties in Luanda, the then already designated Governor of Cabinda made sure to include it in the files ceremoniously handed over to Simão Paulo on the day before his inauguration.[43] But the new Governor never formally approved it and its proposals were rapidly forgotten. This does not mean, however, that development and planning were suddenly out of everyone's minds in the Provincial Government. In fact, anxieties over urban growth and spatial planning concerns remained much the same.

Similar to what the 1997 Program for the Provincial Government had diagnosed, the new provincial executive identified the extensive and anarchic use of land" as "the main issue faced by province."[44] Except that, contrary to what had happened when Aníbal Rocha came to power,

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[41] See *Despacho nº* 1/02 of January 28, 2002, where Graciano Domingos is listed as the representative of the Provincial Government of Luanda, and Sita José and Manuel N'Zangui represent GOE. Notice as well that Carlos Feijó had been nominated for Presidential Advisor on the same day that Puna Zau was appointed as the director of the Office for Special Works. See *Decreto Presidencial nº* 33/00 and *Despacho nº* 5/00 of October 17, 2000, and days before the Luanda Urban Growth Management Plan made it to the *Diário da República,* Angola's Official Gazette.

[42] Despite the elusiveness of this Luanda-focused working group, *Resolução nº* 6/03 of March 14, 2003 (see below) provides indisputable evidence of its existence (it is called in there *Grupo Técnico de Reflexão sobre o Planeamento da Cidade de Luanda*) as well as the short description of its aims briefly summarized in the following sentence. In what concerns its relationship with Carlos Feijó's working group, in addition to Sita José, the Provincial Government representative – Graciano Domingos – was the same in both groups. It seems therefore reasonable to infer that the second was an offshoot of the first or at least that they were closely related. See recent biographies on Graciano Domingos (e.g. "Governador é empossado," *Jornal de Angola*, September 13, 2014.), who in the beginning of 2003 became Vice-Minister of Urbanism and Environment (*Decreto Presidencial nº* 11/03 of January 10, 2003) and is now the Governor of Luanda (*Decreto Presidencial nº* 262/14 of September 18, 2014*).

[43] On April 2nd 2002, little more than a month after Jonas Savimbi was confirmed dead and days before the Luena Memorandum of Understanding put an end to the civil war, President dos Santos undertook a Cabinet reshuffle in which Aníbal da Rocha was sent to Cabinda and his Vice-Governor in Luanda, Simão Paulo, was promoted to Governor. Diógenes Oliveira, the other Vice-Governor – and, according to what I was told, great supporter of the Strategic Charter – was also exonerated. On the governmental reshuffles see *Decretos Presidenciais nº* 19, 22, 23, 26, 27 of April 2, 2002. On the formal handover of responsibilities see No Title ["A cerimónia de passagem de pastas..."], *Angola Press,* April 10, 2002.

[44] See *Programa de Melhoramento e Aumento da Oferta de Serviços Sociais Básicos às Populações da Província de Luanda* or Program for Improving and Increasing the Supply of Basic Services in the Province of Luanda, in *Resolução nº* 6/03 of March 14, 2003.

this was done while relinquishing the Provincial Government's authority over key spatial planning decisions (and even the preparation of the Master Plan) in favor of the central government and the Technical Group to Reflect on Urban Planning in the City of Luanda. Seemingly uncontested by Simão Paulo, the transfer of planning capabilities became symbolically cemented little more than three months into his governorship, when the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers met in the headquarters of the Provincial Government. Chaired by President dos Santos, not only was this a meeting to discuss and approve a program that confirmed the Provincial Government's capitulation of planning power, it was also intended as a public session for the Technical Group to offer some initial thoughts and "collect information" for its endeavors. Sitting in the audience in their own building, Simão Paulo and all his high-rank managers saw GOE's director Puna Zau and Sita José present a preliminary version of the Strategic Plan for the Development and Rehabilitation of the Luanda Metropolitan Area.[45]

They too were worried with the growth of the city capital and its *musseque* areas, but it was its formidable pace that motivated them to devise a new plan. In the prior three decades, Sita José informed the public with apparent gravitas, land occupancy in Luanda had gone up from 20 square kilometers to nearly 270. For the Technical Group this meant not only that urban deterioration was spreading very quickly, but also that land reserves were being compromised. In fact, what they saw as the "rapid and uncontrolled expansion" of the city was pronounced as being "so extensive as to render the 1997 Urban Growth and Management Plan largely obsolete."[46] Furthermore, their diagnosis identified the absence of a local authority capable of coordinating government activity throughout the entire region and the lack of a clear land use policy as two other major difficulties that planning had to deal with.

The initial solutions presented for these problems included countrywide initiatives such as setting up a new legal framework for planning, which was Carlos Feijó's working group's main incumbency, and improving the attractiveness of other provinces in order to relieve demographic pressures
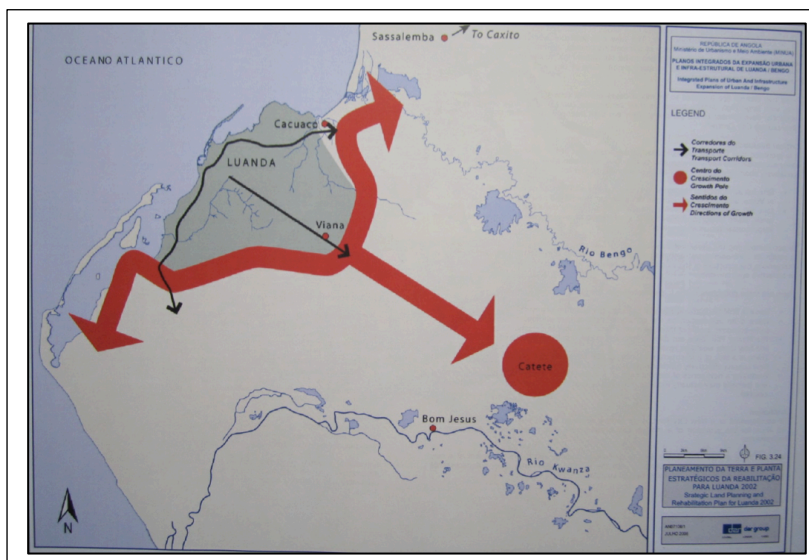
Fig. 2.3 2002 Strategic Plan for the Luanda Metropolitan Area.
In Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah 2008: 43.

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[45] See No Title ["O Plano Estratégico de Requalificação e Desenvolvimento da Zona Metropolitana de Luanda..."], *Angola Press*, July 17, 2002 and *Resolução nº* 6/03 of March 14, 2003, in which this two-year Program (2003/2005) is approved. Between July and November 2002, the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers travelled across the country to approve Programs for Improving and Increasing the Supply of Basic Services for all the provinces. In 2007 all programs, including Luanda's, were approved together by the Council of Ministers, in Luanda (see *Resolução nº* 108/07 of December 26, 2007, pg. 2501-2511 for Luanda's).

[46] See Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah, "Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo, Stage 1," 40.

on Luanda, as well as some general directives for the province. With a programmatic scope extending 70Km out from central Luanda, the Strategic Plan was to encourage private investment in the rehabilitation of run-down areas or to foster development (i.e. protect them from encroachment) along three "service corridors or channel areas" spreading all the way to Caxito, Catete and the Kwanza River Mouth.

But the work of GOE's Technical Group never translated into the type of master planning blueprint that was initially intended. Instead it remained a cursory study on the expansion of the city and a declaration of intent for its future. Nevertheless, when in December 2002 Sita José returned to his old post of Vice-Governor for Technical Affairs[47] all previous schemes had been unofficially overridden and the aspirations of the Strategic Plan had become a go-to reference for planning the development of Luanda.[48] In fact, his spell in Simão Paulo's Provincial Government was partially marked by the solidification of GOE's metropolitan ambitions and the emergence of the idea of the "new city" as a viable solution for "stopping anarchic constructions and contributing for planed urban growth" in the Angolan capital. In addition to the progresses of the Luanda Sul Program in Talatona or the advancements made in housing projects such as Zango, Panguila or Nova Vida,[49] the Provincial Government's "project for the construction of a new satellite city" became a staple element in discussions about the future of the city. This program to "connect the margins of rivers Kwanza and Bengo" was as elusive as the Strategic Plan itself, but a series of contracts were actually signed for its development.[50] But Sita José and the first executive in office after the end of the civil war did not last long in the Provincial Government.

The Plan for the New City of Luanda

In January 2004, the Central Government interceded directly in the Provincial Government over concerns with the "pronounced deterioration of Luanda's main infrastructures" and the "substantial decline in the quality of key basic services."[51] Simão Paulo and both his Vice-Governors were dismissed and an Administrative Commission led by Higinio Carneiro, the

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[47] See *Despacho Presidencial n° 146/02* of December 11, 2002.

[48] Similarly to what happened with the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan, I was never able to access the so-called Strategic Plan for the Development and Rehabilitation of the Luanda Metropolitan Area or *Plano Estratégico de Requalificação e Desenvolvimento da Zona Metropolitana de Luanda*. In any case, it is unclear how developed this document really was. On their analysis of it, from where most of the information in the following summary was obtained, the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment and Dar Al-Handasah point out that despite identifying a development strategy "that focuses on three Growth Corridors", the plan "is not supported by further detail." In Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah, "Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo, Stage 1," 40-41.

[49] In Panguila, for example, the President of the Republic inaugurated a "one-thousand houses residential complex" in January 2003. See No Title ["Um complexo residencial composto por mil casas foi inaugurado hoje, na localidade do Panguila..."], *Angola Press*, January 24, 2003.

[50] See No Title ["Um acordo para a execução de estudos e projectos urbanísticos..."], *Angola Press*, May 2, 2003. See also No Title ["O Governo da Província de Luanda entregou nesta quinta-feira ao Ministério das Obras Públicas..."], *Angola Press*, June 3, 2003; No Title ["O Governo da Província de Luanda anunciou hoje que está a preparar cerca de oitenta mil talhões..."] *Angola Press*, August 20, 2003. This is also related to contracts with Perkins and Will, who end up developing the plan for the UAN campus as well as Dar Al-Handasah's plans in Camama and Cazenga.

[51] See *Despacho n° 1/04* of January 20, 2004, where this language comes from. As *Jornal de Angola* reported at the time, Simão Paulo and his executive had become the target of great criticism after several months of visible problems in the garbage collection system. See "Higinio Carneiro coordena administração da província de Luanda," *Jornal de Angola*, January 19, 2004, in Centro de Documentação e Informação, *Extractos da Impressa Angolana Sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, January 2004), 18-19. Simão Paulo was dismissed through *Decreto Presidencial n° 1/04* of January 20, 2004 and Sita José through *Decreto Presidencial n° 3/04* of January 20, 2004.

Minister of Public Works, was given full governorship powers for a period of six months.[52] Its mandate ended up being extended for another 180 days and a new coordinator was appointed in October. Job Capapinha accumulated his duties in the Provincial Government with the position of Vice-Minister of Youth and Sports until the beginning of 2005, when the Commission's second term came to an end and he became the Governor of Luanda, closing out an exceptional year in the Mutamba Palace.[53] Even if all provincial executives were (and continue to be) appointed by the President, in 2004 the Provincial Government was not just a "deconcentrated organ of the central administration" – it was the Central Government itself.[54]

The Administrative Commission made important changes to how urban growth was to be managed – not least of which were the restrictions put on the Municipal Administrations' planning powers or the intended revitalization of the Directorate of Planning and Urban Management Services led by Hélder José's appointment to the head office[55] – but they were only part of a wider institutional shift in the realms of planning and urban development. In addition to the official ratification of the two aforementioned framing acts – the Spatial Planning Law and the Land Law – 2004 saw some of the capital's governing structures being transformed under the pen of the Central Government. Three separate occurrences deserve our attention in this respect.[56] Before even the fall of Simão Paulo, the Council of Ministers issued a decree to regularize the Nova Vida urbanization project, a ruling under which its 430 hectares were "detached" from their jurisdiction and "transferred for the private domain" of the National Housing Institute, an agency under the tutelage of the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment.[57] In mid-June, one month before the Administrative Commission got reassigned for another six-

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[52] In *Despacho nº* 1/04 of January 20, 2004 the Administrative Commission was given three specific tasks – to come up with a new political-administrative division, to propose the reorganization of the Provincial Government's services, and to adopt measures to improve the provision of basic services – but one month into the six-month term there was the need to clarify the initial dispatch and determine that its coordinator was "to exercise the powers" of the Governor as they were provided by law. See *Despacho nº* 3/04 of February 23, 2004.

[53] See *Despacho nº* 7/04 of June 25, 2004 and *Despacho nº* 13/04 of October 15, 2004. Job Capapinha was a member of the Administrative Commission since its inception. When he became the coordinator, his substitute was Francisca do Espírito Santo. As we will see below, once he became the Governor, she was nominated as Vice-Governor.

[54] The regime under which the local government, including provincial governments, operated was at the time determined by *Decreto Presidencial nº* 17/99 of October 29, 1999. The quote used in this sentence is from paragraph 1 in Article 2.

[55] These restrictions began in April, when Higinio Carneiro issued a dispatch banning the Municipal Administrations from issuing building licenses. Reportedly aimed at "putting an end to anarchic construction" (see "Administrações Municipais de Luanda proibidas de emitirem licenças de construção," *Angola Press*, April 16, 2004), this also determined that all licensing processes were from then on under the direct responsibility of the Provincial Government. Statutorily, this meant that they were under authority of the Directorate for Planning and Urban Management Services, which would later be renewed as part of a reshuffle undertaken by Job Capapinha "in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Provincial Government's performance" (**"**Job Capapinha procede a remodelações," *Angola Press*, November 25, 2004). It was after this reshuffle that land concessions by the Municipal Administrations were also prohibited. Like in the case of construction licensing, all requests had to be forwarded to the Directorate for Planning and Urban Management Services ("Governo de Luanda proíbe cedência de terrenos pelas administrações municipais," *Angola Press*, December 9, 2004.).

[56] One relevant instance in this respect was the proposal to create Belas municipality made in the first few weeks after the Administrative Commission took over. While this would not happen until 2011 (see Lei nº 17/11 of April 21, 2011), the rational for the idea is worth noticing. As it was said in the Council of Ministers meeting in which this was discussed, "to the south of Luanda there is an area with potential for urban growth, endowed with infrastructure networks that are independent from those of the old city, which can be subject of separate management." See No Title ["O Conselho de Ministros decidiu criar um novo município, com o nome de Belas..."], *Angola Press*, January 30, 2004.

[57] See *Decreto nº* 7/03 and *Resolução nº* 1/04 of February 3, 2004. These decrees were issued in February 2004, but their approval took place in the beginning of January of the same year. First planned in the late 1990s, Nova Vida was the first governmental housing project to be erected in post-war period and a precursor to Cidade do Kilamba.

months at the helm of the Provincial Government, the already "detached" 517 hectares of the Futungo de Belas were officially turned into a Tourist Development Area under direct dependence of the Central Government.[58] And finally, in October 2004, just as Job Capapinha took over the Administrative Commission and Sita José became Minister of Urbanism and Environment, the Office for National Reconstruction was established "under the authority of the President" and the leadership of Manuel Vieira Dias Kopelipa, the Head of his Military House.[59]

Created to coordinate, oversee and manage reconstruction initiatives throughout the entire country – most of which were at the time being increasingly contracted to Chinese companies via oil-backed credit lines – the scope of the Office for National Reconstruction went well beyond the capital.[60] Nevertheless, its significance in reconfiguring official modes of regulation in the development of contemporary Luanda cannot be overstated. The GRN, as the state agency came to be known, was responsible for a number of "structuring projects" across and beyond the city. In the year following its establishment, these were mainly devised through contracts mediated by the China International Fund. They included rehabilitation works in five municipalities, various infrastructural improvements, an EPC agreement for the New International Airport, as well as the construction of 120 thousand housing units throughout the province and the concomitant elaboration of yet another large-scale urban plan for Luanda and its expansion.[61]

Fig. 2.4 2006 Plan for the New City of Luanda.
In Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah 2008: 45.

Commissioned to the Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning and Design Institute

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[58] See *Decreto nº* 52/04 of July 23, 2004. See also Chapter 1.

[59] The Office for National Reconstruction, or *Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional* (GRN) was created by *Decreto-Lei nº* 6/04 of October 22, 2004. Days after, in a cabinet reshuffle that included Sita José's nomination to the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment (in *Decreto Presidencial nº* 26/04 of October 26, 2004), Kopelipa was appointed as its director (in *Decreto Presidencial nº* 35/04 of October 26, 2004).

[60] As established by *Decreto-Lei nº* 6/04, the GRN was to operate with considerable autonomy and a short list of rather unspecified responsibilities, including the harmonization of public and private interests in promoting reconstruction initiatives and the articulation with the Ministry of Finance in order to ensure the means to carry them out. For a detailed account of "the rise" of the GRN in the context of the relationship between Angola and China see Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency,* 131-134.

[61] As we will see in Chapter 3, on October 20, 2004 – the same day the GRN was created – the Council of Ministers sanctioned the Framework Agreement for the Strategic Public-Private Partnership between the Republic of Angola and the People's Republic of China, or *Acordo Quadro de Parceria Público-Privada entre a República de Angola e a República Popular da China* (in *Resolução nº* 31/04 of November 15, 2004). This is a brief act where nothing is specified. Almost two years later, however, *Resolução nº* 61/06 of September 4, 2006 approves these and other "contracts signed, within the auspices of the National Reconstruction Program, with the Popular Republic of China". They come also listed on China International Fund's website, under "projects." In my interviews with GRN affiliated professionals, I was told that more than half of the houses to be built under the contract for the construction of 215 500 housing units listed in *Resolução nº* 61/06 was intended for Luanda.

and the Urban Planning and Design Institute of Shenzhen, the 2006 Plan for the New City of Luanda, which was to include "proposals for management, development and urban planning," [62] sidelined the existing city and contemplated the development of an immediately contiguous but entirely different one. Dubbing all of Luanda's formal and informal neighborhoods as well as vast areas of sparsely occupied peri-urban land as *historic*, the master plan foresaw a spaced out network of high-density *modern* urban centers stretched out across a total area of about 780 square kilometers. The New City was to be located south of Luanda Sul,[63] beyond what was en route to become the outer ring expressway and going all the way down the Kwanza River and the Quiçama Natural Park. In the West it would by limited by a large mixed-use economic pole facing the ocean, while in the East it was to comprise an industrial hub located along the Catete road and right next to the projected new airport. Expected to achieve a final population of over seven million people, the scheme involved the initial construction of 600 thousand new housing units, including the 120 thousand that had already been contracted out through the China International Fund, and was therefore formulated not only as a mere reconstruction initiative but also as a means for economic resurgence. Its drive was as grandiose as its spatial vision and as potentially removed from the Angolan experience as its whole approach.

Like the preliminary proposals the Master Plan put forward, the process for its elaboration seems to have entirely circumvented existing governance structures. In fact, when seen from the perspective of those working in the Directorate of Planning and Urban Management Services at the time, the procedures went mostly unnoticed. If GOE worked apart from the Provincial Government, the GRN planned away from it. Despite the lack of specification, the Plan for the New City of Luanda was a marker of how planning efforts were increasingly focusing on the idea of developing anew and expanding towards the south of the city. Adjudicated as part of the technical negotiations for the development of housing projects in 24 different cities that in 2005 took place between a handful of GRN-affiliated urban planners and representatives of the China International Fund,[64] its preparation was undertaken independently of any other efforts to plan or control urban development in the capital. Even if some of those efforts were ostensibly becoming more targeted.

From the Need to Face the Urban Crisis to the Creation of IPGUL

In a period of continued urban expansion and rising investments in housing and the built environment, both the Central and the Provincial Governments were in fact seeking to reinforce the means, tools and methods of urban planning in Luanda. In January 2005, for example, the President considered "the need to define new criteria for organizing and building new neighborhoods and cities" in establishing a Technical Commission for regulating both mortgage lending and the mechanisms of urban planning and management.[65] Now at the highest office in the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment, Sita José remained concerned with the "imbalance" contained in "the fact that Luanda hosts about a third of the country's population." Speaking to the press after a ceremony held in the Mutamba Palace to officially introduce the instruments of

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[62] According to the specifications of *Resolução n° 61/06* of September 4, 2006.

[63] I am referring here not just to Talatona, but the entire area once covered by the Luanda Sul Program (see Chapter 1).

[64] In the next chapter we will analyze these more closely.

[65] See *Despacho n° 2/05* of January 21, 2005.

the recently ratified Spatial Planning Law in the Province of Luanda,[66] he considered the conditions for the implementation of what was the only legally binding plan for the capital – the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan – to be finally created. The next step, he affirmed in line with the plan's stipulations, was to establish a "political and technical structure" capable of coordinating its implementation.[67]

In the meantime, as the Provincial Government regained its ordinary institutional status and Job Capapinha was appointed Governor,[68] a search for more immediate mechanisms to cope with what built environment professionals were increasingly characterizing as a full-fledged "urban crisis"[69] began. In February 2005, for example, one week after Sita José's ceremony at the Provincial Government headquarters, the Directorate of Planning and Urban Management Services organized a housing fair directed not just at those directly involved in the urban development process but also at the general populace. The objective was to encourage everyone "to see housing as the culmination of a complex of spatial planning" as well as "to begin defining a development model" for the province. Held under the motto "for a better Luanda may we fight anarchic constructions," the three-day event included a conference about the Spatial Planning Law, a presentation on the Strategic Plan for the Luanda Metropolitan Area as well as the release of a Citizenship Handbook for Obtaining and Using Land aimed at raising awareness for the importance of improving the city's image.[70] Throughout the following months a number of commissions and working groups were created to deal with a variety of urban issues,[71] and the Directorate of Planning and Urban Management Services gradually tightened up its procedures.[72]

Perhaps more important, however, were the joint appointments of Bento Soito for the office of Vice-Governor for Technical Affairs and André Mingas as Advisor to the President of the Republic on Local and Regional Issues.[73] Together with the Governor, a representative of the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment and another from the GRN, they would comprise a Technical Commission with "the objective of analyzing in advance *all* Urban Development

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[66] The Spatial Planning Law, as we have seen above, was ratified in June 2004. It should be noticed, however, that it would take another year for these instruments to be regulated. This happened, as we have also seen already, through *Decreto nº* 2/06 of January 23, 2006.

[67] See "Luanda deve-se reestruturar para assumir papel de capital," and "Governo poderá realojar populações em zonas de risco fora de Luanda," *Angola Press*, February 14, 2005.

[68] As we have seen above, Job Capapinha was the coordinator of the Administrative Commission. Just as he became Governor, Francisca do Espírito Santo was nominated as Vice-Governor. See *Decretos Presidenciais nº* 3/05, 14/05 and 8/05 of January 27, 2005.

[69] See, for example, "Luanda vive crise urbana," *AngoNotícias*, September 16, 2005, where the President of the Angolan Architects Association, António Gameiro, regrets the lack of a plan to deal with this crisis.

[70] See "Governo da Província realiza primeira Feira da Casa," *Angola Press*, February 16, 2005. See also "GPL anuncia fim das construções anárquicas," *Folha 8*, March 12, 2005, in Centro de Documentação e Informação, *Extractos da Impressa Angolana Sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, March 2005), 23.

[71] See, for example, "Criada Comissão Sectorial para adjudicação de obras públicas," *Angola Press*, April 25, 2005; "Governador de Luanda cria comissão para trabalhar no saneamento básico da baixa," *Angola Press*, August 8, 2005; "Criado grupo de trabalho para propor melhorias nos transportes," *Angola Press*, September 8, 2005; "GPL cria comissão para garantir oferta de serviços básicos à população," *Angola Press,* January 20, 2006.

[72] See, for example, "Munícipes de Luanda têm 72 horas para remover estruturas precárias," *Angola Press*, March 30, 2006; and "Cidadãos devem requerer terrenos no Governo Provincial de Luanda," *Angola Press*, July 25, 2006.

[73] See *Despachos Presidenciais nº* 17/05 and 18/05 of March 7, 2005.

Projects in the Province of Luanda."[74] Its main tasks were to prepare its own urban development projects; to analyze and issue opinions on any other urban development schemes; and to present proposals for improving urban planning in the Province of Luanda. At a time when a slew of legislation aimed at regulating the spatial planning system and modernizing the means for development control were being finalized,[75] one of these proposals was for the creation of IPGUL. On July 12, 2006,[76] the Council of Ministers reviewed and approved the organic statute and on February 6, 2007 formally established the public institute.[77] It was in considering not just "the problems of demographic overload and urban chaos in the Country's capital," but also "the need to stimulate the implementation of the Spatial Planning Law" and "the imperative of promoting the administrative decentralization of the State," that a dedicated apparatus for planning and urban management in Luanda was deemed urgent. Specifically entrusted with the responsibility of implementing the master plan for the entire province, IPGUL was created under the tutelage of the Provincial Government, "without prejudice to the powers of the Central Government" to oversee and guide its activities. Days after its establishment, Governor Job Capapinha appointed Francisco Miguel José as General Director and Manuel Mangueira and Hélder José as Assistant Directors.[78] As he swore them in, Capapinha denounced the illegal sale of land under the watch of public officials in various municipalities and called upon the new institute to collaborate with the municipal administrations, so the different tiers of the local state could "work together in promoting urban planning and management and denouncing illegal land sellers."[79]

"CITIES CANNOT BE EXPLAINED"

Four years after the creation of IPGUL – on February 28, 2011 – the *USA Today* included a supplement entitled "Angola: Unlimited Potential, Bountiful Resources." Produced by United World, a London-base media communications agency that prides itself on "delivering timely, credible information to a sophisticated American audience," the 16-page pullout was part of an ongoing series of inserts dubbed Our World. In fulfilling the agency's aim of "making the changing world more understandable, while highlighting many new business opportunities in

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[74] See *Despacho n° 7/05* of June 3, 2005. Initially coordinated by André Mingas, in November it was put under the responsibility of the Minister of Territorial Administration, Virgílio Ferreira de Fontes Pereira. See *Despacho n° 25/05* of November 10, 2005.

[75] As we have seen above already, the General Regulation for Urban and Rural Spatial Plans, or *Regulamento Geral dos Planos Territoriais, Urbanísticos e Rurais* (REPTUR), was published in *Decreto n° 2/06* of January 23, 2006. Its approval by the Council of Ministers took place on November 30, 2005. The regulation for the so-called urban operations, the *Regulamento de Licenciamento das Operações de Loteamento, Obras de Urbanização e Obras de Construção*, was promulgated and enacted by *Decreto n° 80/06* of October 30, 2006, but the Council of Ministers had reviewed and approved it on July 5. Less than two months after, on August 23, the General Regulation for Land Concession, or *Regulamento Geral de Concessão de Terrenos* was reviewed and approved by the Council of Ministers but it would only be made official by the *Decreto n° 58/07* of July 13, 2007. And finally, on September 27 the General Regulation for Urban Buildings or *Regulamento Geral das Edificações Urbanas* (RGEU) was reviewed and approved by the Council of Ministers and it was made official by *Decreto n° 13/07* of February 26, 2007. Two weeks after the first approval, however, in mid-October, a Multisectoral Commission was created to prepare and elaborate "complementary juridical instruments" for this regulation (see *Despacho n° 64/06* of October 13, 2006).

[76] Some reports say that this approval took place on August 23, in the same meeting where the General Regulation for Land Concession was approved. See "Regulamento de Concessão de Terras estabelece bases definidas na Lei," *Angola Press*, August 23, 2006.

[77] See *Decreto* nº 6/07 of February 6, 2007. All quotes in the following sentences are from the preamble and the four articles long Council of Ministers act that officially created IPGUL and approved its organic statute.

[78] See "Governador de Luanda nomeia direcção geral da IPGUL," *Angola Press*, February 9, 2007.

[79] See "Governador denuncia funcionários implicados na venda ilegal de terrenos," *Angola Press*, February 13, 2007.

both established and up-and-coming markets," these inserts are presented as "impeccably researched and creatively designed" reports but read like advertising brochures for the developmental efforts of the countries in question. The 2011 Angola supplement was no exception. "Since the signing of the peace accord in 2002," it is said on the introductory text, "President José Eduardo dos Santos and his administration have faced the challenge of rebuilding an utterly war-torn country with optimist and clear strategies." The pages are divided between laudatory pieces on public and private initiatives and tailored advertisements to local companies and government agencies. With a double page spread ad, BESA is presented as "the business bank of choice." Rural development project Aldeia Nova is said to offer a fresh start and "new hope for the future." In the energy sector, Angola LNG promises to provide "a new foundation for the country's economic growth."[80]

On the section dedicated to urbanization and housing issues, the leading headline screams out of

Fig. 2.5 IPGUL: Luanda is Reaching New Heights.
In *United World*, "Angola: Unlimited Potential, Bountiful Resources," Our World Insert: Supplement to USA Today, February 28, 2011.

the page in a larger than necessary font. A BETTER URBAN LANDSCAPE, it shouts below yet another picture of the crane-congested downtown skyline that in recent years has come to illustrate the country's booming economy in media outlets throughout the world. Wrapped around a picture of Helder José, the piece itself begins like so many others have since the end of the war. "Few cities on earth have undergone such tremendous growth in such as short time as Luanda has." A decade past the beginning of the reconstruction efforts, the piece continues, "the city is only recently getting a grip on uncontrolled urban sprawl and implementing measures to

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[80] See *United World*, "Angola: Unlimited Potential, Bountiful Resources," Our World Insert: Supplement to USA Today, February 28, 2011.

ensure the population's needs are met in a more orderly manner." Later into the article Hélder José himself explains the challenges for those involved in those efforts in a similar fashion to many before him:

> Our population is very spontaneous, which in fact is an aspect that has its positive side, since Angolans are not defeated by a simple problem. Instead, they always find a way to solve it. But that spontaneity also has its negative side when it is left unregulated and uncontrolled. It impacts not only on housing but also trade and transport. Luanda is overly congested in every way.

Indeed – United World confirms – the road ahead of the "chaotic city of Luanda" was long and arduous. But "thanks to the Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management", the readers of *USA Today* were assured, "city planning is becoming more organized." With a widening range of opportunities in the real estate market and "a legal framework that ensures capital repatriation, investment insurance and other guarantees," the institute's matching ad proclaims, "Luanda is reaching new heights." Displaying an image of the management heart of the Angolan oil industry – Sonangol HQ in Mutamba[81] – and what soon after its oppening in 2008 became one of the utmost symbols of Luanda's resurgent modernity, this advertisement is a reproduction of an earlier one. Its original message, however, was not only written in Portuguese but also appeared quite different. First published on the pages of IPGUL magazine's very first edition, an issue entirely dedicated to presenting the statiticts for licensed constructions in 2008, the 2009 ad presented "a new city being born in Luanda," which was now "recovering much of the spendlor that once had." And instead of boasting about the new heights that Luanda is reaching, it leads with a much more enigmatic message: "Cities cannot be explained."

But when the *USA Today* supplement was published, back in Largo da Ingombota, where IPGUL was then located, the

Fig. 2.6 IPGUL: Cities Cannot Be Explained.
In *Revista IPGUL*, Volume 1, November 2009, 27.

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[81] This is the building in the back. The one in the foreground is Torres Atlântico, where many oil companies have their offices.

institute was laying low below the growing entanglements of planning endeavors in Luanda. Days after the insert was distributed, a series of institutional rearrangements with unequivocal implications for the authority of the institute culminated in an organizational readjustment that explicitly undermined its technical responsibilities. As we will see below, this readjustment took place at the level of the Provincial Government but the intergovernmental quarrels that preceded it went well beyond its jurisdiction. In reality, by the time the supplement was in production, IPGUL was already witnessing considerable institutional turbulence in and around its sphere of influence. But while the turmoil I am referring to seems to have begun around June 2010, when two conjoined Presidential decrees indirectly casted doubt over the institute's ability to carry out the functions vested in it by its founding act, IPGUL emerged embedded in a constantly evolving and very often ambiguous institutional landscape.

Early Difficulties in Getting to Largo da Ingombota

Soon after IPGUL was established – on April 13, 2007 – the President of the Republic created a Technical Executive Office for Coordinating the Government's Projects in the Province of Luanda.[82] Coordinated by the National Director for Public Infrastructures, the multisectoral commission brought together representatives from a wide range of public entities (as well as a delegate from Dar Al-Handasah) to ensure the harmonization between various specific infrastructure development programs being implemented throughout the province. While this was relevant for IPGUL's work, it did not fall under its assigned responsibilities. The same might not have been entirely true when in February 2008, just as Job Capapinha resigned to be replaced by Francisca do Espírito Santo,[83] the President of the Republic created yet another body to coordinate the "high number" of projects under the responsibility of the Central Government in the Province of Luanda and harmonize them with local programs and projects. The Office for Intervening in the Province of Luanda,[84] as it was called, was coordinated by the Council of Ministers Secretary and its attributions were both much less precise than those of the Technical Executive Office and potentially more conflicting with IPGUL's responsibilities.

Before that, however, four months after IPGUL was established, an *Ad-Hoc* Technical Group for revising the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan was created under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Urbanism and Environment.[85] Formally constituted by officials from fourteen different Government Ministries as well as representatives of the Presidency's Advisory Services for Local and Regional Issues, the GRN and the Provincial Governments of Luanda and Bengo, this supervisory body was coordinated by Minister Sita José and the technical work was once again commissioned out to Dar Al-Handasah.[86] Following on Sita José's ideas about the importance of thinking Luanda at the regional scale, which he had tested with the Strategic Plan for the Luanda Metropolitan Area reviewed above, the revision embraced not just Luanda but

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[82] The *Gabinete Técnico Executivo de Coordenação dos Projectos na Província de Luanda*, also known as GATEC, was established by *Despacho nº 7/07* of April 13, 2007, the same day in which the Population Rehousing Program was created under the jurisdiction of the GOE (see *Despacho nº 8/07*). Its mandate was extended by *Despacho nº 35/09* of October 5, 2009.

[83] See *Decreto Presidencial nº 1/08* and *Despacho nº 3/08* of February 1, 2008.

[84] The *Gabinete de Intervenção na Província de Luanda* was created by *Despacho nº 4/08* of February 1, 2008.

[85] See *Despacho Presidencial nº 11/07* of April 13, 2007.

[86] As we have seen above, the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan was prepared by Dar Al-Handasah when Sita José was Vice-Governor for Technical Affairs. Manuel N'Zangui, who had worked with Sita José in the Strategic Plan for the Luanda Metropolitan Area, was the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment official in charge of this revision.

also the adjacent province of Bengo. Its purpose, as established by the President's act, was to provide a thorough analysis of both ongoing and upcoming development initiatives as well as to recommend strategic planning alternatives for the region. Under these stipulations, the revision would then culminate in the elaboration of terms of reference for the General Master Plan as well as a plan for the rehabilitation of the *musseques* and the peri-urban areas. While theoretically this did not directly undermine IPGUL in its specific responsibilities, in practice it was a challenge to the political viability of an institution that got off to a slow start.

While I could not gather what exactly led to it, the fact is that in August 2007 – less than six months into becoming the purported centerpiece of Luanda's urban planning endeavors and soon after Dar Al-Handasah initiated its comprehensive revision of the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan[87] – Governor Job Capapinha dismissed IPGUL's directorship and replaced it them with a management commission headed by Vice-Governor Bento Soito.[88] Hélder José would later take over as the new General Director,[89] but from then until early 2009 – when the four massive bilingual draft reports for the so-called Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo were hastily finalized due to the creation of a new body to elaborate the Master Plan – IPGUL was far removed from the planning process it was supposed to lead. We will return to Dar Al-Handasah's Integrated Plans, which after being sidelined for a couple of years ended up being resurrected in 2011, but before let me jump back to June 2010.

The Strategic Coordination Council of Luanda

Despite any turbulences caused by these three bodies in the early days of IPGUL's existence, it was not until the first two were officially dismissed that the institute saw its formal capacities as "the technical-operative organ of the Province of Luanda with the mission of promoting and coordinating all planning and urban management activities" really being put into question. If the *Ad-Hoc* Technical Group for revising the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan had been dissolved (and informally replaced by IPGUL) when in February 2009 a Commission led by Governor Francisca do Espírito Santo was created for the elaboration of the Master Plan,[90] both the Technical Executive Office for Coordinating the Government's Projects in the Province of Luanda and the Office for Intervening in the Province of Luanda were officially revoked in June 2010, when the Strategic Coordination Council for Spatial Planning and the Economic and Social Development of the Province of Luanda and its Technical Support Commission were established. Chaired by President dos Santos, this highflying body included the Vice-President,

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[87] Bringing together specialists from all over the world with local employees, I was told in an interview at Dar Al-Handasah, the Angolan Government followed the revision works at all times. Not only were the different phases of the studies duly approved by the Council of Ministers, there were "plentiful" meetings in many different ministries and governmental departments.

[88] See "Governador de Luanda exonera responsáveis do Instituto de Gestão Urbana," *Angola Press*, August 6, 2007; and "Governo de Luanda cria comissão para gerir Instituto de Planeamento da cidade," *Angola Press*, August 7, 2007. Contrary to that determined in the organic statute (see Article 12 in *Decreto nº 6/07* of February 6, 2007) and differently from what happened in the beginning (see above), the directorship has since then been constituted by the General Director alone.

[89] I also could not find when precisely this happened, but when in November/December 2007 the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment sponsored a series of information-gathering meetings between Dar Al-Handasah consultants and the full range of state bodies with a stake in the development of the region, the meeting at IPGUL was held with Hélder José. See Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah. "Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo, Stage 1: Updating of Existing Situation and Review of Viable Alternatives," Luanda, London and Cairo, July 2008, Appendix I.

[90] See *Despacho nº 6/09* of February 23, 2009. See below for more on this commission, which backed IPGUL as the main technical facilitator for elaboration of the master plan.

eight different Government Ministers and the Provincial Governor.[91] In considering once again the need for coordinating amongst the various actors involved in the urban development process as well as the recurrent call for harmonizing the multiplicity of on-going projects in the Province of Luanda,[92] its wide-ranged functions included defining development guidelines, advancing the urban planning process and ensuring the articulation of different services, policies and initiatives with spatial impact. On a normative level, its main duty was to ensure both "polycentric" and "more compact" urban development "to counter dispersed and anarchic construction." In order to "prepare, monitor and supervise" the rulings of the Strategic Coordination Council, the Technical Support Commission took on a number of responsibilities that overtly overlapped – or, at least, interfered – with IPGUL's chore mission.[93]

Member	Job Title	Responsibilities in the Technical Commission
Carlos Feijó	Ministro de Estado e Chefe da Casa Civil do Presidente da República	Coordenador
José Joana André	Secretário de Estado da Construção	Área das Vias Estruturantes, Secundárias e Terciárias
Rosa Pacavira de Matos	Secretária para os Assuntos Sociais do Presidente da República	Área de Acompanhamento de outros Investimentos Públicos, Programa Provincial e Programas Municipais
André Mingas Júnior	Secretário para os Assuntos Locais do Presidente da República	N/A
Graciano Domingos	Vice-Ministro da Administração do Território	Área do Reforço Institucional e da Divisão Administrativa
Gualberto Campos	Vice-Ministro do Planeamento e Investimento Público	Área de Acompanhamento de outros Investimentos Públicos, Programa Provincial e Programas Municipais
Carla Ribeiro de Sousa	Vice-Ministra dos Transportes	Área de Integração e Conexão das Infra-Estruturas da Rede de Transportes
Bento Soito	Vice-Governador de Luanda para a Área Técnica	Área do Realojamento das Populações
António Teixeira Flor	Director do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional	N/A
Manuel Van-Dúnem	Director-Adjunto do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional para a Área Técnica	Coadjuvante na Área do Saneamento, Drenagem e Recolha de Resíduos Sólidos e na Área das Vias Estruturantes, Secundárias e Terciárias
Cremildo Paca	Consultor do Chefe da Casa Civil do Presidente da República	Área do Reforço Institucional e da Divisão Administrativa
Manuel Vicente	Presidente do Conselho de Administração da Sonangol	N/A
Ismael Diogo da Silva	Presidente da Fundação Eduardo dos Santos (FESA)	N/A
Afonso das Antas Miguel	Director do Saneamento da Província de Luanda	Área do Saneamento, Drenagem e Recolha de Resíduos Sólidos

Table 2.1. Technical Commission for the Strategic Coordination Council of Luanda.
In *Despacho Presidencial nº* 29/10 of June 21, 2010.

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[91] The Strategic Coordination Council, or *Conselho de Coordenação Estratégica para o Ordenamento Territorial e de Desenvolvimento Económico e Social da Província de Luanda*, was established by *Decreto Presidencial nº* 104/10 of June 21, 2010.

[92] See Article 1 of *Decreto Presidencial nº* 104/10 of June 21, 2010.

[93] The Technical Support Commission or *Comissão Técnica de Apoio ao Conselho de Coordenação Estratégica para o Ordenamento Territorial e de Desenvolvimento Económico e Social da Província de Luanda* was established by Decreto Presidencial nº 29/10 of June 21, 2010. See Article 3 for a list of its responsibilities.

Its assigned duties included coordinating public investments, ensuring the compatibility of private and public initiatives, guaranteeing the implementation of the Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion, and proposing regulatory measures for fostering spatial, economic and social development in Luanda. But the importance of this new body came less from its assignments than it did from the prominence of its members. The Technical Commission was overseen by Carlos Feijó, who now had become Minister of State and Head of the President's Civil House, and constituted by thirteen high-raking officials, including representatives from the Central Government, the Presidency, the GRN and the Provincial Government as well as Sonangol's CEO or the president of the Eduardo dos Santos Foundation.

While IPGUL was not necessarily called into question by these injunctions, its power to act according to its own responsibilities was arguably curtailed. If not by the extra layer of oversight or the higher levels of institutional ambiguity brought in by these new policy-making structures, certainly by the suspension of all land concessions within the private domain of the state that accompanied their establishment.[94] This is not to say that the Strategic Coordination Council alienated the institute. In fact, looking at the Executive Program for the Good Governance of Luanda,[95] one of the first outcomes of its Technical Commission, the exact opposite could be argued. Issued by Carlos Feijó's office on October 22, 2010, the program is a fairly long list of goals organized in a wide range of intervention areas and two administrative levels of implementation – central and local. A variety of themes are addressed, but urban planning and land management issues take a particularly prominent role. In this respect, IPGUL is not forgotten. The program prioritizes the elaboration of the General Master Plan, which it recognizes to be "partially underway,"[96] and puts emphasis on providing IPGUL with the capacity to manage it. At the same time, however, it proposes to restructure the institute and to reassign some of its powers by transferring urban management responsibilities – in particular, construction licensing and allotment operations – back to the Provincial Government.[97] This provided a window into what IPGUL's future could look like but it was not until the following month that its political and institutional foundations began to actually deteriorate.

The Technical Office for the Urban Reconversion of Cazenga and Sambizanga

It all became official on November 29, 2010. Governor Francisca do Espírito Santo, one the biggest advocates of providing IPGUL the capabilities to fulfill its constitutional mission, was sacked in a cabinet reshuffle that also included Vice-Governors Bento Soito and Francisco

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[94] See Article 1 of *Decreto Presidencial nº 104/10* of June 21, 2010. This suspension was lifted in May 2012, while I was at the institute, by *Decreto Presidencial nº 92/12* of May 22, 2012.

[95] There was a bit of confusion in relation what this program was called. In *Jornal de Angola*, where the program was fully reproduced, it was called *Programa do Executivo para a Boa Governação de Luanda.* See "Civismo e organização para recuperar Luanda," *Jornal de Angola*, December 4, 2010. But the Provincial Government, in its dispatches, calls it *Programa Executivo para a Boa Governação de Luanda.* Be that as it may, as evidenced by the *Jornal de Angola* article, the Office of the Minister of State and Head of the President's Civil House issued the document on October 22, 2010.

[96] As we will see below, the Terms of Reference for what was then called *Plano Director Geral Metropolitano de Luanda* or General Metropolitan Master Plan for Luanda were drawn up in 2009.

[97] Interestingly IPGUL's restructuring is supposed to happen under the guidance of Brazilian star urbanist Jaime Lerner, as one of the program's intentions is to hire him to do so. While his company has a number of projects in Angola, I could find no record that this contract was actually made.

Domingos.[98] To replace her, José Eduardo dos Santos chose José Maria dos Santos,[99] who ended up creating a number of political obstacles to IPGUL's work. But the ruling that perhaps presented most challenges for the institute on that day was the constitution of a Special Regime for the redevelopment of the two most densely occupied districts in Luanda and the concomitant delegation of its enforcement to an agency created under direct dependence of the Commission for the Implementation of the National Program for Urbanism and Construction.[100] With the creation of the Technical Office for the Urban Reconversion of Cazenga and Sambizanga, which would rapidly become known as GTRUCS,[101] the National Government took a firmer grip on the institutional infrastructure of urban development in Luanda. To lead this office, the President appointed Bento Soito.[102]

With jurisdiction over more than 5400 hectares of largely occupied urban land where 2 to 2.5 million people were estimated to live in,[103] GTRUCS was granted authority to coordinate, supervise, monitor and execute the implementation of redevelopment projects in what one of its first promotional brochures characterized as an area whose "environmental and safety standards do not conform to the government's strategy for improving the quality of life in Luanda."[104] In order to be able to steer what its founding act envisaged as the "urban reconversion process"[105] for that area, the new agency was provided with a set of institutional mechanisms that made it only marginally subordinate to provincial governance structures. According to the procedural provisions of its own Special Regime, GTRUCS was only obligated to consult with existing planning authorities such as IPGUL once and only when a specific development initiative was accepted in by its services. The master plan to which it had to conform – or the instrument to guide the reconversion process for which elaboration Surbana, a Singaporean consultancy

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[98] The Governor was let go through *Decreto Presidencial n° 269/10* of November 29, 2010, while the two Vice-Governors were dismissed via *Decreto Presidencial n° 277/10* of November 29, 2010. The cabinet reshuffle, which included changes in both the National Government and in many Provincial Governments throughout the country, was made official through 19 presidential decrees published on that day.

[99] In *Decreto Presidencial n° 284/10* of November 29, 2010.

[100] The National Program for Urbanism and Construction, or *Programa Nacional de Urbanismo e Construção* had been approved by *Resolução n° 20/09* of March 11, 2009. The commission for its implementation, the *Comissão Nacional para a Implementação do Programa Nacional de Urbanismo e Construção* was created by *Despacho n° 9/09* of March 31, 2009 and put more directly under presidential control, after the Constitutional reforms of 2010, by *Decreto Presidencial n° 22/10* of May 12, 2010. If in its first configuration this Commission was headed by the Prime Minister, comprised by seventeenth high-level officials of the National Government, and supported by two different Technical Groups as well as delegations in each province, in its second iteration it became a direct responsibility of the President of the Republic, its membership was reduced to five Government Ministers and both the technical support team and the provincial delegations were cut down. Since January 2012 this agency has been working under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Urbanism and Construction. See *Decreto Presidencial n° 25/12* of January 30, 2012.

[101] The Gabinete Técnico de Reconversão Urbana do Cazenga e Sambizanga was created by *Decreto Presidencial n° 266/10* of November 29, 2010. The *Regime Especial de Reconversão das Áreas Urbanas do Cazenga e Sambizanga*, or the Special Regime for the Urban Reconversion of Cazenga and Sambizanga under which GTRUCS operates was approved in the same act.

[102] The director of GTRUCS was nominated by *Despacho Presidencial n° 83/10* of November 29, 2010.

[103] Initially thought for Sambizanga and Cazenga, Rangel would soon be included in the project.

[104] In Gabinete Técnico de Reconversão Urbana do Cazenga e Sambizanga, Institutional Brochure (Luanda, 2012). In the preamble to *Decreto Presidencial n° 266/10* the intervention area is characterized as being occupied by "horizontal constructions with absence of adequate infrastructure," but in a recent presentation at the World Cities Summit it was more bluntly described by Bento Soito and a Surbana representative as "slums" and areas were "unemployment-overcrowding-undervalued" triad prevailed. In Pang Ye Ean and Bento Soito, "Inspiring Livable Future: Redevelopment of Cazenga, Sambizanga and Rangel in Luanda, Angola" (presentation, World Cities Summit, Singapore, June 3, 2014).

[105] See Special Regime in *Decreto Presidencial n° 266/10*, especially Chapters II.
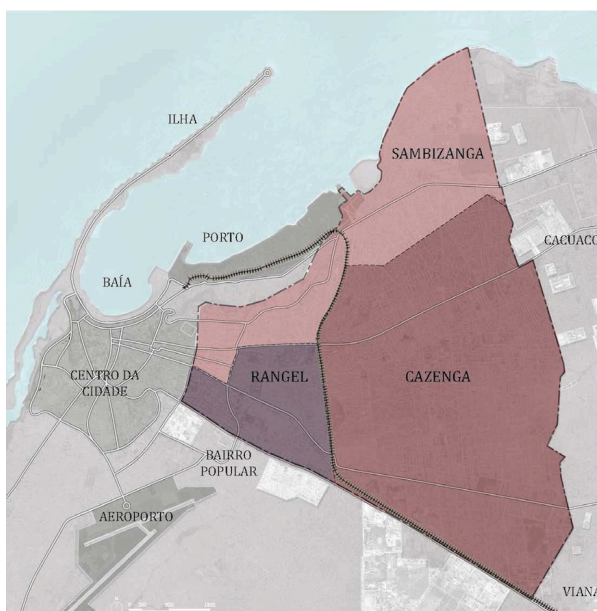
Fig. 2.7 GTRUCS: Intervention/Jurisdiction Area.
Left: In GTRUCS, Institutional Brochure (Luanda, 2012); Right
In GTRUCS, Presentation made on May 8, 2012.

firm,[106] was hired – was in no way obliged to submit to the rulings of the local authorities or even coordinate with their own planning efforts. At most it had to coordinate with the Provincial Government to find a suitable land and property legalization model, or to consult with the entity legally in charge of licensing once a development project was approved.[107] This entity, which in conformance with the Executive Program for the Good Governance of Luanda would most probably be a Provincial Government directorate, would then issue an opinion and any changes made in accordance with it would not require new consultation.

The Return of the Integrated Plans

GTRUCS and its activities are well worth further analysis, but for our purposes here it suffices to point out that IPGUL saw both its responsibilities and ongoing endeavors being openly undermined by its establishment in late 2010. This, however, might have been the least of its cadres' concerns at that point. Created as a public institute under the tutelage of the Provincial Government, IPGUL was endowed with organizational autonomy but it has been continually susceptible to any commotions in its higher ranks. When in December Governor José Maria dos Santos sat in office, the effects did not take long to be felt. Before the end of the year, a Special Commission to assess all of the contracts binding the Provincial Government was created and a Coordinating Group for the implementation of the Executive Program for the Good Governance of Luanda was formed under the direct leadership of the new Governor.[108] Left out of this group or its technical secretariat, IPGUL also saw its efforts to set up a service provision agreement for the elaboration of the General Master Plan being curbed by the emergent institutional

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[106] See *Decreto Presidencial nº* 300/11 of December 6, 2011.

[107] See Special Regime in *Decreto Presidencial nº* 266/10, especially Article 5b) and Chapter III.

[108] See *Despachos nº* 586/10 and 587/10 of December 27, 2010.

configuration. Despite the fact that the Executive Program heralded its importance, I was told in various conversations with IPGUL officials, the new governorship sidelined the ongoing works for the Plan. Most importantly, as we will now see, it was President dos Santos and the Central Government who wanted it to advance in a different direction.

Drawn up by IPGUL and A1V2 – a Portuguese engineering and architecture firm – and officially sanctioned by the Council of Ministers in August 2009,[109] the Terms of Reference for the General Master Plan[110] were consigned to oblivion soon after the new Governor came to power and the final stages of the international tender for
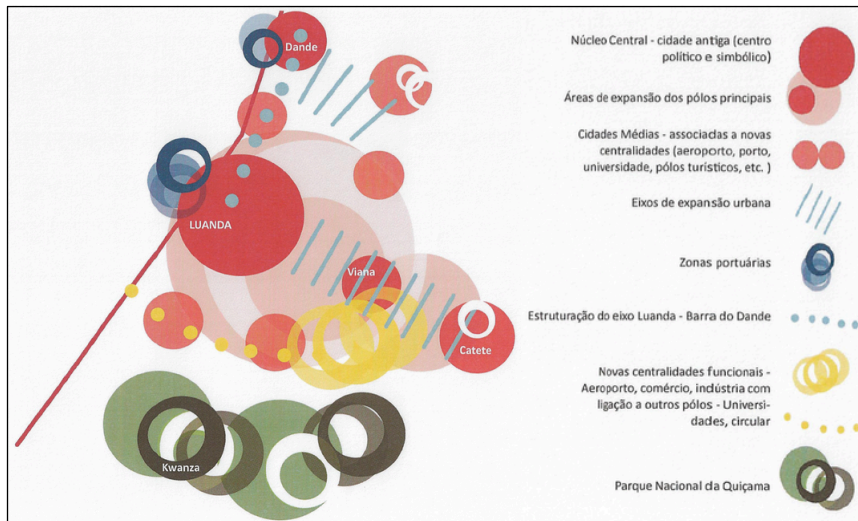
Fig. 2.8 Terms of Reference for the General Master Plan.
In IPGUL and A1V2, "Termos de Referência: Plano Director Geral Metropolitano de Luanda" (Luanda, July 2009), 67.

preparing it were put on hold for an indefinite period. In the meantime, Dar Al-Handasah's Integrated Plans of Urban and Infrastructure Expansion of Luanda/Bengo were rescued back from the dormant state they were put at when those Terms of Reference began to be drafted.

When in February 2009 the President created the Master Plan Commission co-led by Governor Francisca do Espírito Santo and the Head of the President's Military House General Kopelipa,[111] not only was the *Ad-Hoc* Technical Group for revising the Luanda Urban Growth and Management Plan dissolved, all documents, studies and reports produced under its scope were statutorily transferred for the domain of the new decision-making structure. Even if the massive study that Dar Al-Handasah had produced for the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment went often beyond mere strategic guidelines for the expansion of the city, the Presidential Decree setting up the Master Plan Commission reinforced the notion that the function of the Integrated Plans was to provide a framework for the elaboration of the General Master Plan. Not, as they would from the beginning of 2011, to serve as its substitute.

Establishing a provisional regime and reproducing the entire study in 866 pages of *Diário da República*, the President now determined that while the General Master Plan was not complete, the Integrated Plans would make do as a regulatory tool for land use control and for steering

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[109] See "Plano Director de Luanda pode levar mais de dois anos a ser concluído," *Angola Press,* June 17, 2009; and "Governo de Luanda, Angola, lança concurso internacional para elaboração do Plano Director," *MacauHub*, August 27, 2009.

[110] Instituto de Planeamento e Gestão Urbana de Luanda and A1V2, "Termos de Referência: Plano Director Geral Metropolitano de Luanda." Luanda, July 2009.

[111] See *Despacho nº* 6/09 of February 23, 2009. This was a small commission. In addition to the two coordinators, it included three other members: the Head of the President's Civil House, the Secretary of the Council of Ministers and the President's Chief of Staff.

together different sectorial investments throughout the region. [112] Supervised by the Strategic Coordination Council of Luanda and its Technical Commission, their management and execution became a duty of the Provincial Government. [113] But not only were these plans never devised as a binding legal instrument for regulating land use or determining development parameters, nothing was said as to which body within its structure would absorb the responsibility over the new piece of legislation – which takes us to another turn of events that seems to have caused much deeper anxiety amongst those working at IPGUL at the time.
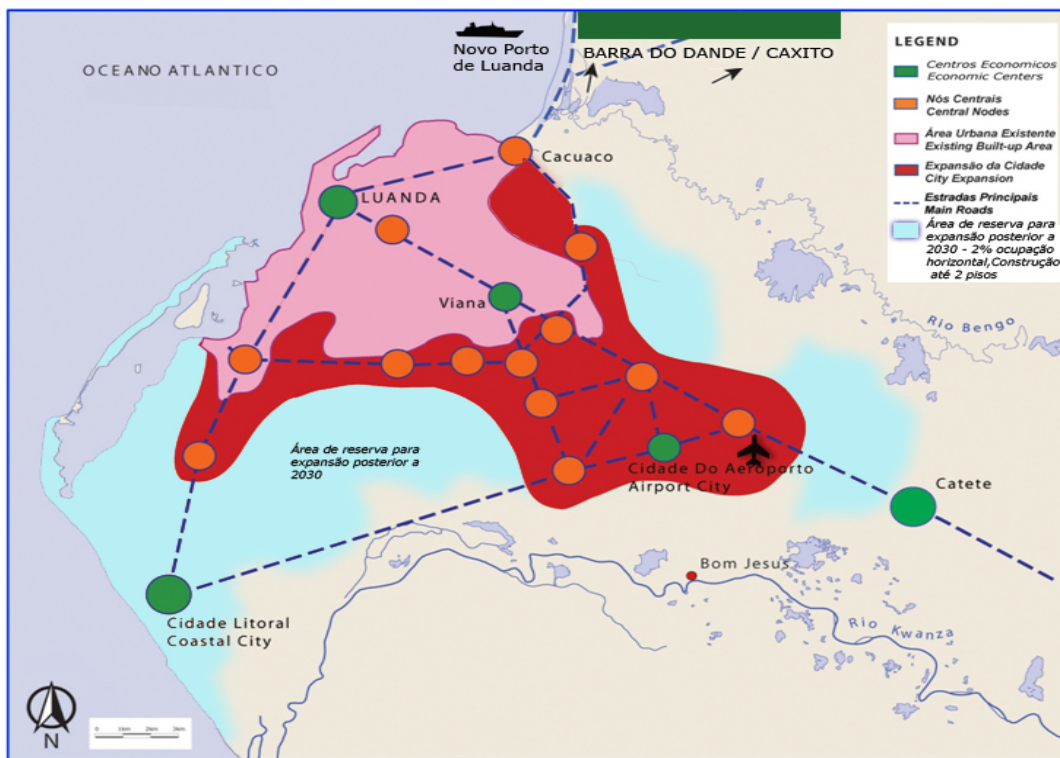
Fig. 2.9 Integrated Plans: Recommended Alternative.

In Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente and Dar Al-Handasah. "Planos Integrados da Expansão Urbana e Infra-estrutural de Luanda/Bengo, Sumário Executivo." (Luanda, London and Cairo, February 2009), 4

The Provincial Directorate for Planning and Urban Management

In the beginning of March 2011, less than a week after IPGUL's role in promoting "a better urban landscape" in Luanda was extolled all through the US, the organizational structure of the new Provincial Government was altered to include five new directorates and modify the makeup of two other. [114] Just like the Executive Program for the Good Governance of Luanda called for,

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[112] See *Despacho Presidencial nº* 59/11 of April 1, 2011, especially Article 3.. To be sure, the study was not simply recovered and reproduced onto the *Diário da República.* Some things were amended, particularly those that had not even been translated from English, and there was an update that profiled 93 different infrastructure projects to be immediately implemented (pages 2365 to 2424).

[113] In *Despacho Presidencial nº* 59/11 of April 1, 2011, Article 5.

[114] The *Direcção Provincial de Gestão Urbanística e Habitação* became the *Direcção Provincial de Planeamento e Gestão Urbanística* through *Despacho Presidencial nº* 39/11 of March 4, 2011. Note that the act had been endorsed by Council of Ministers in February.

the Provincial Directorate for Urban Management and Housing became the Provincial Directorate for Planning and Urban Management and was accordingly equipped with a brand new Department of Planning and Urban Management. Directly undermining its responsibilities as the technical-operative organ for promoting and coordinating all planning and urban management activities in the province, I was told across the ranks of the institute that IPGUL saw this reorganization as an undisguised mechanism to extinguish it. "Never in its history," one planner asserted me with unflinching conviction, "never in its history had Luanda witnessed such *confusão* in its planning infrastructure".

As if confirming IPGUL's institutional downgrading, on March 20 the Governor issued a dispatch creating a Technical Group that would be responsible for proposing rules and practical measures for legalizing non-registered properties throughout the city.[115] While IPGUL's General Director was included in this group,[116] his position regarding a set of duties that were within the constitutional jurisdiction of the institute was noticeably weakened in relation to what it was before. If IPGUL had been established in 2007 as "*the* technical-operative organ of the Province of Luanda," he was now only one amongst nine other high-ranking members of the provincial executive responsible for coordinating a crucial urban management activity.

But it was not until the last weeks of May, soon after the first ordinary meeting of the Provincial Government led by José Maria dos Santos, that the intergovernmental quarrels reached their climax. Convened to review and approve the balance report for the first quarter of his governorship, the meeting delved into IPGUL's duties and responsibilities and their compatibility with the new structures of the Provincial Government. I could not confirm whether or not Helder José or any other IPGUL representatives were present, but this discussion seems to have ended with the participants recommending the institute to submit annual budgets and action plans as well as periodical reports on their activities,[117] which – of course – was a requirement that had never before been stipulated and represented an open challenge to its autonomy.

The Technical Office for the Camama Residential Area Master Plan

The challenges, however, were not over. In the following month, in June 2011, IPGUL's institutional deterioration was further amplified by the creation of yet another planning agency with its own juridical regime and considerable ability to operate independently from it or any other local planning authorities. Similarly to GTRUCS, the Technical Office for the Implementation and Management of the Camama Residential Area Master Plan or GTARC was established under direct dependence of the Commission for the Implementation of the National Program for Urbanism and Construction and within this scope put under the wing of the Ministry of Construction and Urbanism.[118] Differently from GTRUCS, however, GTARC was given full

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[115] See *Despacho nº* 487/11 of March 30, 2011; see also "Governador cria grupo técnico para regularização jurídica dos imóveis," *Angola Press*, March 21, 2011.

[116] It is perhaps telling of IPGUL directorship's ongoing feud with the new governorship that Hélder José was the only official not named by name in this dispatch.

[117] See "Governo de Luanda arrecada mais de 92 milhões de Kwanzas em três meses," *Angola Press*, May 19, 2011; and "Governo Provincial de Luanda aprova plano contra a pobreza," *Jornal de Angola*, May 20, 2011.

[118] The Gabinete Técnico para a Implementação e Gestão do Plano Director da Área Residencial de Camama *Decreto Presidencial nº* 190/11 of June 30, 2011. The *Regime Jurídico para a Implementação e Gestão do Plano Director da Área*

Fig. 2.10 GTARC: Master Plan / Jurisdiction Area.
In http://www.gtarc.ao (Accessed on October 20, 2013).

control over a preexistent land use and infrastructure development program. Commissioned to Dar Al-Handasah in 2003,[119] the Master Plan to develop a "new satellite community" in a 1200 hectares site located in the largely unoccupied region of Camama was initially drafted as a "high-standard residential district" for about 140 thousand people and later seemingly "densified" to serve 210 thousand more.[120] But even if the Camama Master Plan had been developed under the auspices of the National Government long before the foundation of the institute,[121] the establishment of GTARC had on IPGUL a similar effect to that of GTRUCS. For it too undermined its authority over planning and urban management in the province.[122] While I am not claiming that this new entity caused particular grievances amongst IPGUL cadres, it seems to have been during the month of its official establishment that the institutional turmoil at the institute hit its peak. Or at least it was not until then that its shockwaves made it to my inbox.

With this said, the levels of political volatility in the Provincial Government were high and spread well beyond the institute. In August, on the very same day the Director of GTARC was appointed,[123] José Maria dos Santos lost the governorship, being temporarily substituted by Graciano Domingos and later replaced by Bento Bento.[124]

Residencial de Camama, or the Juridical Regime for the Implementation of the Camama Residential Area Master Plan under which GTARC was to operate was approved in the same act.

[119] Ministério das Obras Públicas and Dar Al-Handasah, "Distrito Residencial do Camama: Plano Director Geral," (Luanda, 2004).

[120] On this see Dar Al-Handasah website as well as "Chinese companies start construction of Angola's housing project," *Xinhua,* December 17, 2009 and "Chinese consortium to build 145,000 social houses in Angola over two years," *MacauHub*, December 18, 2009.

[121] The program was initiated by the Ministry of Public Works, later transferred to the responsibility of the Ministry of Urbanism and Housing to then land in Ministry of Urbanism and Construction. Note that in February 2010 a government reshuffle brought down the Ministry of Public Works and replaced the ministry with Urban and Construction. On this see *Despacho nº* 296/09 of September 29, 2009.

[122] The procedural provisions of its Juridical Regime in *Decreto Presidencial nº* 190/11 (especially Chapter III) are similar to those of GTRUCS' Special Regime. GTARC's autonomy can be confirmed in its own organic statute. See Decretos Presidenciais nº 51/12 of March 22, 2012 and 194/12 of August 20, 2012. These were discarded in 2014, when a new office was created, the *Gabinete de Coordenação para a Construção e Desenvolvimento Urbano das Cidades do Kilamba, Camama e Cacuaco.* See *Decreto Presidencial nº 190/14* of August 6, 2014 as well as *Despachos Presidenciais nº* 151/14 and 152/13 of the same day.

[123] António Teixeira Flor was nominated by *Despacho Presidencial nº* 57/11 of August 10, 2011.

From Ingombota to Chicala (in my Inbox)

It was June 2, 2011. My final semester as a student had come to an end not more than a couple weeks earlier and I was getting ready for a year of fieldwork that would include a short stay at IPGUL – an internship, as it was proposed to me in my first visit to the institute. I was just beginning to sort my way through the bureaucratic difficulties of getting a student visa to Angola when I received an enigmatic email from the official with whom I had been negotiating the terms of the internship since returning from a second preparatory trip to Luanda. The tone I read into it was devastatingly categorical. He had been excused from his duties and the institute as it was originally conceived had been dismantled. Something much less autonomous would come out of it. A body that, in his perspective, would simply wreck what was being accomplished. He seemed defeated.

I was stunned with the news. Not only was this a major setback in my research plans, it had also caught me completely off guard. When in August 2009 IPGUL received for the first time the atmosphere was rather invigorating. Only a couple of days had passed since the Central Government ratified the Terms of Reference for the Metropolitan Master Plan and they were getting ready to initiate the tender process for hiring a company capable of leading its elaboration. As I learned about the institute and its initiatives, the thrill and excitement of "finally being able" to organize and regulate urban development according to a vision of "the city we want" shone in every word I heard. There was "certainly a lot to be done," but those were emphatically auspicious times. In my second visit, which took place in June 2010, mere weeks before the Strategic Coordination Council was officially constituted, the mood of my interlocutors and potential informants was perhaps not as sanguine. While three "world-renowned companies" had been invited to submit proposals for the tender, the process was taking longer than it was initially expected to. Nobody explained why this was happening but I could feel a certain uneasiness about the "administrative apparatus of the central state." When I asked about the role of the National Government in determining urban development trajectories in Luanda, I was guaranteed that IPGUL was "consolidating its position" in their upholding complex of decision-making. I really had no reason not to trust such assurance and I gave it further credence when in early November, more than four months after the establishment of the Strategic Coordination Council made the news, I was promptly informed that the tender had finally been closed. Before the end of the month, the winning company was going to be selected and given sixteen months to elaborate a Master Plan draft proposal. And even though I thought I had felt the enthusiasm that came with such message rapidly vanish from our subsequent email exchanges, it is also true that in mid-April, more than a month after the new Provincial Directorate was formally established, I received official confirmation that the internship would indeed take place. Besides the rumors that had surfaced on the Internet days after the new Governor was invested, during the six months that followed I had no credible forewarning on a possible demise of IPGUL.

In the weeks after that email struck a sudden blow on my research plans, I frantically tried to ascertain what was going on. This haunted me to the point of obsession, but the Web was dead silent and all my enquiries were inconclusive. There was no clear indication that IPGUL had

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[124] See *Decreto Presidencial n° 222/11* and *Despacho Presidencial n° 56/11* of August 10, 2011. Bento Bento nomination happened in *Decreto Presidencial n° 290/11* of November 14, 2011.

actually been dismantled and yet I could not find any signs that it was still operating. I remained in the dark until I finally got to Luanda. Once I arrived, however, it did not take me long to confirm that the institute was still up and running. The location was different, quite different indeed, but the golden lettered signboard stayed the same.

Fig. 2.11 IPGUL's signboard
Both photos taken by author.
Left: Largo da Ingombota (2009). Top: Chicala (2012).

STATE BUILDING(S)

My first visits to IPGUL took place in Largo da Ingombota. Situated right at the heart of downtown Luanda, the square signals the transition between the Ingombota neighborhood and its Maculusso counterpart. With its back turned to the latter's more residential complexion, the building I visited in my preliminary fieldtrips to Angola provides shape and character to the small square whilst opening itself towards the core of the city's administrative district. From there you could walk everywhere: five minutes to the Presidential Palace in Cidade Alta, two minutes to the Provincial Government, less than ten to the Marginal. But the prominence of what were the institute's headquarters is not only geographical. It is also aesthetic. From the colonial roof tiles and pink-plastered walls that characterize much of Angola's state architecture to the eminence of the turret-like structure that splits it in two, the outward appearance of the building lends prestige and public dignity to whatever might be happening inside. In 2009 it was as if the country's coat of arms in its frontispiece was being protected from the construction scaffolds rising above its backyard by the pointed roof of its central tower, while the golden lettered signboard underneath it reminded everyone that the Provincial Government had a special body dedicated to planning and urban management. In 2012, when I returned to Luanda unsure as to whether or not I would find the institute in operation, the scaffolds covering what would later be revealed as *Edifício Elite* were still lingering over the pointy tower but the signboard was long gone. Hidden behind construction hoarding, the building was now being renovated to receive the Administrative Commission of the City of Luanda, a body that had been newly formed under the

province's political-administrative rearrangement of late 2011.[125] This, however, was not an entirely sudden conversion.

A. IPGUL's first location in Largo da Ingombota
B. IPGUL's current location in Chicala
C. Presidential Palace in Cidade Alta
D. Provincial Government headquarters in Mutamba
E. Marginal / Baía de Luanda
F. Chicala
G. Entrance to the Ilha / Fortaleza

Fig. 2.12 Baixa and Chicala: IPGUL's Locations and Spatial Context
Images from Google Earth (2014).

While the ratification of the law determining such reordering seems to have provided the final impetus for IPGUL to vacate the building in Largo da Ingombota, the big move had began long before that. In reality, some of the institute's divisions had been operating in what now comprises the entirety of its facilities since early 2009. Their staff started moving into what still was Odebrecht's construction yard for the *Vias de Luanda* program – the Provincial Government's initiative to revitalize the city's main thoroughfares – soon after the aforementioned Presidential Dispatch gave the green light for the elaboration of the Metropolitan

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[125] In 2011 the administrative divisions in the provinces of Luanda and Bengo were rearranged, with Luanda now becoming both a province (a much larger province) and a municipality. See *Lei n° 29/11* of September 1, 2011. IPGUL's former address was inaugurated as the headquarters of the Administrative Commission of the City of Luanda on April 4, 2013. See "Inauguradas instalações da Comissão Administrativa da Cidade de Luanda," *Angola Press*, April 4, 2013.

Master Plan under the auspices of the institute. Taking advantage of the temporary pavilions erected in 2008 for the Brazilian company, the initial motivation to move away from the city center was to adapt already existing structures into suitable office spaces for accommodating both the services that would be involved in the elaboration of the plan and the company that would eventually come to oversee it. For the subsequent years, a sticker on a permanently closed door was a constant reminder that the crucial document was yet to be prepared. Like in all other office signs spread around the facilities, the white lettering contrasted with a bright orange background to stand out over the institute's logo. PLANO DIRECTOR GERAL METROPOLITANO DE LUANDA, it said.

But I did not know any of this when I returned to Luanda in 2012. So once I spotted the golden lettered signboard I had previously only seen hanging over the city's administrative district, I was relieved, perplexed, and somewhat amused by the coincidence. Relieved for finding it in use, perplexed by where it stood, and amused by the fact that the institute had moved just a stone's throw away from my new house. Located in Chicala, a neighborhood that my memory of Luanda was already full of, IPGUL's headquarters had moved to a rather familiar location. When I first visited the city, back in 2009, this is where I would come to eat cheap *mufete* or see some live music at *Quintal do Tio Jorge*. In fact, I had walked numerous times past the solid hoarding panels limiting what then I could only guess to be just another construction yard for the

renovation of the city. Now that my new address was on that very same street, the Cape-Verdean *mornas* of uncle Jorge could still be heard on Fridays and Sundays but most of the restaurant shacks were already gone. After all, the whole neighborhood had been earmarked for redevelopment since the early 2000s.[126]

"A *musseque* entangled amidst a city,"[127] Chicala is both very close and very far from the urban center. Located between the Baixa and the Ilha, under the poising shade of Cidade Alta, the neighborhood divided by ocean water grew up from an idyllic beach at the time of independence into a dense informal neighborhood of more than 50,000 residents in the new millennium. With its unpaved streets and patchy infrastructure provision, it has long

Fig. 2.13 Moving IPGUL: From Ingombota to Chicala.
IPGUL, Relocation Pamphlet (Luanda, 2012).

stood far from the official imaginary for a new Luanda or the new buildings that in a small foldout pamphlet produced by the institute in 2012 were seemingly celebrated as the outcome of its work.

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[126] Since the early 2000s, when a company especially created for this purpose – SODIMO, or *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento Imobiliário* – was created. The project for the "Luanda New City Center" was commissioned to Dar Al-Handasah. See website.

[127] Ângela Mingas, "The "Chicala" Triad," in *Chicala is not a Small Neighborhood*, Ed. Paulo Moreira (Porto: Self-Published, 2012), pp. 27-29, 27.

I highlight this pamphlet, of which I found only a draft copy during my stay at IPGUL, because it symbolizes the relationship between IPGUL and the city. On the main side of it, the pictures of seven different high-rises pop out the page. Although nothing is said as to why these particular buildings are emphasized, the list comprises some of the most emblematic buildings to have been erected after the end of the civil war. It includes Torre Ambiente, on top of which sits what might very well be "Africa's most expensive apartment,"[128] Torres do Carmo, where BP has recently inaugurated its in-country offices, as well as Total's new headquarters and Edifício Escom.[129] In addition to these oil-infused markers of modernity, there is also a picture of one of the 710 buildings in the then recently inaugurated – and similarly oil-propelled (see Chapter 3) – Cidade do Kilamba. With delineated route on a map of downtown Luanda, the reverse side of the pamphlet is mostly only dedicated to informing people about the location of the institute's new facilities. Anyone trying to find IPGUL in Largo da Ingombota would be able to follow its improbable move to Chicala. There, where the city has yet to arrive, the signboard spelling IPGUL's official designation no longer gleamed goldenly under the thick layer of dust. And when the rain cleans away the grime, the dirt road becomes a muddy and almost impenetrable mess. But the filth stops, like any stranger coming into the complex, at the checkpoint.

Past the barrier, the security services and the Angolan flag, the road tar is almost always impeccably clean. With about 15 hundred square meters and a 250 meters front towards the ocean, the makeshift compound that in 2012 people still referred to as Odebrecht's construction yard, was occupied by a variety of governmental bodies. Roughly divided in two by the canteen building, the southern part of the complex was mostly taken up by nondescript warehouses and the Provincial Government's tow pound facilities. The northern side, onto which the entrance gate faces, is where IPGUL has its services. Initially given access to four pavilions – I was told during a tour of the premises – the institute now controls seven single floor office buildings plus a small addition for its archive. Even though their appearance is somewhat sturdier than all the other structures in the compound, these are also prefabricated constructions. The windows are small, the walls are plasticky, and only a fiercely air-conditioned environment can keep out the scorching heat that more often than not is felt in Luanda. But while neither the flimsily structured doors nor the acoustic insulation of the wall panels relayed a sense of stability to the facilities, I found the abiding commitment to their maintenance to be quite remarkable. What perhaps impressed me the most during the months I spent at IPGUL were the garden patches framing their layout. They were not copious or luxuriant, nor did they seem to be of much use, but the beach facing lawns surrounding the two wooden *jangos* – the community meeting sheds of the Angolan pastoral imaginary – were always perfectly mowed. On a more symbolic level, the carefully manicured flowerbed spelling out the acronym of the institute conveyed an impression of dignity and orderliness to those entering the front desk. And once one came in the buildings, things were not different. The fake marble floors were at all times gleamingly clean, the bulkiness of the office furniture gave a certain gravity to the workplace ambience, and the

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[128] See David McKenzie, "Africa's Most Expensive Apartment?" *CNN* video, 5:04, October 29, 2012. Accessed March 16, 2015. In this report McKenzie visits the apartment on the top floor of Torre Ambiente, which at the time was on the market for $10 million cash.

[129] The Escom Group is an Angolan investment company with businesses in various African countries and a portfolio ranging from construction, public works and infrastructure to oil and gas. The Espírito Santo Group and Hélder Bataglia, who was a notable intermediary in the oil-backed deals established between Sonangol and the China International Fund after the end of the civil war (see Chapter 3), founded it in 1993 and between 2010 and 2013 there were various attempts to sell it to the National Oil Company.

official picture of President José Eduardo dos Santos next to the maps and blueprints pinned to the walls of almost every room provided a reminder of the institute's state-mandated purpose.

When in November 2011 Bento Bento took office, one of his initial actions as Governor was to personally inspect the facilities and working methods of all the divisions and agencies under his charge.[130] In many of the visits he was not pleased with what he saw. "One cannot continue working under these conditions", he reportedly cried out after one of those probing stopovers. At IPGUL, however, the reaction was different. Catching the final stages of the relocation process and shown around by Hélder José, the Governor was apparently "satisfied with the propitious conditions" that the new facilities provided to the institute's employees. But that was not his only visit on the northern side of Odebrecht's construction yard. In Chicala he also met with Bento Soito. For GTRUCS was moving in soon. From the last months of 2011 onwards, IPGUL would have one of the agencies associated with its own impairment working out of one of its seven buildings. They would stay at least until they were able to move to their own purposely built head office in Cazenga.

STATE PRACTICE(S)

I could hear a fluorescent light bulb buzzing in the hallway. It was past five on a Friday and the open plan office was empty. Whilst Anselmo panned across vast extensions of sparsely developed urban areas on Google Earth, I was trying to retrace my latest urban explorations on the photomosaic of Luanda on the wall. There was something quite fascinating about that large printout – something marvelously gripping. Even though the montage did not go beyond Cazenga, Camama and Viana, the textures conveyed by those high-resolution images were rather remarkable. It was as if one could touch the urban fabric and feel the differences between each of its various patterns. Perhaps because I had only seen those contrasting shapes within the boundaries of a computer monitor, the sharpness of that poster seemed to reveal a lot more than the Google Earth imagery Anselmo was patiently scanning through. "Could it be within the limits of this picture?" I asked to break the silence and get the conversation going. "Nah," he replied with his eyes stuck to the screen, "it is way beyond what's in there."

Anselmo finds Google Earth quite helpful. He is obviously well aware that the pictures are not displayed in real time and he concedes that there are several limits to what one can learn from them. Most importantly, he explained to me in an earlier chat, "satellite images do not show social and economic dynamics." How many of those buildings are schools? What is the infrastructure like? Where do people go shopping? Are there any jobs around? Where can you find the closest police station? How long does it take for one to get to a hospital? In Luanda "one cannot really understand what is going on the ground with Google Earth alone." But that does not nullify its usefulness to IPGUL. Notwithstanding the importance of considering all such aspects of urban living when enforcing planning authority, Olímpio points out, being able to rapidly survey "a city that permanently grows past our memory of it" is a great asset for their work in the Department of Urban Planning.

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[130] See "Governador de Luanda realiza visitas de constatação às direções provinciais," *Angola Press*, November 29, 2011; "Governador de Luanda sai em visita de campo," Governo Provincial de Luanda, in http://www.governo.gov.ao, November 30, 2011; and "Governador inteira-se do funcionamento das direções provinciais," *Angola Press*, December 14, 2011.

If Google Earth can never match reality, IPGUL had always failed to act in accordance to what was statutorily set up to do. In this respect, the macro-institutional historical analysis that we have done thus far is in line with the outlooks that many of my interlocutors shared with me from within its ranks. For one clear manifestation of the discrepancy between what was planned for the institute in the mid-2000s and what it really does – IPGUL officials would tell me in one way or another – is the fact that its internal configuration never really matched that of its statute.

Yet, in Luanda, that which is official carries considerable weight. In the sphere of the state and for those working in planning and urban development, what comes out in *Diário da República* is regularly far from determining what actually happens. Nevertheless, it often shapes not just how people conceive of material reality but also how their day-to-day practices evolve both with and within it. In my conversations with IPGUL officials, when I explained that I wanted to comprehend what the role of the institute is and what it does, I would typically be directed at its founding decree and the organic statute that it approves. "You need to read it in order to understand what is going on," which was exactly what I was told in my very first day at the institute. During the following months, as I went around the various prefabricated pavilions to get the hang of what each department was doing, I would recurrently return to the Council of Ministers act to prepare for the different meetings and make sense of how each person related to the next. But while the basic arrangements were there, all in all I would find a repeated mismatch of structures, functions and responsibilities. For, as we have seen above already, the road that the institute travelled through the permanently changing institutional landscape was bumpy from the very beginning. Stripped down of so many of its constitutional assignments soon after being created, IPGUL saw some of its internal structures deflate in purpose, ambition and even in the word count of their title.

Nowhere is this more evident than what I presented above as having been designed to be the technical core of the institute. Intended for dealing with the fundamental instruments of the Angolan spatial planning system, the DEPTUC and the DPGUT were devised to provide means for preparing and administering what I have translated above as *spatial plans* and *planning operations*.[131] In actuality, however, in the daily workings of IPGUL, the DEPTUC became simply the DPU and the DPGUT was soon merely the DGU. In a loose translation to English, the actually existing units were the Department of Urban Planning and the Division of Urban Management.[132] I point this out not just because of the denominational difference in relation to the official plan, but also and most importantly because it denotes a transformation in what the work of those departments actually consists of. In other words, it indicates the emergence of particular configurations of power, authority and technical-operational ability in the actual

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[131] As we have seen above, the DEPTUC or *Departamento de Estudos, Planeamento Territorial, Urbanismo e Cadastro* was to be the Department of Research, Spatial Planning, Urbanism and Cadastre and the DPGUT or *Departamento de Projectos, Gestão Urbana e Tráfego* was to be the Department of Projects, Urban Management and Traffic. Also to keep in mind what was presented in the beginning of this chapter, the two fundamental instruments of the spatial planning system set in place just before IPGUL's establishment are – in Portuguese – the *planos territoriais* and the *operações de ordenamento*.

[132] DPU here stands for *Departamento de Planeamento Urbano* or Department of Urban Planning and DGU for *Direcção de Gestão Urbana* or Division of Urban Management. A longer discussion could be held on the minutiae of these unofficial designations, for the difference the difference between *departamento* and *direcção* is significant. Although, a *direcção* in an organization typically sits a higher level than a *departamento*, the DPU and the DGU were (like their statutory counterparts, the DEPTUC and the DPGUT) equally ranked in the overall structure. Note also that a new organic statute was recently approved. See *Decreto Presidencial nº 85/15* of May 5, 2015. In its new configuration, these two departments are now called *Departamento de Estudos e Planeamento Urbano* and *Departamento de Projectos e Gestão Urbana*.

practices of IPGUL officials. The question then becomes, what did those planning practices consisted of?

To be sure, after the initial turmoil, the institute did not shrink down as a whole. In fact, while some of its functions were never really fulfilled (transit and traffic management stand out here as a particularly neglected area), other purposes emerged much more strongly than was initially anticipated. In this respect, the focus on Geographical Information Systems and the project of mapping out the entire province were forged beyond the statutory components of IPGUL. Given the sheer lack of information about the territory or its social and economic structures, the GIS Office came to fulfill a role that the much more static Cadaster and Cartography Division could not satisfy.[133] There are various aspects in the specific work of this unit that could use further analysis, but I would argue that its rise in significance in the internal apparatus of IPGUL speaks to what the institute's actual planning practices became in the midst of the various layers of *confusão* depicted above. For more than shaping the future of Luanda, the planning institute came to congregate mechanisms for keeping up with its burgeoning transformations. Not just the expansion of so-called informal settlement, which could only be frowned upon as a problematic anarchic practice, but also the development of purportedly ordered parts of the city. In other words, a great deal of planning practices at IPGUL became mere cartographic exercises.

This was particularly striking in the development of Cidade do Kilamba. As we will analyze in the following chapter, Luanda's new centralities were planned beyond the structures of the Provincial Government. Even if the project elaboration for the massive and now widely known housing development began just as IPGUL was in its first months of operation, no mechanisms seem to have been put in place for the institute to fulfill its purpose of promoting and coordinating all urban planning and management activities in the province. Despite being well within its jurisdiction, the 710 high-rises of phase one of Cidade do Kilamba – just like those of the projects in Cacuaco, Zango, Km 44 or Musseque Capari, not to mention the extensive resettlement areas of Zango or Panguila (see Fig. E, in the Introduction) – emerged in the periphery of Luanda without its interference or approval. IPGUL was established to ensure the rational use of land in the province, but most of the Central Government's reconstruction effort took place a long way off its sanctioning or mere consideration. The bureaucratic glitches arrived when SONIP, the Sonangol subsidiary in charge of commercializing the new centralities, wanted to make the apartments available in the market. In order to properly legalize the new cities (and be able to sell their thousands of housing units) it was necessary to license the division of land[134] upon which they had been built and to sanction architectural drawings for buildings that had already been erected. For the case of Cidade do Kilamba, this *ex post facto* approval was conducted in what an IPGUL planner referred to as a "regime of mass production." There was "no planning involved," I was told in conversation. And even if some of its provisions where considered insufficient, "there was not much we could have done at that point."

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[133] In the original organic statute, the DEPTUC (see Article 22) was to be divided in a *Divisão de Estudos e Projectos de Planos Territoriais, Documentação e Informação* and a *Divisão de Cartografia e Cadastro.* In reality what was forged out of this last one was the *Gabinete de Cadastro.* The *Gabinete de SIG,* or GIS Office was a created a couple of years into IPGUL's existence. In the new statute, approved by *Decreto Presidencial n° 85/15* of May 5, 2015, the executive services of the institute now include a *Departmento de Informação Territorial e Cadastro*.

[134] In the law, the *loteamento urbano*, which is the act of parceling out a parcel of land for the purposes of urban development, is one of the fundamental planning operations.

But it was not just in the case of the Government's priority projects that IPGUL's planning practices lagged behind Luanda's burgeoning transformations. Going back to the existing organizational structure, the routinized practices of the institute were a simulacrum of what was constitutionally intended. Given that no plans were actually being produced, planning was never about projecting and managing growth but rather a reaction to development change. In the Department of Urban Planning where Anselmo worked, planning happened once an application for granting land surface rights[135] for a particular development initiative came in. The established procedure would involve either a discretionary volumetric analysis to integrate the proposed buildings in the surrounding urban mesh or a study of land parceling proposals to ensure the observance of whatever practices were considered adequate for ordering urban expansion. Sometimes these reviews would follow existing rules and regulations, at others they would have to adapt. For often the building works had already started and in other occasions the development requests did not correspond to what was actually built. "You see what I mean, *Arquiteto*?" Anselmo told me as he finally found what he was looking for. The land division map did not match the image on the screen.[136]

Confusão as a Mode of Rule

The theoretical models usually deployed to depict and analyze the workings of the state in contemporary Africa are for the most part incapable of capturing the ambivalences of official planning practices described in this chapter. They seem particularly unfit to scrutinize the entanglement of law and bureaucratic ruling portrayed above as Luanda's planning *confusão* as well as the unpredictability upon which its rather relentless modernist ambitions are built. And their shortcomings are not merely superficial. In fact, they derive from some of their most foundational and inextirpable characteristics.

While the literature is abundant and full of important variations, classificatory reasoning and Weberian propositions have indelibly marked the study of postcolonial African states over the past two decades or so.[137] In one way or another, different regimes and forms of government are

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[135] As we have seen above, the granting of land surface rights or *direito de superfície* was the main mechanism for enforcing planning rules and regulations.

[136] While I was at IPGUL there was constant talk that the elaboration of the master plan was just about to get started. It did not for the whole time I was in Luanda. But the works for the *Plano Director Geral Metropolitano da Cidade de Luanda* began in December 2013. Weeks before this dissertation was filed, it was announced that the plan would be ready for analysis and approval in August 2015. See "Plano Director Metropolitano no próximo mês," *Jornal de Angola*, July 28, 2015. Forecasting a total population of almost 13 million in 2030, the plan is entitled "Luanda 2030 – Innovative City." See "Luanda vai ter 12,9 milhões de habitantes em 2030," *Rede Angola*, August 2, 2015.

[137] This is indeed a vast and dynamic body of literature with very significant internal disputes. I do not claim to sum it all up and I certainly do not intend to homogenize its immense variability. Nevertheless, I believe there are foundational uniformities that render it generally unsuited to understand the case in hand. In that sense, my goal with the abridged overview that follows is not to survey the study of the African state or examine the full range of debates unfolding within it. Reading across what arguably are the main contributions to these debates as well as some of the many surveys of African political analysis recently produced, my objective is rather to locate and inspect those foundational uniformities as a means for both pinpointing general insufficiencies in this body of literature and conceptualizing alternative channels for grasping phenomena like Luanda's planning *confusão*. For a couple of general overviews of African politics and the study of the state see Crawford Young, *The Postcolonial African State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960-2010* (Madison and London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2012) or Goran Hyden, *African Politics in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For more specific analyses of the literature see Gero Erdmann and Ulf Engel, "Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 45(1), 2007: 95-119; Anne Pitcher, Mary Moran and Michael Johnston, "Rethinking Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism in Africa," *African Studies Review* 52(1), 2009: 125-

measured up against the paragon of the modern state and generally ranked on the far side of the multiple normative spectrums that emanate out of it. They are usually *weak*, often *predatory* and frequently pronounced as entirely *failed*.[138] In seeking to understand actual structures of legitimacy and domination in African societies, political scientists and economists alike describe states throughout the continent as *rentier*, *clientelist* or *kleptocratic*. But the most widely accepted descriptor amongst Africanist scholars, political analysts and other observers of the continent construes the majority of them as essentially *neopatrimonial*.[139] Notwithstanding the differences between the various theoretical models coming out of this conceptual cauldron, the African state is then typically described as a matrix of systems, organizations and practices

156; or Johnatan Di John, "The Concept, Causes and Consequences of Failed States: A Critical Review of the Literature and Agenda for Research with Specific Reference to Sub-Saharan Africa," *European Journal of Development Research* 22 (1), 2010: 10-30. For reviews done with the Angolan context in mind see Sylvia Croese, "Post-War State-Led Development at Work in Angola" or Nuno Vidal, "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa: The Genesis and Development of the Angolan Political System, 1961-1987," (PhD Dissertation, King's College, University of London), 2002.

[138] These are fairly longstanding arguments that, despite plentiful disputes raised against them throughout the years, survive remarkably intact up to this day. See Joel Midgal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton and Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1988), Robert Fatton, *Predatory Rule: State and Civil Society in Africa* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), William Zartman, Ed, *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), Christopher Clapham, *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2000), Robert Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* (New York: Vintage, 2002), Robert Rotberg, Ed, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2004), Robert Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa* (New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), Paul Collier, *War, Guns, and Votes: Democracy in Dangerous Places* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), or Goran Hyden, *African Politics in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), to name just a few references.

[139] Of all the different attributes advanced in the literature – *corrupt, prebendal, crony, gatekeeper* or *parasitical* are only some of the multiple other terms used to describe the African state – the concept of *neopatrimonialism* is not only the most widely diffused, it is also often used as an umbrella title under which, in one way or another, all of those other terms fall. In fact, the concept has been so extensively utilized to describe such a diverse range of sub-phenomena in the study of Africa that it is certainly not unreasonable to identify a full-fledged interpretative paradigm built upon its foundations. Thandika Mkandawire calls it the "neopatrimonialism school of thought." Regardless of all in-house contentions or the different meanings, levels of prominence and degrees of sophistication with which the term has been deployed over the years, its main building blocks go back to the early 1980s. Jean François Médard, "The Underdeveloped State in Tropical Africa: Political Clientelism or Neo-Patrimonialism?" In *Private Patronage and Public Power: Political Clientelism in the Modern State*, Ed. Christopher Clapham, (London: Frances Pinter, 1982), pp. 162-192; Jean François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993); Patrick Chabal, *Power in Africa* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1994); Michael Bratton and Nicolas Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Jean François Bayart, Stephen Ellis and Béatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999); Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999); and Nicholas Van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979-1999* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) comprise some of the most often cited works. Other important references in its constellation include Richard Sandbrook, *The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Richard Joseph, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Fatton, *Predatory Rule*; William Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999); or Frederick Cooper, *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). More recently, there have been calls for conceptual refinement – see, for example, Erdmann and Engel, "Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept" – as well as strong criticisms questioning the utility of neopatrimonialism as an analytical concept – see, for example, Aaron DeGrassi, "'Neopatrimonialism' and Agricultural Development in Africa: Contributions and Limitations of a Contested Concept," *African Studies Review* 51(3), 2008: 107-133; Pitcher, Moran and Johnston Rethinking Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism in Africa;" Gretchen Bauer and Scott Taylor, *Politics in Southern Africa: Transition and Transformation* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2011); or Thandika Mkandawire, "Neopatrimonialism and the Political Economy of Economic Performance in Africa: Critical Reflections," Working Paper nº 1, Institute for Futures Studies, 2013.

whereby political and administrative relations are predominantly treated as personal affairs. Despite the formal existence of legal provisions separating public and private spheres, the act of governing in this purportedly non-emancipated state is generally not institutionalized or based on bureaucratic rules. It is instead founded on the will and interests of those who rule. For that which continues to be one of the most prevalent factions of political and economic analysis in African studies, the dominant working logic of the postcolonial African state is not just highly arbitrary and centered on *big men*; it also lies on the *political instrumentalization of disorder* that feeds dynamics of elite reproduction, self-enrichment and capital accumulation.[140] Reliant on informal, hierarchical and deeply entangled networks firmly held together by bonds of loyalty and subordination, its concrete structures are at all times pulsating with routinized criminality, rent-seeking behavior and copious amounts of elite greed. The actually existing state is therefore seen as a *shadow* complex hidden behind a legitimizing veneer of bureaucratic autonomy, a subterranean *rhizomatic* structure by which popular sovereignty is impaired and rational-legal forms of authority are continually undermined (if not entirely dismantled).

This prevailing tendency in the analysis of postcolonial African politics finds virtually no exception in conventional studies of Angola. If anything, state forms and political-economic structures in what the British *GQ* called "the world's richest poor country"[141] have been widely portrayed in the literature as either perfect examples of neopatrimonialism or rather unique configurations that refine its working logics.[142] Just as Botswana or Cape Verde are routinely referred to as exceptions that confirm the rule, the case of Angola has not only been put forward as the utmost embodiment of continent-wide patterns, but is now frequently portrayed as the model that many other African countries are currently following.[143] In what concerns the state

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[140] Used for the Angolan case by Steve Kibble, "Angola: Can the Politics of Disorder Become the Politics of Democratization & Development?" *Review of African Political Economy* 33 (109), 2006: 525-542; or David Sogge, "Angola: Global 'Good Governance' Also Needed," Working Paper nº 23, FRIDE, 2006, Put forward by Chabal and Daloz's ideas around the *political instrumentalization of disorder* have only superficial connection with my argument that *confusão* is a mode of rule. See below.

[141] John Kampfner, "Welcome to the World's Richest Poor Country," *GQ Magazine*, July 1, 2008.

[142] Virtually any account of Angolan society makes reference the paradoxical condition evoked by the British magazine in 2008. If the *fate* of Africa has yet to match its *fortunes* – see Martin Meredith, *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2005) and Martin Meredith, *The Fortunes of Africa: A 5000-Year History of Wealth, Greed, and Endeavor* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2014) – Angola's notoriously rich endowment in natural resources has so far failed dramatically to translate into development gains for the majority of citizens. This common feature in analyses of Africa is, of course, related with the so-called *resource curse* (see Introduction)*,* the widely influential thesis under which the overabundance of natural resources in any given country is understood to hinder its economic performance as well as inhibit the development of robust and accountable public institutions. To be sure, most of the authors and students of Angola cited below refuse to apply these wide interpretative models (be it the resource curse thesis or the precepts of the neopatrimonial school) without critical reflection on their suitability to analyze the empirical material they have in hand. In fact, they are often described in the Angolanist academic literature as either too simplistic or incomplete models to understand the Angolan case. That said, the majority of these authors assumes and reproduces an understanding of the state inherited from the trend described above and their interpretative models are therefore equally incapable of capturing the ambivalences of official planning practices described in this chapter. For an interesting critical – even if empirically lacking – take on this literature see Audun Solli and Anthony Leysens, "(Re)Conceptualizing the Political Economy of the African State Form: The Strong/Weak State Contradiction in Angola," *South African Journal of Political Studies* 38 (2), 2011: 295-313.

[143] Similar to the ways in which, during the civil war, Angola was often described in terms that were even somber than those of Africa – see, for example, Assis Malaquias, "Making War and Lots of Money: The Political Economy of Protracted Conflict in Angola," *Review of African Political Economy* 28(90), 2001: 521-535 – in recent years the country has served as an explanatory model in a wide range of literature. In the popular press as well as in academic and policy discussions, for example, the exchange of infrastructure for natural resources is commonly referred to as the *Angola mode* and is typically described as China's engagement model with African countries is (see Chapter 3). Another prominent use of the Angolan case has taken place in descriptions of enclave-based development models – see, for example, James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

and its arrangements, the oil-rich nation has then been taken to represent Africa's curses and tragic institutional failures as well as some of its most advanced forms of circumscribed connection with the wider world. In fact, while there have been different entry points into the analysis of the Angolan state as well as multiple modes of explanation for its particular configurations, core ideas about the *extreme concentration of political power*, the *enclave nature* of the economy or the fundamental importance of *personal rule* in the actual management of state institutions have remained largely unaltered over the past couple of decades.

Up until the early 2000s, when *The Economist* deemed the continent *hopeless*,[144] Angola was consistently seen across the literature as a war-ravaged dystopia of elite greed, reckless self-interest and widespread human destitution.[145] Unable to rule over vast expanses of the country or to carry out most of the expected functions of a modern government, the bureaucratic structures of the Angolan state were generally described as a *withering*, *collapsed* or even *phantomlike* apparatus. This atrophy and downfall, however, did not translate into any type of comprehensive demise of the state. As those portrayals of utter failure promptly denote, control over the oil industry was well preserved by the small and immensely wealthy elites that arose out of the party-state *nomenklatura* of the 1980s. Just as the regular apparatus of government was shriveled down to its bare bones, political power became increasingly concentrated all the way up an ever-tightening chain of command well oiled by a remarkably efficient national oil company. Emerging through a process of *informalization*, the *privatization* of government functions and the consolidation of *patrimonial networks,* the actually existing state had simply become

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[144] "The Hopeless Continent," *The Economist*, May 13, 2000.

[145] Similar to what was stated in relation to the literature on the African state, my intention in the very brief review that follows is not coalesce a range of studies with important variations and layers of nuance into a singular interpretative framework. There are, of course, different levels of empirical sophistication as well as multiple ways of accounting for Angolan state forms in the academic literature. But the disagreements amongst most analysts rarely touch the very essence of the arguments made. In the vast majority of cases, I would argue, interpretations are different but not necessarily divergent. With this in mind, my objective here is to provide a general overview of how this rather consonant body of work on Angolan politics has conceptualized the state over the past couple of decades. In that sense, this paragraph is an attempt to critically digest the assertions made about the state up until the early 2000s in following studies: Manuel Ennes Ferreira, "La Reconversion Économique De La *Nomenklatura* Pétrolière," *Politique Africaine* 57, 1995; Barry Munslow, "Angola: The Politics of Unsustainable Development," *Third World Quarterly* 20 (3), 1999*: 551-568*; Jakkie Cilliers, "Resource Wars: A New Type of Insurgency," in *Angola's War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds*, Ed. Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2000); Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich, Eds. *Angola's War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds* (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2000); William Reno, "The (Real) War Economy in Angola." In *Angola's War Economy: The Role of Oil and Diamonds*, Ed. Jakkie Cilliers and Christian Dietrich (Pretoria: Institute of Security Studies, 2000); Philippe Le Billon, "Angola's Political Economy of War: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000," *African Affairs* 100, 2001: 55-80; Malaquias, "Making War and Lots of Money: The Political Economy of Protracted Conflict in Angola;" Christine Messiant, "The Eduardo dos Santos Foundation: Or, how Angola's Regime is Taking Over Civil Society," *African Affairs* 100, 2001: 287-309; Marcus Power, "Patrimonialism & Petro-Diamond Capitalism: Peace, Geopolitics & the Economics of War in Angola," *Review of African Political Economy* 28(90), 2001: 489-502; Vidal, "Post-Modern Patrimonialism in Africa: The Genesis and Development of the Angolan Political System, 1961-1987;" Imogen Parsons, "Conflict and the (De)Formation of the State in Angola," in *Community and the State in Lusophone Africa*, Eds. Malyn Newitt, Patrick Chabal and Norrie Macqueen, (London: King's College, 2003), pp. 35-57; Tony Hodges, *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State* (Oxford and Bloomington: James Currey and Indiana University Press, 2004); Sogge, "Angola: Global 'Good Governance' Also Needed;" Assis Malaquias, *Rebels and Robbers: Violence in Post-Colonial Angola* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007); Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Oil and Politics in the Gulf of Guinea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Nicholas Shaxson, *Poisoned Wells: The Dirty Politics of African Oil* (London and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Christine Messiant, "The Mutation of Hegemonic Domination: Multiparty Politics Without Democracy." In *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 93-123; Christine Messiant, "Angola, le Voies de l'Ethnisation et de la Décomposition. I. De la Guerre à la Paix (1975-1991): le Conflit Armé, les Interventions Internationales et le Peuple Angolais," in *L'Angola Postcolonial. 1. Guerre et Paix sans Démocratisation*, Eds. Briditte Lachartre and Michel Cahen (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2008), pp. 33-91; David Sogge, "Angola: 'Failed' Yet 'Successful'," Working Paper nº 81, FRIDE, 2009.

nongovernmental, classically rentier and *viciously predatory*. By the end of the war in 2002, the literature tells us, this was indeed a *successful failed state.*

From the mid 2000s onwards, as the London-based weekly began to see Africa *rising*[146] and Angola famously became one of the most rapidly growing economies in the continent, the majority of political analysts began to think through and explain the state in connection with the post-war reconstruction effort.[147] Drawing attention to the soaring *statist activism* of the national government as well as the international agreements that have enabled a state-led modernization agenda with a strong focus on infrastructure and housing, the recent literature has undertaken a generalized shift towards a finer understanding of contemporary realities. Straight predation turned into aspiration for regime *legitimization* and statecraft gained attributes such as *high modernist* or *developmental*. But these new qualities of the Angolan state, the literature tells us, have only intensified the *dual structure* of government formed during the civil war. In fact, the majority of analysts seem to agree that in this two-tiered state system the formal bureaucracy remains weak and incompetent while the *parallel* institutional arrangements established in and around the presidency amount to a *steady* and sophisticated state that provides new opportunities for capital accumulation amongst the elite and shape the reconstruction effort into an *illiberal, authoritarian* and *patronage-based* process.

These analyses are starkly insufficient. They prove to be especially lacking once one attempts to make sense of routinized practices of the state or the legal infrastructure through which they are enabled. To be sure, much of this literature provides us with significant empirical findings as well as important insights into some irrefutable dynamics of many African states. However, when taken as a whole, this body of work contains deep-seated shortcomings that debilitate our capacity to understand of how each of those states actually works. In the specific case of Angola

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[146] "Africa Rising," *The Economist*, December 3, 2011.

[147] Following on the previous paragraph, this one extends the analysis to the period following the end of the civil war. In addition to some of the references listed above, these were also considered: Steve Kibble, "Angola: Can the Politics of Disorder Become the Politics of Democratization & Development?" *Review of African Political Economy* 33 (109), 2006: 525-542; Manuel Ennes Ferreira, "China in Angola: Just a Passion for Oil?" in *China Returns to Africa: A Superpower and a Continent Embrace*, Eds. Chris Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (London: Hurst Publishers, 2008), pp. 275-294; Tony Hodges, "The Economic Foundations of the Patrimonial State," in *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds. Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 175-199; Nuno Vidal, "The Angolan Regime and the Move to Multiparty Politics," in *Angola: The Weight of History*, Eds. Patrick Chabal and Nuno Vidal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), pp. 124-174; Didier Péclard, "L'Angola Dans la Paix: Autoritarisme et Reconversions," *Politique Africaine* 110, 2008: 5-20; Marcus Power, "Angola 2025: The Future of the 'World's Richest Poor Country' as Seen through a Chinese Rear-View Mirror," *Antipode* 44 (3), 2012: 993-1014; Paula Roque, "Angola: Parallel Governments, Oil and Neopatrimonial System Reproduction," Situation Report, June 6 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2011); Aslak Orre, "Entrenching the Party-State in the Multiparty Era: Opposition Parties, Traditional Authorities and new Councils of Local Representatives in Angola and Mozambique" (PhD Dissertation, University of Bergen, 2010); Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, "Illiberal Peacebuilding in Angola," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 49 (2): 2011, 287-314; David Sogge, "Angola: Reinventing Pasts and Futures," *Review of African Political Economy* 38 (127), 2011: 85-92; Lucy Corkin, "Angolan Political Elites' Management of Chinese Credit Lines," in *China and Angola: A Marriage of Convenience?*, Ed. by Marcus Power and Ana Cristina Alves (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012), pp. 45-67; Markus Weimer and Alex Vines, "China's Angolan Oil Deal," in *China and Angola: A Marriage of Convenience?*, Ed. by Marcus Power and Ana Cristina Alves (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012), pp. 85-104; Lucy Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency: Angola's Management of China's Credit Lines* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013); Sylvia Croese, "Post-war state-led development at work in Angola: The Zango housing project in Luanda as a case study" (PhD Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2013); Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War* (London: Hurst and Company, 2015).

they often trap us in simplistic accounts of the state and prevent us from seeing into the complexities of its quotidian existence.[148]

One particularly hampering limitation of these analyses derives from the reified understanding of the state upon which their different approaches lie.[149] After all, conceived within a fundamentally Weberian framework, out of the trenches of conventional political science, the core body of literature produced on the postcolonial African state presupposes its concreteness, prejudges its coherence and analyzes *it* as an apparatus of power that big men and their surrounding elites deploy at will for little more than their own benefit. The problem with taking for granted functional and structural characteristics of the state is not only that it obstructs appreciation for processes of subjectivization and the workings of power. It is also that it breeds an essentialist and predominantly dichotomous understanding of political-legal systems, placing them along spectrums of functionality where Western liberal democracies comprise a tacit normative ideal (even when the stated objective is to uncover the logics of the African politics). This causes researchers to overlook contradiction, renounce ambiguity and obliterate the nuances of state formation. It also leads them to treat official legal orders and bureaucratic modes of rule as failed and secondary phenomena in contemporary Africa. By looking at intra-institutional conflicts and organizational ambivalences as either expressions of state dysfunctionality or side effects of patrimonial networks, no space is left for making sense of the heterogeneity of state action within the realm of legal authority.[150] In terms of what we have been analyzing in this chapter, this dominant approach to the study of the African state forecloses the possibility of looking into the multiple and often contradictory ways in which the politics of space is implicated with legal and bureaucratic arenas.[151]

But both the application of law and the intricacies of officialdom play a most significant role in the construction of modern Luanda. In order to make sense of the *confusão* that this chapter

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[148] There are, of course, many exceptions to these generalized tendencies. In the case of Angola, Jon Schubert's treatment of the "system" is particularly instructive. See Jon Schubert, "'Working the System': Affect, Amnesia and the Aesthetics of Power in the "New Angola" (PhD Dissertation, The University of Edinburgh, 2014).

[149] This critique has a long lineage, starting with Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1(1), 1988: 58-89. Some of its most relevant constituents include Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics," *American Political Science Review* 85, 1995: 77-96; and Akhil Gupta, "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State," *American Ethnologist* 22 (2), 1995: 375-402. For a recent compilation on "the anthropology of the state" see Aradhana Sharma, and Akhil Gupta, Eds, *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader* (Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).

[150] In the case of Luanda, a recent study conducted between the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra in Portugal and the University Agostinho Neto in Angola produced three volumes worth of critical legal scholarship on "Luanda and justice." As a whole this study provides an account of such heterogeneity as well as an important contribution for our understanding of legal pluralism in Angola, but it generally overlooks questions of urban spatial production. See Boaventura de Sousa Santos and José Octávio Serra Van Dúnem, Eds, *Luanda e Justiça: Pluralismo Jurídico numa Sociedade em Transformação, Volume I – Sociedade e Estado em Construção: Desafios do Direito e da Democracia em Angola* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2012); Conceição Gomes and Raul Araújo, Eds, *Luanda e Justiça: Pluralismo Jurídico numa Sociedade em Transformação, Volume II – A Luta pela Relevância Social e Política: Os Tribunais Judiciais em Angola* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2012). Maria Paula Meneses and Júlio Lopes, Eds, *Luanda e Justiça: Pluralismo Jurídico numa Sociedade em Transformação, Volume III – O Direito por fora do Direito: As Instâncias Extra-Judiciais de Resolução de Conflitos em Luanda* (Coimbra: Almedina, 2012).

[151] A whole field of knowledge – critical legal geography – has evolved around this connection between law and the production of space. For a study that deals precisely with this articulation, albeit in a very different context, see Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

expounds I take cue from James Holston's ideas about "the misrule of law."[152] In his analysis of how the peripheries of São Paulo developed in relation to the evolution of land and planning law, Holston presents the expected dysfunctions of the Brazilian legal system as a perpetuation of "judicial irresolution through legal complication."[153] Although he acknowledges that the use of law as an "instrument of calculated disorder"[154] promotes corruption and different forms of individual manipulation, his main argument is that "it is also a means of rule that systematically produces irresolution for a society in which irresolution is a means of rule."[155] Ananya Roy has a similar reading of the Indian planning regime. For her "urban planning in India has to be understood as the management of resources, particularly land, through dynamic processes of informality."[156] Of course both Holston and Roy are mostly concerned with the question of land and the entanglements of legality and illegality in its occupation, ownership and use, but the way in which they allow us to see legal and planning regimes as open-ended, ambiguous and arbitrary is exceptionally instructive for making sense of our case. In particular, an understanding of law, official norms and forms of regulation as a means of confusion and complication provides us with theoretical tools for understanding the legal and bureaucratic apparatus of state planning in contemporary Luanda. For if we open up our inquiry to the logics under which the state actually functions, its *confusão* is not just an avenue for corruption. It is indeed its way of operating, a mode of rule and the means by which state action becomes possible out of overlapping and deeply entangled layers of regulation and institutional forms. To put in Roy's terms, in Luanda *confusão* is "the idiom of planning."

Going back to Olímpio's indictment that "planning is destined to fail" in the Angolan capital or the state's unflinching pursuit for a master plan that will finally bring order to its purportedly disorderly state, this reading of planning efforts in contemporary Luanda allows us to bring to light that the solutions to its urban crisis might not just reside in a better legal infrastructure or improved planning system. For like in other contexts characterized by alleged anarchy and disorder,[157] law is itself misruled and planning is deeply implicated in that crisis. What perhaps sets post-war Angola apart is that planning regimes have often been streamlined by crude oil. In the cases described above, but most relevantly in the one we will now turn to, oil has fueled certain forms of developmentalism and infrastructured urban expansion. They are still profoundly fragmented and their scope is very far from addressing the needs of the entire population, but I argue that they constitute a form of urbanism that must not be neglected.

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[152] See James Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (Princeton and Woodstock: Princeton University Press, 2008), especially Chapter 6.

[153] Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship*, 219.

[154] Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship*, 203.

[155] Holston, *Insurgent Citizenship*, 220.

[156] Ananya Roy, "Why India Cannot Plan its Cities: Informality, Insurgence and the Idiom of Urbanization," *Planning Theory* 8 (1), 2009: 76-87, 80.

[157] In the Introduction we have already seen how informal settlements are typically described in Angola as "anarchic occupations."

CIDADE DO KILAMBA

FANTASIES AND CIRCUITRIES OF LUANDA'S NEW CENTRALITIES

The camera moves swiftly along a road lined up with streetlights. There are three transplanted young trees in between every two lampposts. On the outer limit of the sidewalk, a narrow strip of manicured green grass blends into the vacant land. A conspicuous mass of indistinct buildings appears in the distance. "A jaw dropping development outside of Luanda, Angola." Pause. The voice-over is dramatic, almost theatrical. As the moving image transitions into a short sequence of static views, a pristine city is revealed. "Row after row of high-rises. 20,000 apartments. And that's just phase one." New pause. CNN's David McKenzie comes on the screen. He is in jeans and a pale blue shirt with an unbuttoned collar. Standing in the middle of a wide boulevard, with an inactive bus stop on his left and two long lines of multistory buildings vanishing behind his back, he presents Kilamba to the world.[1]

Fig. 3.1 Reporting from Kilamba with Open Arms 1.
In David McKenzie, "Africa's Most Expensive Apartment?"
CNN video, 5:04, October 29, 2012, min 3:07.

"Kilamba is based on a campaign promise," McKenzie explains in less sonorous fashion. The camera zooms in on him. "For the 2008 election Angola's President pledged to the people a million homes for ordinary citizens." Turning his torso slightly to the side and looking away from the camera, he gesticulates more emphatically. "And Kilamba is an attempt to do that." There is a sense of astonishment in both his body language and his words. "They've built cities like this across the country," he continues before moving his arms in one sprouting-like motion, "coming literally out of the bush."

"But from where I am standing," he now looks purposely behind his back as if inspecting his entire surroundings, "Kilamba feels almost deserted." Pause, again. His declamatory voice-over returns with some more images of the city. "Four lane highways without cars. Schools without people." Two idle Asian workers come up on the screen. "In under five years a Chinese company built Kilamba using Angola's credit lines with China." A couple more views of empty streets, a slightly graver tone, and McKenzie brings it home in just under forty-five seconds. "But parts of Kilamba feel like a ghost town."

CNN ran slightly different versions of McKenzie's story between the end of October and early November 2012,[2] but they were far from bringing breaking news to the world. In fact, Kilamba

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[1] David McKenzie, "Chinese-Built Angolan City Feels Like a Ghost Town," YouTube video, 2:53, posted by *CNN*, November 1, 2012. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[2] See, for example: David McKenzie, "Africa's Most Expensive Apartment?" *CNN* video, 5:04, October 29, 2012. Accessed March 16, 2015; David McKenzie, "A New Town, With Few Residents," *CNN* video, 3:33, December 5, 2012. Accessed March 12, 2015.

had been the object of a media frenzy of planetary proportions initiated by the BBC almost four months before that, when Louise Redvers reported how "the jewel in Angola's post-war reconstruction crown" and "the star of glossy government promotional videos which show smiling families enjoying a new style of living away from the dust and confusion of central Luanda" stood practically empty almost one year after the official opening.[3]

Making her way to the housing development "perched in an isolated spot some 30Km outside Luanda" in early July 2012, when a mere 220 of the 2,800 apartments that were initially made available had been sold, she too seemed flabbergasted with what she saw. "The place is eerily quiet, voices bouncing off all the fresh concrete and wide-open tarred roads. There are hardly any cars and even fewer people, just dozens of repetitive rows of multicolored apartment buildings, their shutters sealed and their balconies empty." Faced with a grandiose urban scenery and a total of 750 high-rises (plus a dozen schools and 100 retail units), she is led to ponder if "the ghost towns of China, Ireland and Spain – full of large empty house estates – may be a phenomenon that is on its way to Africa."

So impressed were both Redvers and her editors by Kilamba's desolation that the rather substandard footage she took from the car while moving through its brand-new streets ended up featuring on the BBC News website. Despite all the shakiness and wind noise, even though there was no narration or dialogue, the one-minute video took the center stage on her piece. Exhibiting no one other than Chinese workers – walking by a hoarding fence, watering the shiny green lawns, or simply strolling down the streets – and the same lifeless void of colorful new buildings that CNN's professional camera would later also capture, the "footage showing how eerily quiet" Kilamba was made the rounds of social media in no time and in a couple of days "Angola's Chinese-built ghost town" began being picked up by an array of pundits and commentators far and wide. While few actually visited it and many seemed to know almost nothing about Angola, pictures were reproduced, facts misrepresented and opinions sprung from all over the web. The focus of most of these assessments was on the fact that the development had been built by a Chinese company.[4] Those more acquainted with Angolan politics also aimed their attention at the project's internal legitimacy or the opacity of its institutional arrangements. But the case of Kilamba generated not just remote awe at China's surging power in Africa or anti-corruption pronouncements about José Eduardo dos Santos's government in Angola.

CIRCUITRIES OF THE GHOST CITY: LOOKING BEYOND THE SPECTRAL

With such rampant and widespread notoriety, Cidade do Kilamba – which, as we will see below, was only the largest of Luanda's so-called new centralities[5] – could not escape the scrutiny of urbanists and analysts with an interest in African cities. Through its consecutive rows of multicolored apartment blocks and the particular development models that are allegedly mirrored

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[3] Louise Redvers, "Angola's Chinese-Built Ghost Town," *BBC News*, July 2, 2012. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[4] This is something that Redvers later lamented and reproved. She was particularly disgusted with what the Daily Mail had done with her work: "the UK Daily Mail ripped off my piece to create a cheap and hateful anti-Chinese rant that may have made even its most loyal readers feel uncomfortable." In Louise Redvers, "'Ghost Town' Still Haunting Government," *Economic Justice News* (Blog), *Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa*, June 6, 2013. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[5] *Novas centralidades*, which is Portuguese for new centralities, is one of the ways in which developments like Cidade do Kilamba became known in Angola. Other designations include *novas cidades* (new cities), simply *cidades* (cities), or *urbanizações* (urban developments).

in them, Luanda-based architect and specialist in urban planning Allan Cain denotes, Angola rapidly came to be seen as "a pioneer of the new urbanism in Africa."[6] For those concerned with the new forms of planning and urban development emerging throughout the continent often saw it as the early embodiment of a process that extends well beyond Angola. In the latest installment of UN Habitat's *The State of African Cities*, for instance, where there is no shortage of references to the "new towns and satellite cities now being established to relieve pressures on the largest African urban concentrations,"[7] Cidade do Kilamba is used as one of the primary examples given to substantiate some of the bleakest conjectures made on these new forms of development. It is as Nairobi-based urban practitioner and UN Habitat consultant Jane Lumumba put it in an early 2013 blog post about these "vast urban experiments."[8] Cidade do Kilamba, she said after reading about its immense emptiness, is "an ominous sign for the many other new cities popping up around the continent."

Another illustration of how Cidade do Kilamba has been taken to represent a continent-wide occurrence comes from the CNN again. In a story written for Future Cities, a reporting initiative that "offers an inside look at the rapid evolution of urban spaces, exploring new ideas, new technologies and new design concepts that might impact urban life throughout the world," Teo Kermeliotis examines the touted intentions of a number of international property developers who in the past few years have announced "plans for new satellite cities and vast modern compounds across Africa."[9] Almost always "branded as smart and futuristic," these ambitious planning and development schemes are, as he puts its, "usually planned to be built from scratch on the edges of the continent's existing metropolises." Cidade do Kilamba was not amongst the initiatives briefly analyzed, but Kermeliotis borrows from critics such as Cain and Lumumba[10] as well as McKenzie's reports from Luanda[11] to suggest that the Angolan "ghost city" might be an indicator of how those looming plans could be "out of touch" with the reality of African cities.[12] Amongst the pundits who he draws from are, of course, many academics.

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[6] Allan Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," *Environment and Urbanization* 26 (2), 2014: 561-567, 563.

[7] In UN Habitat, *The State of African Cities 2014: Re-Imagining Sustainable Urban Transitions* (Nairobi: UN Habitat, 2014), 7 and 202.

[8] Jane Lumumba, "Why Africa Should Be Wary of Its New Cities," *Informal City Dialogues* (Blog), February 5, 2013. Accessed April 14, 2015.

[9] Teo Kermeliotis, "Africa's 'New Cities': Urban Future or Utopian Fantasies?" *Future Cities* (Special Report), *CNN*, May 30, 2013. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[10] "Critics," Kermeliotis says, "bemoan a lack of adequate research to gauge the impact of some new developments on the local environment and economies." Amongst them was people like Cain, who in the case of Angola lamented the "quick fix solutions [that] were offered by Chinese and other international investors" by saying that "there was no adequate preliminary assessment to determine the affordability of land and housing markets or to gauge urban management capacity" before the new centralities projects were initiated, or Lumumba, who argued that "a vast urban experiment [was] underway, with not nearly enough study or forethought as to how these places will affect the economies, environments and lives of people who will live both in and outside of them." See Kermeliotis, "Africa's 'New Cities': Urban Future or Utopian Fantasies?"; Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 564; and Lumumba, "Why Africa Should Be Wary of Its New Cities."

[11] In one of the pieces David McKenzie hears from Joaquim Israel, the President of Cidade do Kilamba's Administration Office, who says that "the idea [of Kilamba] was to start this town in an area where we don't have any problem to relocate people and from there you develop all the fields." To which he asks: "To start from complete scratch?" And Israel responds: "Complete." In David McKenzie, "Africa's Most Expensive Apartment?" *CNN* video, 5:04, October 29, 2012. Accessed March 16, 2015.

[12] This, I should note, is despite the fact that this story was written after the changes that allowed for Kilamba to start being occupied (see below). While this follow-up on the Kilamba story did not make worldwide headlines, almost two months before

The sort of projects examined in this CNN Future Cities story have been subject to growing attention from urban scholars and students of African cities. Filip De Boeck, for example, has written on *Cultural Anthropology* about "the new Kinshasa" being conjured by urban authorities and the Congolese government for a couple of years now.[13] More recently, Garth Meyers looked into Kenya's current "efforts to reimagine Nairobi as a 'world-class city region' by 2030."[14] In the same issue of *American Behavioral Scientist*, Richard Grant examines the "groundswell of interest" in these new urban projects throughout the entire continent.[15] In an even more recent issue of *City*, David Simon describes Cidade do Kilamba as representing "but one example of a widespread movement to insert generally unsustainable 'international' or 'world class' elite enclaves into urban landscapes" across Africa.[16] But it was Vanessa Watson – who is actually quoted in Kermeliotis's piece – who brought the issue up more emphatically thus far.[17] In her main piece, published last year on *Environment and Urbanization*, after a cursory examination of a number of different plans and their dazzling 3D imagery, including brief glimpses at a few initiatives in Luanda,[18] she describes these emerging new schemes not merely as "urban fantasies" but more emphatically as "African urban fantasies."

Borrowing from Michael Goldman's work in Bangalore,[19] Watson suggests that these "African urban fantasies" are built upon "processes of speculative urbanism."[20] For her – like for Goldman, who sees many Bangaloreans "being actively dispossessed as part of the effort to build up a world city based on a speculative imaginary"[21] – more than attempts to build on the potential and range of development aspirations now announced for cities like Accra, Dar es

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Kermeliotis's piece, CNN iReport published a new (albeit "non verified by CNN") piece on how "new initiatives" created "massive demand" in the housing complex. See Adam Sandle 2013, "Kilamba: New Initiatives Create Massive Demand," *iReport*, *CNN*, 11 April 2013. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[13] Filip De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," *Cultural Anthropology* 26(2), 2011: 263-286. See also Filip De Boeck, "The Modern Titanic: Urban Planning and Everyday Life in Kinshasa," *The Salon* 4, 2011: 69-78; and Filip De Boeck, "Spectral Kinshasa: Building the City Through an Architecture of Words," in *Urban Theory Beyond the West: A World of Cities*, Ed. Tim Endensor and Mark Jane (New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 322-328.

[14] Garth Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," *American Behavioral Scientist* 59(3), 2015: 328-346, 328.

[15] Richard Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," *American Behavioral Scientist* 59(3), 2015: 294-310, 294.

[16] David Simon, "Uncertain Times, Contested Resources: Discursive Practices and Lived Realities in African Urban Environments," *City* 19(2-3), 2015: 216-238, 221.

[17] Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" *Environment and Urbanization* 26 (1), 2014: 215-231. See also Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: New Generation Urban 'Master' Plans, Produced by International Architectural and Engineering Firms," Presentation Slides. Accessed March 12, 2015; Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasy Plans that 'Sweep Away' the Poor," *Inclusive Cities Project* (Blog), April 2, 2014. Accessed March 12, 2015; Vanessa Watson, "Future Imperfect: Foreign-Born Development Fantasies Will Make African Cities a Nightmare," *Good Governance Africa* (Stories), August 1, 2014. Accessed March 12, 2015; Vanessa Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 5(1), 2015: 36-39.

[18] In addition to Luanda, in "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" Watson reviews plans in Kigali, Nairobi, Accra, Dar es Salaam, Kinshasa, and Lagos. In "African Urban Fantasies: New Generation Urban 'Master' Plans, Produced by International Architectural and Engineering Firms," she has also images of a plan for Maputo.

[19] Michael Goldman, "Speculative Urbanism and the Making of the Next World City," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35(3), 2011: 555-581.

[20] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216.

[21] Goldman, "Speculative Urbanism and the Making of the Next World City," 577.

Salaam or Lagos, these new visions hold "very remote"[22] possibilities of being implemented at the same time as they embody an outrageous disregard for the reality of poverty and the daunting ordeals endured by the vast majority of their populations. Their "fine print," as James Duminy puts it on a blog post for *Urban Africa*, "promise a growth in urban inequality."[23] Driven by and for local elites, they will cause city budgets to be "skewed away from basic services towards infrastructure for these visions"[24] or they will simply "sweep the poor away."[25] With "major exclusionary effects on low-income groups" and a host of demands "for forms of governance and decision-making that facilitate the realization of property investment interests,"[26] Watson argues, they will have "devastating consequences" for African cities and the lives of ordinary Africans.[27]

In other words, "African urban fantasies" are for Watson "dreams" of an urban future that are bound to turn into "nightmares" for contemporary urban dwellers.[28] They represent for Simon a "partial elite resurgence" of urban planning that is coupled with its "popular eclipse."[29] Or, to put it in De Boeck's terms while describing the "ocular ground" of contemporary Kinshasa, they are articulations of "spectral urbanism" that are predicated on a "politics of erasure."[30] These are, of course, both timely and very important observations. They are empirically relevant, they call attention to the disconnectedness of contemporary urban planning, and they raise crucial moral and political questions about the ways in which the future of African cities is currently being imagined. What their proponents seem less interested in doing, however, is to account for how these "fantasy city ideas"[31] are actually becoming realities in many of those African cities.

While they announce that such top-down visions "are beginning to make an appearance on the African continent,"[32] they pay little attention to how they are actually coming about. But "a key question to ask," Emma Wragg and Regina Lim have recently pointed out in a brief study of how ordinary Lusakans respond to the very same fantasies identified by Vanessa Watson, "is how this how these visions have come to be?"[33] The problem with disregarding what forms and informs the creation of such urban visions, their study implies, is that it leaves us unaware of how those fantasy city ideas "are literally 'assembled' through layering of diverse influences." I would add to this that ignoring what underpins and constitutes the substance of those fantasies also renders

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[22] Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 37.

[23] James Duminy, "Visions of African Urban Futures Yet to Come," *Urban Africa* (Blog)*,* July 31, 2013.

[24] Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: New Generation Urban 'Master' Plans, Produced by International Architectural and Engineering Firms," Presentation Slides. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[25] Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasy Plans that 'Sweep Away' the Poor," *Inclusive Cities Project* (Blog), April 2, 2014. Accessed March 12, 2015; see also Vanessa Watson, "'The Planned City Sweeps the Poor Away…': Urban Planning and 21st Century Urbanization," *Progress in Planning* 72 (3), 2009: 151–193.

[26] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216.

[27] Vanessa Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: New Generation Urban 'Master' Plans, Produced by International Architectural and Engineering Firms," Presentation Slides. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[28] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216.

[29] Simon, "Uncertain Times, Contested Resources: Discursive Practices and Lived Realities in African Urban Environments," 221.

[30] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 272.

[31] Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa", 36.

[32] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216.

[33] Emma Wragg and Regina Lim, "Urban Visions from Lusaka, Zambia," *Habitat International* 46, 2015: 260-270, 260.

us oblivious to the unavoidably messy politics that go into planning and designing what they actually contemplate as the future of African cities. Most importantly, it does not allow us to apprehend them as modes of city making with particular histories, practices and toolkits. And ultimately, I believe, it leaves their forms of spatial production impervious to critique.

With all this in mind, this chapter builds on what is a growing but still incipient body of literature. The most pressing aim, it seems to me, is to do some of the empirical work that is blatantly missing.[34] So we can begin to move our understanding of Africa's new developments and satellite cities beyond the generic realm of the oneiric. For sometimes they are more than ungrounded delusions, more than mere speculative images. They are developed in specific conditions and they are tied to palpable political and economic circuitries. For the new centralities did not emerge "out of the bush,"[35] nor is Cidade do Kilamba a mere refraction in "a Chinese rear view mirror" or a spectacular and high-modernist "urban transplant," as Marcus Power or Ricardo Soares de Oliveira make us believe.[36] It is an instance of a mode of city making deeply entwined in those political and economic circuitries – a form of globalized spatial production that, in the Angolan context, flows out of (and back into) what Michael Watts has called "the oil assemblage."[37] By looking into Cidade do Kilamba, like Timothy Mitchel would do, as "the outcome of particular ways of engineering political relations out of flows of energy,"[38] this chapter is then also a first stab at tracing some of the links between the financialization Angola's deepwater oil deposits, the urban visions of the MPLA Government, and the modes of expertise evoked in forging specific solutions for the future of Angolan cities.

An Outline for Analyzing the Circuitries of Kilamba

In order to accomplish these objectives, we will begin by reviewing the main tenets of how Africa's new developments and satellite cities have been analyzed thus far. With a brief summary of the lineaments of what is a burgeoning typology amongst urban scholars and students of African cities, we will be both better equipped to analyze the specificities of the Angolan case and more acutely prepared to complexify our current understanding of what underpins and constitutes those urban visions. This is then followed by the story of Cidade do Kilamba and a look inside what Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos referred to as "the modern way of thinking cities."

Placed right where Watson, De Boeck or Soares de Oliveira cut off their analyses of new developments and satellite cities, the third section attempts to make sense of how Kilamba and the other new centralities have emerged around Luanda. In particular, it examines their financing systems and it reflects upon some of the planning and policy-making efforts that went into

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[34] As Watson puts it when warning about the "speculative" character of parts of her paper, "very little empirical work on these new trends" has been done. In Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 226.

[35] See above. In David McKenzie, "Chinese-Built Angolan City Feels Like a Ghost Town," YouTube video, 2:53, posted by *CNN*, November 1, 2012. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[36] See Marcus Power, "Angola 2025: The Future of the World's Poor Country as Seen Through a Chinese Real-View Mirror," *Antipode* 44 (3), 2012: 993-1014 and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War* (London: Hurst and Company, 2015), 66.

[37] Michael Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs: Life, Death, and Dispossession along Two Oil Frontiers," *American Quarterly* 64(3), 2012: 437-467, 441-443.

[38] Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2011), 5; see also pg. 399-432.

making them possible. To be sure, in no way do I claim to have a full grasp of how Cidade do Kilamba came to be Cidade do Kilamba. As it will soon become clear, not only was this process highly convoluted, full of hiccups and setbacks, it has also been hiding behind thick walls of secrecy and therefore it does not lend itself to easy scrutiny. Nevertheless, even a cursory examination of the intricate circuitry threads weaving through the undersea of the Angolan coastline, across money transactions in Beijing and Hong Kong, and into the blueprints and models produced for the different new centralities allows us to complicate the typology currently being construed under the banner of "African urban fantasies." If nothing else, the case analyzed here points to the importance of considering them as a full-fledged mode of city making.

The fourth section brings the arc of the story back to the worldwide dissemination of Kilamba as a "ghost city" to look into how the set of calculative practices through which the project emerged connects to the metrics of distribution and the ways in which the Angolan state ended up bringing people in. Which is why, in the fifth and final section, we will look beyond the eeriness with which this chapter began to reassess and adjust some of our current propositions for analyzing the new forms of spatial production emerging throughout Africa.

AFRICAN URBAN FANTASIES: LINEAMENTS OF A BURGEONING TYPOLOGY

There is an expanding body of literature on the recent surge in master plans and grand visions produced for African cities. The analyses are mostly still rudimentary and based on rather circumstantial evidence, but the number of urbanists attempting to grasp what is going on keeps adding up. Amongst them, the most referenced author has been Vanessa Watson. In fact, her study and depiction of what she calls "African urban fantasies" has rapidly become the go-to epitome for enquiries into this alleged planning resurgence and the conceptual scaffold for what can be said to be a burgeoning interpretative typology. In this section we will briefly analyze the main features of this systematic classification. Reading through the existing literature, with obvious emphasis on Watson's writings, we will draw a summary of the key characteristics attributed to these plans and look into what has been proposed as explanation for their existence.

The first key characteristic of these urban fantasies is that they are embryonic. They are "currently being launched" in Kinshasa.[39] They have "surfaced in the past few years" in Nairobi.[40] They might "find echoes"[41] in the nationalist urban projects of the early-independence period, but they are – as Watson puts it – "a relatively recent phenomenon."[42] Until a few years ago, she begins by saying on a guest blog post for the *Inclusive Cities Project*, "there was very little interest in the fate of African cities, either from local politicians or international investors."[43] It was a time of "marked disinvestment in urban planning," says Myers.[44] Or, as Grant describes it, a longstanding "planning void."[45] In the opening sentence of her *Environment*

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[39] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 282.

[40] Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 328.

[41] Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 561.

[42] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 222.

[43] Watson, "African Urban Fantasy Plans that 'Sweep Away' the Poor," *Inclusive Cities Project* (Blog), April 2, 2014. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[44] Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 329.

[45] Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 297.

and Urbanization article, Watson reiterates the idea. "The urban plans for Africa's larger cities, if they exist at all, are usually to be found in dilapidated condition, perhaps pinned to the wall in a central government ministry or folded into a large technical report."[46] And when they do exist, they often consist in land use and zoning maps that have lingered motionless since the colonial era, or sets of development standards that were never observed since the early days of independence.[47] With "little thought given to implementation,"[48] it is said, "they usually bear little relationship to what is actually on the ground."[49]

Such acute disinterest in urban planning dates back to the late 1970s and 1980s. Seen from the perspective of this literature's assertions about the recent impassibility towards the fate of African cities, two complementary dynamics seem to explain it. On the one hand, as the continent suffered with "the combined pressures of debt, structural adjustment, and economic decline,"[50] international investors and property developers were always judicious in avoiding the immense "black holes of informational capitalism"[51] hovering over its soaring cities. On the other hand, as these cities quickly pilled up numbers for the so-called "planet of slums,"[52] especially "since formal employment expansion rarely kept pace with the demand for jobs,"[53] political leaders and local urban authorities responded with little more than a belief that people should (and would) return to rural areas.[54] It was then through "decades of disinterest and laissez-faire,"[55] as African cities swelled uncontrollably into modernity's oblivion, that spatial order collapsed and urban planning was deemed utterly irrelevant.

But this state of things, Africanists and students of "urban fantasies" tell us, has been changing fast over the past few years. For there are new aspirations, proposals and master plans for cities across the continent. They are just no longer deteriorating within ministerial walls and technical report folders. Nor do they consist of comprehensive zoning regulations or maps segregating land uses. Instead, they are now to be found in "huge billboards" and "advertisements" spread all over the city,[56] or "on the websites of international architectural, engineering and property

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[46] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 215. See also Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 297.

[47] See Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 329, De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 265-257 and Simon, "Uncertain Times, Contested Resources: Discursive Practices and Lived Realities in African Urban Environments," 218-221.

[48] Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 297.

[49] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 215.

[50] Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 329. See also Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 295.

[51] Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, Volume III* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

[52] Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2006).

[53] Simon, "Uncertain Times, Contested Resources: Discursive Practices and Lived Realities in African Urban Environments," 220.

[54] See Watson, "African Urban Fantasy Plans that 'Sweep Away' the Poor" and Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 297.

[55] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 272.

[56] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 274.

development companies."[57] Because, as Watson reaffirmed in a recent commentary on Ayona Datta's portrayal of smart cities as the new urban utopias of contemporary India,[58] "the form and aesthetics of the built environment are what really count"[59] in these new plans. Full of glass-box towers and iconic architectural features, they now typically "consist of graphically represented and three-dimensional visions of future cities,"[60] a fanciful "ocular ground"[61] said to offer the semblance of metropolises such as Dubai, Singapore or Shanghai. Providing "spectral, and often spectacular" representations of Africa's "reinsertion into the global oecumene,"[62] these are images that promise hyper-modern urban standards and a life away from the often scorned 'disorder' of existing cities.[63]

In addition to their "ocular" qualities, these private sector plans are also described according to their scale of intervention and discourse on urban form. In terms of their sheer dimensions, just like Kermeliotis does in his CNN Future Cities piece, Watson and all other analysts of "urban fantasies" point out that they are never modest or small-scale proposals. On the contrary, they always are "grandiose planning schemes"[64] with profound implications for urban form and associated modes of governance. Sometimes they entail renewing sweeping expanses of existing cities, at others they encompass large projects in the urban fringe, but more often they involve a fundamental restructuring of metropolitan areas through the creation of new satellite cities.[65] Still on matters of form, in what concerns some of the discourses framing these grand urban visions, academic analyses and Kermeliotis' coverage also echo each other in emphasizing that most "African urban fantasies" rehearse the globally articulated languages of sustainability and technological change.[66] More often than not, they point out, the proposed new cities are set out to be *smart*, *eco* or *green*. But these labels, they immediately insinuate, amount to little more than a "legitimation strategy" and a "marketing ploy" for projects that are fundamentally driven by their yield.[67] As Grant suggests after Mark Swilling and Eve Annecke, they "may be no more than a

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[57] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 215; also De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 277.

[58] Ayona Datta, "New Urban Utopias of Postcolonial India: 'Entrepreneurial Urbanization' in Dholera Smart City, Gujarat," *Dialogues in Human Geography* 5(1), 2015: 3-22.

[59] Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 37.

[60] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 217. See also Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: New Generation Urban 'Master' Plans, Produced by International Architectural and Engineering Firms".

[61] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 279.

[62] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 274.

[63] See De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 274 and Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 224-225.

[64] Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 343.

[65] See Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216-222, and Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 299-303. UN Habitat says that what is happening in these cases is "deliberate creation" of what they call *Extended Metropolitan Regions*. See UN Habitat, *The State of African Cities 2014: Re-Imagining Sustainable Urban Transitions*, 23-25.

[66] See Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 217 and 225-226, and Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 301-302.

[67] See Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 225-226. Also Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 38.

thin green veneer to property developers' and place promoters' profit motivations and short-term horizons."[68]

Which take us to a last key characteristic of "African urban fantasies." Just like the imagery that supports them, there is in these "make-overs, satellites and extensions"[69] not only a "newfound enthusiasm for longer-term, broader-scale city-region-wide planning"[70] but also an attempt to "avoid dealing with the messy spatial realities of existing cities."[71] Planned beyond the purported disorderliness and unsustainability of current structures, they are set out "vis-à-vis existing urban settlements,"[72] to begin anew and to modernize African cities from scratch. According to Watson's sample, "by far the bulk of the new urban fantasy plans takes the form of new satellite cities adjacent to an existing larger cities."[73] By the same token, analysts suggest, they seem to be institutionally set up to "simply parallel or override"[74] existing legal and governance structures, including any formal city plans that may already exist or the complications of democratic decision-making processes. The anticipated result of this "'splintering urbanism' at a scale yet unseen"[75] is, as analysts have it after Steve Graham and Simon Marvin,[76] a sweeping landscape of autonomous cities, immense elite enclaves and profoundly differentiated access to infrastructure.

In explaining the "rationales, real and imagined,"[77] of such rekindling of urban planning ambitions, analysts of "African urban fantasies" connect them to a range of endogenous factors as well as important shifts in the ways in which global economic forces interact with local African contexts. One crucial set of determinants for this resurgence of the plan, they say in one way or another,[78] derives from both speculative takes on the continent's most recent period of resource-based economic growth[79] and the now conventional narrative that Africa and its

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[68] Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 302. Citing Mark Swilling and Eve Annecke, *Just Transitions: Explorations of Sustainability in an Unfair World* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2012).

[69] See Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216.

[70] Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 329.

[71] Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 299.

[72] Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 302.

[73] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 217.

[74] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 217.

[75] Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 39. See also Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: New Generation Urban 'Master' Plans, Produced by International Architectural and Engineering Firms"; and Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 302-303.

[76] Steve Graham and Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

[77] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 222-226.

[78] See De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 279; Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 215-216; Meyers, "A World-Class City-Region? Envisioning the Nairobi of 2030," 329-330; and Grant, "Sustainable African Urban Futures: Stocktaking and Critical Reflection on Proposed Urban Projects," 295-296.

[79] In his response piece to Watson's article on *Environment and Urbanization*, a commentary that offers an "on-the-ground perspective from Luanda," Allan Cain points out that the "post-2000 decade has been similar in some ways to the early 1970s." Like it happened in the post-independence period in many African countries, the combination of low interest rates and high commodity prices led African governments "to invest in prestigious but often 'useless urban projects'." In Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 562.

middle-class have been "on the rise" to become "the ultimate frontier market" of the 21st century.[80] Such beliefs and expectations might be based on misguided and flawed assumptions about the character of urbanization processes across the continent or what its middle-class is actually rising to, Watson points out,[81] but it is the allegedly growing demand for new forms of living in its cities that has transformed what once was capitalism's geographical black hole into an alluring destination for investments, corporate ventures and urban development projects. Even if business conditions vary considerably between and within countries, this surge in new visions for African cities is then to a great extent explained by the growing interest from international real estate developers and globetrotting financiers as well as architecture, engineering and planning firms from different parts of the world. More so even, Watson adds, after the 2008 financial crisis hit hard property markets across the global North.[82]

But there is another important set of explanations for the regeneration of urban planning and the emergence of these new plans. In addition to the interest that now comes from outside the continent, Watson and other analysts tell us, there is a range of domestic factors that must also be considered. One thing, at least, is certain. While it might be difficult to generalize about what exactly drives developers from different parts of the world to propose such fantasy plans, without "the willing engagement" of local politicians and senior government officials they "would have little traction."[83] In looking to understand what motivates them, Watson suggests that they probably stand to gain in three ways. First this type of grandiose modern projects might represent a boost in their political status and a broadening of popular support for the government. Second the implementation of such projects may involve direct and indirect financial returns. And third, she suggests after Michele Acuto,[84] they can also be interested in advancing the "symbolic power" of their cities in relation to world. The least of their concerns, all analysts seem to agree, has been to make the city function for the urban majority.

This is an exploratory typology. If nothing else because, as Watson tells us, most of these projects "are still at the ideas stage."[85] In Luanda, however, they are more than "finding their

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[80] See Vijay Mahajan, *Africa Rising: How 900 Million African Consumers Offer More than You Think* (Upper Saddle River: Financial Times Press and Prentice Hall, 2008), David Mataen, *Africa, The Ultimate Frontier Market: A Guide to the Business and Investment Opportunities in Emerging Africa* (Petersfield: Harriman House, 2012); or Jonathan Berman, *Success in Africa: CEO Insights From a Continent on the Rise* (Brookline; Bibliomotion, 2013), amongst many others.

[81] Watson is doubtful about some of the premises of what supposedly drives companies to Africa. Drawing on United Nations Population Division figures as well as the work of Deborah Potts, she raises suspicions about the actual extent and distribution of urbanization processes, suggesting that property development interests might be displaced. More importantly, while she accepts that "African middle-class consumer tastes probably align closely with the images portrayed in the fantasy plans," she is not too convinced by the numbers. If this middle-class is being counted as those spending between 2 and 20 US dollars a day (as the African Development Bank apparently does), Watson rightfully points out, "it is difficult to imagine how households with such minimal spending power can afford the luxury apartments portrayed in the fantasy plans, and it may be that prospective property developers are seriously misreading the African market". In Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 224. See also Deborah Potts, "The Slowing of sub-Saharan Africa's Urbanization: Evidence and Implications for Urban Livelihoods," *Environment and Urbanization* 21 (1), 2009: 253-259.

[82] See Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 216 and 222. See also Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 37-38.

[83] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 224. See also 225 and Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 37-38.

[84] Michele Acuto, "High-rise Dubai Urban Entrepreneurialism and the Technology of Symbolic Power," *Cities* 27 (4), 2010: 272-284.

[85] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 226.

way through to implementation." They are more than just fantasies. Their "impact on the urban fabric" is indelibly real. As Allan Cain put it, Luanda is "a city where one of the fantasies discussed by Professor Watson has developed beyond a dream to become a reality."[86] Underneath that reality is a whole infrastructure of urban planning. A "modern way of thinking cities."

"THE MODERN WAY OF THINKING CITIES"

Little more than one year prior to CNN's segment on Kilamba, the broadcasting airwaves coming out of the southern periphery of Luanda carried a drastically different message to a significantly dissimilar audience. TPA, the Angolan public television network, aired a whole show exclusively dedicated to sing the praises of the new city.[87] Taking off with a fast-paced African drum beat and a quick sequence of images from the construction phase, including multiple aerial views of the entire project as well as many brief clips of Angolan workers, the show began with a greeting. "Welcome all to the information special about the great achievement that is the inauguration of Cidade do Kilamba." Sporting a coat and tie, an unnamed reporter stood alone on a patch of green grass. On his hands, a tablet that he never looks at. Behind him, a wall of yellow and ostensibly new high-rises. When the camera suddenly zooms out, he opens is arms and continues. "A megaproject that is today a source of pride for the country, and for the rest of the world." To reach that day – July 11, 2011 – he ensures, "there was a lot of commitment and hard work." In this section we will examine some of that work. But before proceeding to do so let us hold on that proud day for a little while longer.

Fig. 3.2 Reporting from Kilamba with Open Arms 2.
In Especial Informação, *TPA*, July 11, 2012.

The opening celebrations were led by President José Eduardo dos Santos. Received by a large number of people brandishing his own posters and all sorts of MPLA propaganda material, the head of state was in charge of cutting the ribbon and unveiling the inaugural plaque. But in the speech ceremony, which took place well away from the crowd, it was the CEO of Sonangol who first spoke to "members of parliament, local representatives, religious leaders, diplomats and senior officials."[88] The National Oil Company had been officially in charge of managing the construction of Kilamba since September 2010 and its highest-ranking official, Manuel Vicente, took it to himself to brake down the numbers and explain what was going on. "With today's ceremony we are formalizing the first delivery." This, he described to all of those present as well as the TPA cameras, amounted to "10 kilometers of roads, 115 buildings with a total of 3,180 apartments and 48 stores." The rest of phase one was scheduled for the following 15 months. Vicente continued with his tally. 218 buildings, including 6,130 apartments and 78 stores, were

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[86] Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 561.

[87] "Especial Inauguração Cidade do Kilamba," *Televisão Pública de Angola*, July 11, 2011.

[88] Kumuênho da Rosa, "Fazer da Cidade de Luanda Uma Das Mais Belas do Mundo," *Sonangol Notícias*, June 2011, 22-27.

programed for December and the last 377 buildings, which were to offer another 10,692 apartments and 120 stores, were anticipated for October 2012. In addition to the 20,002 houses and 246 commercial units, the brochure distributed during the ceremony specified, the 906 hectares of that first stage would also include "24 kindergartens, 9 primary schools and 8 secondary schools" as well as "space reserved for the construction of 1 hospital, 4 clinics, 12 health centers, 3 financial institutions, post offices, gas stations, police units and stations, fire stations, parking lots, churches, cemetery and other structures." In terms of basic infrastructures, Cidade do Kilamba comprised amenities "such as road network; rainwater drainage and sewage, and wastewater treatment plant for 35,000 cubic meters per day; water network, and water treatment plan for 40,000 cubic meters per day; electric substations and distribution network; telecommunications and public transport terminals."

But Cidade do Kilamba was far from being the only new centrality under Sonangol's responsibility on that day. In the Luanda region alone four other projects for an expected total of about 19,000 apartments were well underway.[89] Beyond the capital there were new centralities under construction in Lunda Norte and Cabinda and in the subsequent couple of years multiple others would follow throughout the rest of the country. Between 2012 and 2013, three additional projects for 18,000 more houses were initiated in Luanda.[90] In this

Fig. 3.3 President Dos Santos Opens Cidade do Kilamba
Cover of *Sonangol Notícias*, June 2011.

section we will look into how this came about. In other words, we will make sense of some of the means and practices that went into planning the almost 60 thousand new houses with which the Angolan government expected not only to bridge the housing shortage but also to create new urban dynamics in the periphery of Luanda.[91] Doing so in rough chronological fashion, our analysis will begin in late 2002 and lead us to that momentous day in July 2011. We will start by

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[89] The four other new centralities under construction in the Luanda region were, as we will see below, Cacuaco's new city (where more than 10,000 apartments were being built), the Zango project (almost 2,500) and the developments in Km 44 (about 2,250) and Capari (4.000). See Sonangol, *Relatório de Gestão 2012* (Luanda: Sonangol, 2013), 40; Sonangol, *Relatório de Gestão 2013* (Luanda: Sonangol, 2014), 44; and Domingos dos Santos, "Empresa imobiliária apresentou soluções," *Jornal de Angola*, September 14, 2013. Accessed March 17, 2015.

[90] See also "SONIP sem data prevista para iniciar vendas nas novas centralidades," *Expansão*, March 21, 2014. Accessed March 17, 2015; Euclides Seia, "Governo aposta forte na habitação social," *Sonangol Notícias*, March 2014, 14-22; "Luanda com três novas centralidades prontas a partir deste ano," *Angola Press*, March 2, 2014. Accessed March 18, 2015.

[91] To be sure, this is addition to the equally peripheral resettlement and social housing projects of which Zango and Panguila are the most significant examples. On these see: Sylvia Croese, "Post-war state-led development at work in Angola: The Zango housing project in Luanda as a case study" (PhD Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2013) and Chloé Buire, "The Dream and the Ordinary: An Ethnographic Investigation of Suburbanization in Luanda," *African Studies* 73(2), 2014: 290-312.

analyzing – mostly through secondary research on the Chinese credit lines – the institutional and financing model upon which these new centralities were designed. In the following subsection we will examine the calculi and practices of urban planning that came out of it between 2005 and 2006. This will then lead us to an analysis of the gridlock the project went through in 2007, the beginning of the construction works in 2008 and the way in which they all landed in Sonangol's hands in 2010.

Fig. 3.4 Sonangol and China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group: Welcome to Nova Cidade do Cacuaco.

Photos taken by author on February 24, 2013.

The Institutional and Financing Model

Differently from what the typology rehearsed above suggests, the project for building new centralities in Angola is not necessarily recent and it is certainly not an aftereffect of the 2008 financial crisis.[92] The planning for these new cities and urban developments began to take official shape in October 2004. Part of the Government's strategy to rebuild and modernize the country after the end of the civil war, it arose out of the oil-backed financing arrangements with Chinese institutions that came to be known amongst experts as 'Angola Mode'.[93] The core institutional edifice for conceptualizing these new towns was set up by the creation of the GRN,[94] the Office for National Reconstruction. In the previous chapter we looked into how this body has shaped the recent history of planning in Luanda, but its significance went well beyond efforts to control and manage urban growth in the capital. While the statute and rules for its operations were really only approved at the end of its fairly short life,[95] the agency directed by

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[92] This is not to say that the crisis did not have an effect on this project. As we will see below, the ensuing fall in oil prices seems indeed to have had important repercussions. But the crisis was notably not the cause for the emergence of these plans.

[93] The term 'Angola Mode', or 'Angola Model' as it is often referred to as well, has been frequently used in academic and policy discussions to describe a type of infrastructure financing arrangement by which repayment is made in natural resources. So named within relatively small circles because of its initial emergence in Angola, it was more widely disseminated after a World Bank investigation on "China's Growing Role as Infrastructure Financier for Sub-Saharan Africa." See Vivien Foster, William Butterfield, Chuan Chen and Nataliya Pushak, *Building Bridges: China's Growing Role as Infrastructure Financier for Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington DC: The World Bank, 2009). While she was one of the first to make use of the phrase (e.g. Lucy Corkin, "'Angola Model' Sets the Trend for Chinese Funding," *African Energy* 120, September 5, 2007), Lucy Corkin debunks it quite convincingly throughout her book. See especially, Lucy Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency: Angola's Management of China's Credit Lines* (London: Ashgate, 2013), 87-91 and 143- 150.

[94] The GRN or *Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional*, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, was established by *Decreto-Lei nº* 6/04 of October 22, 2004.

[95] Article 3 of *Decreto-Lei nº* 6/04 states that "GRN's organization and functioning is provided in specific legislation, to be approved by the President of the Republic," but an organic statute would not be officially approved until 2010, when the agency was entirely reformulated and little more than a year before it was actually shut down (see below).

General Kopelipa – the Head of the President's Military House – developed rapidly into a powerful node of decision-making in the realms of infrastructure and urban development in Angola. This happened not only because of its close proximity to the highest rungs of political power in the country (or its statutory attachment to the Ministry of Finance),[96] but also due to its links to the then emerging financing apparatuses of the Angolan state. After all, the GRN seems to have been purposely created to manage credit lines from the China International Fund. Below we will analyze some of the ways in which the collaboration between this now infamous Hong Kong-registered company and the no less notorious GRN contributed for producing some of the most salient urban configurations of contemporary Luanda, but in order to do so it is crucial to situate them in the context of China's expanding role as a financier of infrastructure in post-war Angola.[97] It all began with a pact between states.

Following the death of Jonas Savimbi in February 2002 and the immediate cessation of the longstanding hostilities between MPLA and UNITA, reconstruction and infrastructure development became top priorities for the Angolan state and access to means of financing them one of the most pressing issues the National Government had to deal with. With the IMF out of the conversation before it even started,[98] China emerged on the scene as a professedly "pragmatic" partner and a more willing source of capital for the rebuilding of the country.[99] The first concessional loan to come out of Chinese banks was awarded in 2002. With $145 million

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[96] See Article 1 of *Decreto-Lei nº 6/04* of October 22, 2004.

[97] Which, of course, is related to the way in which "Angola has become increasingly important as a source of oil for China." Markus Weimer and Alex Vines, "China's Angolan Oil Deals," in *China and Angola: A Marriage of Convenience?* Ed. Marcus Power and Ana Cristina Alves (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012), pp. 85-104, 85.

[98] Angola was under an IMF Staff-Monitored Program between April 2000 and June 2001, but the balance made at the end of it was far from positive. The March 2002 final staff report, as Tony Hodges points out, condemned the slowness with which macroeconomic stabilization policies were implemented and was "especially critical of the failure to make progress in bringing greater transparency to the management of public resources." This was not well received by the Angolan Government. During a visit to Washington, a few days before the report was finalized, President dos Santos "publicly rebuked the Fund" and the final text of the 2002 report stated that the Angolan "authorities were not interested in another SMP." "In view of this deterioration," says Hodges, "there was no prospect of Angola moving forward to a loan agreement with the IMF, as has originally been envisaged at the time the SMP was launched." See Tony Hodges, *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State* (Oxford and Bloomington: James Currey and Indiana University Press, 2004), 121-122. See also Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 75; Lucy Corkin, "Uneasy Allies: China's Evolving Relations With Angola," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 29 (2), 2011: 169-180, 171; Ana Cristina Alves, "China's Oil Diplomacy: Comparing Chinese Economic Statecraft in Angola and Brazil" (PhD Dissertation, London School of Economics, 2011), 146; and Indira Campos and Alex Vines, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership" (Working Paper presented at CSIS Conference, December 5, 2007), 18, released March 2008.

[99] When the Chinese Prime Minister visited Luanda in 2006, "President dos Santos described bilateral relations as being 'mutually advantageous', and the partnership as being 'pragmatic', with no 'political preconditions'"; in *Jornal de Angola*, June 21, 2006, as cited by Campos et al, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership", 1 as well as Weimer et al, "China's Angolan Oil Deals," 86. This said and to be sure, China was not the only source of capital – or, for that matter, oil backed loans – for the reconstruction effort (for a list of creditors of the Angolan government between 2003 and 2008 see Corkin *Uncovering African Agency*, 81-82.) Nevertheless, the dimension of its credit lines and their importance for the production of urban space make it especially relevant for the purposes of this chapter. The analysis done in here, however, is mostly based on secondary sources. The fact is that this partnership between Angola and China has fairly well studied. One of the first and most widely cited studies of this "pragmatism" was produced by Indira Campos and Alex Vines (Campos et al, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership"), who has been following the situation since then. See, for example, his work with Markus Weimer (Weimer et al, "China's Angolan Oil Deals.") Another important analyst has been Ana Cristina Alves (Alves, "China's Oil Diplomacy"), who together with Marcus Power edited a whole volume analyzing this "marriage of convenience." See Marcus Power and Ana Cristina Alves, Eds, *China and Angola: A Marriage of Convenience?* (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012). Finally, perhaps the most prolific author on these issues has been Lucy Corkin (see, especially, Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*). This and the following paragraphs draw heavily on their investigations as well as some of the official documentation they use in their analyses, namely the credit line reports produced by the *Gabinete de Apoio Técnico* (see below) between 2007 and 2008. Available on the Ministério das Finanças website, under *Obras e Projectos do Governo* (Accessed March 2, 2015).

given directly to Chinese firms, two state-owned institutions – the China Construction Bank and China EximBank – financed the first phase of Luanda's railway reconstruction as well as electrical grid rehabilitation projects in four different cities. But it was in the subsequent couple of years that the financial relations between Angola and China really began to pick up.

In November 2003 the Angolan Ministry of Finance and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce signed a "framework agreement" for economic cooperation, in March 2004 the first China EximBank financing package – a \$2 billion credit line for the Government's Public Investment Program – was officially approved with a repayment horizon of 12 years and an interest rate of LIBOR plus 1.5 percent.[100] According to the basic framework of this and the following loan agreements, this was to be serviced through a fixed amount of oil shipments sent quarterly from Sonangol's concessions along the coast of Angola to Sinopec's refineries in China. The crude petroleum – the equivalent of 10,000 barrels per day in the first two years and 15,000 for the balance of the loan period[101] – was sold at the international spot price of the day in which the tanker left towards East and paid into a China EximBank escrow account in the name of the Angolan Ministry of Finance that would guarantee its repayment obligations.[102]

Beyond these servicing mechanisms, one other important (but hardly unique) characteristic of this credit line is that it comes tied to the procurement of Chinese contractors.[103] On this matter, in what concerns the decisions over what specific initiatives within the Government's Public Investment Program were to be supported and what particular companies were to undertake them, a joint committee formed by the Angolan Ministry of Finance[104] and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce was responsible for validating those identified as priorities in each area and each of the selected projects was then put out to tender amongst a pre-selected group of contractors put forward by the Chinese Government. As the winner was designated, the Angolan Government would hire a third-party engineering consultant to inspect and monitor its work,[105] and the Gabinete de Apoio Técnico – an *ad-hoc* technical support body comprised of senior staff

[100] The Council of Ministers approves it in *Resolução nº 4/04* of March 26, 2004. It is often said that these "deeply concessional" (Campos et al, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 6) interest rates provide for particularly favorable loan terms when compared with commercial loans. See also Alves, "China's Oil Diplomacy," 147 and International Development Association, *Interim Strategy Note for the Republic of Angola*, Report No. 39394-AO, The World Bank, April 26, 2007. Corkin (*Uncovering African Agency*, 79-81), however, argues that is not necessarily the case.

[101] At least according to Alves ("China's Oil Diplomacy," 148), quoting an AFRODAD report. Corkin (*Uncovering African Agency*, 83-84) points out that there is no clear information on this.

[102] In her work, Corkin (*Uncovering African Agency*, 80 and 89) repeats this idea a number of times: China EximBank's lending policy is not to exchange "resources for infrastructure", but rather "to structure a loan so that there is a revenue stream that will be able to support the debt repayment."

[103] As any other export credit agency, the primary function of the China EximBank is to stimulate demand for Chinese goods and services. Under its loan agreements in Angola "Chinese companies would have access to 70 percent of the contracts, leaving 30 percent for Angolan contractors." (Campos et al, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 24). The question of local content is often discussed in relation to the presence of Chinese companies in Angola, but it goes beyond the purpose of this chapter to analyze it. For a comprehensive analysis of these issues see Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, Chapter 6. See also Alves, "China's Oil Diplomacy," 149.

[104] Executive Research Associates (*China in Africa: A Strategic Overview*, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization, 2009, 82) states that the Angolan side of this joint committee, the *Grupo de Trabalho Conjunto*, was headed by the Minister of Finance and constituted by the Minister of Public Works, the Secretary of the Council of Ministers, the Governor of Angola National Bank and the CEO of Sonangol.

[105] In Angola, and in Portuguese, this component of any large-scale contract is called *fiscalização*. The companies performing this job were hired outside the credit line. See Campos et al, "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 9 and Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 85.

members from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Planning, the National Bank of Angola, the Council of Ministers' Secretariat as well as a representative from the Ministry of External Affairs[106] – was responsible overseeing both the financial and the physical implementation of the different contracts. GAT, as this office came to be known, was also in charge of keeping track of the movements in the escrow account where the oil revenues were deposited and ensuring that this held enough funds to service six months of principal and interest.[107] Once the Angolan Ministry of Finance considered a project complete, the China EximBank made the correspondent disbursement directly to the contractor and repayment would begin out of the escrow account.

The mechanics of the China EximBank credit line, which in May 2007 was extended in $500 million and in September of that same year was renegotiated for another $2 billion, were managed in reasonably transparent fashion. Even if much of such openness happened in reaction to the allegations of mismanagement that in 2007 arose around the Ministry of Finance,[108] the negotiations were fairly well publicized, the terms of the agreements were relatively well known and GAT made projects, company names and monitoring figures available to the public.[109] But this was not the only major financing arrangement to be brokered with Chinese institutions in the first couple of years after the war. For a parallel and undeniably more obscure deal started being negotiated sometime in early 2004 (or perhaps even before). A deal that, as many have described it,[110] was less of a pact between Angola and China and more of an amalgamation of private interests and state power on both sides of the partnership. And the deal that, as I have suggested above, paved the way for the idea of building new centralities and satellite towns. I am referring, of course, to the set of provisions that brought the China International Fund to Angola.

What exactly those provisions were, we will probably never know. What we do know is that it was a couple of months before the first tranche of the China EximBank loan was reportedly released that the GRN was established and the China International Fund officially (even if somewhat surreptitiously) materialized as the key financing structure for its initiatives. While there is no definitive insight into the backdoor negotiations leading to their emergence in the Angolan institutional landscape, nor is there any type of conclusive understanding about their original inseparability,[111] the fact is that the two bodies were made official in Angola during the

[106] The *Gabinete de Apoio Técnico à Gestão da Linha de Crédito com o EximBank da China* was officially established by *Despacho n° 153/04* of July 23, 2004.

[107] As many notice, "given the volatile price of oil, the amount transferred to the account can vary significantly" (Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 84). If the quarterly payments exceed the amount required for debt servicing, the surplus is transferred to Angola's Treasury and used, under GAT's suggestions (in *Despacho n° 153/04* of July 23, 2004), at the Angolan Government's own discretion. If it is lower, then the BNA needs to make a deposit into the escrow account. See Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 84 and Alves, "China's Oil Diplomacy," 148.

[108] For an account of these allegations see "Big Oil, High Stakes," *Africa-Asia Confidential*, November 2, 2007.

[109] See the Ministério das Finanças website, under *Obras e Projectos do Governo* (Accessed March 2, 2015).

[110] See the literature on the relationship between China and Angola cited above as well as the various investigations on the 88 Queensway Group cited below.

[111] To be sure, even if no analyst of China's role in the Angolan reconstruction effort ignores that GRN and CIF are inextricably interconnected, there is no final word on whether or not their emergence the Angolan institutional landscape is inseparable. More or less everyone arrives at the conclusion that the GRN was "a mechanism through which the president could centralize power and achieve direct access to the credit lines" (*Uncovering African Agency*, 132), but not all explanations connect its creation specifically to the China International Fund. Campos and Vines ("Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 9-10), for example, begin by saying that the GRN was set up "to manage large investment projects and ensure rapid infrastructure reconstruction prior to national elections" and "designed to provide work for demobilized military in order to bring new dynamism to the reconstruction effort." Later in the same text (11) they quote Angolan media reports in suggesting that the

exact same ministerial meeting. For it was on October 20, 2004 that the Council of Ministers approved both the creation of the GRN and the so-called Framework Agreement for the Strategic Public-Private Partnership between the Republic of Angola and the People's Republic of China.[112] The first, as we have already seen, was set up as a government agency under direct jurisdiction of the President of the Republic and aimed at coordinating, overseeing and managing reconstruction initiatives of purportedly strategic importance throughout the entire country. The second laid out the groundwork for financing those initiatives and establishing an additional large-scale credit line with China. Similar to what had happened in the process for setting up the China EximBank loan, this "framework agreement" promoted by the Angolan Ministry of Finance was the first formal step towards a financing arrangement with CIF.[113]

It goes beyond the scope of this dissertation to weigh in on the debates about the CIF and the intricate corporate web out of which this company has emerged.[114] For our purposes here it

agency might have been created in direct response to allegations of embezzlement related to the China EximBank credit line. Others tend to reiterate this explanation. See, for example: Manuel Ennes Ferreira, "China in Angola: Just a Passion for Oil?" in *China Returns to Africa: A Superpower and a Continent Embrace*, Ed. Chris Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (London: Hurst Publishers), pp. 275-294; Lev Levkowitz, Marta McLellan Ross and JR Warner, *The 88 Queensway Group: A Case Study in Chinese investors in Angola and Beyond*, US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 10 July, 2009; and Alves, "China's Oil Diplomacy," 150. But the Executive Research Associates (*China in Africa: A Strategic Overview*, 82) go even further in saying that the GRN actually "started as a monitoring entity over the EximBank loan." Finally here are also those (including Campos et al "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 11) that see the GRN as having been "created specifically to manage credit lines from CIF," (Corkin, "Uneasy Allies: China's Evolving Relations With Angola," 172) which is an understanding that can both be both complemented and denied by how the Ministry of Finance's described the CIF (see below).

[112] Note that the GRN was established by *Decreto-Lei nº 6/04*, which was published on October 22, 2004 and the Framework Agreement for the Strategic Public-Private Partnership between the Republic of Angola and the People's Republic of China, or *Acordo Quadro de Parceria Público-Privada entre a República de Angola e a República Popular da China*, was approved by *Resolução nº 31/04* of November 15 but both were "seen and approved in Council of Ministers, in Luanda, on October 20 2004."

[113] This framework agreement seems to have gone fairly unnoticed amongst analysts, which is no surprise given the fact that the government resolution that officially approves it – *Resolução nº 31/04* – is not only very brief but also sufficiently vague to be overlooked. Despite all the scrutiny the relationship between China and Angola has been subject to, I only found a passing reference to it in Sylvia Croese's work. See Sylvia Croese, "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," in *China and Angola: A Marriage of Convenience?* Ed. Marcus Power and Ana Cristina Alves (Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012), pp. 124-144, 127. But she connects to the China EximBank loan, suggesting that this was the framework agreement under which its negotiation began, which – I believe – is not quite what it happened. In fact, the evidence I had access to, in particular the project confirmation letters mentioned below, suggests something different. Sent from the GRN to CIF, they made explicit reference to "the Framework Agreement for the Strategic Public-Private Partnership between China and Angola, signed by the China International Fund and the Ministry of Finance"; in "Carta de Confirmação de Projecto," Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional to Director Gerente do China International Fund. Luanda, January 11, 2005.

[114] Stemming out of one address in Hong Kong – 10/F Two Pacific Place, 88 Queensway – where a small group of Chinese investors registered more than thirty companies between 2003 and 2008, this network was first widely exposed in a 2009 US Congressional Report (Levkowitz et al, *The 88 Queensway Group*). A couple of years later, the China International Fund and its associated companies made it to the pages of *The Economist*, *Caixin Online* or *The Financial Times*. See, by order of publication: "China's Oil Trade with Africa: Does the Government in Beijing Control de China International Fund?" *Baobab* (Blog) *The Economist*, August 12, 2011. Accessed March 16, 2015; "China International Fund: the Queensway Syndicate and the Africa Trade." *The Economist*, August 13, 2011. Accessed March 11, 2015; Laura Rena Murray, Beth Morrissey, Himanshu Ojha and Patrick Martin-Menard. "African Safari: CIF's Grab for Oil and Minerals" *Caixin Online*. October 17, 2011. Accessed March 2, 2015 (see also Beth Morrissey, Himanshu Ojha, Laura Rena Murray and Patrick Martin-Menard. "China-Based Corporate Web behind Troubled Africa Resource Deals: Incomplete Promises of Public Works Cast Doubt on Chinese Firms" *The Center for Public Integrity*, November 9, 2011. Accessed March 2, 2015.); Tom Burgis. "Company Profile: The Queensway Connection." *The Financial Times*, July 18, 2012. Accessed March 10, 2015; and Tom Burgis. "China in Africa: How Sam Pa Became the Middleman." *The Financial Times*, August 8, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2015. Academics and policy analysts have also put the CIF and the Queensway group under considerable (even if far from conclusive) scrutiny. Amongst all these, there are many speculations about the nature of the 88 Queensway group, particularly around its relationship with the Chinese government, its level of access to high levels of foreign governments, its capacity to enter foreign markets, its level of coordination with Sinopec, etc. See, in particular, Levkowitz et al, *The 88 Queensway Group* and Weimer et al, "China's Angolan Oil Deals".

suffices to do two things. The first is to merely take note that this corporate network has been deeply entangled in the Angolan oil complex since the first years after the war. If the CIF was created in 2003 as a vehicle for investing in infrastructure and the Angolan reconstruction effort, China Sonangol – its "affiliated company" and a joint venture in which the Angolan National Oil Company is a minority partner – developed into a powerful oil intermediary soon after its foundation in 2004.[115] The second aspect of the CIF we should retain for our purposes in this chapter concerns its particular nature. In this case, I will simply borrow from a description with which the Angolan Ministry of Finance attempted to clarify the mismanagement controversy mentioned above. The China International Fund, it was said in an October 17, 2007 press release,[116] is a "private entity headquartered in Hong Kong" and constituted "with the specific purpose of: creating facilities or credit lines to finance projects within the framework of the GRN; obtaining new funds on more competitive terms; [and] promoting in Angola the allocation of venture capital through national and international private investments."

The "first financing facility organized by the China International Fund," the ministerial statement continues, was a $2.9 billion credit line that, "similarly to the China EximBank loan," had its "disbursements made through direct payments to the Chinese suppliers contractors." Early in the same year, however, the World Bank's International Development Association published what it said to be a Ministry of Finance estimate pointing at a figure of $9.8 billion for the very same facility.[117] There the interest rate was said to be LIBOR plus 1.5 percent, the same as in the China EximBank loan, but there was no information on the guarantee. It seems, however, safe to assume that the 2005 loan agreement with the CIF was backed by oil supply contracts mediated by China Sonangol.[118]

The Calculi and Practices of Urban Planning

This institutional and financing edifice, I would like to suggest, provided a tangible infrastructure for adjusting and consolidating a mode of city making that had been in formation in Luanda since at least the mid-1990s. In fact, contrary to what analysts of "African urban fantasies" would make us believe, planning in Luanda was not exactly in a void. It was rather entangled in multiple layers of law and bureaucratic ruling. In previous chapters I have provided a material genealogy of this entanglement as well as a reflection on its implications for planning routines at the provincial level. This section looks into some of the specific ways in which the calculi and practices of urban planning were tweaked by the abovementioned Strategic Public-Private

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[115] China Sonangol, another company in the 88 Queensway Group, was originally established for managing energy sector projects and is primarily an oil company, but its businesses go well beyond that. As its website boasts under "Our Business" (Accessed March 2, 2015), their "global team of experts assist the company in making responsible investments in the oil and gas, industries and infrastructure, real estate and transportation sector globally." Amongst its listed real estate investments (see "Real Estate") is, besides the former JPMorgan building opposite the New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street and a number of flashy towers in Singapore and Jakarta, a "Public Housing Project" in Angola. In addition to a picture of the now called *Condomínio Vida Pacífica* (see below), one of Luanda's new centralities, it simply says: "China Sonangol, through its affiliated company constructed 40,000 public housing units for the people of Angola." The affiliated company is, of course, CIF. It seems indeed, as Weimer and Vines ("China's Angolan Oil Deals," 99) have put it, that "China Sonangol diversified its operations through the CIF." On CIF/China Sonangol's role as an oil intermediary see also Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 138-140.

[116] See Ministério das Finanças, "Esclarecimento sobre a Linha de Crédito da China," Press Release, Luanda, October 17, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015.

[117] See International Development Association, *Interim Strategy Note for the Republic of Angola*, 50.

[118] And, to be sure, many do so; see, for example, Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 81 and 134-140.

Partnership between the Republic of Angola and the People's Republic of China. Based on interviews with Angolan planners then affiliated with the GRN as well as analysis of a number of technical reports and correspondence related to the development of new housing projects throughout the country, the objective here is to make sense of how the future of Angolan cities came to be imagined and negotiated out of the oil-infused partnership between CIF and GRN.

The barebones of the arrangement seem to have been fairly straightforward. Similarly but not quite exactly as what is said to have happened with the China EximBank loan, once projects were selected and prioritized by the Angolan Government, the CIF/China Sonangol corporate web would not only provide the credit lines to facilitate their execution, but also broker deals with contractors and suppliers for their prompt implementation. In order to minimize costs and speed up completion times, which appear to have been the main thrust of the GRN's reconstruction efforts since the very beginning, preference was often given to pre-established and standardized technical solutions.[119] The idea was that once a blueprint was drafted, the GRN could then make adjustments, corrections and improvements to meet the Government's development goals. In this way, the official contracting procedures for the selected initiatives would be set in motion with a "project confirmation letter" addressed to the China International Fund. In the one I had access to – a missive dated January 11, 2005 – the GRN certified the Government's decision to proceed with the initiative in question and invite the CIF "to submit the Contracts and Executive Projects" to accomplish the broad set of quantified outcomes that were presented as the program to be followed.[120] Skipping over predesign phases and going directly into the design stages,[121] the contractors selected by the CIF were then to specify and complete the projects in collaboration with the GRN's technical personnel.

In the first year or so after the establishment of the GRN and the arrival of the China International Fund to Angola, somewhere between six and seventeen projects might have been set up.[122] These included, amongst other initiatives in the National Reconstruction Program, multiple urban development projects, two of which are particularly relevant for our analysis in this chapter. One was the protocol for the elaboration of the Plan for the New City of Luanda, which dos Santos referred to in the opening speech for Cidade do Kilamba as the city "by the Kwanza River" to which Kilamba was to serve as "a link."[123] The other was the agreement to

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[119] Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Balanço Sobre os Projectos de Investimento Prioritários," Luanda, December 16, 2005.

[120] "Carta de Confirmação de Projecto," Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional to Director Gerente do China International Fund. Luanda, January 11, 2005. The practice of writing "project confirmation letters" is criticized in Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Balanço Sobre os Projectos de Investimento Prioritários," Luanda, December 16, 2005.

[121] Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações, Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Balanço Sobre os Projectos de Investimento Prioritários," Luanda, December 16, 2005.

[122] In the October 2007 press release mentioned above, where the CIF credit line is said to be worth $2.9 billion, only six projects are mentioned. See Ministério das Finanças, "Esclarecimento sobre a Linha de Crédito da China," Press Release, Luanda, October 17, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015. However, in the resolution approved by the Council of Ministers in July 2006 that we will look at below – *Resolução n° 61/06* of September 4, 2006 – the whole list comprises seventeen different projects. Given this discrepancy, it seems reasonable to infer that these seventeen projects combined correspond to the $9.8 billion figure put forward by the World Bank to quantify the CIF credit line (see above).

[123] For more on the Plan for the New City of Luanda see the previous chapter. For dos Santos's speech, which we will return to below, see José Eduardo dos Santos, "Discurso pronunciado na Inauguração da Cidade do Kilamba," Luanda, July 11, 2011, available on *Angola Press*. Accessed March 16, 2015.

build 215,500 housing units throughout the entire country out of which the program for the new centralities and satellite towns began to emerge.

Even if, as we will see below, none of these contracts seems to have taken off in its entirety or reached anywhere near what it initially proposed to achieve, they contributed for important transformations in modes of thinking and negotiating development trajectories and the future of Angolan cities. In this respect, perhaps the most significant transformation during the first couple years of partnership between GRN and CIF was the emergence of new locations, ambitions and anxieties in urban planning practices. From the previous chapter, we already know that the grounds of masterplanning were shifting. They were evolving apart from existing governance structures and into the corridors of the President's Military House (as well as a number of architectural offices in China). But it was not just that. With this partnership, conflicting as it might have been, both the impetus for steering urbanization processes and the form of Angolan cities became deeply entangled in quantitative deliberations about the volume of development outcomes and the minutiae of contractual obligations.

The basic agreement regarding the development of new housing, for example, was that at least 2,000 units would be built in each of all eighteen provincial capitals as well as in five additional municipalities. Subject to various rounds of adjustments, their contracted distribution seems to have been approximately the following:[124] the majority of the selected towns were to receive 2,500 units, a few were allocated 5,000 and two were to get 10,000 apartments; beyond that, Benguela was the only city that would take in up to 20,000 units and Luanda absorbed more than 55% of the total goal of 215,500. In the capital, where the New City of Luanda was being planned for a 780 square kilometers area, 120,000 apartments were to be built. In addition to these overall geographical distributions, the contracted planning calculus determined that the housing units would be developed in twelve to fourteen-story high blocks and that there would be two different types of apartments. The three bedroom apartments, the so-called "economic" units, were initially discussed at 100 square meters of net internal area but ended up being raised to 120, while the four bedrooms apartments for "medium and high-income" families began at 120 and were later brought up to 150 square meters. Overall, throughout the entire country, 129,300 were allocated to the first category and 86,200 to the second. In Luanda the split would be 72,000 and 48,000. But the numbers-driven planning processes did not stop here. The technical deliberations that followed the establishment of the contracts – those led by the handful of architects, engineers and planners that comprised the GRN's Technical Group for Urban Development[125] – were also often reduced to the quantification of specific architectural standards and the establishment of measurable development guidelines.

For more than a year after January 2005, during months of back-and-forth deliberations that extended well into 2006, the plans and blueprints presented by the CIF were assessed against selected fragments of the colonial building code as well as some "universal rules" that the GRN's architects and engineers then assembled into a set of norms and regulations for the new

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[124] Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Parecer Técnico Sobre Urbanizações e Edifícios," Luanda, July 29, 2005. To be sure, the numbers kept changing, both in the internal discussion and in what came out to the press. See, for example, "Duzentas mil casas serão construídas no país até 2008," *Angola Press,* March 7, 2006. Accessed March 11, 2015.

[125] This was the *Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações*, sometimes also known as *Grupo Executivo das Urbanizações*, but most often simply as *Grupo Técnico*, or Technical Group.

housing and urban development projects.[126] The principle was, as we have seen above, that this would provide a collaborative platform (or, at least, an expeditious regulatory system) to speed up the design process and jump rapidly into the construction phase. In practice, however, there were numerous disputes between what then became known simply as the Technical Group and the CIF. Amongst the many technical quarrels and specific non-compliance issues, one of the most recurrent grievances amongst the GRN planners concerned the fact that most of their interactions were with CIF representatives with no authority or knowledge to adjust the projects. In a July 2005 opinion report, for example, the Technical Group asked for the "dialogue on technical issues to take place directly with project designers."[127] Nevertheless and despite any such internal complaints, in March 2006 the GRN/CIF housing development project arrived in the public eye.

The event that first brought the scale of the GRN's ambitions to light was the ceremony to lay the first stone for the construction of 44 fifteen-story buildings comprising 5,000 apartments in the enclave Province of Cabinda. Located eighteen kilometers outside the capital, the new city was presented by the CIF's head representative in the country as the first of many to come and the beginning of what they called the "Urbanization of Angola Project".[128] But back in Luanda, from the offices of the GRN to the table of the Council of Ministers, the evaluations made of the blueprints presented towards that very same project were considerably less sanguine.

This became most evident in early June 2006 when that which the GRN called "Project to Build New Developments (Buildings and Infrastructures)" was first officially presented to the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers. In preparation for the meeting, the Technical Group emitted an internal opinion pinpointing and reiterating several insufficiencies in the CIF's proposals. "Due to the imminent start of the constructions works," it concluded in somewhat premonitory fashion, critical adjustments were necessary "in order to avoid disastrous consequences and minimize the constraints that may arise."[129] In the actual session, which was chaired by President dos Santos on June 7, the representatives of the GRN presented the scheme as a "three-year project" to build "200,000 houses throughout the country" but did not hold back on their assessment of the technical solutions. Consequently, the discussion about the New City of Luanda was "postponed for another occasion" and the main recommendation was directed at "the technical teams." Under orders of the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers and the President of the Republic, they were "to continue improving the projects," taking into account "the reality of the country" as well as the "habits and customs" of its population.[130]

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[126] Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Normas sobre Superfícies a Construir," Luanda, August 2005.

[127] Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Parecer Técnico Sobre Urbanizações e Edifícios," Luanda, July 29, 2005. See Also Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações, Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, "Balanço Sobre os Projectos de Investimento Prioritários," Luanda, December 16, 2005.

[128] See "Duzentas mil casas serão construídas no país até 2008," *Angola Press,* March 7, 2006. Accessed March 11, 2015; "Cabinda vai ter nova cidade com 44 edifícios," *Jornal de Angola,* March 7, 2006; "Governo lança em Cabinda amplo projecto habitacional," *Voz da América*, March 6, 2006. This ceremony, in which three different Government Ministers participated as well as the Director of the GRN and the Governor of Cabinda, seems to be the one pictured on the China International Fund website, under Public Housing Projects (Accessed March 2, 2015).

[129] "Acessibilidade e Segurança nos Edifícios a Implantar nas Urbanizações," Coordenador do Grupo Técnico das Urbanizações to Director do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, Luanda, June 2, 2006.

[130] "National Housing Project Presented," *Angola Press*, June 7, 2006.

In response to this, two days later, the Technical Group for Urban Development wrote another internal memo addressed to the Director of the GRN.[131] The new dispatch on the CIF's urban development projects did two things. First, it summarized the reasons for why it considered the "technical conditions" to implement them to have not been met. Amongst the multiple concerns, one of the most crucial had to do with density; or, in the terminology utilized by the Technical Group, the area allocated to each housing unit for purposes of designing the physical layout of the different developments. In fact, earlier documents show, this had been a disputed issue since the initial meetings with the CIF. According to the norms assembled by the Angolans, that area was to be 196.5 square meters per unit, which amounted to 42,345.75 square meters to be attributed to the program throughout the entire country. But the "Chinese proposal" was, in their calculations, 13,665.162 short of that goal.

| | | | ÁREAS (SUPERFÍCIES DE TERRENOS) A ATRIBUIR (ÁREAS MÍNIMAS) | | | | | PROPOSTA CHINESA (B) | DIFERENCIAL DE AREAS (A-B) |
| | | | TIPO A | | TIPO B | | AREAS TOTAIS (A) | | |
PROVÍNCIAS	LOCALIDADES	TOTAL DE FOGOS	Nº DE FOGÓS	x 196,5 m² DE SOLO/FOGO	Nº DE FOGOS	x 196,5 m² DE SOLO/FOGO			
LUANDA	NOVA CIDADE	120.000	72.000	14.148.000	48.000	9.432.000	23.580.000	15.873.120	7.706.880
CABINDA	ZAIA	5.000	3.000	589.500	2.000	393.000	982.500	661.380	321.120
	SOYO	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
ZAIRE	MBANZA CONGO	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
UIGE	UIGE	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
	CAXITO	2.000	1.200	235.800	800	157.200	393.000	275.940	117.060
BENGO	CATETE	2.000	1.200	235.800	800	157.200	393.000	275.940	117.060
CUANZA NORTE	NDALATANDO	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
CUANZA SUL	SUMBE	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
LUNDA NORTE	DUNDO	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
LUNDA SUL	SAURIMO	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
MALANJE	MALANJE	10.000	6.000	1.179.000	4.000	786.000	1.965.000	1.322.760	642.240
	BENGUELA	20.000	12.000	2.358.000	8.000	1.572.000	3.930.000	2.645.520	1.284.480
BENGUELA	LOBITO	5.000	3.000	589.500	2.000	393.000	982.500	661.380	321.120
	CATUMBELA	2.000	1.200	235.800	800	157.200	393.000	275.940	117.060
HUAMBO	HUAMBO	10.000	6.000	1.179.000	4.000	786.000	1.965.000	1.322.760	642.240
	CAÁLA	2.000	1.200	235.800	800	157.200	393.000	275.940	117.060
BIÉ	KUITO	5.000	3.000	589.500	2.000	393.000	982.500	661.380	321.120
MOXICO	LUENA	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
NAMIBE	NAMIBE	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
HUILA	LUBANGO	5.000	3.000	589.500	2.000	393.000	982.500	661.380	321.120
CUNENE	ONDJIVA	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
CUANDO CUBANGO	MENONGUE	2.500	1.500	294.750	1.000	196.500	491.250	342.468	148.782
TOTAL GERAL		215.500	129.300	25.407.450	86.200	16.938.300	42.345.750	28.680.588	13.665.162

Fig. 3.5 Distributing Urban Development Across the Country.
In Gabinete Técnico das Urbanizações do GRN, "Microlocalizações nas Províncias e Urbanizações," Luanda, n.d.

The second part of the memo is directly concerned with the directive "brought down from the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers" and the endeavor to salvage the project. In order to address all of the shortcomings in the CIF's proposals, including bridging the "land areas deficit," the Technical Group suggested the implementation of a "non-stop regimen" of joint working sessions participated, on the Chinese side, by "designers with decision-making responsibilities." In the letter that on June 19 followed this internal note, the Director of the GRN told the CIF that the revision demanded by the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers required the program's design technicians "to be stationed in Angola as soon as

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[131] "Acções para o Acerto da Programação Técnica," Coordenador do Grupo Executivo das Urbanizações to Director do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional, Luanda, June 9, 2006.

possible."[132] The six-point missive ended, in unadorned fashion, with a reminder that "each Urban Development must have its own identity and, as such, its own technical dossier."

In the assertion made to me by a former member of the GRN's Technical Group, someone who had been involved in assessing what at times was also known as the *Jardim Vida Pacífica de Angola* real estate project,[133] this was "the beginning of the end." Nevertheless, in what might have been an attempt to provide official certification for purposes of finding investors, on July 12 the Council of Ministers retroactively ratified all of the contracts celebrated between the GRN and the CIF.[134] Almost two years after the Office for National Reconstruction was created and the first steps for building "215,000 housing units in 24 cities of 18 provinces" were given, the only new city initiative that was effectively launched was the Cabinda project. Despite the seemingly oiled means of the China International Fund, not much (if any) of the projected "31,436,706 square meters of built up space" had been developed. Many of the other projects in the CIF portfolio, including the elaboration of the Plan for the New City of Luanda,[135] were running into a similar situation. The Council of Ministers resolution was issued in September, but the majority of the contracts listed in it were either restructured or completely abandoned not long after that. In the case of the agreement to build 215,500 housing units throughout the country, as we shall see further on, there was a both a significant reduction in its immediate objectives and an apparent diversification of its means. Some have called it the "CIF fiasco,"[136] but it was out of the calculus leading to it that the so-called new centralities emerged.

The Gridlock and the Kickoff

In most discussions of the partnership between the GRN and the CIF, 2007 is described as the year in which its "projects came to a standstill."[137] There have been different explanations for

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[132] With the subject of "Urban Developments and Buildings" and signed by General Kopelipa, this letter was somewhat mysteriously addressed to the "General Command for the Execution of China's Contracts in Angola." But in the body of the missive it becomes clear that this General Command is – or, at least, is led by – the CIF. "Sobre Urbanizações e Edifícios", Director do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional to Comando Geral de Execução de Obras da China em Angola. Luanda, June 19, 2006.

[133] To be sure, *Jardim Vida Pacífica de Angola* or Peaceful Live Garden of Angola is how the National Fire Service referred to the project in both the update to an opinion emitted before the Permanent Commission of the Council of Ministers' meeting and a letter sent to the GRN. Later on, as we will see below, the first of Luanda's new centralities to have foundations on the ground came to be known by the same name, and is know referred to as *Condomínio Vida Pacífica*. Serviço de Bombeiros, Ministério do Interior, "Parecer Técnico Atualizado sobre o Parecer Técnico Nº 108/DP/SB/2006 de 01/06/2006." Luanda, July 20, 2006; "Remessa de um Parecer Técnico", Gabinete do Comandante do Serviço de Bombeiros, Ministério do Interior to Director Geral do Gabinete de Reconstrução Nacional. Luanda, August 11, 2006.

[134] To be sure, *Resolução nº 61/06* of September 4, 2006 "[approved] the contracts signed between the Government of the Republic of Angola and companies of the People's Republic of China in the sphere of National Reconstruction" and, classifying them as confidential, did not make reference to CIF. Nevertheless, the projects in its list of seventeen coincide with those specified on the China International Fund website and there is every reason to believe that the approved contracts are indeed the ones established between the GRN and CIF. Croese ("One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 127) arrives at the same conclusion. Also, there is no justification given for such belated approval but, as we will see below, the CIF was having a hard time to mobilize funds.

[135] The Plan for the New City of Luanda, which according to the specifications on *Resolução nº 61/06* of September 4, 2006 was to include "proposals for management, development and urban planning," did not go beyond the "general planning" vision described in the previous chapter. See Chapter 2.

[136] Croese, "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 128.

[137] Campos et al "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 10. As Levkowitz et al put it (*The 88 Queensway Group*, 21), "after experiencing a relatively smooth entrance in the Angolan market, the 88 Queensway Group hit several major roadblocks in 2007." Between the collapse of the negotiations to build a refinery in Lobito or the cancelation of CIF's partnership with

why this might have happened. In China the CIF was allegedly known for "cajoling contractors into taking part in projects in Angola" and then "routinely delaying payment for completed work and keeping rates as low as possible."[138] Reiterating that the problem was in the disbursement of funds, something that the Angolan media seems to have also reported, *The Economist* cites "Western diplomats and Chinese businessmen" in saying that the CIF "stopped paying bills for more than eight months."[139] Several analysts have also pointed out that the logistical constraints of working in Angola were an overlooked and ultimately impairing issue. From such perspective, projects failed to materialize due to both unrealistic planning by the CIF and the lack of it on the part of the GRN.[140] Most of these accounts, however, originate from what the Ministry of Finance reported as a financing problem.[141] It seems that the CIF ran into difficulties to mobilize the funds it had committed to raising, forcing the Angolan Government to issue $3.5 billion worth of treasury bonds in order to complete its projects (see below). As a consequence of this, *The Economist* remarks, it did not take long for CIF billboards and signs on construction sites to be "replaced by those of other Chinese companies."[142] But even if this is true and the CIF appears indeed to have lost a considerable degree of protagonism around this time, the contracts that brought it to Angola were not entirely dismantled. In fact, its presence in the material landscape of the national capital was just about to become inescapable.

Fig. 3.6 CIF Luanda One.
Photos taken by author on June 25, 2009 and June 23, 2010.

By the time its predicaments became public, between the second half of 2007 and early 2008, the China International Fund was already growing visible in both the skyline of downtown Luanda and the outward

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Endiama, "agreements began to unravel and Group-funded projects began to stall." (ibid.) It also "appears that the relationships the Group had with the Angolan Government, and perhaps the Chinese Government, began to deteriorate as well." (ibid.)

[138] Jiangong Zhou, "Africa Frenzy Feeds China Stock Bubble," *Asia Times*, March 27, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015. Many of these accusations came after Hangxiao Steel was investigated for insider trading on the Shanghai stock exchange after announcing it had won $4.4 billion in contracts from the CIF to sell construction material and services for a public housing project in Angola. Following this controversy, in March 2007 the Chinese embassy in Angola denounces the CIF and separates itself from its projects. See Levkowitz et al, *The 88 Queensway Group*, 22-23. See also Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 136, footnote 32.

[139] "China International Fund: the Queensway Syndicate and the Africa Trade," *The Economist*, August 13, 2011. Accessed March 11, 2015. As Croese ("One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 128) puts it, "the disbursement of funds and hence the execution of most of the projects was either delayed or never materialized."

[140] See Ana Cristina Alves, "The Oil Factor in Sino-Angolan Relations at the Start of the 21st Century," *SAIIA Occasional Paper* 55, 2010, 13; and Campos et al "Angola and China: A Pragmatic Partnership," 10.

[141] In the aforementioned press release, the Angolan Ministry of Finance states that "some constraints" had been verified in this respect. See Ministério das Finanças, "Esclarecimento sobre a Linha de Crédito da China," Press Release, Luanda, October 17, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015.

[142] "China International Fund: the Queensway Syndicate and the Africa Trade," *The Economist*, August 13, 2011. Accessed March 11, 2015.

development of the burgeoning city region. It all happened, it seems, at the hands of the Beijing Construction Engineering Group.[143] Most meaningfully, the CIF Luanda One tower – a dazzlingly golden 25-story high office building whose façades would display glimmering images of Beijing's Temple of Heaven, the CIF logo or even Tom and Jerry cartoons once the sun went down – began arising at the bottom of Cidade Alta, a stone's throw away from the National Assembly and the Presidential Palace. Perhaps more importantly, but certainly not as noticeable, the construction works for the now called Nova Centralidade do Zango or *Condomínio Vida Pacífica* must have begun around the same time.[144] Seemingly adopting not only the building and development types that for two years were recurrently rejected by the GRN's Technical Group but also the most idyllic designation under which the project was known, the first tower blocks of the then called *Jardim Vida Pacífica de Angola* rose fast behind CIF hoardings and a billboard pledging to build a better country. In fact, as we will see below in more detail, this was the first of Luanda's new centralities to have foundations on the ground.

Despite the problems the CIF had in 2007, the GRN seems to have gotten through the year fairly unscathed by the dwindling reputation of its main source of finance. Perhaps some of its initial responsibilities on the financing end of the reconstruction deals were lost, but the fact is that a great number of contracts were then confirmed under its wing. For in May 2007, ten months after the contracts celebrated between the GRN and the CIF were retroactively ratified in a resolution issued in September 2006,[145] the Council of Ministers endorsed a new set of infrastructure initiatives "to accelerate economic growth as a basic condition for sustainable and

Fig. 3.7 CIF: Building a Better Angola.
Top: photo taken by author on June 24, 2010; Bottom: In China International Fund website, under Public Housing Projects.

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[143] See both the China International Fund website, under Building Projects and the Beijing Construction Engineering Group website, under Angola. Accessed March 11, 2015.

[144] I was not able to confirm when exactly did the construction for any of these projects started. Nevertheless, limited evidence from Google Earth suggests that in early 2008 works were already underway in both sites. Morever, an October 2008 article states not only that "51 buildings are under construction" in Zango but also that the first 10,000 apartments of what it was called *Jardim Vida Pacífica de Angola* were to be delivered in December 2008. See "Nasce Ao Sul De Luanda Uma 'Cidade Harmoniosa'," *Jornal De Angola*, October 9, 2008. Available in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento: Habitação e Urbanismo 2007/08/09* (Luanda: Development Workshop, 2009), 108-109. When I visited in June 2010, no one had moved in but a group of six or eight buildings was in the very final stages of completion and a large number of others had their superstructures up. Outside the main gate, as pictured in Fig. 3.7, the mentioned hoardings and billboard were seriously worn out but still standing. One year before that, in downtown Luanda, the construction works for CIF Luanda One were definitely wrapping up.

[145] I am referring, of course, to the abovementioned *Resolução n° 61/06* and the July 12 meeting during which it was approved.

harmonious development."[146] In six different resolutions officially issued on June 25, the collegial executive body authorized the reconstruction agency to sign a total of 67 contracts for at least 26 different schemes throughout the country.[147] Like it had happened in the 2006 ordinance, these acts provided an official list of the reconstruction projects in which the GRN was involved, but they were much more thorough. If in July 2006 the Council of Minsters approved contracts that were not only already signed but also classified as confidential,[148] the 2007 resolutions gave permission for contracts to be celebrated at some point in the future while detailing both the counterparts and the financial values for each contract.

This hints at three things to have in mind. First, it indicates the existence of agreements between the GRN and each of the listed companies that predate May 2007. Second, it suggests that there was at that point in time at least a broad understanding of what each project would entail. And third, given that the CIF was only listed in one of the 67 approved contracts, it seems to be a sign that its role in the reconstruction effort was changing. Nevertheless, a number of schemes were clearly conceived out of the GRN/CIF partnership. Two of the largest projects to have been carried from the 2006 list were the rehabilitation of the Benguela railway line and the construction of a New International Airport in Luanda, which was the only contract where the CIF was detailed as the contractor.[149] At the same time, many projects were entirely new and a couple even involved contractors from countries other than China.[150] Some of the most significant new schemes were the development projects for the Luanda/Bengo Special Economic Zone and the seaports in Benguela and the Dande River Mouth.[151]

In point of fact, there is no clear evidence about the role of the CIF in each of these contracts. It might be the case that the GRN negotiated them independently, but it is also possible that the CIF brokered many or even all of the agreements. In any case, regardless of what the precise role of the CIF might have been, one thing is for sure. Enumerating contracts worth more than $17 billion, a sum that was about 28 percent of the country's GDP at the time,[152] this renewed list of

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[146] In the preamble of all six resolutions mentioned below. See *Resoluções nº* 49-A/07 to 49-F/07 of June 25, 2007.

[147] Each of the six acts – *Resoluções nº* 49-A/07 to 49-F/07 of June 25, 2007 – approved "draft contracts" contracts in a different realm: A was for "productive infrastructures;" B, as we see in more detail below, was for "contracts for the construction of urban developments and new cities;" C was for "productive infrastructures in various agro-industrial poles;" D was for "contracts for the rehabilitation of railway and roadway infrastructures;" E was for "contracts for the construction and rehabilitation of community infrastructures;" and F was for "air and seaport infrastructures."

[148] As I have alluded to above, *Resolução nº* 61/06 evokes the State Secret Law to classify the approved contracts as confidential.

[149] The Benguela railway line, which was only the largest of six different large railway and roadway projects, involved a contract worth almost $2 billion to be signed with the China Railway 20 Bureau Group. See *Resolução nº* 49-D/07 of June 25, 2007.. The EPC contract for the new airport was worth $1.51 billion. See *Resolução nº* 49-F/07 of June 25, 2007..

[150] Like in the case of the EximBank loan projects, and as we will see below, almost all of the projects in the list involved two types of contracts. One the one hand, there was in each project a contract for the actual construction works, which often also involved procurement of both materials and services. The vast majority of these were to be signed with Chinese companies, but there was one large contract with a Spanish company (worth almost €1.3 billion) and almost $900 million worth of contracts with Brazilian companies. As we have seen in the case of the EximBank loan, these are typically paid off the credit lines. One the other hand, each of these contractors was to be supervised by third part consultant who was awarded a contract for management, coordination and monitoring services; what in Portuguese is known as *fiscalização*. Hired outside the credit lines, many of these in this list were given to Portuguese and Angolan companies.

[151] According to the World Bank Angola's GDP in 2007 was $60.45 billion; The World Bank Group, World Development Indicators: GDP. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[152] Involving a whole subset of contracts, including two with Brazil's Odebrecht, the SEZ was at that point worth at least $1.8 billion. See *Resoluções nº* 49-A/07 and 49-C/07 of June 25, 2007. The Benguela seaport contracts, to be signed with the China

GRN initiatives was an indisputable demonstration of the agency's position as the leading venue for guiding physical modernization efforts throughout the country. Moreover, it provides insight into the Government's specific priorities at the time. With almost $7.9 billion worth of contracts approved, transport infrastructure was to receive a significant boost.[153] One other important area of intervention was shown to be housing, urban development and the creation of new cities.

Project	Company	Contract (Value in USD)	
Nova Cidade do Kilamba (Fase I) [LR]	CITIC – International Contracting Inc.	EPC [1]	3,534,564,888.00
	TPF Planege	MCSS [2]	123,709,770.00
Urbanização do Km 44 [LR]	China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation	EPC	82,795,046.03
	SECAN – Sociedade de Engenharia e Consultoria	MCSS	2,897,466.00
Urbanização do Musseque Capari [LR]	China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation	EPC	294,070,754.00
	SECAN – Sociedade de Engenharia e Consultoria	MCSS	10,244,266.00
Urbanização do Zango [LR]	China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation	EPC	184,883,380.55
	SECAN – Sociedade de Engenharia e Consultoria	MCSS	6,470,918.00
Urbanização Especial de Cabinda	China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation	EPC	59,710,535.26
	Arquinota, Limitada	MCSS	2,089,869.00
Nova Cidade do Cacuaco [LR]	China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group Co	EPC	704,273,800.00
	TPF Planege	MCSS	24,649,583.00
Cidade do Dande [LR]	China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group Co	EPC	704,273,800.00
	TPF Planege	MCSS	24,649,583.00
Nova Cidade do Dundo	Pan-China Construction Group Corporation Limited	EPC	574,704,000.00
	TPF Planege	MCSS	20,114,640.00

[LR] In the Luanda Region

Table 3.1. GRN Contracts for Urban Developments and New Cities
Approved by the Council of Ministers on May 12, 2007 (see *Resolução nº* 49-B/07).
[1] EPC: Engineering, Procurement and Construction Contract
[2] MCSS: Management, Coordination and Monitoring Services (*Fiscalização*) Contract

This is no surprise. In fact, the Government's agenda for housing development had been moving in tandem with the official endorsements made to the GRN's reconstruction program.[154] If in 2006 the Government's housing development policy had been approved one week before the ratification of the contracts between the GRN and the CIF,[155] in 2007 it was just days prior to the $17 billion worth of contracts were approved by the Council of Ministers that the draft for the Framework Law for Housing Development was presented in the National Assembly, during which discussion the Minister of Urbanism and Environment seems to have "admitted government engagement in building 215 thousand housing units throughout the entire

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Harbour Engineering Company, were worth more than $1.2 billion and the one for Dande, which was awarded to Spain's FCC Construcción, was worth almost €1.3 billion. See *Resolução nº* 49-F/07 of June 25, 2007.

[153] *Resoluções nº* 49-D/07 and 49-F/07 of June 25, 2007.

[154] On the Government's efforts for "putting housing on the agenda" around this time see Croese, "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 128-131.

[155] See *Resoluções nº* 60/06 and 61/06 of September 4, 2006.

country".[156] Of all the 67 contracts officially sanctioned a couple of days later, sixteen were "inherent to projects for the construction of urban developments and new cities."[157] Corresponding to no more than eight different initiatives, they were considerably far from the aim of building 215,000 houses in all eighteen provinces. But they amounted to approximately $6.35 billion worth of contracts, twelve of which were for projects located in the wider Luanda region (see also Fig. E, in the Introduction).

In addition to approving these draft contracts, a couple of days later the Council of Ministers created four different land reserves "to be used by the Government"[158] in the region around Luanda. Almost 153 thousand hectares were demarcated, more than 127 thousand of which were withhold for the New City of Luanda. Enclosing an expanse of land almost twice as large as the area covered by the plan proposed by the Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning and Design Institute and the Urban Planning and Design Institute of Shenzhen,[159] this last reserve provided legal means for the implementation of the projects in Km 44, Zango and Kilamba.

Land Reserves in the Luanda Region	Area (ha)	Perimeter (km)
Novo Porto, Base Naval e Nova Cidade do Dande	19,728.72	76.46
Nova Cidade do Cacuaco	3,317.36	25.93
Nova Urbanização do Musseque Capari	2,127.05	19.25
Nova Cidade de Luanda	127,591.00	182.00

Table 3.2. Land Reserves Created in the Luanda Region in 2007
Approved by the Council of Ministers on May 16, 2007 (see *Decretos n° 62,63,64* and 65/07)

Coincidentally or not, it was on August 22, less than ten days after the decrees establishing these land reserves were officially issued, that the Council of Ministers authorized the Ministry of Finance to issue the $3.5 billion worth of treasury bonds mentioned above.[160] Specifically aimed at "financing priority projects of the National Reconstruction Program," the issuance was to be fully underwritten through a subscription agreement with "a syndicate of banks headquartered in Angola." Led by BAI and BESA, this syndicate and that which was the largest public debt issuance ever carried out in Angola were officially announced on October 31.[161]

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[156] This would be approved in the National Assembly in late June and turn into law in September. See Lei n° 3/07. On the presentation make by Sita José, then Minister of Urbanism and Environment, see "Parlamento aprova Lei de Base do Fomento Habitacional," *Angola Press*, May 8, 2007. Accessed March 16, 2015. On the alleged evocation of the project to build 215,000 houses see "O Governo não tem projecto habitacional," *Folha 8*, May 12, 2007. Available in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento: Habitação e Urbanismo 2007/08/09* (Luanda: Development Workshop, 2009), 16-17.

[157] *Resolução n° 49-B/07* of June 25, 2007.

[158] In *Decretos n° 62* to 65/07 of August 13, 2007.

[159] The Plan for the New City of Luanda was commissioned to these two institutes in 2006. As we have seen in the previous chapter, their master plan covered a total area of about 780 square kilometers, or 78 thousand hectares.

[160] Decreto n° 71/07 of September 19, 2007.

[161] The issuance was made official by *Decreto Executivo n° 106/07* of October 31, 2007. The two banks – *Banco Angolano de Investimentos* and *Banco Espírito Santo Angola* – were responsible for 80% of the financing and the remaining was distributed amongst a number of other Angolan banks. See "BAI e BESA asseguram 80% da operação de financiamento de USD 3,5 biliões para infra-estruturas," *Angola Press*, October 31, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015. As explained in BESA's 2007 Annual Report, the debt was to be issued in several phases: "phase I, in the amount of USD 1 billion, took place in November 2007 and phases II

Fig. 3.8 Urbanização do Musseque Capari and Urbanização do Km 44.
Top Right and Bottom Left: photos taken by author on February 24, 2013; Top Left and Bottom Right: In Guagxi International
Construction Engineering Corporation website, under Projects (Last accessed on March 10, 2015).

It was then soon after the Ministry of Finance publicly recognized that the China International Fund had run into difficulties "to complete ongoing projects and initiate new ones"[162] that the GRN took the final steps to launch the planning and designing processes for the new cities and urban developments as they currently exist around Luanda. Of the six projects sanctioned by the Council of Ministers for the region, at least the two largest had their official contracts signed in November 2007: phase one of the New City of Kilamba and the New City of Cacuaco. The abovementioned *Jardim Vida Pacífica de Angola* in Zango was probably already underway. And while the City of Dande seems to have fallen through the cracks, the construction works for the urban developments of Capari and Km 44 eventually also began. Despite the ordeals the CIF was going through, by the end of 2007 the GRN had inked contracts not just for the creation of a model to be reproduced throughout the country, as it had happened during its first two years of existence, but for the "engineering, procurement and construction" of particular solutions for specific places around Luanda.

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and III, for respectively USD 1 billion and UDS 1.5 billion, will occur in June 2008 and February 2009." Banco Espírito Santo Angola, *Relatório e Contas 2007* (Luanda: Banco Espírito Santo Angola, 2008), 99.

[162] Ministério das Finanças, "Esclarecimento sobre a Linha de Crédito da China," Press Release, Luanda, October 17, 2007. Accessed March 11, 2015.

Fig. 3.9 Urbanização or Nova Centralidade do Zango and Nova Cidade do Cacuaco.
Top: both images from photos taken by author on July 8, 2010 (Plan by CIF / Beijing Construction Engineering Group); Bottom: both images from photos taken by author on February 24, 2013 (Plan by China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group).

This did not mean, however, that the building and development solutions devised under the auspice of the CIF in 2005/2006 were completely discarded. In fact, despite the reservations of the GRN's Technical Group, they seem to have been generally adopted in that which became the very first new centrality to have foundations on the ground. Even though its legacy arguably extends into all the other new city projects, the Zango project was the only one conspicuously kept under CIF's direct responsibility.[163] The main contractor was the Beijing Construction Engineering Group and the initial plan was to cover a total area of 685 ha adjacent to the then already burgeoning Zango social housing project. The ultimate aim was to build 35,000 apartments for 210,000 people.[164] But like the project for Dande this tremendous ambition also seems to have fallen through the cracks. When in February 2013 the houses were first put on the

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[163] As I mentioned above, CIF hoardings surrounded the Zango project, which is something that did not happen in any of the other housing development projects.

[164] See Beijing Construction Engineering Group website, under Angola (Accessed March 11, 2015). This is despite the fact that it is the China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation that comes listed on Resolução nº 49-B/07 as the building company responsible for this project. While the evidence is not conclusive, when I visited in June 2010 there were brand new CIF/BCGE hoardings alongside a large GRN panel summarizing the plan (see Fig. 3.4). Moreover, the value of the contract approved under *Resolução nº* 49-B/07 leads me to believe that while in Capari and Km 44, the China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation was indeed hired as the main contractor, in Zango they seem to have been hired merely as a subcontractor. See China Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation website, under Project (Accessed March 17, 2015).

market only two or three hundred were ready and not more than 2,500 were under construction.[165] There have been no reports that the original vision is to pursue.

If the Zango project is located just next to the outer ring expressway and the first phase of Cidade do Kilamba is sufficiently close to it to not be missed, the New City of Cacuaco was located far enough into the unoccupied outskirts of Luanda to go practically unnoticed until it was suddenly on the market in 2013.[166] Its construction works, however, began in August 2008. Contracted out to the China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group, the first phase of the project covered 171 ha and entailed the construction of just over half of the planned 20,000 apartments in more than 400 high-rises. This was complete in October 2012, when all units were reportedly inspected and given official certification.[167] Five months later, when the selling process began, about 9,800 were available and another two or three hundred were under construction.[168] But the ambition was to go much beyond that (see Fig. 3.4, above).

The Circuitries of Cidade do Kilamba and the Metrics of Oil-Backed Modernization

This brings us back to Cidade do Kilamba. It is sometimes said that the Kilamba project was the result of the partnership between CIF and GRN described above.[169] I could not confirm nor deny these claims, but the paper trail I was able to pull together on Kilamba goes back to no earlier than May 12, 2007. In fact, it begins with the

Fig. 3.10 Nova Cidade do Kilamba.
In BUEDRI and CITIC IC, "Projeto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I."

aforementioned Council of Ministers meeting in which the GRN is given authorization to sign two contracts towards the planning and construction of phase one: an EPC contract with CITIC

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[165] See Sonangol, *Relatório de Gestão 2012* (Luanda: Sonangol, 2013), 40; Sonangol, *Relatório de Gestão 2013* (Luanda: Sonangol, 2014), 44. See also Domingos dos Santos, "Empresa imobiliária apresentou soluções," *Jornal de Angola*, September 14, 2013. Accessed March 17, 2015.

[166] In fact, if Cidade do Kilamba received a great deal of attention in the Angolan media, particularly after its partial opening in July 2011, the equally impressive Cidade do Cacuaco was barely talked about even amongst planners and urban commentators.

[167] Lixin Zhu, "Finally, a Place to Call Home," *China Daily*, March 14, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2015. See also: Kumuênho da Rosa, "Cidade do Cacuaco pronta em Dezembro," *Jornal de Angola*, September 18, 2011. Accessed March 17, 2015; Nan Hao, "CTCE: Homes in Angola, Projects across the Globe," *China Daily*, December 14, 2014. Accessed March 10, 2015; and the China Tiesiju Civil Engineering Group website. Accessed on Mar 10, 2015.

[168] See Sonangol, *Relatório de Gestão 2012* (Luanda: Sonangol, 2013), 40; Sonangol, *Relatório de Gestão 2013* (Luanda: Sonangol, 2014), 44. See also Domingos dos Santos, "Empresa imobiliária apresentou soluções," *Jornal de Angola*, September 14, 2013. Accessed March 17, 2015.

[169] David Benazeraf and Ana Alves ("'Oil for Housing': Chinese-built New Towns in Angola," *SAIIA Policy Briefing 88*, April 2014, 3), for example, say that "the project is officially the result of a shared process between Chinese and Angolan planners and engineers between 2004 and 2007, with several visits to Angola by Chinese planners and visits to China by the Angolan technical coordination team." In her dissertation, Sílvia Leiria Viegas ("Luanda, Cidade (im)Previsível? Governação e Transformação Urbana e Habitacional: Paradigmas de Intervenção e Resistência no Novo Milénio" (PhD Dissertation, Universidade de Lisboa, 2015), 269) argues the same.

International Contracting for over $3.5 billion and a $123 million *fiscalização* contract with TPF Planege, which together indicate the existence of a prior agreement of some kind. For at least a broad program had to have been agreed upon between these companies and the GRN before the draft contracts were presented to the Council of Ministers.

But this does not necessarily mean that the CIF was not involved in brokering the deals for Cidade do Kilamba.[170] In fact, there is really only one thing that the Council of Ministers resolution tells us about this project. That by May 2007 the proposed contractor was China's CITIC Construction, the company that owns CITIC International Contracting and is itself a subsidiary of CITIC Group, a state-owned conglomerate with activities in a wide range of sectors.[171] It is also known that General Kopelipa and this company's president signed a memorandum of understanding in June and that on November 14, 2007 the turnkey contract for the first phase of Cidade do Kilamba was officially awarded to CITIC Construction.[172] All of this said and while the China International Fund's logo would never be seen on any hoardings or billboards surrounding the construction site, the arrangements made for financing and implementing the Kilamba project do not seem to have gone too far out of its corporate network.

For the company hired to oversee and manage the project financing was Pierre Falcone's Pierson Capital Group,[173] a self-described "privately-held entity that focuses on developing businesses in the World's fast growing markets" and whose client list in 2008 included both China Sonangol

[170] Corkin (*Uncovering African Agency*, 138, footnote 38), for example, who visited the construction site in 2010, hypothesizes that "this may very well be the project CIF initially awarded to Hangxiao Steel." See footnote above. In this respect, in their study of the CIF's corporate network, Levkowitz et al (*The 88 Queensway Group*, 5-6), also pointed out that Lo Fong Hung, "who appears to serve as the public face of the 88 Queensway Group" was married to Wang Xiangfei, who at the time was "non-executive director of the CITIC group" as well as a director of "at least six of the companies owned by the 88 Queensway Group." For more on this see Corking, *Uncovering African Agency*, 138.

[171] In fact, CITIC Construction is a subsidiary of CITIC Limited, which is then owned by CITIC Group. Founded in 1979 as the China International Trust and Investment Corporation, this was created as a ministry-level financial institution and is described on its website (under About CITIC, Brief Introduction; Accessed March 22, 2015) as having "become a window of China's opening-up to the outside world." Today, it is said elsewhere on the website (under About CITIC, The History of CITIC Group; Accessed March 22, 2015), "CITIC Group has developed into a large state-owned multinational conglomerate with a balanced development of both financial and non-financial businesses." The company "was listed in the Fortune 500 for the fourth consecutive year, rising from 194th in 2012 to 172nd in 2013." See also CITIC Group Corporation, *Annual Report 2013* (Beijing: CITIC Group Corporation, 2014), 4-7.

[172] To be sure, Croese ("One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 129; also on "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," in *Strengthening the Civil Society Perspective. Series II: China and the Other Emerging Powers in Africa* (Cape Town: Fahamu), pp. 7-29, 19) seems to be the only one mentioning the establishment of the memorandum of understanding in June. As for the signature of the contract in November, this is confirmed by a variety of sources. See, for example, Zhixin Wu, "Build Livable and Affordable Houses in Africa Quicker and Costing Less," Presentation Slides, African Union for Housing Finance Annual Conference, Cape Town, November 17, 2014 or Hong Bo, "Practice in Angola: Kilamba Kiaxi (K.K.) Satellite City Project," Presentation Slides, The World Bank's Global Housing Finance Conference, Washington DC, May 29, 2014. See also "Lançado projecto de habitação social do Kilamba Kiaxi," *Angola Press,* August 31, 2008 or CITIC Construction website, under Projects (Accessed March 23, 2014).

[173] Pierre Falcone is widely known as one of the key figures in the oil-for-arms and money laundering scandal known as Angolagate. In October 2009, after a process that lasted almost one decade, Falcone was convicted in a French court for arms trafficking to the Angolan Government in the 1990s. See "Chronologie de l'Angolagate," *L'Express*, October 27, 2009. Accessed March 29, 2015. His links to José Eduardo dos Santos and the Angolan leadership were so strong that when he was first accused the president "publicly hailed him as a national hero" and called for his prosecution to be abandoned. See Rafael Marques de Morais, "How France fuelled Angola's Civil War," *The Guardian*, November 1, 2009. Accessed March 29, 2015. In 2003, he was even appointed Angolan ambassador for UNESCO in order to procure diplomatic immunity in France. See Levkowitz et al, *The 88 Queensway Group*, 52-53. Less than two years after his conviction on the Angolagate case, in April 2011 the Paris Court of Appeal overturned the decision.

and CITIC.[174] With headquarters in Luanda (as well as Beijing, Chicago and Mexico City) and a "task force of experts in construction design and financial engineering," their consultancy work "consists in leveraging strong strategic alliances commercial conglomerates for the design and long term financing of major infrastructure programs in emerging countries."[175] Featuring high amongst their current achievements in the construction sector, Cidade do Kilamba is heralded as a "good example" of how Pierson Capital "works to design, finance and build brand new cities and their infrastructures."[176] In this case they seem to have able to provide a direct link between the GRN and its "close network of policy and commercial banks as well as export credit agencies"[177] in China.

In the first few years of the project, oil-backed pre-export loans appear to have been brokered with "various Chinese banks,"[178] but the largest chunk of the funds came from the state-owned Industrial and Commercial Bank of China in 2009. Announced in November, soon after an official visit by the vice-president of ICBC to Angola,[179] the $2.5 billion credit line provided by what is today the largest bank in the world was entirely designed for financing the Kilamba project.[180] Similarly to the EximBank loans described above, its repayment was to take place in crude oil shipments to be made by Sonangol: 10,000 bpd in 2010, 40,000 bpd between 2011 and 2013, and 30,000 bpd in 2014-2016.[181] With these guarantees on future oil production, the Chairwoman of CITIC Construction recently said at the World Bank's Global Housing Finance

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[174] Levkowitz et al (*The 88 Queensway Group*, 19-20 and 52-53), who state that Falcone and Pierson Capital are likely to have helped what they call the 88 Queensway Group establish operations in Angola cite two *Africa Energy Intelligence* articles on this: "A Controversial Figure Pops Up in Beijing," *Africa Energy Intelligence*, June 18, 2008 and "Is Sonangol Africa's First Sovereign Wealth Fund?" *Africa Energy Intelligence,* November 26, 2008.

[175] See Pierson Capital Group website, under Company Overview. Accessed March 23, 2014. As they put it there, they serve as "strategic advisors" to their clients, "providing them with valuable insight in structuring, financing and implementing customer-tailored projects in a highly competitive, multicultural and sophisticated geopolitical environment." In Luanda the Pierson Capital Group seems to be registered as a local company under the name of *Africasia – Construção Civil & Turismo*.

[176] See Pierson Capital Group website, under Achievements. Accessed March 23, 2014. Elsewhere on the website it is also said "Pierson Capital ensures the planning, design and building of new neighborhoods and of social housing programs. Major projects include but are not limited to Kilamba, the new Luanda city urban project for 700 000 inhabitants in Angola." While Pierson Capital's involvement in the Kilamba project seems to have escaped the attention of most commentators on the project, the independent press in Angola exposed the Falcone's connection in early 2012. See "Falcone e JES de costas viradas," *Folha 8*, March 10, 2012. Outside Angola, it seems to have been only peripherally mentioned in "Kilamba, de 0 à 200 000 habitants en trois ans," *Open Globe* (Blog), *L'Obs*, June 27, 2012.

[177] See Pierson Capital Group website, under Financial Engineering. Accessed March 23, 2014.

[178] The Chairwoman of CITIC Construction and the Advisor to the President of CITIC Construction's Africa Division have both recently referred to the "problem of financing" has having been solved by "oil-backed pre-export finance from Chinese banks." In Hong Bo, "Practice in Angola: Kilamba Kiaxi (K.K.) Satellite City Project," and Zhixin Wu, "Build Livable and Affordable Houses in Africa Quicker and Costing Less."

[179] During this visit he was received by President dos Santos and is said to have "guaranteed China's participation in Angola's development, in particular its reconstruction process," after the meeting. See "Presidente da República recebe vice-presidente do Banco do Comércio da China," *Angola Press*, October 16, 2009. Accessed March 24, 2015. Coincidentally, or not, this agreement took place in the month after Pierre Falcone was convicted on the Angolagate case. See above.

[180] See "Presidente da República informado sobre obras do Kilamba Kiaxi," *Angola Press*, March 21, 2011. Accessed March 24, 2015; also Kumuênho da Rosa, "Cidade do Kilamba fica pronta no próximo ano," *Jornal de Angola*, March 24, 2011. Accessed March 25, 2014. The importance of the ICBC loan for the Kilamba project is attested by the opening speech mentioned above, where Sonangol's CEO Manuel Vicente thanked the ICBC as the bank that financed the project. See da Rosa, "Fazer da Cidade de Luanda Uma Das Mais Belas do Mundo," 26.

[181] This is according to Alves ("China's Oil Diplomacy," 154), quoting an early version of the contract that was signed with Sonangol. She also adds that in January 2011, when she interviewed someone at the Debt Management Department of the Ministry of Finance, no funds had yet been disbursed, something that is unlikely to be true.

Conference in Washington DC, CITIC and the Angolan authorities were able "solve the problem of financing" an initiative initially planned for more than $3.5 billion but which is now said to have actually cost $4.2 billion.[182] And that, to borrow from David McKenzie's bewilderment on the CNN piece with which this chapter opens, was only phase one.
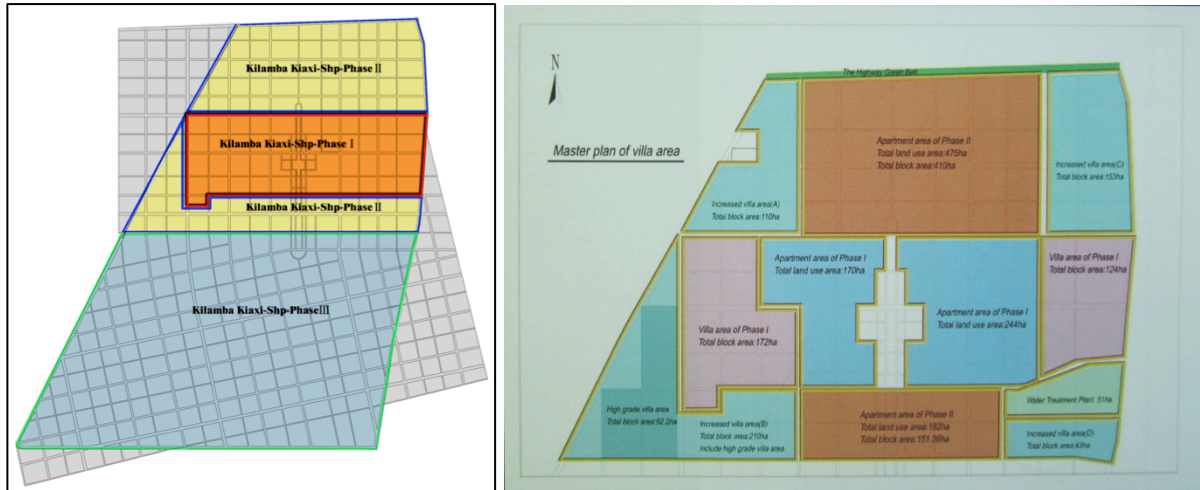

Fig. 3.11 Phases of Cidade do Kilamba.
Both images in BUEDRI and CITIC International Contracting, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I"
Left: The Three Phases of Cidade do Kilamba; Right: Master Plan for Phases One and Two

From the beginning, the ambition of Kilamba's designers and financiers was indeed much larger. For two more phases and at least another $6.5 billion worth of crude oil shipments were to follow.[183] Sitting almost two kilometers out of the outer ring expressway, the 900 hectares of phase one would connect back to it during phase two and then extend further out to put the size of Cidade do Kilamba at a staggering 54 square kilometers.[184] By the end of the three phases, 70 to 80 thousand housing units would have been built and about 500 thousand people would be living there.[185] For phase one alone, in and of itself the largest EPC contract undertaken by a

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[182] In Hong Bo, "Practice in Angola: Kilamba Kiaxi (K.K.) Satellite City Project." See also Zhixin Wu, "Build Livable and Affordable Houses in Africa Quicker and Costing Less."

[183] A total investment of about $10 billion was the most commonly quoted figure for the whole initiative. See, for example, Ni Tao, "Urbanization Flagship," *ChinaAfrica*, Vol. 7, March 2015. Accessed March 29, 2015. Or the Beijing Urban Construction Group website, "Municipal Party Secretary Liu Qi Visited Angola Housing Project," under News Center. Accessed March 25, 2015. In "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," Croese states that the reported cost of the entire project was $10.6 billion (137).

[184] This figure has been part of the sound bites about Kilamba from the early stages of the project. In early 2011, as we will see below, an area of 5,294,91 hectares (or 53 square kilometers) in the same vaguely trapezoidal shape of the first plans was demarcated as the charter area of Cidade do Kilamba. In *Decreto Presidencial nº* 32/11 of February 9, 2011.

[185] Reports on the number of houses to be built in the end of the three phases varied between 70 and 80 thousand. Compare, for example, "Nova Cidade do Kilamba beneficiará 120 mil pessoas," *Angola Press*, April 9, 2010 with "Cidade do Kilamba Kiaxi habitada em Julho," *Jornal de Angola*, April 10, 2010, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, April 2010), 51-52, or Rosa, "Cidade do Kilamba fica pronta no próximo ano," *Jornal de Angola*, March 24, 2011. Accessed March 29, 2015. Population projections varied even more across different sources. In *Jornal de Angola* it was said that the final population would be 350 thousand inhabitants but the Pierson Capital Group, perhaps counting in their own initiative (see below), projects 700 thousand. See Pierson Capital Group website, under Achievements. Accessed March 23, 2014. But if we use the rule of about six people per household, which is the general rule amongst planners in Luanda, the expected population for the whole project was almost 500 thousand inhabitants, which indeed was the most common projection for the final stage of Cidade do Kilamba.

Chinese company outside China at the time, 20 thousand apartments and 6,666 single-family houses were planned when the first stone ceremony took place on August 31, 2008.[186] Between 120 and 160 thousand people were expected to move in 36 months later.

Given the magnitude of the project they had in hands, CITIC Construction involved numerous subcontractors. More than twenty different companies, I was once told, constituted the "joint fleet" for the Kilamba project.[187] Amongst them, at least two different firms were put in charge during the early planning and design stages, alongside the GRN's planning personnel. The "comprehensive design," it seems, was under the responsibility of the Beijing Urban Engineering Design and Research Institute.[188] Also involved from the beginning, the Beijing Urban Construction Group did the site surveying, helped developing the master plan and were put in charge of urban and architectural designing.[189] By May 2008, the building site had been fenced, CITIC's temporary offices were set in place and the upcoming urban grid had been laid out.[190] When the first stone was officially thrown, nine months after the general contract between the GRN and CITIC Construction was signed, the first execution drawings had been completed and

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[186] To be sure, while the 20,000 apartments figure was widely publicized, the plan to build single family houses which we will look at below, was not always mentioned in reports about the project. But when on the day of the first stone ceremony it is said that the project was going to benefit 160 thousand people is presumably because those extra 6,666 are being included. See "Lançado projecto de habitação social do Kilamba Kiaxi," *Angola Press*, August 31, 2008. Accessed March 26, 2015. A Chinese report of the same day even pulls the population figures for phase one up to 200 thousand. See "Chinese company launched $3.5 bln housing project in Angola" *Xinhua*, September 1, 2008. Accessed March 19, 2015. Later, as the project developed it was more commonly said that the first phase would benefit 120 thousand people, but other figures would also be heard. On April 9, 2010, for example, the then Vice-Minister for Urbanism and Housing placed that projection at 158 thousand but some press reports stuck with the six people per household rule of thumb and the 120 thousand estimate. See Albano Inglês, "Nova Cidade do Kilamba terá 20 mil casas até 2012," *TV Zimbo*, April 10, 2010; and "Nova Cidade do Kilamba beneficiará 120 mil pessoas," *Angola Press*, April 9, 2010.

[187] "Joint fleet" is how CITIC Construction refers to the group of companies with which it collaborates in each project. Their current "joint fleet" across the continent includes "40 Chinese and foreign companies of large and medium size." Zhixin Wu, "Build Livable and Affordable Houses in Africa Quicker and Costing Less." Some of the subcontracted companies involved in the Kilamba project include the Beijing Construction Engineering Group, who said to be in charge of the "5 largest plots" in phase one (see their website, under News; accessed March 25, 2015), the Beijing Shougang Construction Group, who was responsible for building infrastructures such as roads and water supply "west of the central dividing line" (see their website, under Company News; accessed March 25, 2015), the Beijing Urban Construction Exploration & Surveying Design Research Institute, who has undertaken geotechnical surveys and soil analysis (see their website, under Business; accessed March 29, 2015), or Sri Lanka's Automated Technologies, who was asked to install "572 ELENESSA elevators without machine room" (see their website, under Completed Projects; accessed March 29, 2015).

[188] I was given access to two documents attributed to Beijing Urban Engineering Design and Research Institute and CITIC International Contracting that attest for this: Beijing Urban Engineering Design and Research Institute (BUEDRI) and CITIC International Contracting, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I," Presentation Slides, November 28, 2008; and BUEDRI and CITIC/IC, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I," Brochure, n.d.

[189] See Beijing Urban Construction Group website, under Design and Consultation. See also "Municipal Party Secretary Liu Qi Visited Angola Housing Project," under News Center. Accessed March 25, 2015. In addition to the work done by these two companies, during fieldwork in Beijing Jia-Ching Chen found evidence of a March 2010 plan proposal produced by the Beijing Institute of Architectural Design for CITIC Construction. Covering what had been planned as phases 2 and 3, the whole 54 square kilometers reserved for the initiative, this plan builds on what was then under construction to present a solution that seemed to be both different and more developed than that of the Beijing Urban Engineering Design and Research Institute. CITIC Construction also partnered up with the China Academy of Urban Planning and Design (CAUPD). A team of planners visited Luanda in late 2010 and in early 2011 CAUPD "teamed up with scholars, urban planners, architects and CITIC Construction, as well as officials and experts of various professions in Angola" to conduct a series of urban development and urban design studies for the Luanda metropolitan region and especially for slum upgrading in what then was the Kilamba Kiaxi municipality. See Jiang Feng, "Urban Planning from a Microscopic Perspective to Macro-Scaled Coordination," Presentation at the Pro-Poor Urban Development: China and Africa Workshop, Nairobi, July 30, 2012. Available on Africa-China Initiative website, under Resources. Accessed March 26, 2015.

[190] This is attested by Google Earth imagery from May 2008.

by November 2008 about half of the prioritized development areas were covered by refined architectural solutions (see Fig. 3.14, below).[191]
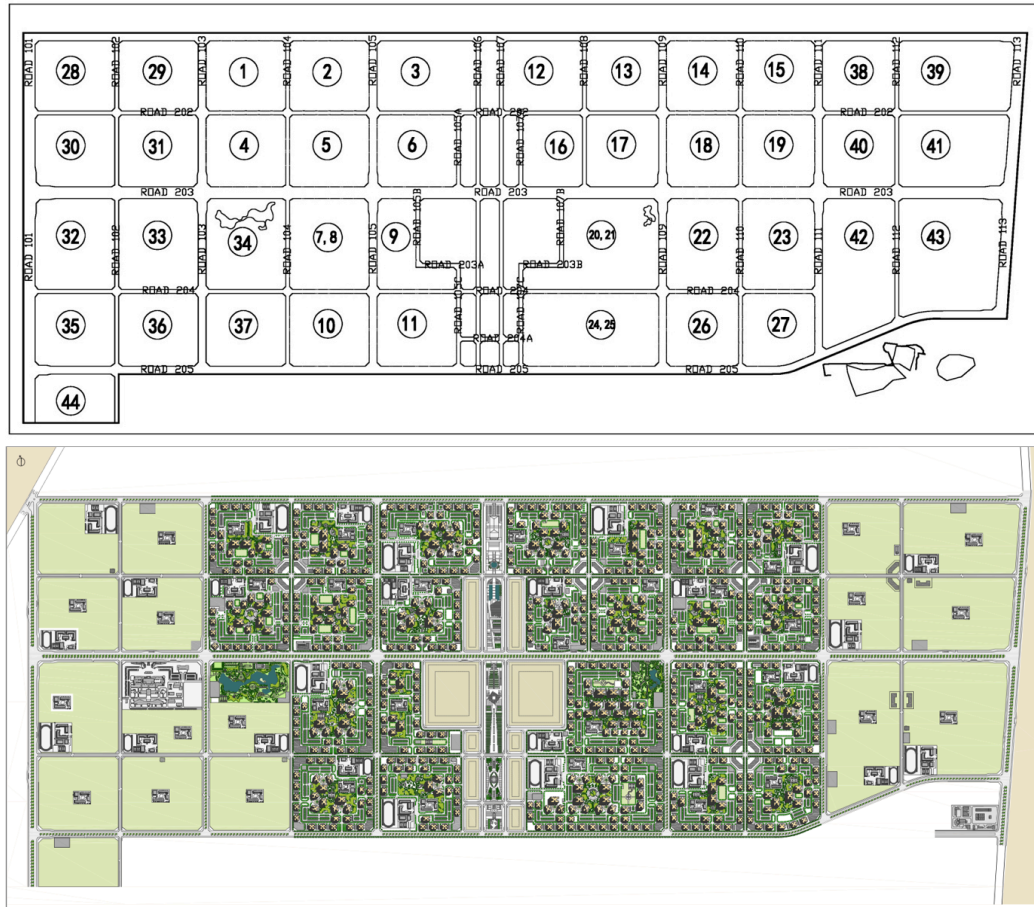

Fig. 3.12 Plans for Cidade do Kilamba, Phase One.
Top: in BUEDRI and CITIC International Contracting, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I";
Bottom: As-built or as constructed (record drawings) TPF Planege: Planta Geral do Plano de Urbanização.

In what concerns the particular design chosen for phase one, the planning area was roughly shaped in a 2 by 4.5 kilometers gridded rectangle. Following the most basic precepts of modernist architecture, the orthogonal grid of the plan is functionally and morphologically segregated. The main artery of the city is an 8-lane boulevard running east and west to split the intervention area longitudinally in two. This intersects, in the middle of the rectangle, with the core ordering component of Cidade do Kilamba. The central corridor park runs north and south and is lined up with ten different parcels "reserved for private investment," one of which was at one point earmarked for a Pierson Capital development ostensibly – and, I must say, somewhat mind-bogglingly – planned for a 5-star hotel, a 30,000 square meters shopping mall, five luxury apartment towers and a 215 meters high office building.[192] Spreading in all four quadrants

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[191] In BUEDRI and CITIC International Contracting, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I," Presentation Slides, November 28, 2008.

[192] The earmarked parcel is one of the two largest on the plan, a 10 hectares plot located east of the central park. Evidence of this idea can be found on Pierson Capital Group website, under Achievements. Accessed March 23, 2014. There, the initiative is presented as a "landmark commercial development." On site (see Fig. 3.13) it is professedly bound to be "the largest and most modern housing estate in Africa." On one of my 2012 visits to Kilamba's construction site, when I was shown the model of the

created by these two strong perpendicular axes, 41 large residential blocks organize housing types in two different morphological categories: apartment buildings on the 24 parcels closer to the central corridor park and single-family houses on those nearer the edges of the rectangular planning area.[193] The high-rises, as we know already, were prioritized and 710 of them were built in about four years, but the original plan for phase one also includes 6,666 "private villas."[194] In terms of circulation, another crucial aspect of *The City of Tomorrow*, three categories of thoroughfares define the orthogonal grid. "Primary avenues" such as the boulevard mentioned above hold 4 traffic lanes on each side of an 11 meters median strip. "Secondary streets," as they are called, hold 4 lanes of traffic and 7 meters median. Finally, "tertiary streets" are 2 lanes wide with parallel parking spaces on both sides.[195]

Fig. 3.13 Reserved Areas for Private Investment and Pierson Capital Development Proposal
Photos taken by author on March 5, 2012.

But it is not just the overall shape of Cidade do Kilamba that follows Corbusian principles. The internal order of each block is also notably organized according to the dictates of *The Athens Charter*. With standardized buildings of four different heights and uniform apartment models within each of them, all buildings are detached from each other and most blocks contain high-rises of all four sizes. While irregularly arranged within each parcel, the general rule is that the higher ones are located in the most interior areas and lower buildings are distributed towards the edges. In between them parking areas as well as gardens and collective facilities occupy a continuously open space. This means that in each block the thirteen floors high-rises tend to congregate at the center while the five-story apartment buildings are located along the limiting

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entire phase one, some of the ten reserved areas were attributed to a different entity. In addition to Africasia, which is the company under which Pierson Capital is registered in Angola, four other companies and a ministry were designated: CITIC (in the second 10 hectares plot), Sonangol, Unitel, Portmill/Movicel and MINUHA (Ministério do Urbanismo e Habitação).

[193] To be sure, as the top image on Fig. 3.12 shows, the grid was numbered up to 44, but there were only 41 blocks since three are given two numbers. For the same reason, on that very same image, the blocks for apartment buildings are all of those up to 27.

[194] As I have said above, this was not always mentioned in was not always mentioned in reports about the project, but there is evidence of it in BUEDRI's documentation. In there, where architectural and urban models are presented, it is said that there will be single-family houses of three different sizes: 133 will have 1200 square meters, 200 will have 900 and all other 6333 will be 450 square meters. In BUEDRI and CITIC/IC, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I," Brochure, n.d.

[195] In BUEDRI and CITIC International Contracting, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I," Presentation Slides, November 28, 2008.

avenues. All 24 parcels are equipped with a kindergarten, 9 of them have primary schools and 8 other secondary schools.

Buildings		Apartments			
# Floors	Total # 710	Type	Area (m^2)	# Bedrooms	Total # 20,002
5	123[*] + 301	T3A	110	3	8234
9	160	T3B	120	3+1	5760
11	68	T3+1	120	3+1	2992
13	58	T5	150	4+1	3016

Table 3.3. Building and Apartment Types in Cidade do Kilamba, Phase One
From BUEDRI and CITIC/IC, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I"

Fig. 3.14 Drawings for Cidade do Kilamba.
In BUEDRI and CITIC International Contracting, "Projecto de Habitação Social de Kilamba Kiaxi, Fase I.";
Bottom Right: Drawing by Beijing Urban Construction Group, August 2008.

This was, in multiple ways, an unprecedented initiative. If nothing else, for the fact that it was proving to be more than speculative reverie. Through the weaves and turns of the Angolan oil complex, Cidade do Kilamba was not locked in glittering tridimensional imagery and aspirational billboards. It was charted in execution drawings and detailed architectural blueprints, and it was actually emerging out of the ground. But as extraordinary as this might have been deemed, the GRN's plans for Cidade do Kilamba and the other new centralities around Luanda were only a drop in the Government's housing and urban development pledges at the time.

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It was in the run-up to the September 2008 legislative elections, as Luanda was selected to host the celebrations for World Habitat Day in October, that perhaps the most striking figure of the Angolan Government's post-war modernization efforts came on the scene. The objective now was to go well beyond the GRN's goal of building 215 thousand housing units. As UN officials were told in July, after announcing their decision to bring World Habitat Day's observance to Angola, the aim was "to build 1 million houses" over the following five years.[196] That became one of the key campaign promises made by the MPLA,[197] as well as a motive for a number of legislative initiatives of its incumbent administration. On July 30, for example, one month before the construction of Cidade do Kilamba officially began, the Council of Ministers identified over 126 thousand hectares of land reserves in all provinces of the country.[198] In the aftermath of the MPLA's 82% electoral landslide, soon after reaffirming his Government's commitment "to mobilize more than $50 billion" for the promised one million housing units in his speech for World Habitat Day,[199] President dos Santos created a Working Group to elaborate an Executive Housing Program. Established in early November, when the first few high-rises in Kilamba had already been built, this was to be jointly coordinated by the Minister of Urbanism and Housing and – of course – the Director of the GRN.[200] Their efforts led to the approval of the National Program for Housing and Urbanism in March 2009 and the subsequent creation of a commission for its implementation, a body that was now under the direct responsibility of the Prime Minister

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[196] Multiple news reports suggest that the first public allusion to this objective was made by José Eduardo dos Santos during an MPLA event in May 2008. In any case, when in July 2008 it was announced that the celebrations for World Habitat Day would be held in Luanda, the Minister of Urbanism and Environment commented that "the Government planned to build 1 million new homes over the next five years, with work set to start [that] year on the construction this year of 250,000 homes." In "Angola to Host Global Celebration of World Habitat Day 2008," *UN-Habitat News,* July 18, 2008. Accessed Marc 30, 2015. For a more thorough analysis of the "1 million houses" program see Croese "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," and "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction."

[197] See, for example, "Vota no MPLA 'por mais um milhão de casas'," YouTube video, MPLA, September 2, 2008, 5:02, posted by *Club-K Angola*, September 13, 2011, 0:50. Accessed March 31, 2015.

[198] *Decretos n° 80 to 112/08 of September 26, 2008. Of these 126,000 hectares, about 2,500 were to be used by the GRN and the remainder was to be kept under the responsibility of the respective Provincial Governments. In Luanda, where the GRN had already been given control over large extents of land (see Table 3.2, above), more than 34 thousand hectares were at this point assigned to the Provincial Government of Luanda, including over 20,000 in the area surrounding the Nova Cidade do Cacuaco land reserve mentioned above (this was called Luanda Norte Land Reserve) and over 10,000 north of the Nova Cidade de Luanda (this was called Kikuxi-Sapú-Benfica Land Reserve). For a map summing up all of Luanda's Land Reserves see Instituto Geográfico e Cadastral de Angola, "Mapa de Reservas Fundiárias da Província de Luanda," *n.d.*, in Croese, "Post-war state-led development at work in Angola: The Zango housing project in Luanda as a case study," 204.

[199] The figure was calculated by José Eduardo dos Santos in his response to the UN Habitat's Executive Director speech on World Habitat Day by: "if we calculate, conservatively, a cost of $50,000 per housing unit, the total budget [of the program to build one million houses] will be around $50 billion." In José Eduardo dos Santos, "Discurso do Presidente da República sobre o Dia Mundial do Habitat," *Angola Press*, October 7, 2008. Accessed March 31, 2015. It is, of course, noteworthy to consider this calculation in relation to what were at that point the agreed upon numbers for Cidade do Kilamba, which at the time was typically referred to as a "social housing project." Even if the $3.534 contract with CITIC Construction was signed for 26,666 houses (20,000 apartments plus 6,666 single family houses), the average cost of each Kilamba house amounts to more than $130,000 per house. For UN Habitat's account of Word Habitat Day see "Lessons, good and bad shared on World Habitat Day," UN Information Center in Nairobi, October 6, 2008. Accessed March 30, 2015.

[200] *Despacho n° 27/08 of November 8, 2008. I found evidence that the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment and the GRN had been drafting this Executive Program since early 2008. In fact, it seems to have been during its elaboration that the housing deficit was estimated "in the order of 1,100,000 units" by 2012. In Ministério do Urbanismo e Ambiente, "Programa Habitacional Executivo 2008/2012," DRAFT, República de Angola, n.d., 1-15, 2.

but in which the two top officials remained as joint assistant coordinators.[201] By then Cidade do Kilamba already had twenty buildings up and an additional 200 were in the making.[202]

Quickly after this institutional infrastructure was formally created, one of the first initiatives organized under the auspices of the new program was the National Conference on Housing. Held in Luanda on April 13, a week after the construction of yet another GRN new city project was officially launched in the remote and diamond-rich province of Lunda Norte,[203] the event for 700 "specialists" was opened by President dos Santos. His speech, like the convention as a whole, was underpinned by the "objective of building one million houses in four years."[204] It turns out, however, that the Government only intended to build 115 thousand of those. A couple of weeks before the conference, during a visit to Huambo, Minister of Urbanism and Environment Sita José had already hinted at this when he explained that part of the program would include providing families with access to infrastructured and properly subdivided land plots.[205] The bulk of the one million houses – 685 thousand, to be precise[206] – were to be actually built by the occupants themselves.[207] Under the "directed autoconstruction" subprogram, the Government would make both land and construction materials available at affordable prices while providing standardized projects and technical support for their implementation.[208]

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[201] *Resolução nº 20/09* of March 11, 2009 and *Despacho nº 9/09* of March 31, 2009. In addition to these three coordinators, the National Commission for the Implementation of the National Program for Housing and Urbanism integrated ten other Government Ministers as well as the Secretary of the Council of Ministers, two Secretaries of State as well as the Economic advisors of the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister. In addition to this national body, Provincial Commissions were also constituted as well as a Central Coordination Technical Execution Group and a Technical Group for the program's Financing Mechanism. See also *Despacho nº 7/09* of May 14, 2009.

[202] These numbers are according to Carine Kiala who in March 2009 wrote a Policy Watch note for the Stellenbosch University's Center for Chinese Studies. See Carine Kiala, "China Construction in Angola: CITIC and the Kilamba Kiaxi Housing Project," *The China Monitor*, March 2009, 7-9. Regardless of these numbers' precision, the pace of Kilamba's construction in face of many logistical difficulties has been revered upon in and outside Angola. Suspicious as they might be, Pierson Capital hails the "about 4 years" time in which the project was delivered as "a world record." See Pierson Capital Group website, under Achievements. Accessed March 23, 2014.

[203] See "Ministro da Economia lança pedra para projecto de Urbanização do Dundo," *Angola Press,* April 4, 2009. Accessed March 23, 2014. For more on Nova Cidade do Dundo see Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, *Magnificent and Beggar Land: Angola Since the Civil War* (London: Hurst and Company, 2015), 67-70.

[204] "Presidente angolano considera habitação principal problema," *Agência Lusa*, April 13, 2009. Accessed March 31, 2015. For various news reports on this conference see CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, April 2009), 49-55.

[205] According to press reports, the Minister's wanted to mobilize the private sector to participate in the National Program for Housing and Urbanism. As it was explained during this visit, two subsystems had been created. One that was going to provide low and medium income families with access to infrastructured and properly subdivided land plots and a second one under which the private sector would build housing for medium-high and high income households. See "Urbanismo quer parceria privada para o programa habitacional," *Angola Press*, March 22, 2009. Accessed April 1, 2015. In the end, as explained in a note below, there would be seven different subprograms.

[206] The break down of the numbers was the following: of the 1 million houses, 115 thousand would be under the responsibility of the public sector, 120 thousand would rely on private initiative, 80 thousand would be built by cooperatives and all the rest (685 thousand) would be self-built.

[207] Despite of all the talk about the conference and the one million houses objective, there seems to have been very few reports on these numbers. The state-owned *Jornal de Economia e Finanças* appears to have been the only news source to break down the numbers around that time. See "Construção cresce em proporção indirecta à população," *Jornal de Economia e Finanças*, April 14, 2009, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, April 2009), 54.

[208] On July 29, 2008 the Government "adopted the conclusions and recommendations of the National Conference on Housing" during a Council of Ministers meeting – see *Resolução nº 77/09* of September 7, 2009 – and added an "annex" in which it briefly

The standard justification for this downsizing of ambitions involved blaming it on the global economic meltdown. Sita José himself had said it in Huambo. It were the then "current conditions of the Angolan economy,"[209] which of course had been affected by the major slump in oil prices in the second half of 2008, that led the Government too look for "strategic partnerships" with the private sector in order to achieve the aims of the National Program for Housing and Urbanism. In fact, as it has been pointed out in the literature,[210] despite dos Santos' early commitment to mobilize $50 billion for the program, this had been approved without even a provisional budget in place and the sharply declining oil revenues were an obvious impediment to its sustained development.[211] Nevertheless, the construction of Kilamba kept going at pace.

In October, as we have seen above already, the ICBC provided $2.5 billion for the project and by January 2010 the building works were reported to be "advancing very rapidly."[212] As anyone used to drive through the then partially inaugurated outer ring expressway would be able to certify, a vast forest of high-rises had been emerging swiftly at sight distance.[213] And when on March 22 the Chairman of CITIC Group was received in the Presidential Palace the press announced that the construction of Cidade to Kilamba had been progressing faster than originally planned. Inviting all Angolan authorities to visit the construction site, Kong Dan is reported to have said that more than 80% of the project had already been accomplished.[214] But when on April 9 a large entourage of top government officials led by President dos Santos took up on that invitation, it was officially admitted that a series of constraints had caused delays. Nevertheless and even if the time frame for phase one was moved to April 2012, *Jornal de Angola* guaranteed that the first families would be moving in not more than four months later, when the first 3,200

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laid out the different subprograms of the National Program for Housing and Urbanism. There were seven different, albeit potentially overlapping, subprograms, but the "directed autoconstruction subprogram," or *subprograma de autoconstrução dirigida*, was by far the one that would reach more people. Confirming the information that had emerged before, "685,000 families in urban and rural zones" were to benefit from it. Also, on that very same meeting the Council of Ministers approved the $148 million *Nossa Casa* (Our Home) project, an initiative intended to provide affordable constructions materials for this subprogram. See *Resolução nº 76/09* of September 7, 2009. See also Croese "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," 21.

[209] In "Urbanismo quer parceria privada para o programa habitacional," *Angola Press*, March 22, 2009. Accessed April 1, 2015.

[210] As Croese points out, *Resolução nº 20/09* of March 11, 2009, the resolution under which the program was approved, made it very clear by calling for the Ministries of Economy and Finance to support the conclusion of a Provisional Budget as well as a Financing Mechanism for the program, something that had also been one of the major preoccupation of the National Conference on Housing. See Croese, "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," 21; and Croese, "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 132-133.

[211] Again, as Croese points out, "by the beginning of 2009, the impact of the lower prices hit the treasury will full force, leaving the government suddenly scrambling for money." Amongst its "active search for new sources of funding," she continues, they "even reach[ed] out to the IMF resulting in a $1.4 billion stand-by agreement to restore macroeconomic balances and rebuild international reserves." In Croese, "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 132-133. On "just how bad things really were," see Croese, "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," 21.

[212] Madalena José, "Nova Cidade Satélite de Luanda cresce a ritmo muito acelerado," *Jornal de Angola*, January 20, 2010. Accessed April 2, 2015.

[213] A GRN official who shared his photos of the evolution of construction site provided illustrative evidence of such emergence during our retrospective conversations.

[214] *Angola Press* and *Jornal de Angola* have slightly different numbers for how much of the project Kong Dan had said to have been achieved. The first says 80% and the second 85. See "Presidente da República analisa construção da Cidade da Camama," *Angola Press*, March 22, 2010. Accessed April 2, 2015; and "Urbanização de habitações sociais está em conclusão no Kilamba Kiaxi," *Jornal de Angola*, March 23, 2010, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, March 2010), 61.

apartments were to be concluded.[215] While it would actually take almost one and a half years for the first residents to arrive and the 80% conclusion rate was most certainly an overstatement, the building works were undoubtedly moving forward. On November 21, when then Vice-President Xi Jinping visited the site and met with representatives of the various companies involved in the project during a 48-hours official visit to the country, CITIC's in-country representatives guaranteed that 115 buildings and a total of 3,500 apartments were ready to be delivered.[216]

The Re-Oiling of the New Centralities and their *Ex Post Facto* Legalization

Notwithstanding the advancements in Cidade do Kilamba, 2010 was a momentous year for the GRN and the institutional architecture of the new centralities program. It all started, in fact, with the adoption of a new constitution and the reinforcement of the President's executive powers.[217] Coming into force in early 2010,[218] this had almost immediate consequences for the National Program for Housing and Urbanism and associated government bodies. In May, four months after the Constitution was approved, dos Santos made use of its newly acquired authority to restructure both the commission for its implementation and the GRN. The first was downsized and put under his direct responsibility and the second was given an entirely new format.[219] Then, on August 5, in his public communication ahead of the new commission's meeting, the President pledged to reignite the program that had fallen back due to the financial crisis and renewed the Government's commitment "to provide the conditions for Angolan families to realize the dream of home ownership and have access to adequate housing."[220] This was soon followed by his

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[215] "Cidade do Kilamba Kiaxi habitada em Julho," *Jornal de Angola*, April 10, 2010, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, April 2010), 51-52; Albano Inglês, "Nova Cidade do Kilamba terá 20 mil casas até 2012," *TV Zimbo*, April 10, 2010. See also "Presidente da República constata projecto habitacional no Kilamba Kiaxi," *Angola Press*, April 9, 2010. Accessed April 3, 2015.

[216] Garrido Fragoso, "Jinping no Kilamba Kiaxi," *Jornal de Angola*, November 21, 2010. Accessed April 2, 2015. To be sure, while even a brief analysis of Google Earth imagery from June 2010 (the closest date available) casts doubts over the figures reportedly put forward by the Chairman of CITIC Group in March, it can very easily support the number reported by *Jornal de Angola* in November. See also two maps produced by Viegas (maps 8 and 9) on "Luanda, Cidade (im)Previsível? Governação e Transformação Urbana e Habitacional: Paradigmas de Intervenção e Resistência no Novo Milénio," 241 and 243.

[217] This is something that Croese also points out and reflects upon. Her work argues that the birth of what is often called "the Third Republic" was signaled by a number of transformations in the institutional infrastructure of housing development. My own analysis in this section is more focused on Cidade do Kilamba and the new centralities program. See Croese "1 million houses" program see Croese "1 Million Houses? Angola's National Reconstruction and Chinese and Brazilian Engagement," 21-23 and "One Million Houses? Chinese Engagement in Angola's National Reconstruction," 132-134.

[218] The new constitution was approved with the *Lei Constitucional* of February 5, 2010.

[219] See *Despacho Presidencial nº 22/10* of May 12, 2010 and *Decreto Presidencial nº 44/10* of May 7, 2010. The National Commission for the Implementation of the Program for Housing and Urbanism was also downsized to five ministers only, including the heads of two of the three then recently established ministries of state, which had been created to assist the president in exercising his executive power. One of them was General Kopelipa, who in the meantime was replaced by António Teixeira Flor in the GRN. See Decretos Presidenciais nº 2/10 of February 8, 2010 and 23/10 of May 31, 2010. Many interpreted this as a dismissal of Kopelipa that would have had something to do with a supposed investigation into the mismanagement of past Chinese loans – see Rafael Marques de Morais, "The New Imperialism: China in Angola," World Affairs Journal, March/April 2011; accessed April 2, 2015, or Corkin, *Uncovering African Agency*, 133 – but it does not seem clear to me that these transformations represented a great loss in his political power. It is also noteworthy that *Decreto Presidencial nº 44/10* of May 7, 2010 actually creates the GRN again, integrating under one body the structures of the old GRN as well as those of the GOE or Office for Special Works (see Chapter 1).

[220] José Eduardo dos Santos, "Intervenção na reunião da Comissão Nacional de Habitação," *Angola Press*, August 5, 2010. Accessed April 6, 2015. In this speech dos Santos also added that the social housing envisioned by the Angolan Government would be "built in minimally acceptable urbanized areas, with a minimum floor area of 100 square meters" and that "their prices should not exceed the equivalent to $60,000 in Kwanzas."

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announcement that GRN was no longer in charge of the new centralities program. Made during a visit to Kilamba in September, dos Santos explanation was vague.[221] Recognizing the "central and fundamental role" that the agency had played in the national reconstruction effort, he simply said that this decision was part of a "set of measures to transfer all of its responsibilities" to other entities.[222] In the case of the new centralities the entity that would take over was Sonangol Imobiliária e Propriedades, a then recently created subsidiary of the National Oil Company whose original purpose was to manage its real estate holdings.

It was one of SONIP's top officials who clarified it for me, whilst we talked on the seventeenth floor of the Sonangol tower, with a sweeping view of downtown Luanda.[223] The group "owns land and buildings from Cabinda to Cunene" and SONIP was given the task of maximizing the return of all of those immovable assets that are not directly connected to its core activities.[224] The case of the new centralities, however, was different. Mostly, I was told, because it was the product of a higher-up directive. Sonangol had been instructed by the Government to take over the ongoing projects and SONIP, as its real estate arm, assumed the ensuing tasks. There was nothing really unexpected in this, my interlocutor assured me. Some years before, not long after the end of the civil war, the oil company had been called upon to "invest" in these projects as way of helping to solve Angola's "blatant housing problem," an excruciating issue that the firm knew all too well.[225] Working closely with the GRN and making use of its vast experience in raising capital in the international financial markets, they were able to secure the necessary investment funds.[226] As such, when the "disaggregation" of the reconstruction agency took place, Sonangol was simply "given back what it owned already." It was then as "proprietor of the buildings" arising all around Luanda as well as in Cabinda and Lunda Norte that SONIP was now looking to recover the investment that had been made. "Naturally," I was told in so many words, this involved "finishing up the ongoing projects, regularizing the new cities and placing them in the market."

It seems, however, that one of SONIP's very first assignments was to scale up the whole initiative and expand on the collaboration with CITIC. On the same month it was publicly announced they were taking over the GRN's housing projects, a $10 billion framework agreement for the development of another 100 thousand units throughout the country was

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[221] "Presidente José Eduardo dos Santos visitou obras no Kilamba Kiaxi," *Angola Press*, September 27, 2010. Accessed April 4, 2015.

[222] Santos Vilola, "Imobiliária da Sonangol gere novas centralidades," *Jornal de Angola*, September 28, 2010. Accessed April 2, 2015. Less than a year later, on August 2011, the GRN would actually be extinguished in the same decree that recovered back the GOE. See *Decreto Presidencial n° 217/11 of August 8, 2011*.

[223] This conversation took place in June 2012, about one year after Cidade do Kilamba's official opening.

[224] This is similar to what *Novo Jornal* reported in July 2010, when SONIP was apparently created. That which had determined the establishment of a real estate subsidiary, according to what *Novo Jornal* found out at the time, was the need to manage the oil company's real estate holdings in "a modern professional basis." See "Sonangol cria imobiliária com estatuto de subsidiária," *Novo Jornal*, July 31, 2010.

[225] After all – the official told me when I asked why would an oil company be dealing with housing development – Sonangol had been trying to address this problem internally since 2000, when it created *Cooperativa Cajueiro*, a housing cooperative for its own employees. "Today," I was assured, "the group still has 10,000 workers without a home." It was then only natural, the official concluded, that Sonangol was given this responsibility.

[226] In this respect, the official guaranteed me that in order to finance the construction of the new centralities Sonangol had gone, as it had always done, to "the financial market to get money." The return on these investments, I was also told, was not dependent on housing sales alone. "We found other mechanisms…" I was explained in rather evasive terms.

reportedly set up with the Chinese firm.[227] While precise evidence on this is somewhat frail, the fact is that before the end of the year, SONIP and CITIC visited at least two different land reserves – in Benguela and Kwanza Norte – in order to assess their conditions and discuss the development new centralities.[228] In the meantime, in what concerns the regularization of what was already well under construction, dos Santos took the matter in his own hands.

Once again making use of his recently acquired constitutional powers,[229] the President leapfrogged through the juridical infrastructure introduced by the 2004 Spatial Planning Law and ruled the legalization of Luanda's new cities by decree. In the case of Cidade do Kilamba this happened through three different presidential edicts issued in early 2011.[230] The first came out in early February and determined the geographical jurisdiction of the new city as well as the territory over which planning and management authority was to be exercised.[231] The second was issued on April 5. Approved by dos Santos one week after he had heard from the vice-presidents of CITIC Group and ICBC that the city was "almost ready,"[232] this decree made the Urbanization Plan for Cidade do Kilamba official.[233] Such *ex post facto* approval is remarkable for two reasons. Not only because the urbanization plan is legally defined as an *ex ante* instrument for regulating land use and establishing rules for urban development, but also due to the fact that its elaboration is foreseen in the Spatial Planning Law as a responsibility of the local administration and its technical services.[234] As we have seen in the previous chapter, this means that the plan in question would have been a duty of IPGUL and the Provincial Government and that it was for

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[227] See Anita Spring and Robert Rolf, "Sub-Saharan Africa Business Environment Report: 2012-2013," University of Florida and University of South Carolina, October 2013. See also CITIC Construction website (under Ongoing Projects; Accessed April 4, 2015), where this September 2010 framework agreement with Sonangol is presented as the beginning of what they called the "Angola RED (Real Estate Development) Project". On this project see, Zhixin Wu, "Build Livable and Affordable Houses in Africa Quicker and Costing Less" and Monica Wang, "Construção Chinesa da Cidade do Kilamba e a Acção Social da CITIC em Angola," Presentation Slides, Development Workshop Debate, Luanda, March 14, 2014. See also Griffin Shea, "Chinese build a new city outside overcrowded Luanda," *Africa Review*, June 15, 2011; and "Grupo Chinês CITIC anuncia construção de 100 mil casas em Angola," *MacauHub*, September 21, 2012. Accessed April 4, 2015.

[228] "PCA da Sonangol Imobiliária visita reservas fundiárias," *Angola Press*, November 4, 2010; "Sonangol inspeciona reserva fundiária para edificação de centralidade urbana," *Angola Press*, December 5, 2010. Accessed April 4, 2015. The RED project would eventually advance in Benguela, but not in Kwanza Norte.

[229] Like it had happened in the restructuring of the commission for the implementation of the housing program described above, all of the presidential decrees issued to legalize Luanda's new cities were made in accordance with articles 120 and 125 of the Constitution. The first is about the President's competences as the holder of the executive power and the second defines the type of acts that he/she can issue to exercise that power.

[230] For Cidade do Cacuaco it would happen in October, through *Decretos Presidenciais nº* 279/11 and 280/11 of October 31, 2011.

[231] *Decreto Presidencial nº* 32/11 of February 9, 2011. As we have seen above already, this area corresponds to the 54 square kilometers encompassed by the three phases planned for Cidade do Kilamba. The *concessão de regime foral* is foreseen in Article 41 of the Spatial Planning Law or *Lei nº* 3/04 of June 25, 2004, and regulated by *Decreto nº* 2/06 of January 23, 2006, Articles 98, 99 and 100.

[232] See "Presidente da República informado sobre obras do Kilamba Kiaxi," *Angola Press*, March 21, 2011. Accessed March 24, 2015; also Kumuênho da Rosa, "Cidade do Kilamba fica pronta no próximo ano," *Jornal de Angola*, March 24, 2011. Accessed March 25, 2014.

[233] *Decreto Presidencial nº* 60/11 of April 5, 2011.

[234] In *Lei nº* 3/04 June 25, 2004 the *plano de urbanização* is defined as a type of "urban plan," which in turn is a kind of "municipal plan." In Articles 31 and 32. On their elaboration see Articles 57 and 50.

the Governor of Luanda to approve it.[235] So much so that the regulation proposal drafted under the GRN's watch by TPF Planege, which was arguably already impaired by both rational and legal incongruity due to having been prepared well after Cidade do Kilamba had began emerging in the periphery of Luanda, was originally intended for the Provincial Government. Under the President's ruling, however, it only served as a mere administrative tool for leading the process of juridical regularization and property registration required for SONIP to be able to sell the apartments.[236] The third presidential decree to shape the juridical status of Cidade do Kilamba was issued on April 18 and determined its administrative organization.[237]

This brings us again to July 11, 2011. Now that the new city was more than just a prominent element in the physical landscape of the Angolan capital, the stage was ready. In his opening speech, which followed the summary of achievements made by the CEO of Sonangol, dos Santos began by placing the project in its wider policy context.[238] Cidade do Kilamba, he made clear to those present as well as the many more that would watch him on TV, was the "the first important step of the Executive in order to meet the right of Angolans to access housing with a minimum of dignity and comfort."[239] Included in "the overall fabric of the city of Luanda," it was "the largest housing project ever built in Angola." But it was more than just that. It was also representative of the particular form of urban development with which the Government was expecting "to solve the housing deficit" and "deal with the constant growth" the Angolan capital had been going through. It was, in other words, a mode of city making which dos Santos found the need to explain. "The development of new centralities," he said awkwardly in professorial fashion, "is the most commonly adopted way of correcting uncontrolled growth in large cities. The city will thus have not only one but several centers offering all the functional conditions for citizens to live their lives without having to frequently travel very far from their place of residence. The creation of Cidade do Kilamba responds, therefore, to the modern way of thinking cities."

The audience of dignitaries and government officials, however, seems to have been much less concerned with the modern character of the new city than it was with the sale price of the apartments. Even though the Government had announced the creation of a regime aimed at stimulating financial institutions to provide mortgage loans and long-term financing as one of the options to purchase property in the new cities of Kilamba and Cacuaco, no precise figures were

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[235] The legislator was seemingly well aware of this problem, for it legitimizes the *Decreto Presidencial nº* 60/11 of April 5, 2011 on the basis of Article 59 of *Lei nº* 3/04. This, however, is odd. For Article 59 simply defines the need for ratification by the Government in order to ensure the conformity of plans with wider norms and policy options.

[236] See *Decreto Presidencial nº* 60/11 of April 5, 2011, Articles 3 and 4.

[237] *Decreto Presidencial nº* 62/11 of April 18, 2011.

[238] José Eduardo dos Santos, "Discurso na inauguração da Cidade do Kilamba," *Angola Press*, July 11, 2011. Accessed March 31, 2015. The speech was widely reproduced in the media and shown in its entirety on the TPA special with which this section begins.

[239] As we have seen above and José Eduardo dos Santos emphasized in his speech "about a dozen centralities or satellite towns of various sizes were projected by the then Office for National Reconstruction (GRN) to be built in phases in the country's eighteen provinces" and four were already being built in Luanda, Bengo, Cabinda e Lunda Norte. Moreover, on that very same day, dos Santos added, "the projects for new centralities in the provinces of Zaire, Malanje, Kuando Kubango, Namibe, Huíla, Benguela e Luanda Sul had been presented to private entrepreneurs in order to invite them to participate in this process."

advanced.[240] The rumor "amongst members of the Executive and not only"[241] was that the apartments in Cidade do Kilamba would range between 100 and 300 thousand American dollars.

RENDA RESOLÚVEL: THE METRICS OF DISTRIBUTION

Once the fanfare was over, the interest extended to the general public. In the days right after the opening ceremony a number of people went over to the new city's administration offices to enquire about what was necessary to access the apartments.[242] Ten days later, a group of youth leaders on a visit to Cidade do Kilamba were said to be "anxiously awaiting" to learn about prices and payment options.[243] The authorities were well aware of such impatience. In a July 27 press conference, one of his thrice-yearly briefings on the Government's performance, Minister of State Carlos Feijó acknowledged the people's concerns and guaranteed that the Executive was working hard to find a solution that would simultaneously allow for the investment to be recovered and ensure the affordability of the houses.[244] That solution was seemingly found around August 19, when SONIP announced that the 3,180 apartments were going to be put on the market a couple of days later.[245] The prices for the different apartments available, it was added, were going to be posted in the offices of Delta Imobiliária, the private real estate company that had been contracted out to manage the selling process.[246] Both in Cidade do Kilamba and in its downtown branch, two or three doors down from the Sonangol headquarters.

When the day came, on August 22, dozens of people started lining up outside both locations well before opening hours.[247] The expectations, it seems, were high. And so was the demand. Even if the offices were to open only for employees of the forty-one public and private entities that had previously filed requests for purchase,[248] there was so much interest that Delta ended up

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[240] Created under the auspices of the National Program for Housing and Urbanism, this regime established a set of "minimum admission criteria." In order to access it, one had not only to be Angolan and living permanently in the country, but also to have a long-term or permanent job contract and not own a house already. See "Criadas regras para a venda das habitações," *Jornal de Angola*, July 12, 2011, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, July 2011), 75.

[241] "Apartamentos na Cidade do Kilamba podem custar até 300 mil dólares," *Novo Jornal*, July 15, 2011, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, July 2011), 78.

[242] "Acesso às casas na Cidade do Kilamba," *Semanário Independente*, July 16, 2011, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, July 2011), 88.

[243] "Jovens aguardam ansiosos pela divulgação de preços," *Jornal de Angola*, July 21, 2011, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, July 2011), 90.

[244] "Executivo cumpre promessas feiras no primeiro trimestre," *Angola Press*, July 27, 2011. Accessed April 15, 2015.

[245] See "Casas do Kilamba são postas à venda," *Jornal de Angola*, August 20, 2011; or "Casas da nova Cidade do Kilamba começam a ser comercializadas segunda-feira." *Angola Press*, August 20, 2011. Accessed April 15, 2015.

[246] Soon after this was announced Delta Imobiliária was subject to Rafael Marques de Morais indictments. According to his investigations the company created in December 2007 was fronted by two officers from the President's Military House and its shareholders were Manuel Vicente, General Kopelipa and his top advisor General Leopoldino Fragoso do Nascimento. "By contracting Delta Imobiliária to sell the apartments in the Kilamba social housing project," he argued, "Sonangol arrogantly and thoroughly broke the laws that are in force. The Law on Administrative Probity defines as 'an act of corruption conducive to illegal enrichment' the receiving of economic advantage as commission in a direct or indirect form, among other acts, through an action 'arising from the duties of a public servant'." Rafael Marques de Morais, "The ill-gotten gains behind the Kilamba housing project," Maka Angola (Blog), September 26, 2013. Accessed April 16, 2015.

[247] See Adalberto Celta and Josina de Carvalho, "Habitações do Kilamba registam muita procura," *Jornal de Angola*, August 23, 2011. Accessed April 15, 2015.

[248] In the announcement made by SONIP on August 19 it was mentioned that 41 different entities, including six different ministries and various state companies had already made requests for purchase. See "Casas do Kilamba são postas à venda,"

accommodating all requests. In the following months, anyone with an Angolan ID and taxpayer identification number would be able to register for buying an apartment. On October 25 SONIP announced that in addition to the 3,180 initial apartments, 35,536 other were about to become available for purchase.[249] But the prices were not quite what people were anticipating (see Table 3.4) and a lot were "disappointed, unhappy and surprised."[250] Not just with how much the houses were selling for but with the available payment methods as well. The more than 70 thousand people that applied for purchasing a house until January 2012 were given one of two options.[251] In order to buy an apartment in Cidade do Kilamba, Delta explained on the FAQs section of its website, one would either pay in cash or get a bank loan to finance it.[252]

Apartments		FFH [1] (monthly payments in $)			Distribution List [2] (monthly pay in AKZ)
Type	**Price** ($)	**Rent-to-Own**	**Condo**	**Total**	
T3A	125,000	527.01	84.32	611.33	63,000
T3B	130,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
T3+1	140,000	590.25	94.44	684.68	68,000
T5	200,000	843.21	134.91	978.12	96,000

Table 3.4. Prices of the first 3,180 apartments available in Cidade do Kilamba

[1] Available only from August 2012, these values were calculated for a principal equal to the price, according to the rules in *Decreto Executivo Conjunto n° 253/12* of August 8, 2012.

[2] On October 13, 2012 a "distribution list" naming 550 people selected to buy a house in Kilamba was published in *Jornal de Angola*. These were the monthly payments listed for the available apartments. 1$ ~100AKZ.

If any of these possibilities would barely endure as a mirage in the imagination of most Luandans, with the cheapest apartments selling at 125 thousand US dollars Cidade do Kilamba was unaffordable even for senior staff at any of the public and private entities that had indicated their interest to SONIP ahead of the sale. Not only were upfront prices prohibitive, banks were also generally unwilling to lend money for real estate acquisition. The fact, as both the National Bank and the Government were certainly well aware,[253] was that the long-term mortgage market

Jornal de Angola, August 20, 2011; or "Casas da nova Cidade do Kilamba começam a ser comercializadas segunda-feira." *Angola Press*, August 20, 2011. Accessed April 15, 2015.

[249] Of these, most of which were still under construction, 16,822 were in Kilamba, 10,002 in Cacuaco, 2,464 in Zango, 2,248 in Km 44 and 4,000 in Capari. See "Inicia a venda de apartamentos na Cidade do Kilamba," *Angola Press*, October 25, 2011. Accessed April 26, 2015.

[250] In Faustino Diogo "Luandanses descontentes com os preços das casas no Kilamba." *Voz da América*, August 24, 2011. Accessed April 15, 2015. Even *Jornal de Angola*, the unashamedly pro-regime newspaper, admitted that some people were disappointed. See Adalberto Celta and Josina de Carvalho, "Habitações do Kilamba registam muita procura," *Jornal de Angola*, August 23, 2011. Accessed April 15, 2015. See also "Inscrição para a Cidade do Kilamba deve ser diversificada," *Angola Press*, August 22, 2011. "Preços desmoralizam jovens Angolanos," *Novo Jornal*, August 26, 2011 and "Kilamba: Preços assustam cidadãos," *O País,* August 26, 2011, both in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, August 2011), 62 and 64.

[251] In early October 2011, the General Manager of Delta, Paulo Cascão, told *Jornal de Angola* that more than 30 thousand people had already registered for buying an apartment. In "Apartamentos postos à venda ainda este mês," *Jornal de Angola*, October 7, 2011. Accessed April 17, 2015. Three months after that, that number had risen up to "more than 70 thousand." In "Kilamba: Aguarda Regulamentação do Regime Geral de Crédito," *O País,* January 6, 2012, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, January 2012), 60.

[252] In Delta Imobiliária website. Accessed February 5, 2013.

[253] In March 2010, Cardno Emerging Markets USA sent two experts to Luanda on a mission on behalf USAID, whose principal counterpart in Angola was the National Bank of Angola, or *Banco Nacional de Angola* (BNA). The resulting report provides an

was practically nonexistent. Despite the apparent neglect with which this issue was treated, the President was quick to respond. On September 30 not only did he create a legal framework that could incentivize the banking sector to provide real estate financing to young professionals,[254] he also enabled the Fundo de Fomento Habitacional (FFH), a housing development fund instituted by the 2007 Law for Housing Development,[255] to establish protocols with financial institutions aimed at generating conditions for expanding the supply of mortgages.[256] But this does not seem to have triggered much change as very few of the multiple thousand applications to buy an apartment actually went through Delta's screening system.

In early January 2012, Paulo Cascão, the General of Manager of Delta Imobiliária, lamented the difficulties in developing the mortgage loan market as he the told the press that the families that were about to move in had all paid for the apartments upfront.[257] By the end of the month, after the first 40 apartments were delivered, he once again regretted that only 120 houses had been sold until then.[258] But the problem was not in the prices. In late June, soon before BBC's Louise Redvers visit to Kilamba, the number of apartments Delta had been able to sell had risen up to a mere 210.[259] And yet Cascão continued to argue that the prices were right.[260] "The sales are going slowly," he told Redvers just as he had been arguing in the Angolan press since the beginning of the year, "due to the difficulty in obtaining mortgages."

In order to fix this problem in March 2012 President dos Santos created an "Ad-Hoc Commission specifically aimed at studying and monitoring the Rules for Selling the Houses in the New Centralities."[261] This was led by Manuel Vicente, who had just left Sonangol to become Minister of State and Economic Coordination, and constituted by the Ministers of Finance and Urbanism and Construction as well as representatives from the FFH and SONIP. Three months later, a type of rent-to-own mechanism for the apartments managed by the FFH was created and in early August 2012, a couple of weeks before the general elections, the conditions for calculating the monthly payments for its 3,180 houses were approved.[262] Under this scheme – the

overview of the underdevelopment of real estate financing in Angola. See Cardno Emerging Markets USA, *Review of Real Estate Financing in Angola, with Recommended Actions for the BNA to Meet New Challenges*, USAID Report, April 2010. Around the same time Development Workshop were doing their own studies of the housing finance sector and produced a report for FinMark Trust that arrives at similar conclusions. See Development Workshop, *Access to Housing Finance in Africa: Exploring the Issues (No. 11), Angola*, FinMark Trust, May 2010.

[254] The incentives included the creation state subsidies for mortgage loans given to Angolan citizens under 40. See *Decreto Presidencial nº 259/11* of September 30, 2011.

[255] The Fundo de Fomento Habitacional, or FFH was given a general framework by Chapter IV (Articles 19 to 27) of *Lei nº 3/07* of September 3, 2007 and regulated by *Decreto nº 54/09* of September 28, 2009.

[256] See *Decreto Presidencial nº 76/11* of September 30, 2011.

[257] See "Kilamba: Aguarda Regulamentação do Regime Geral de Crédito," *O País,* January 6, 2012, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, January 2012), 60. See also "Cidade do Kilamba já tem moradores," *Jornal de Angola*, January 17, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2015; and "A imobiliária conta com mais de 70 mil pessoas inscritas," *O Independente,* January 21, 2012, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, January 2012), 67.

[258] See "O estado, de uma forma geral não é um bom gestor," *Novo Jornal,* January 27, 2012, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, January 2012), 69.

[259] See "Centenas de casas foram vendidas no Kilamba," *Jornal de Angola*, June 27, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2015.

[260] See Louise Redvers, "Angola's Chinese-Built Ghost Town," *BBC News*, July 2, 2012. Accessed March 12, 2015.

[261] See *Despacho Presidencial nº 34/12* of March 14, 2012.

[262] See *Decreto Presidencial nº 107/12* of June 7, 2012 and *Decreto Executivo Conjunto nº 253/12* of August 8, 2012.

renda resolúvel regime – the renter-buyer pays a monthly rent to the owner of the house for a pre-agreed period of time and it is only once the last payment is received that the property title is transferred. Implicit in the amount of rent charged is a fixed interest rate. In the case of the FFH houses the payment period was set at 30 years and the interest rate at 3% (see Table 3.4, above).[263]

The elections took place on the last day of August and two weeks later, ten days before 23 years incumbent dos Santos was inaugurated for only the second time in history, the construction works for the first phase of Cidade do Kilamba were officially complete.[264] This was barely covered by the press but it was certainly on the minds of those responsible for it. Said to be concerned with the "low occupancy rate" of the mega-development, it was on November 10 that the reinstated President returned on a "field visit" to Kilamba.[265] Accompanied by an entourage of Government officials led by Manuel Vicente, who had ascended to the Vice-Presidency after the election, he met with Sonangol and SONIP representatives. In his public pronouncement on the occasion of this high rank meeting, Vicente's replacement at Sonangol Francisco Lemos Maria began by informing the press that all of the 20,002 apartments had been concluded. Of those, 4,111 had been dispensed but there were another 9,466 houses ready to be sold. Amongst the ones that had already been distributed, he specified, 96 were purchased through mortgages obtained from different financial institutions, 465 had been paid for up front, and 3,550 were obtain through the *renda resolúvel* system.[266] This represented a definitive improvement over how things stood like a couple of months before, but (almost) everyone was now convinced that the prices had to come down (see Fig. 3.16).[267]

In a set of rather earnest and open statements broadcasted by *Voz da América* a week after the President's visit to Kilamba,[268] Francisco Lemos Maria explained what had made Sonangol change its position. Mirroring what had been said to be José Eduardo dos Santos concerns, the "lack of effective physical occupancy" in Cidade do Kilamba was the National Oil Company's main preoccupation. There were numerous factors that could explain the difficulties in selling the houses, but the key reason for Lemos Maria was the "paucity of household incomes." Regardless of the fact that Angola's GDP per capita was about $5000, he explained, the distribution of

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[263] In addition to this, the renter-buyer would also have to pay a condominium fee of 16% over the value of the rent.

[264] See "PCA do Grupo CITIC na cerimónia de conclusão da Cidade do Kilamba," *Angola Press*, September 17, 2012. Accessed April 24, 2015.

[265] See Kumuênho da Rosa, "Ordenada a redução dos preços das casas," *Jornal de Angola*, November 10, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2015.

[266] In addition to the FFH's 3,180 it then became known that Sonangol had made 3800 houses available to its employees, 2000 of which had been dispensed through the *renda resolúvel* system. See Arão Ndipa, "Angola: 'Projecto Kilamba' continua a gerar controvérsia," *Voz da América*, November 16, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2015.

[267] The day after the cover in Fig. 3.15 was issued, *Jornal de Angola* published a statement by the Minister of Urbanism and Housing, José António da Conceição e Silva in which he denies that the President demanded a reduction in the price of the houses. According to him, what had been found was that, "more than the prices," what inhibited the demand were "the arrangements for accessing and paying" for the houses. In "Executivo prepara mecanismos para o acesso fácil ao Kilamba," *Jornal de Angola,* November 11, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2015. But this, as we will now see, was different from what the CEO of Sonangol would say a couple of days later. See also "Sonangol Imobiliária vai ajustar preços no Kilamba," *O País,* November 16, 2012; and "PR e Ministro do Urbanismo com discursos desencontrados," *Novo Jornal*, November 16, 2012, both in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, November 2012), 71 and 74.

[268] See Arão Ndipa, "Angola: 'Projecto Kilamba' continua a gerar controvérsia," *Voz da América*, November 16, 2012. Accessed April 18, 2015.

wealth was still "very irregular."[269] In other words, the problem was not that the houses were overpriced. The prices averaged 1130$ per square meter, while in downtown Luanda they often went over $5000. The problem was, Lemos Maria argued, that even some of the lowest prices in the market were still too high for the average income of those that most needed the houses.

With this in mind, for SONIP and Sonangol the question became whether or not it was possible to bring down the prices. "If Sonangol foregoes the interest on its loans and SONIP waives all of its profit margin, the prices can be immediately brought down 10%," said Lemos Maria. But this, he argued, would not be enough to appeal to a sufficient number of people. In order for the demand to go up in significant fashion, "the prices had to be reduced in 40 to 50 percent." With houses at 60 to 70 thousand dollars and the generalization of the *renda resolúvel* system, Cidade do Kilamba would be brimming with life. A couple of months later – and seventeen months after the first batch of apartments were made available to the public – the prices came down.

Fig. 3.15 Dos Santos Demands the Reduction of Prices.
Jornal de Angola, November 10, 2012.

It was on the last days of January 2013 that SONIP announced that all five of Luanda's new centralities – Kilamba, Cacuaco, Capari, Km 44 and Zango – would be put on the market. More than 30,000 unsold houses would be offered. From February 1 those interested were to head to Delta's branches in Cidade do Kilamba or to SONIP's own offices in Zango, Cacuaco or Kilamba.[270] In addition to being available for cash payments, the apartments could now be rented as well as bought over fifteen or twenty years through the *renda resolúvel* system.[271] Correspondingly, the price lists now included four different tables for each project and spread through an eight-page

ad that run for several days on *Jornal de Angola*. While the originally intended prices for Cacuaco, Zango, Capari or Km 44 were never divulged, in Kilamba there were price drops of up to 44 percent (see Table 3.5, below).[272]

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[269] This was not, however, a critique of inequality. Lemos Maria saw this irregularity as being "associated with the country's demography" since "the age stratum that needs homes is precisely the stratum that either doesn't have income or has very limited income."

[270] Sonangol Imobiliária e Propriedades, *Comunicado*, January 30, 2013.

[271] The option of renting-to-own over a 20 years period was only available for those younger than 40. Anyone older than that was restricted to the 15 years option.

[272] If calculated on the prices for those who would pay in cash, the reductions were 44% for the T3A, 39% for the T3B, 36% for the T3+1 and 10% for the T5. These, however, are only indicative values. Given that most apartments were acquired via the *renda resolúvel* system, which in this case include implicit interest rates of about 3% in the case of those who are able to make a

This led hordes of people to Kilamba, Zango and Cacuaco. With home ownership now within the reach of middle-level workers with a formal job,[273] the demand was rambunctious. The lines outside Delta and SONIP went on for days.[274] Many slept over in the offices' vicinity in order not to loose their slot in periodically updated name registers. Others paid someone to stand in line for them. There were rumors of bribes being disbursed to jump the queues, accusations of misleading advertising and stories of malaise.[275] There were also complaints about SONIP's demands and calls for the cancellation of the whole process.[276] And, of course, those that were already paying for the FFH houses were not happy with the fact that the apartments were now being sold at much lower prices.[277] Subject to so many grievances, SONIP ended up suspending the sales on February 22.[278] More than 18 thousand houses had been sold by then. There were no more apartments available in Capari, Zango and Km 44 but the sales for the remaining houses in Kilamba and Cacuaco would resume in early March.[279]

Apartments		*Renda Resolúvel* with DP			*Renda Resolúvel*		Rental	
			Monthly Payments		Monthly Payments			
Type	Cash Price	Down Payment	15 years	20 years	15 years	20 years	Monthly Rent	Annual Rent
T3A	70,000	14,000	390	310	550	460	350	4,200
T3B	80,000	16,000	440	360	630	530	400	4,800
T3+1	90,000	18,000	500	400	720	600	450	5,400
T5	180,000	36,000	1,000	800	1,430	1,190	900	10,800

Table 3.5. Final prices in Cidade do Kilamba

Adapted from SONIP, *Tabela de Preços das Habitações das Centralidades*, January 31, 2013. All prices in US Dollars.

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down payment and 5% for those who are not, the effective discount depends on the inflation rate over the years. For example: an impossibly low constant inflation rate of 1% would represent an average discount of about 16%, while a still conservative rate of 5% would yield a reduction of more than 50% in relation to the original prices.

[273] Costumers were asked to bring a copy of their ID cards, a proof of employment, their last pay slip and the their taxpayer identification card. See "Preços do Kilamba reduzem 10% a 44%," *Expansão*, February 15, 2015, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, February 2013), 69. See also Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 565.

[274] See Josina de Carvalho and Alexa Sonhi, "Compradores 'dormem' nas centralidades," *Jornal de Angola*, February 9, 2013, Accessed April 27, 2015. See also "A corrida aos apartamentos das novas centralidades," *O Independente*, February 9, 2013; "Milhares de pessoas lutam pelo Kilamba," *O País*, February 15, 201; and "O Sono começa nas ruas das centralidades," *Diário Global,* February 15, 2013. In CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento:* (Luanda: Development Workshop, February 2013), 61, 64 and 67.

[275] See "Negócios ilícitos na centralidade do Cacuaco," *O País,* February 22, 2013; "Funcionários da DELTA trocam favores por 1500 dólares," *Semanário Factual*, February 23, 2013; "SONIP acusada de fazer publicidade enganosa," *O País*, February 22, 2015; and "Indícios de desmaios e morte no Kilamba," *Folha 8*, February 23, 2013. In CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, February 2013), 81, 83 and 90.

[276] These were mostly connected to the fact that SONIP was asking for the rents to be paid annually, which despite being a common procedure in Luanda was a clear infringement of the law of tenancy. See "AJPD pede cancelamento do processo," *O País*, February 22, 2013 and "SONIP 'mata' comissão," *Novo Jornal*, February 22, 2013, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, February 2013), 78 and 84.

[277] "SONIP e Fundo de Habitação desencontrados," *O País*, February 15, 2013, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, February 2013), 71. The FFH rents ended up being updated in May. See *Decreto Executivo Conjunto nº* 142/13 of May 17, 2013.

[278] "SONIP suspende venda de habitações," *Angola Press*, February 22, 2013. Accessed April 27, 2015.

[279] "SONIP retoma as vendas de residências em Março," *Jornal de Angola*, February 26, 2013, in CEDOC, *Extractos da Imprensa Angolana sobre Questões Sociais e de Desenvolvimento* (Luanda: Development Workshop, February 2013), 97.

But despite all the enthusiasm, the new centralities were still out of reach for the vast majority of Luandans. Regardless of any reductions or the universalization of access, the new prices were still too high for a country where most live on less than $2 a day and the requirement to be formally employed continued to leave the bulk of the population out of the *renda resolúvel* system. In fact, as some have argued,[280] the Government's initiative to build new centralities had steered away state funds from those in most need. For not only were infrastructure investments for these areas being prioritized over the *musseques* where about two thirds of Luandans lived with poor or no access to infrastructure and basic services, they are sitting on all sorts of state subsidies. From the acquisition of land, which was initially undertaken by the GRN at almost no cost, to the support provided by SONIP to those who were able to get access to a house, the new centralities rest on a tremendous subvention given to middle-class families.[281] And nowhere was this more evident than in Kilamba. Planned for $3.5 billion (but now said to have cost $4,2 billion), the sale of apartments for phase one was initially expected to yield $2.8 billion. If after the price reduction all the apartments had been sold cash, the total sum of generated revenues would fall 34% to $1.85 billion. But the losses for the public purse can be even more severe. Dependent on the payment modalities being applied as well as the effective inflation rate, it is reasonable to expect that they will be well north of 50%.[282] But even if the yield stays at only half of what SONIP expected in August 2011, a very rough estimate puts the subsidies indirectly received by the tenant-buyers in Cidade do Kilamba at an average total of more than $70,000 per household.

THE REAL CIRCUITRIES OF AFRICAN URBAN FANTASIES

The main goal of this chapter, however, was not to show that state spending in Angola is subsidizing the middle-class or being skewed towards the supply of particular segments of the market. Nor was it to argue that new city projects are financially unsustainable or prone to deepen urban inequality. These are arguments rehearsed by Vanessa Watson and well corroborated by Allan Cain, whose complementary remarks on Cidade do Kilamba and Angola's development trajectory since the turn of the millennium are further substantiated by the work of scholars such as Ricardo Soares de Oliveira or Marcus Power. Rather than simply adding to the litany of indictments against the Angolan Government's policy choices or the clientelist nature of its actions, the core objective here was to trace part of the material circuitries that underpin the making of Luanda's new centralities. In other words, the point of going through the decade-long story of how Cidade do Kilamba emerged beyond the periphery of Luanda was to pull apart some of the intricate threads through which they were assembled, designed and effectively built over the years. Including, of course, disentangling several of the twists and turns that led to the public bankrolling of middle-class families and their purported "dream of owning a home."[283]

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[280] See Cain, "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 564-567.

[281] Cain says that "the state has been obliged to allocate the bulk of its housing budget to subsidies in order to make projects such as Kilamba affordable to civil servants," in Cain "African Urban Fantasies: Past Lessons and Emerging Realities," 567.

[282] It is difficult to calculate this with precision, but a 5% inflation rate, which despite pronounced drops over the past decade has not yet steadily gone below 7%, would roughly represent average losses of more than 56% in relation to the initially expected yield.

[283] As one hears often in Angola, "*o sonho da casa própria,*"

In addition to contributing for filling in the empirical lacunae that exists in studies of Africa's new plans and forms of urban development, the story of Kilamba also allows us to reconsider and fine-tune some of the propositions with which they have been carried out thus far. Two aspects seem especially relevant. One has to do with the ideas of speculation and fantasy. The other is related to the role of aesthetics.

By conceptualizing these new city plans as speculative fantasies urban scholars and students of African cities have predicated much of their analysis on the idea that these constitute an "ocular ground" of billboards, advertisements and 3D imagery "in which the city seems to appear out of nothing and might well vanish again into nothing."[284] In doing so they typically argue that the chimerical qualities of such images or the remote chances that most have of being implemented do not take away from their significance. In Watson's perspective, for instance, "there is no doubt that the scale and extent of change envisioned in these plans might be sufficient to mobilize shack dwellers, unemployed youth, local informal and formal businesses and the NGO sector at a citywide scale, to effectively counter these interventions."[285] De Boeck goes at it from a more explicitly theoretical perspective. Making sense of how the longing for a better city embodied in those images "unites Kinshasa's powerful and powerless, its Big Men and its *petit peuple*,"[286] he holds Michel Foucault's reflections on "other spaces"[287] in the background when proposing that such longing "offers a new heterotopia, a new space that escapes from the real order of things, its standard forms of classification and accumulation, if only because it conjures up the marvelous through its appeal to the imagination and the oneiric."[288] In the end, he continues, "it is as if it almost doesn't seem to matter whether the new city is physically built on not." Because "the only place where the city can be inhabited and in which it is constantly being build, is in the place of language, in the architecture of words."[289]

Gautam Bhan, who offered a brief reflection on Watson's arguments by thinking through current fantasies in Indian cities, takes up some of these ideas. Borrowing also from Foucault, albeit more openly and from a different text, one of his claims on "the real lives of urban fantasies"[290] is that "even if undone by their own terms, these plans are also ends unto themselves." In the conversation about *Discipline and Punish* and "questions of method"[291] from which he obtains his insight, Foucault points out that dreams, utopias and imaginary productions "aren't abortive schemas for the creation of a reality." Rather, "they induce a whole series of effects in the real (which isn't of course the same a saying that they take the place of the real): they crystalize into institutions, they inform individual behavior, they act as grids for the perception and evaluation of things." Bringing this understanding to the realm of urbanism and the discussion on the images and imaginations of urban fantasies, Bhan argues something very similar to De Boeck. "The conjuring of these images and imaginations alongside their circulation," he says, "shapes

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[284] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 279.

[285] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 230.

[286] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 278.

[287] Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* 16 (1), 1986: 22-27.

[288] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 278.

[289] De Boeck, "Inhabiting Ocular Ground: Kinshasa's Future in the Light of Congo's Spectral Urban Politics," 279.

[290] Gautam Bhan, "The Real Lives of Urban Fantasies" *Environment and Urbanization* 26 (1), 2014: 232-235, 234.

[291] Michel Foucault, "Questions of Method," in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 73-86, 81-82.

urban politics. It claims the space and form of aspirations and futures just as it guides how one thinks about the present."[292]

These are all important arguments. But they overlook the importance of understanding the ways in which these fantasies are coming to be. In fact, they neglect that which was Foucault's first point about the importance of taking dreams, utopias and imaginary productions seriously. That "the elaboration of these schemas corresponds to a whole series of diverse practices and strategies."[293] The objective of this chapter was to contribute for making sense of what those practices and strategies have been in the case of Angola's new centralities. As we have seen, they were far from constituting a whole or unbroken form of city planning. They were informed by modernist design principles, but they did not really establish the totalizing order of Brasília's "blueprint utopia."[294] But even if they evolved across widely dispersed arrangements – structures full of failures, disconnections and uncertain ideals – those practices and strategies have comprised a mode of city making that is deeply entwined in the specific circuitries of Angola's political economy. In particular they were put together and negotiated in the "zone of political and economic calculation"[295] demarcated by oil. This "oil assemblage," as Watts has it, is a vast governable space constituted by "the variety of actors, agents, and processes that give shape to our contemporary iteration of hydrocarbon capitalism." Not just all that surrounds the operations of the oil industry but also actors, agents, and processes across multiple other spheres. In the case of Cidade do Kilamba the oil assemblage extends well into financial transactions in Beijing, the practices of urban planning at the GRN, or the mechanism of *renda resolúvel* deployed by SONIP to rescue the project. Together with a variety of other specific regulations, arrangements and procedures they constitute what Bhan would perhaps call the real *circuitries* of urban fantasies. Which takes us to a second theoretical adjustment in our current understanding of how new forms of urbanism are emerging throughout Africa.

The circuitries through which Cidade do Kilamba loomed imposingly beyond the southern periphery of Luanda were spurred by a number of both material and immaterial flows. Of the different elements circulating through their multi-scalar infrastructures, oil is obviously the most prominent. Many analysts of Chinese interests in Angola would rightfully argue that workers, construction materials or modes of expertise have also been crucial components of those circuitries. Based on the evidence presented above, I would propose that some of the most fundamental pulses running through them have been numbers, spreadsheets and all different sorts of counting tallies.

This would certainly not come as a surprise for those who have studied the types of calculative practices propelled by the abundance of oil,[296] but it is something that the current focus on aesthetic regimes in the burgeoning literature on new city projects in Africa might preclude us from understanding. For, as we have just seen, analysts of urban fantasies have deemed the circulation and forging of urban futures in contemporary African cities as being primarily

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[292] Bhan, "The Real Lives of Urban Fantasies," 234.

[293] Foucault, "Questions of Method," 81.

[294] C.f. James Holston, *The Modernist City: An Anthropological Critique of Brasília* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1989), Chapter 2.

[295] Watts, "A Tale of Two Gulfs: Life, Death, and Dispossession along Two Oil Frontiers," 442.

[296] See, for example, Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*.

composed of images, words and metaphors. In De Boeck's analysis of "spectral Kinshasa," for instance, both official and alternative urban orders are fundamentally built "through an architecture of words."[297] Complementary, Watson performs her own analysis of these new city projects by looking at them as "graphically represented and three-dimensional visions of future cities;"[298] or, as she puts it in a recent and very brief comparison with the new urban utopias of contemporary India, as graphics showing "a city with no poverty and unemployment, where global capital is welcome and can operate without constraint."[299] But the parallel with Indian cities and their identified idioms of "world-city making" might be clouding our perception of how these projects are being put together in Africa. While I certainly cannot assess what is going on all across the continent, in Angola evidence suggests that there is a whole set of planning practices that does not really fall under what Asher Ghertner has called "aesthetic mode of governing."[300]

To be sure, this is not to say that aesthetic criteria do not play a fundamental role in the negotiations of Luanda's urban future. As Claudia Gastrow has shown, "the realm of urban aesthetics is one of the key areas where citizenship is being constituted in contemporary Angola."[301] In the same way, the dreams, delusions and forms of representation identified by Watson or De Boeck are certainly also present all across the city. Be it on billboards and advertisements or on flashy websites and videos. Or even in the very visual space that Cidade do Kilamba came to occupy in the imaginary of progress in Angola. But I would like to suggest that there is something complementary to these aesthetic circulations that needs to be better understood. For I saw more numbers than images weaving through the circuitries of Luanda's new centralities, fewer dreamy metaphors than dull excel sheets. And this has important implications for urban politics. Because if the city is being built through an architecture of numbers,[302] perhaps what we have is less "rule by aesthetics"[303] and more rule by bookkeeping. A calculative regime that converts oil barrels crossing past the Indian Ocean into and tallies of built area all across Angola.

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[297] See De Boeck, "Spectral Kinshasa: Building the City Through an Architecture of Words."

[298] Watson, "African Urban Fantasies: Dreams or Nightmares?" 217.

[299] Watson, "The Allure of 'Smart City' Rhetoric: India and Africa," 37.

[300] In his comment on Watson, Bhan draws a parallel between "Watson's master plans" and the "visions of the 'world-class city'" that were in the basis of Ghertner's analysis. In Bhan, "The Real Lives of Urban Fantasies," 235. See also Asher Ghertner, "Rule by Aesthetics: World Class City-Making in Delhi," in *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, Ed. Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 279-306, 281.

[301] Claudia Gastrow, "Negotiated Settlements: Housing and the Aesthetics of Citizenship in Luanda, Angola" (PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2014).

[302] C.f. De Boeck, "Spectral Kinshasa: Building the City Through an Architecture of Words."

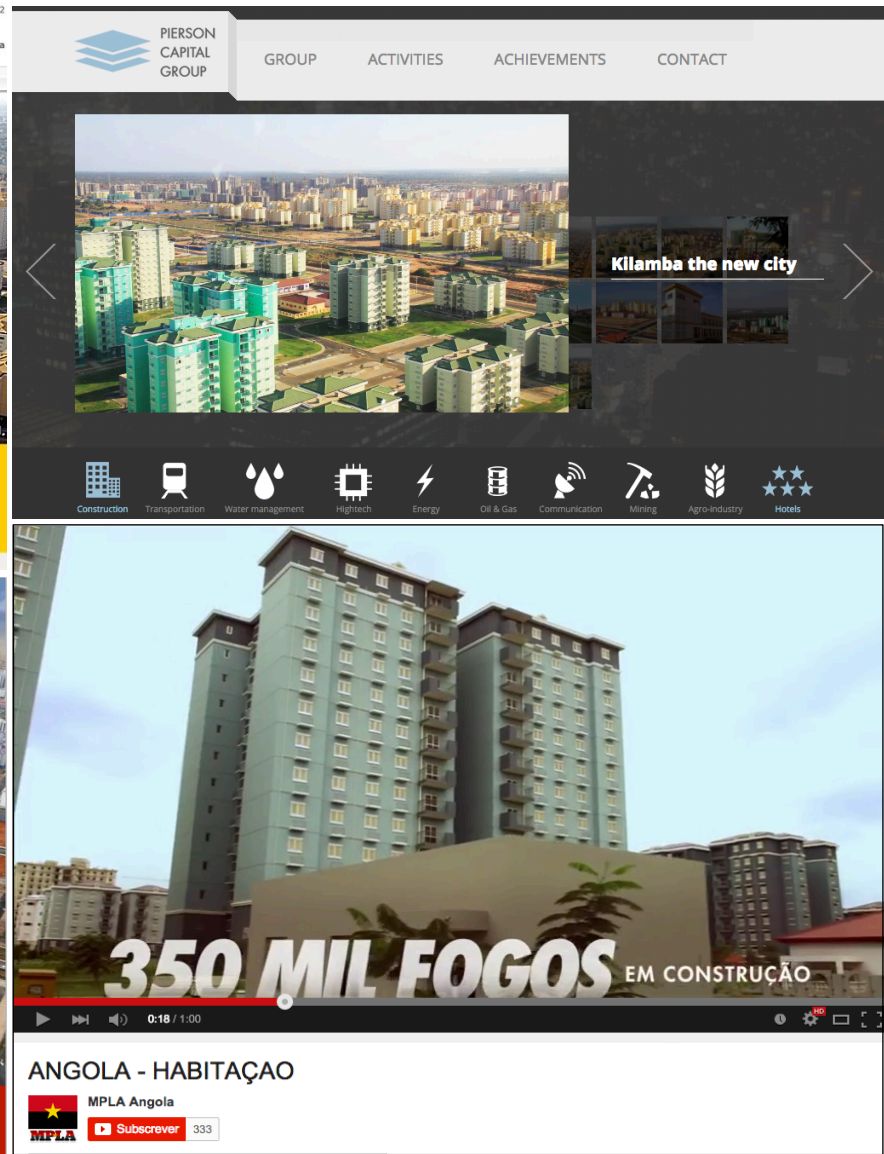[303] Ghertner, "Rule by Aesthetics: World Class City-Making in Delhi."

Fig. 3.16 Cidade do Kilamba as the image of progress in Angola.
Top Left: Sonangol website, Front Page. Accessed May 7, 2012; Top Right: Pierson Capital Group website, under Achievements. Accessed March 23, 2014; Bottom Left: In Zhixin Wu, "Build Livable and Affordable Houses in Africa Quicker and Costing Less," Presentation Slides, African Union for Housing Finance Annual Conference, Cape Town, November 17, 2014; Bottom Right: MPLA, "Angola – Habitação," You Tube video, 1:00, July 6, 2012, min 0:18. Accessed April 3, 2015

OS TRANSPARENTES
FOR THINKING LUANDA (AND THE CITY)

> – ainda me diz qual é a cor desse fogo…
> o Cego falou em direção à mão do miúdo que lhe segurava o corpo pelo braço, os dois num medo de estarem quietos para não serem engolidos pelas enormes línguas de fogo que saíam do chão a perseguir o céu de Luanda
> – se eu soubesse explicar a cor do fogo, mais-velho, eu era um poeta desses de falar poemas
> com voz hipnotizada o VendedorDeConchas acompanhava as tendências da temperatura e guiava o Cego por entre caminhos mais ou menos seguros onde a água jorrante dos canos rebentados fazia corredor para quem se atrevia a circular por entre a selva de labaredas que o vento açoitava
> – te peço, vê você que tens vistas abertas, eu estou sentir na pele, mas quero ainda imaginar na cor desse fogo
>
> Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes* (Alfragide: Caminho, 2012), 11.[1]

Cego, a blind man named after his inability to see, begs VendedorDeConchas (SeashellSeller) to help him. They had first met in a Maianga crosswalk, while waiting for the red light to turn green. Back then the blind man had told VendedorDeConchas he "could hear the sound of salt inside the seashells"[2] he was carrying. Now all he wanted was for the kid to describe what he could not see. "tell me only what is the color of that fire…" Coming "out of the ground to chase the sky," the fire was immense. The two friends were scared. Holding Cego by the arm, VendedorDeConchas tried to follow the "more or less safe paths" that "the water gushing out of the busted pipes" opened through the "wind-whipped jungle" of devouring flames. "i'm asking you, see yourself as your eyes are open, i'm feeling it on the skin, but I still want to imagine in the color of that fire"

Os Transparentes, Ondjaki's latest novel, opens with an enormous conflagration and two persons of different ages – a kid who sells seashells and a blind old man – trying to escape the flames. In the midst of the fire consuming the city they had wandered around together, all the old man desperately wants is for the youngster to answer is query. "tell me only the color of that fire…"

> – mais-velho, qual era mesmo a pergunta?
> a cidade ensanguentada, desde as suas raízes ao alto dos prédios, era forçada a inclinar-se para a morte e as flechas anunciadoras do seu passamento não eram flechas secas mas dados flamejantes que o seu corpo, em urros, acolhia em jeito de destino adivinhado
> e o velho repetiu a sua fala desesperada
> – me diz só a cor desse fogo
>
> Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes* (Alfragide: Caminho, 2012), 12.[3]

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[1] Unless noted otherwise, all quotations in the following paragraph are my own translations from this excerpt.

[2] Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 21.

[3] The quotation in the previous paragraph is my own translation of the last sentence in this excerpt.

The book unfolds mostly in and around an apartment tower in Maianga, a neighborhood in central Luanda. Combining realism and fantasy, with both tragic and whimsical elements, the novel is comprised of various intermingled individual stories. A number of characters lives in the seven-story building, others come by for various reasons, and there are also those whose journeys intertwine with the lives of its residents or more generally with the city. In fact, the apartment tower functions as an entryway for that which constitutes the main character of the novel: Luanda itself. The city is an integral component of every story, but it is perhaps through Odonato' character, who eventually says he loves Luanda to the point of doing anything for her,[4] that its textures and complexions come more vividly to life. He does not really know how to explain it. It is he himself who suggests that his own image can be that of its people. This is what he thinks about when he heads alone to the building's rooftop and he sits there, "feeling the wind and looking at the city."

It was there, on the rooftop's edge, that his wife found him when he first told her that he had stopped eating.[5] "Baba – Odonato took a deep breath, as if inhaling all of Luanda's dust – i've decided that i'm no longer going to eat." She was aware of her husband's worries – his son's recklessness, the lack of employment, and the inability to provide for his family – but she was still caught by surprise. "are you not hungry? don't you want to have lunch?" To which he replied: "– you didn't get it. i'm not going to eat anymore, i'm sick of leftovers and other people's things". Not knowing what to say, Xilisbaba takes a step closer to Odonato. They were now both facing Luanda.

> a cidade era mais simples vista dali. sentia-se menos na pele e nos olhos o peso doloroso dos seus problemas, dos seus dramas

"what is beautiful in this city," she ends up telling him, "are the people. the parties, even the burials". But he does not give in. "we spent many years, Xilisbaba, in search of what is beautiful to endure what is ugly. and i'm not talking about the buildings, the potholes, the busted pipes. it is time we face what is not well."

Os Transparentes paints a picture of today's Luanda as a city at the crossroads of both old and new worlding processes, characterized by profound disparities and by what Ondjaki himself referred to in an interview as "moral deconstruction."[6] The demise of Mrs. Ideology,[7] eulogized by the President as "one of the moral and civic pillars of our nation," is mourned with pomp and ceremony, but the laconic headline in *JornalDeAngola* leaves no room for doubt (or turning back): "Mrs. Ideology is officially dead."

Ondjaki's acute sensibility for Luanda's quotidian experiences put his fictionalized characters right in the midst of the city I myself observed and learned about. I believe I have indeed met many of them. For this dissertation examines a number of structures and processes depicted in *Os Transparentes*. In particular, the occurrences and movements happening at the corporate and

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[4] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 283, where the quotations in this paragraph come from.

[5] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 52-53, where the excerpt and the quotations in this paragraph come from.

[6] See Raquel Ribeiro, "Que fazer enquanto Luanda arde?" *Público*, November 9, 2012.

[7] The commotion around the death of *senhora Ideologia* is described in pages 329-332 and 361-362. In Ondjaki's fabrication, the death of this concept-turned-person is in fact so important that the President ends up "cancelling" an upcoming solar eclipse. The two quotations translated in this sentence are, respectively, from pages 362 and 330.

governmental levels of society in Ondjaki's novel resonate with the stories about the construction of Luanda's official urbanism this dissertation much less eloquently tells.

Take, for instance, the way in which markets are carved out of the concerted efforts of state and private actors. In the novel it is water distribution that is privatized, but Ondjaki could have very well been writing about other burgeoning markets. At one point in his story, DomCristalino, a powerful businessman who had held various positions in the time of "schematic socialism,"[8] says to Ministro, the government minister, in a conversation about the works happening in Luanda's underground: "we cannot run the risk of that piping being public! don't forget, who determines the price of transporting water, determines the price of water"[9] This was soon followed by a ministerial dispatch granting the company ÁguasCristalinas "the right, and the duty, to ensure the installation of a new network of pipes, 'of international quality and recognition', for the transport and supply of drinking water in Luanda."[10] Similarly, in the Luanda of my analysis, the formation of an official market land and real estate happened through Odebrecht's unwavering sense of where profits might lie, its capacity to adapt to evolving historical circumstances and the diligent production of governmental decrees parceling out suitable conditions for its establishment. The making of a new Luanda, much like the city shaped by DomCristalino and Ministro, has therefore been forged out of thick layers of power and history.

I also met Ondjaki's Assessor SantosPrancha, Ministro's advisor, in the offices of many government buildings, just as I encountered inspecting officers DestaVez and DaOutra in various journeys through the daily workings of the Angolan state. The importance of social formalities, the respect for institutional hierarchy, or the deference to authority and legal determinations underlying many of the episodes novelized by Ondjaki[11] are all traits of an urban development framework characterized by regulatory ambiguity and a planning bureaucracy permanently enmeshed in *confusão.*

But perhaps the most evocative parallel between this dissertation and *Os Transparentes* is in the role played by oil. Walking through the city, after selling $100 worth of shells to Ministro's wife, VendedorDeConchas and Cego are just about to cross a busy avenue, when the kid stops to read a huge billboard sign.

> – calma só, estou aqui a ver uma coisa (...) isto está em todo o lado
> – o quê?
> – esta placa. deve ser um serviço novo
> – diz quê?
> – CIPEL
> – cipel? nunca ouvi falar. algum serviço, banco, ou mesmo coisa do Partido?
> – não. é... comissão instaladora do petróleo encontrável em Luanda...

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[8] The expression *socialismo esquemático* is often used in literature and popular language to refer to the brand of Marxism-Leninism that developed in Angola during the 1980s. As Fernando Arenas explains in relation to João Melo's use of the term, the ironic take on MPLA's commitment to central planning at the time puts emphasis on the "bribes, favors, schemes, or connections [that] were essential to get by in daily life at all levels of society." In Fernando Arenas, *Lusophone Africa: Beyond Independence* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), n25p240. Ondjaki uses the expression while introducing DomCristalino on *Os Transparentes*, 165.

[9] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 192.

[10] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 211.

[11] For some of the episodes involving SantosPrancha see Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 97-102, 109-121 or 154-156.

– nunca ouvi falar

– mas Luanda também tem petróleo?

– qual petróleo, você não leu bem?

– então, ali diz petróleo... encontrável... em Luanda. Luanda é aqui

– mas antes não dizia da «comissão»?

– sim, comissão instaladora

– então, até eu que sou cego costumo ouvir notícias na rádio. comissão instaladora é aquela que vai instalando..., e você fica à espera que ela instale

– e não instala?

– instala, só que você não vê a instalação. é uma comissão para alguém se instalar mesmo

– como assim, mais-velho?

– epá, é muito complicado, a esta hora, com a fome, vamos só tentar comer alguma coisa, depois te explico

– isso aqui é sério, você é não está a ver a placa – insistiu o VendedorDeConchas

– você é que não está a ver essa comissão..., um grupo de alguns alguéns que vão se instalar! você é miúdo, você!...

<div align="right">Ondjaki, Os Transparentes (Alfragide: Caminho, 2012), 70-71.</div>

The billboard spelled out the title of what VendedorDeConchas imagined to be a new government service and CIPEL, the Installing Commission for Luanda's Findable Oil, was indeed a new and powerful agency. On the day of its formal establishment, it was the President of the Republic himself who appeared on TV to announce it. In his address to the country,[12] the President asked for the population's patience and availability to collaborate with CIPEL, explaining that the "new phase of 'on shore' and even, he added, 'under city' oil exploration" by them inaugurated was for promoting the wellbeing of both city and country. With its epicenter in Maianga and an operation range covering the entire downtown, CIPEL's excavation and prospecting works provide a sublime subterranean metaphor with which to adorn – if not, enhance – my own arguments in this dissertation. For if in the "crude urban revolution" I describe petroleum as the fundamental enabling substance of Luanda's official urbanism, in *Os Transparentes* oil is the very essence of the city's tectonic transformations. The idea of extracting oil from underneath it is obviously a flight of imagination (or so we must hope), but the concept is as powerful as it is insightful. The image of Luanda sitting on top of an extensive network of tunnels, pipes and heavy machinery for extracting crude oil provides a prescient reminder of how the interweaving arrangements of the oil assemblage might have powerful effects on urban form. This folding together of material and immaterial circuitries can indeed serve not as an anchor for thinking Luanda, but also as a tool for imagining the urban condition.

Os Transparentes, however, takes us well beyond the analytical confines of this dissertation. The more CIPEL dug up the "under city," the less Odonato weighed. At first he had stomachaches, but then the hunger dissipated. When Xilisbaba grabbed his hand to kiss it, after he told of his refusal to eat, she becomes frightened. He, however, had already noticed the condition that afflicted him: "i know, Baba: i'm becoming transparent!"[13] Later, after she felt him disappear

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[12] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 171, where the quotation in this sentence comes from. The terms 'on shore' and 'under city' are used in English in the original.

[13] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 54.

and once again begged for him to eat, Odonato responds: "the truth is even sadder, Baba: we are not transparent because we don't eat… we are transparent because we are poor."[14]

The "transparents," the urban majority made ethereal by the engineering of new business and profit frontiers inside the ground beneath their feet, are neglected in Luanda just as they are shunned away in cities all across an increasingly unequal world. One common mistake made by long-distance observers of contemporary cities is to think that these majorities are not interested or engaged in forging alternative futures for themselves and those around them. In Luanda, at least, this is far from reality. At the moment I am writing these last words in the dissertation, fifteen anti-government activists have been in prison without charge for almost two months. They are part of a small but loud group of young people who have been mobilizing since 2011 against José Eduardo dos Santos long tenure in office. They have gotten used to being observed, beaten and arrested, but one is still struck by the tightening crackdown led by the Angolan government. What, however, is also striking is the unprecedented level of open public condemnation that these arrests have aroused in the Angolan society.[15] But dissent is not a monopoly of the *revus*, as the activists are commonly referred to. In the *musseques*, away from Talatona or Cidade do Kilamba, everyday conversations often turn to the frustrations over the state of the regime or the unfair distribution of resources and opportunity. Grievances are not yelled out, but they are most certainly articulated.

This dissertation offers a detailed analysis of how the "new" Luanda is coming about. Even if the "transparents" are not part of its stories, the processes described under the notion of the "crude urban revolution" help explain their translucence. In that sense, what this study hopes to achieve is an opening up of the debate about modes and forms of official urbanism in Angola and elsewhere. Because a more refined understanding of these can be – I believe – an invaluable contribution for "Luanda, as a city, to think itself,"[16] which is Ondjaki's implied invitation with the apocalyptic conflagration that the oil prospecting ends up provoking in *Os Transparentes.*

In the very last scene, Ondjaki returns to Cego's insistence to learn the color of that fire. "don't let me die without knowing the color of that light…," he implored again over the loudly roaring burning Luanda to the ground. VendedorDeConchas, who had found them refuge in bar, took two water bottles out of the fridge and handed one to Cego. "water?" – the old man cried. "see instead if there is an ice cold beer or even whisky" VendedorDeConchas opens the refrigerator again "without losing sight of the onslaughts of fire" as the "bleeding city was being forced to lean towards death" and Cego repeats softly: "tell me only what is the color of that fire…" To which the kid finally replies: "it is a slowly red, *mais-velho*[17]… that's it: a slowly red…"[18]

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[14] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 203.

[15] In Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes*, 203.

[16] See Justin Pearce, "Angola crackdown fails to silence criticism," *Democracy in Africa*, July 28, 2015. See also *Maka Angola* for a thorough investigation of what has been happening.

[17] *Mais-velho*, which can be translated as "older one," is used in Angola is a term of respect. As Marissa Moorman explains a *mais-velho* "is not necessarily an elder in the sense of someone of a different generation, but a person who is wiser and more experienced." In Marissa Moorman, *Intonations: A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda, Angola, from 1945 to Recent Times* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), xxi.

[18] All quotations in this paragraph are my own translations from the excerpt that follows it.

a cidade transpirava sob uma luz encarniçada, preparando-se para viver na pele e nos corpos oscilantes, uma profunda noite escura, como só o fogo pode ensinar

– mais-velho, qual é mesmo a pergunta?

– a cor desse fogo – o Cego parecia implorar

o VendedorDeConchas sentiu que era falta de respeito não responder

– se eu soubesse explicar a cor do fogo, mais-velho, eu era um poeta

mas, com a voz hipnotizada, o VendedorDeConchas acompanhava as tendências da temperatura, os círculos descontrolados daquela selva de labaredas que o vento açoitava em provocação contínua

– não me deixa morrer sem saber a cor dessa luz

falou o Cego sobre o grito das labaredas que bramiam com força

– mais-velho, estou a esperar uma voz de criança dentro de mim

o VendedorDeConchas levantou-se, abriu a arca que continuava a funcionar, encontrou dentro dela tantos objetos que teve dificuldade em escolher o que agarrar, apanhou num canto duas garrafas de água, passou uma ao Cego

– água? – provou o velho, cuspindo de seguida –, vê lá se não tem masé uma cerveja bem gelada ou mesmo whisky

o VendedorDeConchas voltou a enfiar as mãos sem perder de vista as investidas do fogo, a cidade ensanguentada era forçada a inclinar-se para a morte

– ainda me diz qual é a cor desse fogo

repetiu baixinho

para que VendedorDeConchas, afagando a mão do Cego, pudesse então dizer

– é um vermelho devagarinho, mais-velho... é isso: um vermelho devagarinho...

Ondjaki, *Os Transparentes* (Alfragide: Caminho, 2012), 424-425.

Cover artwork for *Os Transparentes* (Alfragide: Caminho, 2012). *by* António Jorge Gonçalves. In http://www.antoniojorgegoncalves.com.

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