The development of the Angolan political-administrative system from 1975 to the present

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This paper discusses the development of the Angolan political-administrative system since the independence, not so much in terms of its inner working logic which I called post-modern in a recently published work[1], but focusing in one of its specific processes, namely the concentration of political power and administrative centralization paralleled by an increasing 'elitism' in the access to patrimonial benefits and privileges. Such type of processes are common to many other political systems of patrimonial character in sub-Saharan Africa, however, contrary to what is usually referred as the common path, the Angolan case did not reach a point of operative stabilisation but continued unabated towards an extreme. Constructed over two presidential administrations (since the independence) and having survived the end of the Socialist model, such distinctiveness of Angolan patrimonialism runs the risk of perpetuating itself in the supposedly 'new era' of multiparty democracy. This paper is divided in three parts, the first gives a brief analytical framework, the second and the third deal with the administration of Agostinho Neto and Eduardo dos Santos respectively.

I - Analytical Framework

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[1] Vidal, Nuno, 'Modern and Post-Modern Patrimonialism', in Newitt, Malyn with Chabal, Patrick & MacQueen, Norrie, *Community & the State in Lusophone Africa* (London: King's College, 2003), pp. 1-14.

According to a recent, but influential analytical framework developed by Médard, Bayart, Chabal and Daloz[2], in post-independence sub-Saharan African countries, political systems were subjected to a specific patrimonial dynamics, whereby chains of distributive interdependence are forged between rulers and ruled according to micro-identity solidarity lines such as family, region, religion, ethnicity and so on. A growing proportion of public or State's resources were personally appropriated and distributed in order to feed these chains. This type of distributive relationship between rulers and ruled linked the top and the base of the patrimonial pyramid, the centers and peripheries, the urban and the rural areas. The new State was seen as the main mechanism for the allocation of all forms of income, such as from natural resources, the control of production, taxes, permits, loans, the allocation of governmental and other public offices and so on[3]. Thus, after the State had been conquered by a given group or leading alliance of groups, the main task consisted in the creation of a distributive system for these resources that allowed the leading group or alliance to remain in power, satisfying and co-opting potential rivals[4].

The vulnerability of such a system varies from one case to another, but regardless of the regime (civil or military) or political model (Socialist or Capitalist), they all have in common a strategy for concentrating political power and centralising administration in strategic areas (those providing primary access to State's resources) in order to subsequently concentrate and centralise the general distribution of benefits and privileges. This strategy is crucial because if the distributive system is politically scattered and administratively dispersed, the whole patrimonial organization goes into disruption, as the necessary economic

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[2] Reference is made mainly to the following works: Médard, Jean-François, 'The Underdeveloped State in 'Tropical Africa: Political Clientelism or Neo-Patrimonialism?', in Clapham, C., ed., *Private Patronage and Public Power* (London: Frances Pinter, 1982), pp.162-192.; Médard, Jean-François, 'L'État néo-patrimonial en Afrique noire' in Médard, Jean-François (ed.) *États d'Afrique noire* (Paris: Karthala, 1991), pp.323-353; Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa, the politics of the belly* (London: Longman, 1989); Bayart, Jean-François et al., *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (London: James Currey, 1998); Chabal, Patrick, *Power in Africa* (London: Macmillan Press, 1994); Chabal, Patrick and Daloz, Jean-Pascal, *Africa Works* (London: James Currey, 1999).
[3] See Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa* …op. cit. pp.74-83.
[4] See Médard, Jean-François, 'The Underdeveloped State … op. cit. p.163, p.175.

privileges can still be obtained, but without having to depend on hierarchical distribution[5].

Within such strategy, the role of the party in African post-independence patrimonialism is singularly different from partisan patrimonialism studied elsewhere (South East Asia and Southern Europe)[6]. Post-independence African patrimonialism started off by being partisan in nature, soon to become presidential. In most stable patrimonial regimes, patrimonialism is firstly presidential, secondly bureaucratic, and thirdly partisan[7]. Partisan patrimonialism meant that most parties were clientelist, yet faced with decreasing revenues due to the economic crisis of the 70's and 80's, the 'masses' lost a good part of their initial slice of the cake. The natural 'manducatory' or 'predatory' unbalance between ruling elites and ruled masses was aggravated and patrimonialism became relatively 'elitist' [8]. Nevertheless, a certain (minimum) operative level of distribution was maintained in order to keep the system going[9].

Contrary to that interpretation, in the case of Angola the process of power concentration, administrative centralisation and patrimonial 'elitism', did not reach any point of operative stabilisation but continued unabated towards an extreme. The system that was supposed to relate rulers and ruled, link centers and peripheries, urban and rural areas, simply collapsed. It became extremely concentrated at the top, in the hands of a few (the President and a restricted clique) and virtually excluded the majority of the population from any effective political participation. Insofar as it was the political and administrative system that gave

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[5] 'l'État qu'on cherche à implanter presque partout est un État centralisé de type jacobin, et non un État fédéral ou décentralisé. Le cas du Nigeria est là encore atypique'; in Médard, Jean-François (ed.) *États d'Afrique…*op. cit. p.360.

[6] An excellent anthology of studies on patrimonialism and clientelism including political and anthropological science writings is Schmidt, Steffen W. et al, eds., *A Reader in Political Clientelism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); see also Eisenstadt, S.N. and Lemarchand, R., *Political Clientelism, Patronage and Development* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1981); see also Nelson, Joan M., *Access to Power: Politics, and the Urban Poor in Developing Nations*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Scott, James C., 'Corruption, Machine Politics and Political Change', in *American Political Science Review*, 63 (1963), pp.1142–58; Scott, James C., 'Patron–Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia', in *American Political Science Review*, 66 (1972), pp. 91–113.

[7] See Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa …*op. cit. p.167.

[8] See Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa …*op. cit. pp.233-235; also Chabal, Patrick and Daloz, Jean-Pascal, ...op. cit. p.28.

[9] See Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa …*op. cit. p.233; See Bayart, Jean-François, *The State in Africa …*op. cit. p.172; Chabal, Patrick and Daloz, Jean-Pascal, ...op. cit. p.28, p.107.

access to material benefits and privileges, such phenomenon also represented an acute restriction to the resources' channels and the near-total distributive neglect of the population at large. The enclave nature of the main source of revenue - oil - facilitated this phenomenon, allowing the ruling elites to ignore practices of surplus extraction from the productive effort of the general population[10].

Analysing the historical process through which this phenomenon took place in Angola, it is useful to distinguish between two presidential administrations -- Agostinho Neto (1975-1979) and Eduardo dos Santos. Dos Santos' administration can be divided in two - a so-called Socialist phase (1979-1987) and a transition period towards a multiparty democracy and market economy (1987 to the present).

II - Agostinho Neto's Administration

Having managed to defeat the other two movements at the independence (UNITA and FNLA), Agostinho Neto's presidency hinged from the start on a new internal political threat. It started as a political activism pro-MPLA, but went out of control and climaxed with the attempted *coup d'état* on 27th May 1977, led by Nito Alves. Such threat became the perfect excuse to start a double process: on the one hand, a movement of party rectification was launched, whereby rigid processes were set up for party membership, degenerating in the first signs of 'elitism'; on the other hand, a process of strong administrative centralization and power concentration unfurled.

Insofar as the rectification process is concerned, the balance of its first three years was presented at the Party Congress in December 1980 -- by then, it was said, party membership dropped to 31,000 members from the previous 110,000 members in 1977[11]. In an estimated population of 7-8 million in 1980,

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[10] For an overall approach on this subject see Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa: the genesis and development of the Angolan political system, 1961-1987* (London: King's College, 2002), PhD thesis.

[11] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I° Congresso Extraordinário do Partido, realizado em Luanda de 17 a 23 de Dezembro de 1980* (Luanda: Secretariado do Comité Central, 1980), pp.17–18.

the new party members represented circa 0.4% of that population, which was quite small considering that it was a single party system.

The selection criteria of members were said to have strictly followed the orientations established at the 1977 Congress, considering 'the more aware elements of the working class' (usually taken as those capable of studying and quoting the manuals of political instruction distributed by the party). Members of the new party would need a minimum of education and preparation to study and defend socialist principles during the interview set to approve or reject the candidate member. Such educational criteria ended up discriminating the peasants, given their limited education (most of them were illiterate). After the rectification they merely represented 1.9% of that membership[12]. In the words of Lúcio Lara (Party Secretary for Organisation), priority was given to workers in the selection process: they only had to undergo one year's observation, as opposed to the peasants' two years, before becoming members.[13] The 1980, CC report clearly assumed such priority of the working class over peasantry towards membership in the following terms,

> The working class, though small in numbers, is the most suitable for the assimilation of Marxist–Leninism […] its living and working conditions are the guarantee of greater capacity for organisation and discipline in order to follow the scientific and technical progress as well as a higher level of collectivism [...] thus, it is the guiding force of our revolution. The working peasantry, because of their living and working conditions, is not able to lead the struggle. This is because the peasant, as our late Comrade President Agostinho Neto said, is a 'capitalist in the making', because he owns a piece of land and has means of production, and aspires to increase them all the time.[14]

Such criteria simply ignored the fact that 60% of the whole working force worked in agriculture, most of them as peasant farmers and that 74% of the population still lived in rural areas[15]. They became distanced from the party[16].

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[12] In a sample of 49% of the 31.098 party members, there were 49.1% workers (25.9% industrial and 23.2% agricultural—i.e working in State cooperatives); only 1.9% were peasants; 1.6% were intellectuals and technicians; 16.8% employees; 22.5% office workers and 3.4% others. In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I° Congresso Extraordinário...* op. cit...1980, pp.17–18.

[13] Cit. in Wolfers, Michael and Bergerol, Jane, *Angola in the Frontline* (London: Zed Press, 1983) pp.167–168.

[14] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao I° Congresso Extraordinário...* op. cit...1980, p.35.

[15] See Somerville, Keith, *Angola: Politics, Economics and Society*, (London: Frances Pinter, 1986) pp.96–97.

Considering the party as the main provider of benefits and goods and considering the fact that agriculture production abruptly decreased due to the war and the centralized Socialist management, the peasants were now on the margins of patrimonial distribution. The party was showing its first signs of 'elitism'.

As for the administrative centralization and concentration of power, this process unfurled in four main stages:

The first stage goes back to the CC meeting in October 1976. Although this plenary occurs before the attempted coup it is strongly influenced by the *Nitista* threat, which at that time had already been identified and diagnosed as a problem of internal discipline and power dispersal[17].

Accordingly, the meeting revised the constitution[18], concentrating executive and legislative powers in the Presidency at the expense of the government and the Council of Revolution (the supposedly main executive and legislative organs as previously defined by the constitution)[19]. The President was considered the head of government (a role which previously befell the Prime Minister) and was now responsible for nominating and removing from office the provincial commissioners (a previous attribute of the Council of Revolution)[20].

The second stage in this process involved another CC meeting in August 1977, which again altered the constitution. This time, power was given to the President to nominate and remove from office the Prime Minister and other members of the government; previously, this power befell the Council of Revolution[21].

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[16]Implicitly recognizing this phenomenon is *Relatório do Comité Central ao Iº Congresso Extraordinário...* op. cit...1980, p.53; also 'Principais resultados do desenvolvimento económico-social da RPA no triénio 1978-1980' in *Orientações Fundamentais para o Desenvolvimento Económico e Social para o período 1981-1985* (Luanda: Secretariado do Comité Central, 1980), pp.22-23.

[17] For an overall discussion on the *Nitista* attempted coup see Vidal, Nuno, *Post-modern patrimonialism in Africa: the genesis and development of the Angolan political system, 1961-1987* (London: King's College, 2002), Ch. 5, PhD thesis.

[18] Law 71/76 in *Diário da República (DR)*, I, 266 (11 November 1976) whereby articles 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 41, 48 and 50 were re-written.

[19] See articles 35 to 45 of the Constitutional Law, *DR*, I, 1 (11 November 1975).

[20] See article 1 of Law 71/76 in *DR*, I, 266 (11 November 1976).

[21] Law 13/77, *DR*, I, 194 (7 August 1977), whereby articles 32 and 38 of the Constitution were rewritten; these concerned the powers of the President of the Republic and the Council of Revolution, respectively.

The third stage comprised a third constitutional revision approved by the CC in January 1978 and represented once again an important Presidential 'absorption' of powers of the Council of Revolution and the Council of Ministers. Two permanent commissions (presided by Agostinho Neto and with a restricted number of members chosen by him) were created to decide on behalf of those two organs in a day-to-day basis[22]. The Prime Minister was now to be considered no more than a direct collaborator of the President of the Republic[23].

The fourth and final stage occurred at the CC meeting of December 1978. The plenary, once again approved new executive and legislative powers for the President regarding central and local power. This time, the posts of Prime Minister and Vice-Prime Minister were simply abolished, following Neto's argument that this measure would enable him to relate directly with the ministers, with no intermediaries[24]. Provincial commissioners were integrated into the Council of Ministers, therefore giving more regular account of their actions to the President[25].

With these four main stages of administrative centralisation and power concentration, Agostinho Neto was able to run the central and local government directly.

III - Eduardo dos Santos' administration

When taking over the presidency in 1979, Eduardo dos Santos resumed the development of his predecessor's policy in terms of party selectivity (so-called rectification policies), administrative centralization and concentration of power. However, he took these processes to extremes.

Due to party discrimination and centralisation on pair with escalating public expenditure with the war, the lower levels of the social spectrum were

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[22] Arts. 37, 40, 44, 45; Constitutional Law, *DR*, I, 31 (7 February 1978).
[23] Art. 46; Constitutional Law, *DR*, I, 31 (7 February 1978)
[24] Article 'Le pouvoir du président Neto est renforcé par la destitution du premier ministre' in *Le Monde* (12 December 1978); also in Radio Luanda (11 December 1978), cit. in *Summary of World Broadcasts -- SWB* (13 December 1978); also in *Africa Contemporary Record -- ACR*, 12 (1980), p.B668.
[25] See Law 1/79, *DR*, I, 14 (16 January 1979).

being increasingly neglected by the distributive system. This even included those party members at the bottom of the party structure -- party cells. As soon as the early 80's, such type of membership at the base had no special material privileges in relation to other workers who were not party members[26]. The obvious result was the paralysis of party cells activity, especially at the provincial level as first alerted by the CC report to the party congress in 1980. This document alerted to the increased problems of communication between the top and the bases of Party organisational structure, inasmuch as the decisions and directives from the leadership were neither promptly nor efficiently passed down to the bottom, ending up as archive documents with further other use whatsoever. According to the report it was necessary to imbue the cells and the methods used with more dynamism in order to fulfil the party programmes.[27].

Considering the need to mobilise the people towards party programmes (mainly security tasks) the new President allowed the increase of Party membership, but without discarding the selective principles of rectification[28]. A campaign for new members began recruiting in 1983 and its stated objectives were to double membership from 30.000 to 60.000 [29]. However, given the selective criteria imposed, the figures quoted two years later (by the 1985 congress) accounted for just 3.634 new members, far fewer than the 30.000 hoped for[30].

Once again selection criteria kept on favouring the urban and literate against the rural and illiterate. In fact, out of the 628 delegates to the II congress in 1985, only 12 were peasants whereas administrative office-workers numbered 269 (most of them civil servants) [31]. In short, the party had reinforced its 'elitist'

[26] See Wolfers, Michael and Bergerol, Jane, *Angola … op. cit.* p.177.

[27] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao Iº Congresso Extraordinário... op. cit...*1980, p.21.

[28] 'Opening speech of the President to the Congress' in *Relatório do Comité Central ao Iº Congresso Extraordinário... op. cit...*1980, p.5. Later on, during the CC's plenary of December 1982, the situation had not improved in anyway and the plenary 'studied the reasons for the poor functioning of party structures'; in Rádio Nacional de Angola (9 December 1982), cit. in *SWB* (13 December 1982).

[29] This decision was taken during the CC meeting of June 1982; in Radio Nacional de Angola (29 June 1982), cited in *ACR*, 15 (1983), p.B597.

[30] In *Relatório do Comité Central ao II Congresso do Partido, realizado em Luanda de 2 a 10 de Dezembro de 1985* (Luanda: Edição do Secratariado do Comité Central, 1985), p.22–23.

[31] See *Relatório do Comité Central ao IIº Congresso ...op. cit...*1985, pp.22–23; also Somerville, Keith, *Angola … op. cit.* p.105.

and restrictive character[32] and the bases entered in a 'pernicious state of apathy' as recognised by the President[33].

In terms of administrative centralization and power concentration during the Socialist phase of Dos Santos' administration, we can identify two main political steps of that process:

The first step took place at the CC meeting on December 1979. In fact it consisted in the adoption of a measure that had been planned by Neto before his death, concerning the institution of new legislative and administrative organs of so-called *popular power,* especially the National People's Assembly (that was to replace the Council of the Revolution as the supreme legislative organ) and the Provincial People's Assemblies at the local level. Accordingly, the CC amended the Constitution in August 1980 [34].

Doubts on the centralizing character of the new structure were soon dissipated; Eduardo dos Santos was empowered to control and revoke all executive and legislative acts of the new organisations, be it at the central or local level[35]. Moreover, the President of the Republic was constitutionally consecrated the President of the People's Assembly, with enormous powers over that supposedly sovereign organisation. The assembly was to be convened by its President only twice a year and between those sessions its functioning was assumed by a permanent commission to be convened and presided over by Eduardo dos Santos and basically composed of the MPLA's politburo[36]. In practice, the People's Assembly became reduced to a chamber for the ratification of the President's decisions.

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[32] 'Opening speech of the President of the Republic to the Ist National Conference' in *Documentos da Iª Conferência Nacional do MPLA–PT de 14 a 19 de Janeiro* (Luanda: Edição do Secretariado do Comité Central, 1985), pp. 16-17

[33] 'Opening speech of the President to the Ist National Conference' ... op. cit., p.14; see also pp. 13, 15, 16.

[34] Amendment to Constitutional law, *DR*, I, 225 (23 September 1980).

[35] All provincial commissioners were from then on considered as representatives of the President and his government - art.70; previously they only represented the government); see also art.58, para. *i* and *j*.; art.53, para.d; in Amendment to Constitutional Law, *DR,* I, 225 (23 September 1980).

[36] See Arts. 41, 42, 49, 50 in Amendment to Constitutional Law, *DR,* I, 225 (23 September 1980).

With regards to the Party, the President of the Republic began to isolate certain areas of government that were previously under strict Party control, namely foreign economic affairs; to this effect, a new subsidiary organisation — the President of the Republic's Cabinet — was created in April 1980 [37]. According to its statutes, apart from its more mundane functions the cabinet was expected to *'establish, maintain and develop contacts with public or private foreign entities when asked to do so by the President of the Republic'*[38].

The President's intention to dominate the State's business affairs with private and public entities abroad was beginning to appear, allowing him to have autonomous control over the external sources of income (in other words--oil revenues — the main financial support of the Angolan patrimonial system). From then on, there could emerge secret, direct negotiations and autonomous agreements between the presidency (meaning the President and his trustees) and various public and private foreign entities. These activities are only now being uncovered by media outrage, with cases such as the 'Mitterand scandal' and the 'Global Witness Report'[39], but their origin lies in a process of power concentration developed by Dos Santos, since the beginning of his presidency.

The second main step of the centralization process occurred with the CC session in November 1982. Taking advantage of new South African incursions in southern Angola, Eduardo dos Santos demanded from the CC new and sweeping 'emergency powers', including military, without clearly specifying what these powers would be[40], which turned into a veritable political and administrative revolution, taking the power concentration and administrative centralisation to extremes.

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[37] Presidential decree 25–A/80, *DR*, I, 72 (1 April 1980).
[38] Art. 1, in Presidential decree 25–A/80, *DR*, I, 72 (1 April 1980).
[39] On these scandals and activities see for instance *O Independente* (23 July 1999); also *Público* (5 and 6 December 1999), (14 January 2000), (11 April 2000), (30 July 2000), (9 December 2000), (23 December 2000); also *Expresso* (16 December 2000), (8 September 2001); also the reports by *Global Witness* that names several members of the presidential clique involved in networks of arms dealing, missing accounts from oil income to the State and so on: 'A Crude Awakening: the role of the oil and banking industries in Angola's civil war and the plunder of the state assets', a report by *Global Witness*, December 1999; also 'All the Presidents' men', a report by *Global Witness*, March 2002: also 'A Rough Trade: the role of Companies and Governments in the Angolan Conflict', a report by *Global Witness*, December 1998 Editions at [www.oneworld.org/globalwitness/].
[40] See *Africa Research Bulletin - ARB* (December 1982), p.6678, b; also Rádio Nacional de Angola (9 December 1982), cit. in *SWB* (13 December 1982); also *ACR,* vol.15 (1984), p.B598.

A totally new national political, military and administrative structure was created -- the Regional Military Councils (RMC) [41]. The country was divided in a few areas and each area was governed by one of these Councils. They took over the leadership of political, military, economic and social affairs in their respective regions, above and beyond any other governing structure. They were directly answerable to Eduardo dos Santos in his role as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. The President had the power to nominate the Council's authorities; determine the areas of national territory that the councils were to target; 'approve the defining norms for the composition, organisation and competence of the Councils and any other norms demanded by the political and military situation'[42]. In short, these councils could be and do anything that the President wanted them to be or do. The President became almost plenipotentiary with his new emergency powers.

In order to make more agile the management of this new administrative structure a new body of reduced membership was created -- the Council for Defence and Security (CDS)[43]. The new body formed a sort of crisis government directing the Regional and Military Councils. It was chaired by the President of the Republic, comprised a very restricted number of ministers from the defence and economic areas and was given almost unlimited powers and competence[44]. Confirming the previously mentioned tendency, this organ was made responsible for the '*control of all financial dealings with the outside*'[45]. In practice the President was controlling the President in terms of foreign business affairs.

By then the regime had reached the peak of administrative centralization and power concentration; run by President Eduardo dos Santos, exerting in full his functions as President of the Party, Head of State, Head of Government and

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[41] Law 5/83, *DR,* I, 179 (30 July 1983).

[42] Arts. 1, 2, 3, 5 in Law 5/83, *DR,* I, 179 (30 July 1983).

[43] Law 3/84, by the Permanent Commission of the People's Assembly, creating the CDS, *DR*, I, 22 (26 January 1984).

[44] Law 3/84, by the Permanent Commission of the People's Assembly, creating the CDS, *DR*, I, 22 (26 January 1984); see also art.5, no.1 of decree 6/84, *DR*, I, 79 (3 April 1984), approves the regulations of the CDS.

[45] Art.4 of law 3/84, in *DR,* I, 22 (26 January 1984).

Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. This state of affairs lasted until mid-eighties.

From 1987 onwards a different period begins, characterized by the transition to a market economy and a multiparty system. Although officially the Socialist model existed until the Congress of 1990, the year of 1987 is usually chosen to mark the end of Socialism[46]. By then several changes were implemented at the economic and political levels, expressed mainly through the Economic and Financial Clean-up Programme and through the negotiations with South Africa, the US and Cuba. These led rapidly to the change to a market economy and to a multiparty system, with the first elections held in 1991. A new constitutional revision in 1991, undertaken by the MPLA (prior to the elections)[47], simply approved the basic principles of a multiparty democracy and it was assumed that an absolutely new constitution would be negotiated after elections.

As it is commonly known, UNITA did not accept the electoral results and the war resumed. The 1994 Lusaka peace protocol was partially implemented until 1998, when the MPLA decided to suspend it due to the permanent non-fulfilment of UNITA's responsibilities. By then the MPLA opted for a military solution, which came to be achieved in February 2002 with the killing of Savimbi.

Insofar as the analysis of the political and administrative system during this transitional period is concerned, we must distinguish between the pre- and post- 1998 period. In 1997 and during the first semester of 1998, the National Assembly was boiling with effective multiparty political life as never before in the Angolan history. Negotiations and alliances between parties were on top of the agenda. The constitutional revision was the main concern; UNITA, FNLA and other small parties had already agreed to gather their votes (forming 1/3 of the total) in order to oblige the MPLA to negotiate. Discussions on what Angola

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[46] See Messiant, Christine, 'À propos des "transitions démocratiques", notes comparatives et préalables à l'analyse du cas Angolais', in *Africana Studia*, 2 (2000), pp.61–95; also in the same sense is Hodges, Tony, *Angola from Afro-Stalinism to Petro-Diamond Capitalism* (London: James Currey, 2001).

[47] Law 12/91, *DR,* I, 19 (6 May 1991).

should be in terms of political/administrative model spread throughout the whole society, from the media to public conferences and day-to-day street conversation.

By then one could identify two main projects: the MPLA's project on one side and the FNLA and UNITA's project on the other[48].

On the MPLA's side although there was not a final and official position on this matter, one could clearly see the dominance of a so-called 'semi-presidential' project, characterized by its proponents as proximate to the French model, but with only one chamber (the national assembly). Within such structure the President had the central role. The institution of prime-minister was accepted, but more as a day-to-day co-ordinator of the other ministers, promoting and executing the broad lines of policy orientation as defined by the President.

As for the relationship between central and local administration, the model accepted a possible enlargement of governmental autonomy to the provinces (collection of local taxes and definition of an autonomous budget) and to its governing structures. The project also accepted the idea of direct elections to all the regional political structures, except the governor. In fact, this was one of the most sensitive issues. Such position was very prized within the patrimonial hierarchy given its privileged access to State resources. Its importance would naturally increase in a context of peace, being able to manage some of the provinces' natural resources so far unexplored. It is therefore understandable that the MPLA wanted to leave the position of governor out of direct elections.

On the other side of the negotiation were the FNLA and UNITA. Both expressed a strong interest in a system protecting a very enlarged autonomy to the provinces 'something between regionalism and federalism' with all the positions (including the governor) directly elected by the people. These two parties stressed the necessity not only of an effective decentralisation and deconcentration of political powers, but especially the necessity of an autonomous management of resources at the provincial level.

The intention was obviously related with these parties' regional representation (UNITA in the provinces of Huambo, Bié and Benguela; FNLA in

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[48] Based on field research of the author in Angola at that period.

the provinces of Uíge and Zaire)[49]. An enlarged political and economic autonomy would allow them the opportunity to restructure and solidify their implantation in those areas of the country, probably replicating the patrimonial system at the regional level. In the words of the then parliamentary leader of UNITA, Abel Chiwukuwuku, this project was absolutely necessary to 'accommodate competing ambitions between opposing parties and individuals'. The system as it was did not allow the fulfilment of ambitions outside the MPLA and the President's *entourage*. According to this politician, the extreme centralisation and concentration of power with an inherent centralisation of resources' management were fuelling secessionist feelings[50].

At that time UNITA and FNLA were articulating and reinforcing their argument, benefiting from a very favourable context – there was a broad consensus within political parties, private newspapers, international organisations, national and foreign NGO's and even some sectors of the MPLA, all in favour of a significant 'not cosmetic' provincial autonomy. The MPLA seemed to be ready to make important concessions on this matter. It is worth to remember that, by then, Savimbi was still alive and holding large swaths of territory and therefore able to impose some demands on the negotiations.

However, with the sudden suspension of the Lusaka protocol in late 1998, the abandon of UNITA's deputies from the parliament, the renewed war and the recent military defeat and humiliation of UNITA, the whole context was turned over. The new constitutional project was bi-laterally negotiated between the MPLA and UNITA and approved on January this year. The supposedly new model basically consecrated the MPLA's original project (the civil war's winner). According to the approved model the PR is the Head of Government; the provincial governors although suggested by the party most voted in the province are appointed and nominated by the PR; the parliament has one only chamber[51]. In the end the new constitution of the new multiparty peaceful era is nothing

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[49] See electoral results of each party in each province in Marques, Sofia, *Angola: da guerra à democracia,* (Luanda: Edipress/Edições MINDEP, 1993).
[50] From private interview with Abel Chiwukuwuku (Luanda: 28/5/1998).
[51] See *Voz da América News Online* (4 December 2002 and 28 January 2003); also *Angolense* (28 December 2002 and 4 January 2003).

more than the consecration of the old model founded by Neto and developed by Dos Santos in the 80's.

On the other hand, insofar as the political-economic inclusion of the ruled masses is concerned we have not seen any significant change. More than one year after the end of the war, not even a whiff of the peace dividend has materialised. Oil production increased and is now providing the government with an income of 3 to 5 billion $USD/year[52], however, three quarters of the country's 14 million people live on less than a dollar a day and some 2 million are in danger of starvation[53]. Accusations of an almost criminal neglect of the government towards its own people are commonly heard from international organizations working in the field such as CARE International or MSF[54].

Yet the government shows no sign of changing its attitude. Scandals of multi-billion dollar looting from state coffers have been regularly revealed for the last five years at the same time as the State budget for 2003 still affects 26% of public expenses to the Defence in comparison to 7% affected to the education; 7% to health; 5% to Social Security and a ridiculous 0.47% to agriculture[55].

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[52] See article 'Angola should be able to fianace its own postwar rebuilding' by Michael Dynes in *Times online* (24 February 2003).
[53] *The Guardian* (7 February 2003).
[54] *The Guardian* (7 February 2003); *Voz da América News Online* (11 June 2002). It is also worth to note the complaints on party distancing from the masses, presented by provincial party members to Norberto dos Santos 'Kwata Kanawa' (MPLA's secretary for information) during a party meeting in the province of Bengo on the 2nd February 2003; in *ANGOP – Angolan News Agency* (2 February 2003).
[55] Angola's State Budget, in *ANGOP* (22 January 2003).