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978-1-107-07964-9 - Political Identity and Conflict in Central Angola, 1975–2002

Justin Pearce

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**POLITICAL IDENTITY AND CONFLICT
IN CENTRAL ANGOLA, 1975–2002**

This book examines the internal politics of the war that divided Angola for more than a quarter-century after independence. In contrast to earlier studies, its emphasis is on Angolan people's relationship to the rival political forces that prevented the development of a united nation. Justin Pearce's argument is based on original interviews with farmers and town dwellers, soldiers and politicians in Central Angola. He uses these to examine the ideologies about nation and state that elites deployed in pursuit of hegemony, and traces how people responded to these efforts at politicisation. The material presented here demonstrates the power of the ideas of state and nation in shaping perceptions of self-interest and determining political loyalty. Yet the book also shows how political allegiances could and did change in response to the experience of military force. In so doing, it brings the Angolan case to the centre of debates on conflict in post-colonial Africa.

Justin Pearce is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge and an associate of St John's College. He has published in journals including *African Affairs* and the *Journal of Southern African Studies*.

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107079649

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First published 2015

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Pearce, Justin, author.

Political identity and conflict in central Angola, 1975–2002 / Justin Pearce.

pages cm. – (African studies series)

ISBN 978-1-107-07964-9

1. Angola – History – Civil War, 1975–2002. 2. Angola – Politics and government – 1975–

3. Political participation – Angola. 4. União Nacional para a Independência Total de

Angola. I. Title. II. Series: African studies series (Cambridge, England)

DT1428.P425 2015

967.304'2–dc23 2015002804

ISBN 978-1-107-07964-9 Hardback

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For Rafael, Fern and Okidi

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A Note on Anonymous Sources

The past is a politically sensitive subject in Angola. With the exception of my interviews with elite public figures, all interviews quoted in this book were conducted on the understanding of anonymity so as to allow interviewees to speak freely without fear of the possible consequences. I have assigned a single pseudonym to each interviewee so as to indicate to the reader when the same interviewee is quoted more than once.

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Acknowledgements

This book is the product of an acquaintanceship with Angola that grew and deepened over the course of a decade. It would not have been possible without a large amount of goodwill from people and munificence from institutions. The bulk of the research was done in the course of my doctoral studies at St Antony's College, University of Oxford, between 2007 and 2011. Oxford Research in the Scholarship and Humanities of Africa (ORISHA) funded my doctoral studies and living expenses, supplemented by an award from the Warden's Bursary Fund at St Antony's. My field research was made possible by grants from St Antony's College and the Norman Chester fund at Oxford. The award of a Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Economic and Social Research Council (grant reference ES/I031456/1), held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, in 2011–2012, made it possible to rework my doctoral research material into the manuscript of this book. In 2011 I was hosted by the National History Center at the annual Seminar on Decolonization in Washington, DC, and the research I did there helped shape Chapter 1. The final stages of editing the book have been completed at the start of my tenure as a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow (research grant number 74978) at the University of Cambridge. While acknowledging how I have benefitted from time spent in three great universities, I also take the opportunity to express my dismay at the policies of the Conservative–Liberal Democrat coalition government in the United Kingdom that have undermined a higher education system built over centuries.

No less important than the funding has been the moral and material support that I have received from many individuals in Angola and elsewhere. Here my first thanks are to Father Daniel Nogueira Chimbungunjo and the Benedictine Community of Huambo for providing me with a home over many months during my field research. Without their help, this project would never even have started, and it could not have continued without the help of many

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others. I gratefully acknowledge the accommodation and help offered to me by the Trappist Community of Soke, Father Alberto Sambundo, Father David Sandambongo, Father Nito Tchatalika, Father Nicolau Costa and Archbishop José de Queirós Alves. Also in Huambo, I enjoyed valuable assistance from the staff of Development Workshop and Acção para o Desenvolvimento Rural e Ambiente (ADRA).

My special gratitude goes to the many people I interviewed, some of whom overcame initial misgivings in order to speak to me, and others who were generous with sharing their memories and reflections from the start. I particularly would like to thank General Peregrino Isidro Wambu Chindondo, Marcolino Moco and Penina Paulino for the amount of time they were prepared to spend talking to me, and for helping me to meet others. Mary Daly shared insights born of long experience in Angola and introduced me to other interviewees whose thoughts and recollections formed a great contribution to my research. Paula Cristina Roque also provided valuable contacts and has been a valued sharer of ideas over the years that we have both studied Angola, as has Lara Pawson.

In developing the ideas presented in this book I have benefitted hugely from the advice, intellectual rigour and friendship of my doctoral supervisors, Jocelyn Alexander and Ricardo Soares de Oliveira. My thesis examiners David Anderson and Christopher Cramer, as well as William Beinart and Gavin Williams, have also been valued sources of support and inspiration over the years during which this book has had its gestation. Gerald Bender and an anonymous reviewer made valuable comments on the manuscript and Nakul Krishna's keen editorial eye greatly improved the quality of the final text. I take this opportunity to honour the memory of Terence Ranger, who died as this book was going to press, and whose work on Zimbabwe made me aware of the kind of questions that could and needed to be asked on Angola.

Others who have helped to shape my thinking are too numerous to name, but you know who you are: my colleagues and students at Oxford, SOAS and Cambridge, and the friendly international network of Angola scholars that has developed over the last few years. Many friends and relations in South Africa and in the United Kingdom were a source of support and stability during a few years when research rendered irrelevant the idea of a fixed abode. Again, more than I can mention by name, but particular thanks are due to Lesley and Lucas Cowling, Stephen Garratt, Ryan Meyer, Devon Curtis, Adam Higazi, Richard Naxton, Pauline and Malcolm Pearce, Anthony Philbrick, Ros Taylor and David Turnbull, as well Lorraine Pratt RSCJ, Ana Margarida Santos and the rest of the community at Norham Gardens in Oxford. Finally, special gratitude to Fern Teodoro for her extraordinary generosity and hospitality and to Rafael Marques for his steadfast support over the years since I first arrived in Angola.