

'This Neighbourhood is an Endangered Species'

Investigating urban conflict and reciprocity between Chicala and Luanda, Angola



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*para os meus pais
e os meus kambas*

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Foreword

The research compiled in this thesis was undertaken between 2010 and 2016. An MA degree in Cities Design and Urban Cultures, conducted at The Cass School of Architecture in 2008-9, provided the practical and scholarly background for the subsequent doctoral investigation. This springboard for the PhD was largely complemented by the key critical concepts acquired in PhD seminars attended mainly in 2009/11.

The work was made possible by the financial support of a Doctoral Grant (SFRH/BD/63859/2009) from *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* (2010-14). In addition, the Távora Prize and the *Observatório da Chicala* (a research cluster set up in collaboration with the Universidade Agostinho Neto, Angola) provided funding for pursuing fieldwork and purchasing research materials, respectively.

One of the fundamental dimensions of this research is its collaborative nature. The wealth of material emerging from student surveys was significantly useful, and intended to be mutually beneficial. Logistical support including visa applications and travel arrangements was provided by Agência Piaget para o Desenvolvimento, Development Workshop, Iperforma/Soapro and Universidade Agostinho Neto. Notwithstanding, the thesis credits all participants involved (both in the main body and in the Appendices). Despite the enriching contributions of the many people and institutions involved, the responsibility for all content used in the thesis is entirely mine.

I have at all times attempted to maintain the confidentiality of informants. The names of institutions and places are real, but I have used pseudonyms for the names of some people (exceptions are highly public individuals or people whose words were already cited in publically available sources). Generally, Portuguese and Angolan terms are written in italics. In order not to exceed the established word limit (and because I took field notes in a combination of both Portuguese and English), most quotations of primary and literary sources are presented in English.



Abstract

At the heart of this thesis is an investigation of the reciprocal relationship between the city of Luanda and one of its central informal neighbourhoods, Chicala. The study situates Chicala among conflicts that have arisen in the urban densification process and their socio-political management, and in the context of a long history of natural formation. The particular geographical location of Chicala, along with its integrity and specific development, made the neighbourhood vulnerable to colonial invasions, and more recently to aggressive urbanism and large-scale masterplans.

In the context of Luanda's current neoliberal trajectory of urban regeneration following a protracted civil war (1975-2002), Chicala is undergoing a process of demolition and replacement by high-standard real estate developments. The research began shortly before plans for the complete erasure of the neighbourhood were implemented and local authorities and private investors forcefully displaced its inhabitants to remote settlements with unsuitable living conditions.

The thesis aims to write Luanda's urban history afresh by forging a place for the neighbourhood of Chicala and its wider context in the city's urban order. Documentation of the characteristics of a neighbourhood on the brink of disappearing required a collaborative methodological approach, and a reflection of how architects can operate in such complex urban settings. The thesis aims to go beyond a mere exploration of informal architectural order; rather, it is a contribution to understanding Luanda, and to understanding postcolonial cities in general in their depth.

Analysis of a set of relationships between the neighbourhood and the city is presented in a chronology of six chapters. Each chapter emphasises the 'hybrid' nature of Chicala as part of a larger context, both in urban terms (autoconstruction, monuments and neoliberal form-fantasies are addressed as part of an urban continuum) and historically (precolonial, colonial and postcolonial periods are presented as part of an interconnected process).

The thesis concludes with remarks on the collaborative dimension of the research and the practices of 'blurring' it enabled. It is complemented by four Appendices, presenting a portfolio which complements the methodological approach: fieldwork reports, institutional documents based on the collaboration with Agostinho Neto University, and an extensive visual archive produced over the course of the research.

Acknowledgements

Completion of this thesis was only made possible by the support and contribution of many people. It was begun in London and concluded in Porto. Combined with my ties to Luanda, the thesis is the result of a triangle of equidistant relationships of friendship and collaboration which I would like to acknowledge here. In a project of this nature, extended over such a long period and in constant interaction with numerous people and institutions, it is inevitable that many will fail to be mentioned. For this reason, before I continue, I would like to thank all those with whom I crossed paths in my passage through these three places, as well as in my frequent and enriching excursions to other latitudes.

I must acknowledge the institutions that provided the means allowing me to pursue this endeavour. Many thanks to the *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* in Portugal for providing the generous financial support that made all of this possible. At The Cass School of Architecture, London Metropolitan University, I found a number of people whose work and intellectual generosity inspired me and helped me to find my feet. The collaboration with the Department of Architecture, Universidade Agostinho Neto, was invaluable. I thank the jury of the Távora Prize 2012 for the encouraging distinction awarded when I was still but halfway through this journey. I'm also grateful to the various institutions that contributed to my fieldwork in Angola over the years: ACC, APDES, Christian Aid, Development Workshop, INTASA, Iperforma, Omunga, Soapro, SOS Habitat, Universidade Lusíada de Angola and Universidade Metodista de Angola.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Dr Ines Weizman and Prof. Peter Carl for mentoring me and supporting my work at all times, right from the earliest struggles. The thesis presented here was also shaped by insightful advice from Dr Matthew Barac and Prof. Maurice Mitchell. I was fortunate to receive the insightful and challenging comments of Prof. AbdouMaliq Simone and Dr Nabil Ahmed at the Viva Voce examination (external and internal examiners, respectively). I would like to acknowledge Simone Ten-Hompel, Independent Chair of the Viva. I thank Dr. Tiago Castela for his final reading of the thesis. I thank as well other friends and colleagues at the Cass with whom I have learned: Helen Mallison, Patrick Lynch, Jane Clossick, Julia King and Rex Henry, among others. In Angola, the academic rigour of Dr. Isabel Martins paved the way for the creation of The Chicala Observatory and allowed my work to reach a level it would not otherwise have reached. The involvement of several dozen students in this project (to whom I'm most grateful) owes to her great open-mindedness and friendship.

During this period, I met many scholars and professionals whose curiosity and devotion to Angola nurtured this thesis. The "Luanda research gang" included Chloé Bruire, Claudia Gastrow,

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Since I moved back to Porto to write up my thesis quietly away from the bustle of London, additional architectural/cultural projects and commissions have come my way. Meanwhile, my doctoral grant expired, and I decided to open an architecture practice almost incidentally, for financial reasons (I must thank all my private and public clients). Things began to get busier and busier. If I somehow still managed to complete this thesis, it was thanks to a wonderful team of enthusiastic interns and young architects who started to work with me, keeping the various projects running. I truly appreciate the efforts and contributions of Adéla Krížková, Amalia Bonsack, Ambra Migliorisi, Cecilia Mazzeo, Cecilia Tarantino, Charlotte Pigozzi, Chiara Fiorindo, Elena Borghese, Emanuel Falappa, Giacomo Valzania, Hermínio Santos, Ilaria Marcatelli, Joana Venâncio, Lara Ferreira, Letizia Giovannini, María Peña, Mariagiulia Pistonese, Nikolas Debrauwer, Nuno Silva, Olivia Lillus, Radka Domčíková, Sarah Biffa and Susana Ribeiro. Some of the side projects we were working on were exhibitions or publications related to the research (an extensive portfolio of these projects/collaborations can be found in the Appendices). I must also thank the architects, designers, translators and video editors who collaborated with me on these projects: Ana Naomi de Sousa, Carla Ferreira, Eleanor Staniforth, Frederico Magalhães, Mónica Oliveira, João Sousa, Mercês Tomaz Gomes, Parq Arquitectos, Pedro Ferreira, Pedro Lino, Prompt Collective, Robert Chandler, Samuel Buton, Sol Jaumandreu, Tânia Baptista, This is Pacifica and Tyrone Deans.

With so much going on in the studio, I soon realised that the only way I would be able to complete my thesis was to step away from the bustle of Porto. A significant part of the final year of writing up was spent in my family's retreats by the sea side: in a room facing the Atlantic ocean, listening to nothing but the breaking waves, and in the countryside in a room looking out over a green landscape, listening to nothing but birds singing. These seem like idyllic pictures, but it was at times a painful process, and I experienced some of my toughest moments during this period. My sincere gratitude goes to all my family and close friends for always believing in and supporting me. You know who you are.

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Original Drawings/Maps
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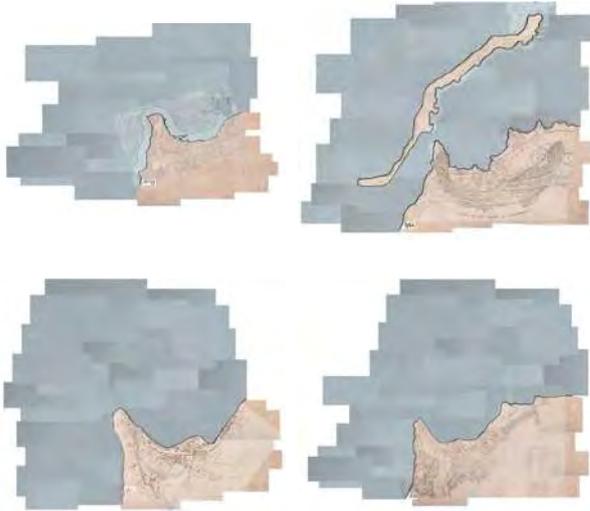


Fig. 34

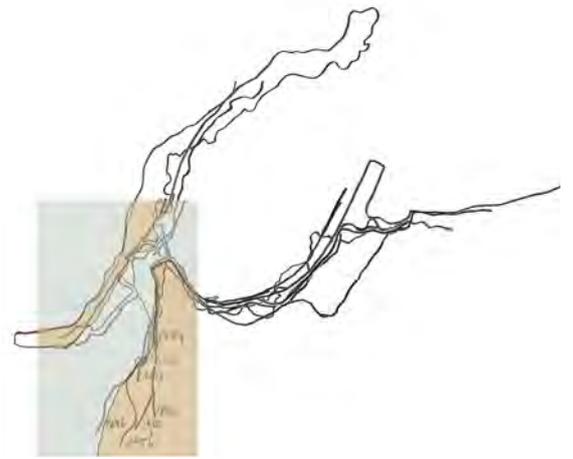


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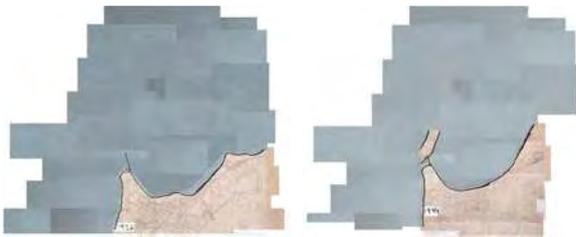


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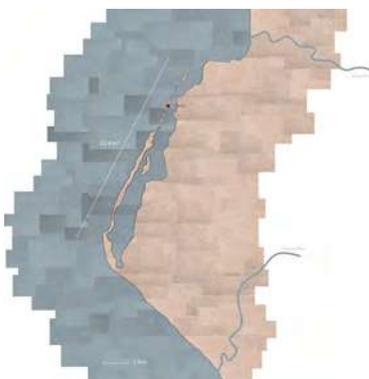


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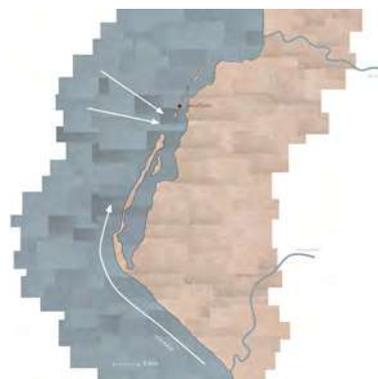


Fig. 62



Fig. 78



Fig. 80

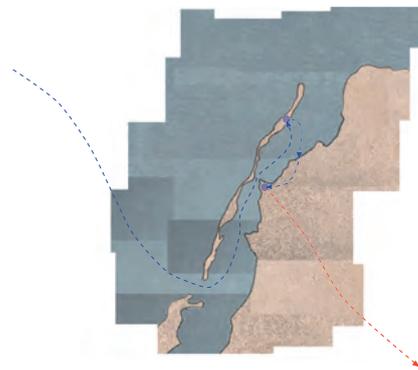


Fig. 81



Fig. 82

Original Drawings/Maps
 Urban Representation [Chicala/Luanda]



Fig. 1



Fig. 118



Fig. 169

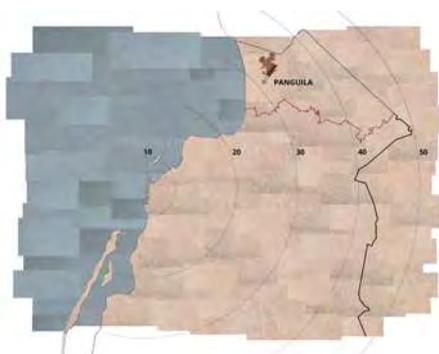


Fig. 247



Fig. 22



Fig. 48



Fig. 25



Fig. 38



Fig. 171



Fig. 172



Fig. 270



Fig. 235

Original Drawings/Maps

Visualising Data [Chicala/Luanda/Angola]

Quadro II / Table II
Lugares de trabalho/estudo dos residentes
Residents' work/study places

Ingombota	16,4%
Chicala	13,9%
Mucanga	10,4%
Iba	9,0%
Samba	6,0%
Bilau	4,5%
Rangel	4,5%
Sambizanga	4,5%
Cacuso	3,0%
Viana	3,0%
Cazenga	1,5%
Kilamba Kaxi	1,5%

295 respostas / responses



Fig. 23

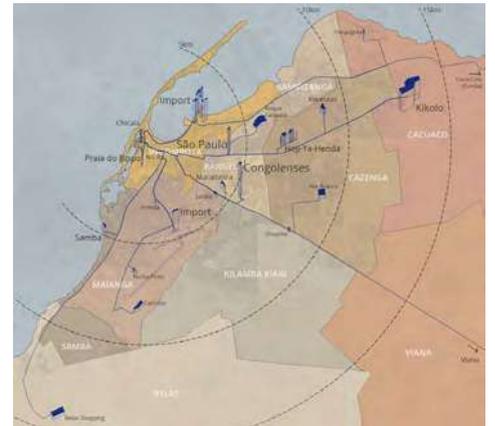


Fig. 50



Fig. 49



Fig. 135

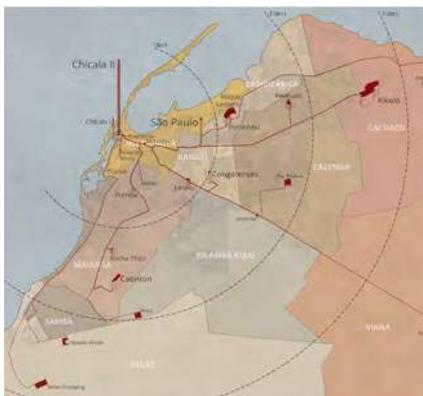


Fig. 181



Fig. 186

Quadro 6 / Table 6
Número de residentes por casa
Number of residents per house

n.º habitantes no. of residents	Chicala 1	Chicala 2	Chicala 3	Total
1-5	38%	25%	52%	29%
6-9	38%	44%	46%	43%
10-15	20%	26%	21%	23%
> 16	4%	6%	3%	5%
Média / Average	7,4	8,3	7,3	7,7

215 Inquéritos para um universo de 1118 indivíduos
215 surveys on a sample of 1118 individuals

Quadro 7 / Table 7
Idade da população
Population Age

	Chicala 1	Chicala 2	Chicala 3	Total
< 18	44%	39%	43%	41%
18 - 30	31%	35%	27%	31%
31 - 50	22%	22%	25%	24%
> 50	2%	4%	4%	4%
Média / Average				

universo de 1118 indivíduos
sample of 1118 individuals

Original Drawings/Maps
 Architectural Representation [Chicala]



Fig. 139



Fig. 155



Fig. 156



Fig. 157



Fig. 165



Fig. 196



Fig. 158



Fig. 187



Fig. 188



Fig. 190



Fig. 187



Fig. 188



Fig. 190



Fig. 192



Fig. 195



Fig. 220



Fig. 192



Fig. 195



Fig. 220

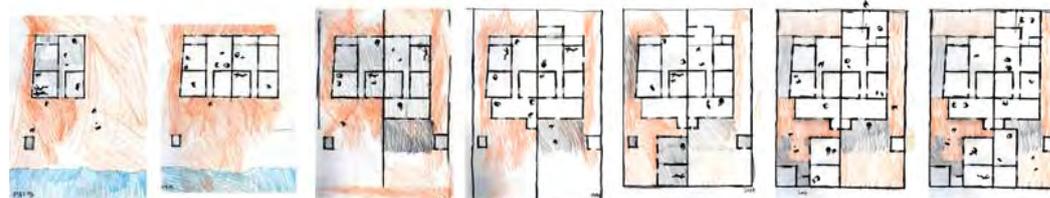


Fig. 194

Original Drawings/Maps

Architectural and Urban Representation [resettlement colonies]



Fig. 239



Fig. 250

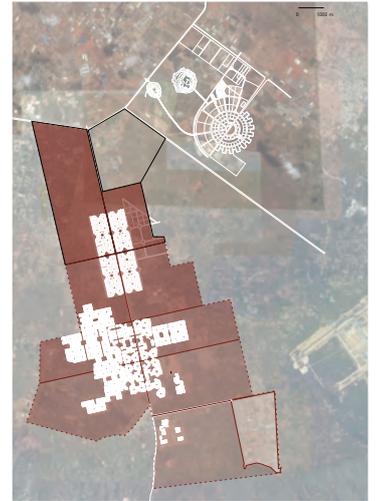


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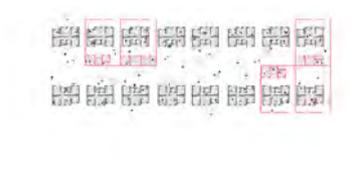


Fig. 251

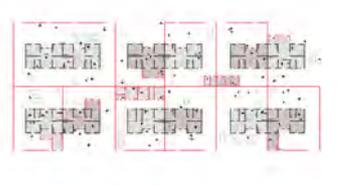


Fig. 253

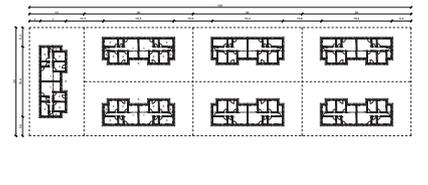


Fig. 256

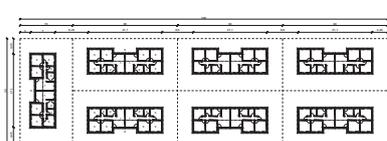
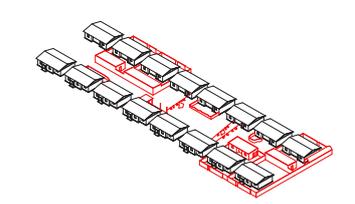


Fig. 258

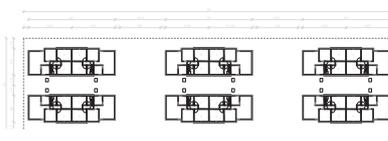
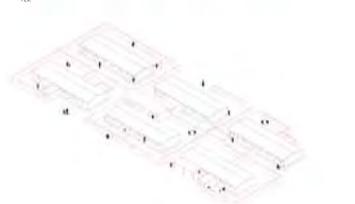


Fig. 262

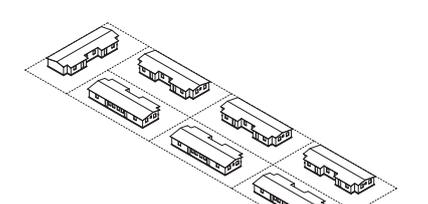
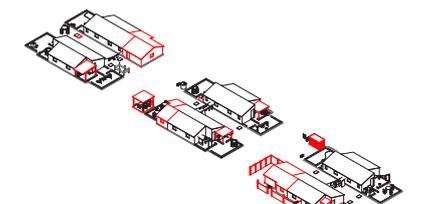
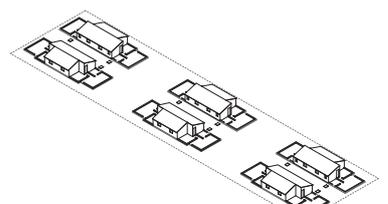
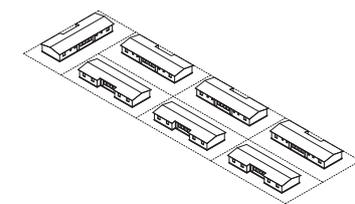


Fig. 265



Introduction

Early in the morning of 11th September 2010, I landed in Luanda for the first time. I knew almost nobody there. I had arranged my stay over the phone with an Angolan friend of a friend, who offered to pick me up at the airport.¹ While I waited for someone I had never met at the recently renovated 4 de Fevereiro airport, I watched the courteous greetings between American oil men and their company drivers as a plane landed from Houston. A television screen showed São Paulo, Shanghai and Lisbon on the list of arrivals. It all seemed rather 'ordinary', and certainly nothing like the apocalyptic descriptions I had heard back home in Portugal.² When I finally met my host and we set off, I experienced Luanda's infamous traffic jams for the first time – it took several hours to reach our destination. Halfway through the journey, I realised that I had forgotten to bring bedsheets, in response to which my host snapped his fingers outside the window and asked a street vendor for some. The problem was resolved in the blink of an eye. This was my first glimpse of Luanda as a lively and unexpected city. After all, something positive could be found even in the perpetual traffic jams – who would have thought?

My interest in Luanda, a city still reeling from decades of war and a Portuguese colonial legacy, had been maturing since 2008 when I moved to London to undertake research on cities and urban cultures.³ This was a turning point in my professional and academic career. Studying and working at top-tier schools and architectural practices in Europe had provided me with undeniable opportunities

1 The story is a little more complicated. My Angolan host was a friend of Ricardo Cardoso, a fellow researcher who had been in Luanda during the month prior to my arrival. Ricardo was introduced to me by Filipe Brandão, an architect colleague, when I launched a call on social media seeking contacts in Angola.

2 One of the most extreme examples of the apocalyptic vision of Luanda that many Portuguese opinion makers propagate is Antonio Pinto Ribeiro's "City of Enclosure" in Público newspaper (7/11/2014).

3 In 2008/9, I completed a Master's degree in City Design and Urban Cultures at the Cass School of Architecture, under Dr Ines Weizman.

for personal and professional growth.⁴ Yet my ideals did not follow the same direction as what might be termed 'conventional' architectural practice. I became increasingly fascinated by a wide range of methods, places and topics.

Earlier in 2008, I had been commissioned the design of a primary school on the outskirts of Angola's capital by a Portuguese NGO.⁵ The school commission merged with the urban study I was preparing to commence for my MA thesis, which would combine practical work with academic research. I began by studying Luanda from a distance, with a particular interest in learning about the colonial and postcolonial history of the city, and mapping and examining the social relationships between architecture, social movements and political topography. This was the year in which Kinaxixe market, a masterpiece designed by Vasco Vieira da Costa in the 1950s, was demolished. This event drew architects' attentions to the urban transformation which had been taking place in Luanda since the end of the civil war in 2002. Indignant voices in Angola, and above all in Portugal, criticised the Angolan regime's indifference towards the most symbolic example of modern 'tropical' architecture in Angola, which had fallen victim to a rampant thirst for 'progress'.⁶ However, these insurgent voices did not highlight the fact that the demolition had been undertaken by a Portuguese company, attesting to the complicity of the Portuguese in the widely criticised architectural and urban disfigurement of this 'jewel' of the former colonial empire. In the midst of all these thoughts, my project gradually took shape throughout the 2008/9 academic year. As the promise to build the school was continually postponed, I decided to look closer at tangible facts (in archives and libraries) and testimonies (particularly my family ties to the former Portuguese African colonies – Angola, Mozambique and São Tomé e Príncipe in the 1950s-70s).⁷

My investigation naturally evolved into a doctoral degree.⁸ One of the first steps of the research was to travel to Luanda to observe and document the city's built environment, experiencing local customs and habits, and to connect with local professionals, academics and other 'insiders'. The trip was decisive in defining the foundations on which the research project would be built. With a certain degree of chance befitting of the city of Luanda, after finally making it through the constant traffic from the airport and settling into Chicala, my case study was naturally found (**Fig. 1**).

4 My earlier architectural education included experiences at excellent institutions such as the Porto Architecture School (FAUP), Accademia di architettura di Mendrisio and Herzog & de Meuron.

5 The NGO, which was setting up a social development project in Angola, was *APDES – Agência Piaget para o Desenvolvimento* (Piaget Agency for Development).

6 Prior to the demolition, a petition and various newspaper articles had called for the building to be left untouched. Following the inevitable demolition, reactions of shock quickly emerged, for example in the article entitled "Architects shocked by destruction of Kinaxixe market in Luanda" (*Público*, 6/8/2008).

7 The family archive proved to be a fundamental source in my MA research. Thanks to a travel grant from the American Institute of Architects – UK Chapter, I was able to travel to Mozambique to visit a school that my grandmother had helped found in the 1950s. A longer report on this experience can be read in my MA thesis (*The Spatial Logic of the Non-planned: A School/Political Centre in the Musseques of Luanda, Angola*, 2009) and the short publication *Regresso ao Passado: Do "Jardim dos Pequenos" de Vila de João Belo ao "Jardim-Escola Joaninha" do Xai-Xai* (Dafne, 2009).

8 My MA thesis led to an invitation by Dr Ines Weizman (my MA tutor), supported by Prof. Peter Carl (who was setting up the doctoral programme at The Cass School of Architecture), to pursue a PhD degree.



Fig.1 – Partial plan of Luanda. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Chicala is located in close proximity to both the ocean and the city centre. At the peak of its urban densification in 2013, the neighbourhood reached almost 65,000 inhabitants, divided into three areas: Chicala 1, 2 and 3.

Why Chicala?

[In Angola] *The petrol revenues caused tall buildings with mirrored walls to bloom. Then the price of oil fell (it fell hopelessly, came crashing down) and that radiant new world collapsed along with it. There was no longer any money to wash those immense windows, so they became covered in a rough layer of red dust, mud, and finally, a carapace able to resist the heaviest downpour which blocked out all rays of light.* José Eduardo Agualusa, *Barroco Tropical* (2009: 93)

Barroco Tropical is a fictional narrative by Angolan writer José Eduardo Agualusa, written in 2009. It is set in Luanda in 2020, anticipating the impact on the urban landscape of the (then unexpected) global oil price crash. At the time of writing, Luanda was a city in turmoil due to the profits of oil extraction. Agualusa predicted that Angola's main source of revenue would crash precipitously. As a consequence, the red dust from the *musseques* (or informal neighbourhoods, which suffered most from the 'overdevelopment' of the city) would finally wreak their 'revenge' and take over the luxurious glass buildings.

Chicala and its surroundings could be, quite literally, the subject of Agualusa's caricature. After years of uncertainty over the future of this neighbourhood, interspersed with sporadic evictions, the process of large-scale demolition and resettlement began during the period of this research. The site is now undergoing a process of replacement by high-standard developments (**Fig.2**).

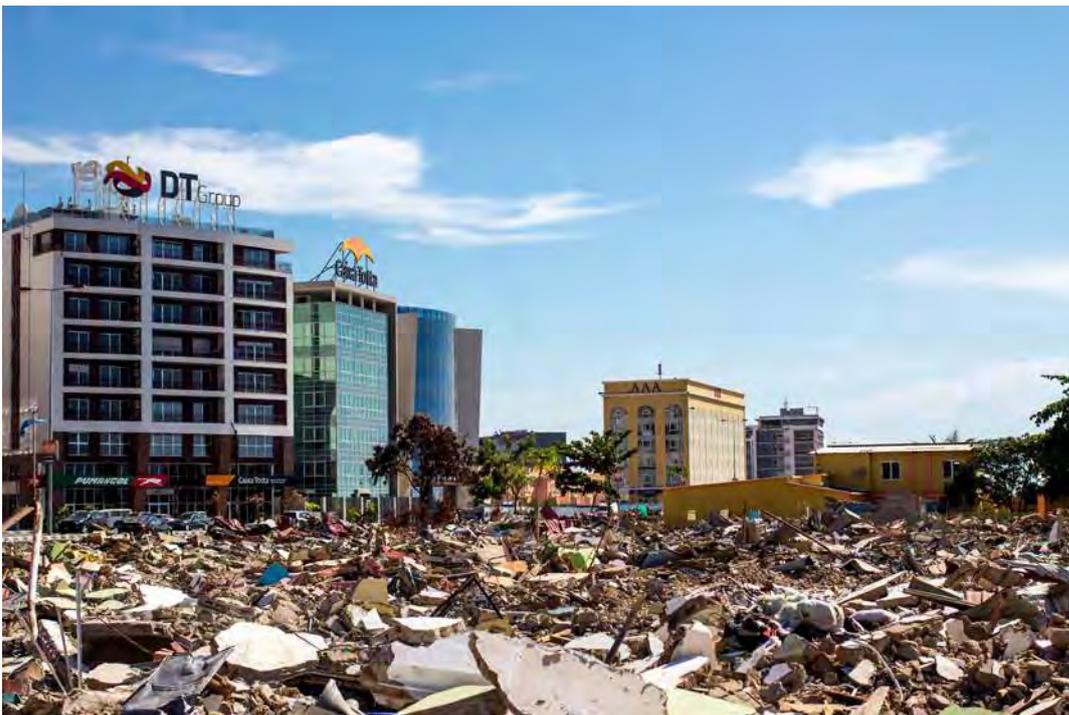


Fig. 2 – Part of Chicala demolished, with the Sodimo masterplan (phase 1) in the background.

© Nadia Righete, 29/10/2013

The conflicts arising from the suppression of this particular neighbourhood are at the heart of this thesis. The decision to identify Chicala as a case study was taken shortly before plans for the complete erasure of the site were implemented and local authorities and private investors forcefully displaced its inhabitants to remote settlements with unsuitable living conditions. It became urgent to document and understand the urban form of this neighbourhood before it disappeared. Chicala affords an opportunity for in-depth reflection on the potential role of research in relation to complex urban situations, in particular those involving disappearing communities. This neighbourhood quite literally vanished before my eyes – the question here concerns the means of documentation and the methods employed in the unique observations and actions undertaken on the ground.

In this research, Chicala becomes a lens through which Luanda's urban history and development can be accounted for as a palimpsest of calculated and arbitrary manoeuvres. The thesis analyses the fundamental incoherence and unpredictability of Luanda as an urban system through an exhaustive examination of the way in which this particular neighbourhood was gradually assembled over time.

Chicala is not an exception to the larger city: rather, it constitutes a microcosm of what the entirety of Luanda has been and could become. It embodies social and urban structures at different levels, along with significant aspects of the history of both the city and the country, as I will attempt to demonstrate. The neighbourhood is surrounded by some of Luanda's main historical landmarks: the São Miguel fortress, the main business district (Baixa, which has been acquiring a familiar assembly of high-standard residential and commercial buildings), the politico-administrative centre (including the Presidential Palace and the National Assembly), a colonial church and a post-independence monument (Agostinho Neto's Mausoleum) **(Fig. 3 – 6)**. Through a reading of this particular place and its surroundings, I aim to provide an insight into the conditions and constituents which have influenced and shaped the city throughout history. Chicala becomes a laboratory for the strategies suggested by the research question: what is the virtue, or meaning, of Chicala's reciprocity with Luanda?

The fact that the site is bordered by such a symbolic context within the nation state inevitably calls for a historical and political contextualisation of Chicala in relation to Luanda and Angola. The neighbourhood's geographical circumstances have had unequivocal material consequences throughout the ages, with its strategic location giving rise to numerous conflicts and invasions. For a long time, the site has been the target of large-scale, economy-driven masterplans – not only following the end of the lengthy civil war in Angola (1975–2002), as is widely believed, but during the late colonial period also **(Fig. 7 – 10)**.



São Miguel fortress

Presidential Palace

Agostinho Neto Mausoleum



Fig. 3 – 6 – Panoramic views of Chicala and surroundings. © Paulo Moreira, 2010
Chicala is surrounded by several of Luanda's historical landmarks – the fortress where the Portuguese settled in the 16th century (now the Armed Forces Museum), the Presidential Palace and the Dr Agostinho Neto Mausoleum (built after the death of Angola's first President).

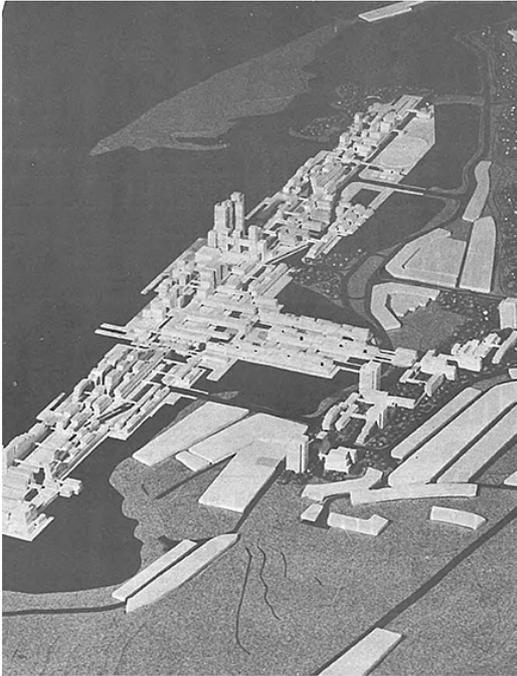


Fig. 7 – 10 – Large-scale projects surrounding Chicala. © *Noticia*, 29/12/1973 (Fig. 0.7 - Late colonial masterplan, 1973 (top left) © DAR, 2009; Fig. 0.8 - SODIMO masterplan (top right); Fig. 0.9 - Luanda bay, plot A. (bottom left); Fig. 10 - Marina Luanda (bottom right) © Costa Lopes arquitectos, n/d).
 Successive plans to transform the site have been presented. It is as if Chicala has been eternally waiting to become something else: it has persistently been considered an incomplete project.

Chicala's ongoing clearance and suppression is but the most recent episode in a broader process of continual change: the wider area has been destroyed and rebuilt several times during the history of the city of Luanda (**Fig. 11 - 13**). Yet, amid constant tension and uncertainty, despite the rejections, constraints and erasures experienced by the neighbourhood over time, it continued to develop and was able to flourish into a viable place for accommodating many ways of life – without it ever having been properly recorded and understood.

Yet this thesis does not aim exclusively to 'fill the gap' in representing a place which is due to disappear completely and which deserves to be remembered in the history books. To frame the investigation simply as an archive of the history of Chicala would be uncomfortably in line with the outside forces responsible for its very disappearance. The thesis instead focuses on a wider intellectual problem, a paradox which appears to reject Chicala and Luanda's informal settlements in all their fullness of life and cityness. It proposes to decipher Chicala's spatial order and the nature of its urban conflicts and reciprocal relationship with Luanda. In order to facilitate understanding of 'urban conflict' and 'reciprocity' as employed in this investigation, I will now expand upon their meaning.



Fig. 11 – Plan of Luanda, 1937. Source: Archive IICT
Note the word 'ruínas' (ruins) on the left – evidence of an old settlement.

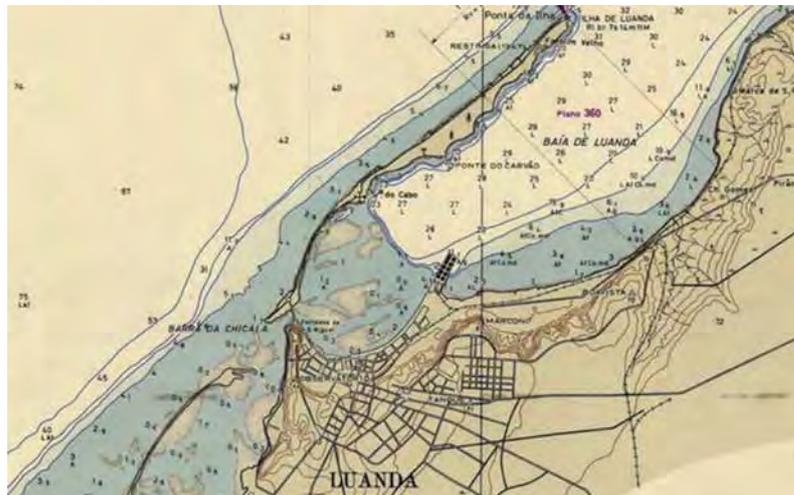


Fig. 12 – Plan of Luanda, 1964. Source: Archive IICT

By the middle of the 20th century, the *kalembas* had caused entire sections of sand on the southern side of the island to disappear. The Chicala area had become isolated from the island (its long, thin configuration gave rise to the name Felete (fillet)).

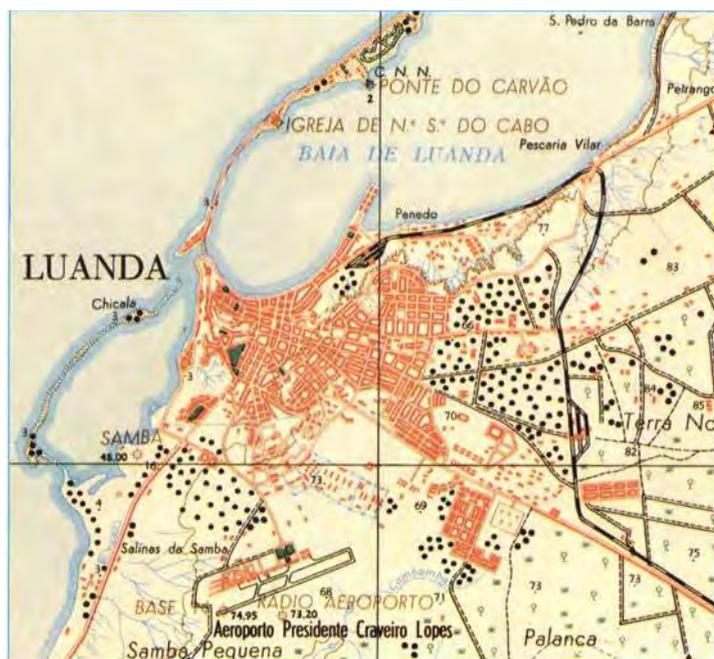


Fig. 13 – Plan of Luanda, 1960. *Atlas Geográfico, Vol.1*, República Popular de Angola: Ministério da Educação, 1982. p.7

Despite becoming separated from the Ilha in the mid-1950s, the settlement of Chicala has remained in place. Here it is depicted as one of the relevant places named on the map.

Urban Conflict and Reciprocity

Angola was ravaged by civil war almost continuously from 1975 to 2002. In the context of the post-war reconstruction, it appears paradoxical to speak of conflict in Luanda. Moreover, the city remained relatively safe and prosperous throughout the wartime years.⁹

This is not a feature exclusive to Luanda. As Jo Beall and Tom Goodfellow explain in *Conflict and post-war transition in African cities*, an analysis of the relationship between cities and conflict in Africa in recent decades, “cities are often economic hubs in war economies but, depending on circumstances, they can either become sites of insurgency and combat or serve as places of refuge or relative security during conflict, such as (...) Luanda during Angola’s protracted civil war” (2014: 20).

Luanda’s ability to become a relative haven of security rather than of instability during the wartime years did not prevent the emergence of other forms of conflict or everyday violence in the post-war period. Beall and Goodfellow label the forms of conflict which are distinct from warfare - and which generally take place in cities - as *civic conflict* (2014: 20). One of the most evident manifestations of *civic conflict* in cities emerges when the state itself is the aggressor, for example forcing evictions of urban dwellers (Beall & Goodfellow, 2014: 21). These violent acts ultimately result from neoliberal urban development policies and the state’s failure to cope with the provision of adequate housing, employment and services for the urban poor (Beall & Goodfellow, 2014: 21).

In Luanda, rising levels of *civic conflict* following the end of the civil war have led to a general feeling of insecurity in peacetime. This partially originated from the misguided assumption by policymakers that urban growth would be temporary (Beall & Goodfellow, 2014: 26):

Again and again, governments and international development actors fail to realise that the urban growth that occurs in wartime is extremely difficult to reverse and is likely to be permanent, instead treating their swollen cities as a temporary aberration.

Furthermore, in Luanda there is a clear over-militarisation of the urban landscape, implemented by a political regime which seeks to avoid any form of criticism or objection to its policies. This significantly affects everyday life, resulting in the displacement of a significant portion of democratic life into the illegal sphere, enforced very closely by the MPLA apparatus. In this regard, it is worth mentioning the work of sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who discusses the ‘wars’ occurring in places which are supposedly at peace (2015):

‘Brand new wars’ occur in (...) urban micro-territories, where a military approach is increasingly confused with the possibility of peaceful sociability.¹⁰

⁹ The armed conflict in Luanda took place largely in the provinces. This is the main reason for Luanda’s spectacular urban growth rate during the civil war years, when it became a safe haven for many internally displaced people fleeing the war.

¹⁰ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, lecture at the Latin American Conference of Social Sciences (CLACSO), 2015. Video, from 11’15” (in Spanish).

Beyond the literal connotation of 'conflict' as warfare, the term has several other meanings in relation to the urban question. Conflicts in cities may refer to territorial disputes, spatial divisions and planning strategies which produce social segregation. This is the context in which the thesis unfolds. The multiple pressures weighing upon Chicala, more visible than ever in the current phase of Luanda's great urban ambitions, provoke severe social exclusion. Paradoxically, top-down reconstruction and regeneration become instruments of conflict.

The masterplans surrounding the study site constitute a paradigmatic illustration of the kind of transformations the city has undergone. The urban condition of Chicala, situated at the confluence of several renewal projects, allows for discussion of the effects of Luanda's neoliberal development. For instance, projects viewed by policymakers as prime real estate, such as the Sodimo masterplan, disenfranchise the entire population of Chicala. This creates a conflict between citizens and non-citizens, who can be displaced to resettlement colonies. The question here is: how to approach the effects of this form of urban conflict as a researcher?

Locating Urban Conflicts shows that one fundamental way of engaging with the problem is to interrogate the type of characteristics which may be attributed to cities with high levels of conflict (Pullan et al, 2013: 6):

Many of the problems of urban conflicts are rooted in the inability of populations in contested cities to appreciate the ambiguities of their own claims and causes.

The concept of 'reciprocity' becomes relevant in an architectural and urban study embedded in a situation of conflict. Many fluid arrangements exist between architecture, finance, management and politics, beyond the *top-down versus bottom-up* categorisation. There are certainly spatial qualities which emerge directly from the various conflicts between Chicala and Luanda, and which are part of broader conditions found in the urban context.

To understand the 'reciprocity' inherent to this given urban conflict implies understanding its exchanges and plurality. Only by bringing together different perspectives and interpreting 'all sides' are we able to challenge the "short-sightedness that characterises urban conflicts" (Pullan et al, 2013: 1). The empirical research presented here shows a set of institutional and spatial reciprocal relations at work between the neighbourhood of Chicala and the city of Luanda. Ultimately, as the thesis demonstrates, life in Chicala and Luanda covers a spectrum of collaborations, negotiations and tensions. It recognises that 'conflict' is a natural outcome of urban life. Indeed, the city in which everyone collaborates and friction is absent exists only in utopias and architects' renders. 'Conflict', therefore, is a fundamental mode of reciprocity.

'Reciprocity' becomes an operative term for working within a complex urban, social and political system. The study sought to characterise the cultures of Chicala by looking at three main characteristic

topographies: the informal neighbourhood, the formal city and the resettlement camps. These are the primary theatres of urban life for local residents.

Moving beyond the architectural characterisation of these topographies, here the social relationships between them are discussed. The phenomenon of middle-class people living in Chicala and their contribution to the city in particular is acknowledged, rather than examining only the plight of the 'urban poor'. Chicala's residents form part of the city's economy, and this form of reciprocity between the neighbourhood and the city also informs the research. However, these ties are often abruptly severed when the population is moved to the resettlement colonies, unless residents are able to find ways to remain near the city centre.

In order to approach and interrogate these urban conditions, expansive architectural methods and tools are required. I drew upon several disciplines: anthropology, architecture, archaeology, geography, politics, sociology, and urbanism. The 'reciprocity' between these various areas of knowledge reiterates the very nature of the city, as well as the wider research field. It is quite plausible that an anthropologist, sociologist or geographer could also have addressed this context, but here architecture prevails. Architecture is, by profession and primary interest, always concerned with the concrete world, its materiality and its spatial logics, so it is the most suitable discipline for understanding the urban phenomenon in this way.

This thesis is the result of a long-term attempt to collectively document a disappearing neighbourhood and an indictment of the main forces which have shaped this transformation. It presents visual and spatial evidence of the way in which Chicala's urban informality establishes reciprocal links with other parts of Luanda, making the case that the former has more in common with the latter than it might appear. The creative dimension of this form of reciprocity points to an alternative form of order, one rooted in constant adjustments and exchanges.

Ultimately, the thesis looks beyond two common conflicting interpretations of a 'good city': on the one hand, the neoliberal city of high-end capitalism; on the other, the more generous, more fractious, probably less healthy or safe city of multiple strata of participation. Between these two types of city, mutual avenues of interconnection exist. I argue that this is in fact similar in London, New York, São Paulo or Hong Kong, none of which seem able to resist progressive domination by the homogenised culture of consumption and orientation towards financial services and leisure.

To facilitate understanding of the attributes of the methodology employed in this thesis, as well as its structure and lines of content, I will now proceed to provide a more detailed background of Luanda as a city during the timeframe of the investigation (2010-16), as well as an academic and professional literature review of the most recent studies which address this context and the broader field of postcolonial studies in architecture.

Economic, Political and Urban Background of Luanda/Angola (2010-16)

A long path was travelled from the commencement to the completion of this thesis. Over a period of six years in total – the PhD officially began on 1st February 2010, and the thesis was submitted on 30th September 2016. This final version of the thesis, following a long-awaited viva examination, was completed in November 2017. The total length of the investigation was nine years if we include the MA period (2008-9).

During the period between 2010 and 2016, the neighbourhood of Chicala changed considerably, in terms of both building and unbuilding simultaneously. This thesis concentrates upon these changes in particular, and the reasons underpinning them. What began as a study of aspects of self-building in Chicala became a much deeper case study focusing on the place of informality in postcolonial Luanda and the kind of transformations that are irrevocably affecting large swathes of the city. The complexity of the political and social events that have fuelled urban change in Chicala and Luanda calls for a lengthier contextualisation of the timeframe of the research. This contextualisation is focused on the period in which the research took place, 2010-16. However, during the time between the thesis submission and the viva examination, Angola's political scene saw dramatic change. Long-standing president José Eduardo dos Santos stepped down from power and João Lourenço was elected the new President. This change will arguably mark a crossroads in Angola's post-war history. However, it was too soon to address the effects of the new political cycle in Angola in this thesis.

This highly complex and volatile situation is perhaps better explained by researcher Claudia Gastrow, who said that “while Luanda was considered a space of safety during the war, in the post-conflict period it has become a site of instability and uncertainty for the poor” (Gastrow, 2014: 15). The economic, political and urban background is presented chronologically.

In January 2010, just days before the official start of this doctoral research, a new constitution enshrining the Angolan republican system came into force: henceforth, the head of the party that wins the legislative elections would automatically become the country's President. The new constitution also clarified the issue of land ownership, stating that all land in Angola is state property and limiting land tenure to Angolan nationals and companies.

Six months later, in July 2010, Luanda was declared the most expensive city in the world for expatriates.¹¹ The country's economy, strongly dependent on the oil industry, experienced a period of prosperity.¹² The frenetic, unstoppable construction linked to Luanda's economic boom, caused by the

11 According to the Mercer Living Cost Comparison, Luanda went on to hold this position in 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2015. In 2012 and 2016, Luanda was ranked second in the Cost of Living Ranking (behind Tokyo and Hong Kong respectively).

12 The price of a barrel of oil in 2010 was \$90. However, by January 2016 the price had gone below the \$30 threshold.

abundance of capital in those years, did not always take place in the most logical and measured way: in the same month, Luanda's recently built General Hospital was evacuated due to risk of collapse. It would be rebuilt and re-opened in 2015.¹³

Days before my first field trip to Angola in September 2010, the Roque Santeiro market, the heart of the Angolan informal economy and workplace of tens of thousands of Luandans, was dismantled (**Fig. 14 - 15**). Some vendors were transferred to the new Panguila marketplace, 30 km north of the city, and many other informal markets proliferated around the city. The policy of evictions and demolitions overshadowing the construction fever was not exclusive to the informal sector. In December 2010, residents of Luanda's iconic Cuca building (neighbouring the former Kinaxixi market, demolished in 2008) were evicted overnight.¹⁴



Fig. 14 – Roque Santeiro Market (aerial photograph following dismantlement). © Paulo Moreira, 4/6/2012

13 The hospital, an \$8 million Chinese construction, was opened in 2006.

14 Within a year since the Cuca building was emptied out, it was demolished to make way for a new hotel/ shopping mall project linked to President dos Santos' family.



Fig. 15 – Roque Santeiro Market (before and after dismantlement). Google Earth printscreen, edited by Paulo Moreira, 2012

The government cited safety concerns about the potential collapse of the 70s-era building. The residents were transported to Zango, one of the large resettlement colonies built on the outskirts of the city, where they were rehoused (**Fig.16**). In January 2011, President José Eduardo dos Santos, in power since 1979, oversaw the beginning of a scheme to construct 100,000 homes nationwide. He visited Zango 5, where homes for 80,000 people were to be built as part of an extension to a Social Housing Zone that already included Zango 1, 2, 3, and 4.¹⁵

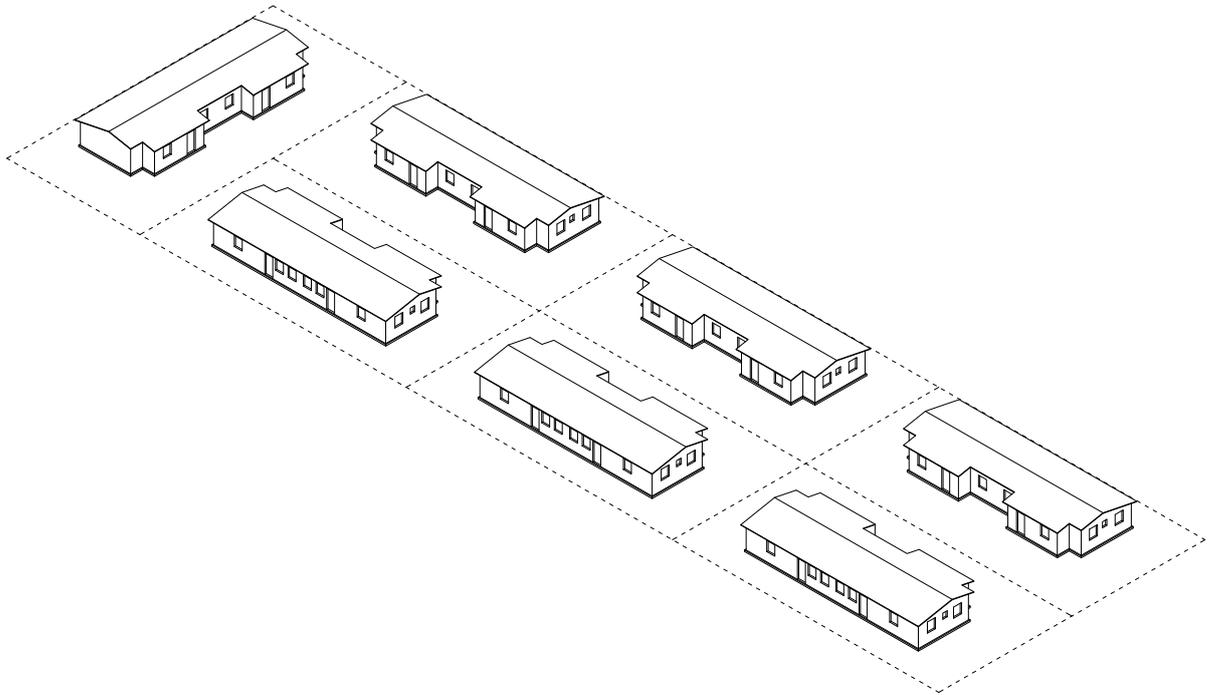


Fig. 16 – Typical Zango block with 14 houses, axonometric. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

During this period, a movement of political dissent and civic protest emerged in Luanda. On 7th March 2011, around 20 people including the rapper Luaty Beirão were detained by the police in the Largo 1 de Maio square. They had planned to protest the 32 year rule of President dos Santos, shouting the slogan “32 é muito” (32 [years] is a lot). The group went on to reorganise their anti-government demonstration for 2nd April, provoking a wave of protests throughout 2011 and 2012.¹⁶

In July 2011, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos inaugurated the Kilamba New City satellite town (**Fig. 17 – 18**). The \$3.5 billion residential development, built by the China International Trust and Investment Corporation and funded by the China International Fund, was intended to fulfil in part President dos Santos’ 2008 pledge to build one million homes.

15 Zango, as well as other resettlement camps, will be further studied in Chapter 5.

16 As an example of the solidarity that the group garnered among various sectors of Angolan society, in March 2012 various public figures including the writer Pepetela signed an open letter to President José Eduardo dos Santos expressing concern over the repression of political protests in Angola.



Fig. 17 – 18 – Cidade do Kilamba. © Paulo Moreira, 4/6/2012 - 25/5/2012

The first phase of the city of Kilamba, concluded in December 2012, was developed on an area of 1,000 hectares, with a total of 710 buildings and 20,000 apartments. It also includes 17 schools with playing fields, 24 nursery schools, 1 hospital and 240 ground floor shops.

Luanda soon became a major destination for Portuguese economic migrants, mostly linked to the lucrative construction, retail and oil sectors. In November 2011, just months after agreeing to austerity measures imposed by the IMF as part of an extensive bailout programme, the Portuguese Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho made an official visit to Angola, where he was promised support from President dos Santos. During the following years, Angola made investments in Portugal worth up to \$15bn. The scale of this business justified Portugal's silence towards the repressive regime. In May 2012, the activists and former soldiers Alves Kamulingue and Isaías Cassule were kidnapped and executed while preparing a protest by military cadres against poor conditions. It is widely suspected that the government was responsible for their murders.

Throughout 2012, with the date of the first legislative elections since the introduction of the new constitution approaching, several improvements were offered to inhabitants of Luanda. In Chicala 3, mains power was installed in April 2012: electricity finally reached most of the neighbourhood. Days before the general elections in Angola, at one of the last electoral campaign acts, the President inaugurated the Bay of Luanda reconversion.¹⁷

In August 2012, the President's party, MPLA, won the elections with 72% of the vote.¹⁸ In accordance with the new constitution, the MPLA's victory meant that President dos Santos (in power for 33 years by that time) was elected President for the first of a maximum two five-year mandates. Soon after the elections, repression by police on the streets of Luanda was reported to have reignited. In October 2012, the city's governor Bento Bento announced his intention to bring an end to the widespread practice of street selling by *zungeiras* (*Voa Português*, 21/10/2012).¹⁹ The repression continued over the following months – in September 2013, Human Rights Watch criticised police violence and persecution of street sellers all over Luanda (HRW, 30/9/2013).²⁰

The Angolan economy continued to grow. In January 2013, Forbes magazine named the Angolan President's daughter, Isabel dos Santos, the richest woman in Africa, with an estimated net worth of over \$3.3 billion (Forbes, 8/6/2016). Still, some of the large-scale urban regeneration projects mushrooming in Luanda failed to reach the estimated market prices. In February 2013, two years after its inauguration, the Kilamba New City project was beset by negative media coverage over unrealistic house prices

17 The Bay of Luanda project will be examined in Chapter 3.

18 UNITA, led by Isaías Samakuva, obtained 18%, and CASA-CE, led by Abel Chivukuvuku, attained 6%.

19 The list of governors of Luanda in the 2010-2016 period shows that the only stable position in government was that of President of the Republic. José Maria Ferraz dos Santos was appointed governor of Luanda in November 2010 and exonerated in August 2011; Bento Joaquim Sebastião Francisco Bento (Bento Bento) was appointed governor in November 2011; Graciano Francisco Domingos was appointed governor of Luanda in September 2014 (Bento Bento exonerated); in January 2016 Francisco Higino Carneiro was appointed governor of Luanda (Graciano Francisco Domingos exonerated).

20 As a reaction of note, in December 2014 Luanda's street sellers created an organisation to mediate between the *zungeiras* and the government (*Rede Angola*, 1/12/14).

(of up to \$200,000) and opaque allocation processes that meant that only a fifth of the 20,000 apartments from the initial phase had been occupied. President dos Santos issued orders for the apartments to be made more affordable.²¹

Political contestation was also on the rise in Luanda. On 19th September 2013, police arrested 22 protesters who sought to demonstrate near Largo 1 de Maio square in Luanda and hand out leaflets calling for social justice. Meanwhile in October 2013, the UN drew attention to the severe drought affecting Angola and causing malnutrition among thousands of children (The Guardian, 22/10/2013). This offers further proof of the uneven distribution of wealth: it is astonishing that a country with such a thriving economy should find itself at the bottom of the infant mortality index (Worldbank, 2016).

The wave of protests also reached the architectural community: between April and July 2014, a campaign and petition was launched against the destruction of the iconic Elinga theatre in downtown Luanda.²² The reaction and attention garnered by the campaign had no parallel in the ongoing evictions afflicting informal neighbourhoods throughout the city.

Around this time, the economic situation in Angola deteriorated. Between June and December 2014, global oil prices began to fall due to decreased demand from China and increased production in the US. There were concerns for Angola's heavily oil-dependent economy, where oil exports account for more than 90% of government revenue. By December, prices had reached less than \$70 per barrel. In August 2014, Portugal's second biggest bank, Banco Espirito Santo collapsed, affecting markets across Europe, with its main holding companies filing for bankruptcy and its CEO investigated for fraud, corruption and money laundering. BES owned 55% of the BESA (BES Angola) bank, and had previously granted \$4.6 billion in loans to the subsidiary. The Angolan government issued a state guarantee of \$5.7 billion to cover loans issued by BESA, rumoured to have been granted to high-ranking members of the government (*Expresso*, 20/11/2014).

Economic instability in Angola brought tension with the former colonising power, Portugal. On 15th October 2014, Angolan president dos Santos called an end to the "strategic partnership" with Portugal during his annual State of the Nation address. The announcement came after a period of diplomatic strain between the two countries, as a result of investigations in Portugal into the financial

21 Most likely due to mismanagement, responsibility for sales and mortgages of properties in Kilamba was transferred from Delta Imobiliaria to SONIP, the real estate arm of the state oil company Sonangol, which lowered the price to \$70,000 per unit. In August 2014, a second phase of construction in the Kilamba New City project was announced, and management responsibility was transferred again from Sonip to another state company Imogestin (*Rede Angola*, 25/8/2014).

22 The theatre and cultural centre, a hub for both alternative and established artists, was due to be demolished and replaced by Elipark, a car park, offices and a hotel. Angolan architect Angela Mingas was one of several high-profile figures to join the campaign.

activities of Angolan investors.²³ At the end of 2014, Angola was ranked 161st out of 175 countries for corruption, scoring 19/100 on the Transparency International Index. In February 2015, the government was forced to revise its \$51 billion budget and cut spending by 1.8 trillion Kwanza, as oil prices continued to fall globally (Reuters, 26/2/2015).

Political repression continued. In March 2015, Angolan authorities detained human rights activist José Marcos Mavungo in Cabinda.²⁴ In September 2015, Mavungo was sentenced to 6 years in prison, charged with rebellion against the government (Amnesty, 15/9/2015). Surprisingly, the activist was released in May 2015, prompting a sense of tempered hope among diverse sectors of civil society.

In April 2015, violent confrontations took place when police raided the *Luz do Mundo* religious sect at Mount Sumi in Huambo to arrest its leader José Kalupeteka. Many deaths were reported – the official figures stating dozens of casualties contrasted with accusations from human rights groups that thousands had been killed. Videos soon emerged that appeared to show police committing human rights abuses and killings inside the commune. Journalists and independent observers were prevented from visiting the site (Yahoo, 6/5/2015).

In May 2015, the government removed the fuel subsidy several months earlier than expected, causing petrol prices to rise by almost 30% and provoking inflation. In May 2015, Rafael Marques, an investigative reporter and author of *Blood Diamonds* (2011), received a six month suspended sentence for defamation in a case brought by seven army generals who co-owned a security company operating in the Lunda diamond mines (The Guardian, 28/5/2015) **(Fig. 19)**.



Fig. 19 – Protesters holding the book *Diamantes de Sangue* at the entrance to the court in Luanda (29/5/2015).
Unknown author, 29/5/2015

23 In the same month, Angola was elected to the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member, with effect from January 2015.

24 Cabinda is a highly sensitive region due to its concentration of most of Angola's oil reserves and a long-running separatist conflict with the FLEC guerrilla movement.

On 20th June 2015, 15 activists were arrested in Luanda during a book club meeting, and accused of plotting a coup against President dos Santos and the government.²⁵ Analysts attributed the arrests to nervousness in the government regarding the potential for political unrest, amid economic uncertainty (The Guardian, 30/6/2015). On 20th September, the legal period for pre-trial detention without charge (90 days) was exhausted. On the following day, some of the detainees went on hunger strike to protest against the arbitrary arrests, provoking an international outcry. Luaty Beirão remained on hunger strike for 36 days (the number of years of President dos Santos' rule).²⁶

In July 2015, falling revenues linked to oil prices affected the currency peg between the US dollar and the Angolan Kwanza, causing depreciation. The central bank took measures to tackle soaring inflation and to restrict currency leaving the country. It became difficult to send money abroad to South Africa, Portugal, the Middle East, and elsewhere, affecting the middle and expatriate classes. Many international companies working in Angola left the country and/or made thousands of workers redundant. The World Bank agreed to \$650 million in financial support for Angola, the first funding from the lender since 2010 (Reuters, 9/7/2015). Global oil prices continued to fall, and in January 2016 they reached less than \$30 per barrel.

In this context of economic and political turmoil, in October 2015 the *PDGML – Plano Director Geral Metropolitano de Luanda* (Luanda General Metropolitan Masterplan, shortened to *Plano Luanda*) was published, setting out the government's \$15 billion, 15 year vision for territorial development and housing construction in the city. Responsibility for its implementation was charged to the parastatal company Urbinvest, whose director, Isabel dos Santos, is the daughter of President dos Santos (*Rede Angola*, 11/10/2015; *O País*, 15/12/2015). The masterplan, promised to be implemented by 2030, had been commissioned to Broadway Malyan, a global architecture, urbanism and design company which had previously refurbished the Hotel Tropico in Luanda.²⁷ Criticism emerged in the Angolan media, with some architects, urbanists and educators complaining that they had not been included in discussions surrounding this pivotal project. The masterplan was criticised for its non-inclusive attitude. An example of criticism came from Ângela Mingas, a renowned Angolan architect and educator, who complained that "at the University level, we were not contacted to provide any kind of opinion" (*O País*, 15/12/2015).

25 Two more (female) activists were kept under house arrest, causing the case to be referred to in the mainstream media as the "15+2" case.

26 The country experienced a period of repressive turmoil. In November 2015, outspoken Angolan rapper MCK was prevented from leaving the country to perform at a concert in Brazil (*Público*, 24/11/2015). In January 2016, the trials of Kalupeteka and the "15+2" trial resumed in Luanda (*Angop*, 25/1/2016)

27 Broadway Maylan's website presents the company by saying: "we create world-class cities, places and buildings to unlock lasting value" (Source: broadwaymalyan.com).

On the other hand, some media outlets close to the political regime praised the new Luanda masterplan, resorting at times to ethically dubious manoeuvres such as using other people to foment positive opinions of the plan. *Rumo* magazine published an issue on the new wave of Angolan architecture, in which one of the interviewees was architect and curator Paula Nascimento (Fig. 20). The article presented a supposed commendation of the new city plan by the architect (*Rumo*, April 2016):

The urban plan will resolve the issue of building in high-risk areas.

Days after the magazine was published, however, the architect denied saying these words on social media (Paula Nascimento, 13/5/2016):

I have just read part of the article, and it contains errors (...) and quotes of phrases that I did not say. (...) Inventing a phrase and presenting it as a quote is not an error, it has another name (...). I did not say the phrase which was attributed to me; mainly because I have not read the document referring to the PD [*Plano Director*, or Masterplan].



Fig. 20 – *Rumo* magazine (issue 24, April 2016).

The *Plano Luanda* deserves closer analysis, as it represents the official strategy of city-making to be implemented in Luanda, at the expense of vast areas with years of development and consolidation. Its large-scale, long-term, generic principles merit interrogation. The masterplan was made available in a bilingual (Portuguese and English) downloadable document. A ‘bullet point’ style presentation of information accompanied by shiny photographs constitutes the outcome of the long-awaited masterplan (Fig. 21). The tone of the document is mainly economy-based, insisting on the efforts made to implement economic diversification in strategic sectors (manufacturing, services, logistics, tourism, among others),



REDE RODOVIÁRIA A NÍVEL METROPOLITANO

METROPOLITAN ROAD NETWORK

UMA HIERARQUIA RODOVIÁRIA MELHORADA FOI ESTRUTURADA DA SEGUINTE FORMA:

- 01 Dotar a Via Expresso (circular central) de capacidade adicional. Melhorar a ligação suburbanos ao núcleo interno da cidade criando a circular arterial do Corredor do Combate.
- 02 Concluir a via rodoviária "Segunda Circular" de Banhos à Kitanganda, como via automóvel expresso e corredor ferroviário de passageiros e de mercadorias.
- 03 Melhoramento da Estrada de Caxaco - o principal eixo de transportes da Província.
- 04 Continuação do corredor primário Norte-Sul para oferecer uma conectividade rápida ao centro de Viana, aliviando simultaneamente a pressão sobre outras artérias.
- 05 Melhorar a Estrada de Caxaco e actualizá-la para estrada primária, como uma esplanada para a Marginal de Baía, que garante ligações rodoviárias rápidas para a Dande.
- 06 Completar a entrada costeira da Marginal da Corroia.

AN ENHANCED ROAD HIERARCHY HAS BEEN DEVISED AS FOLLOWS:

- 01 Upgrade Via Expresso (middle ring) with additional capacity. Enhance links from suburban Luanda to the inner city core by building Combate Corridor arterial ring.
- 02 Complete Kitanganda (second) ring road, an express suburban route, passenger rail and cargo rail corridor.
- 03 Upgrade Estrada de Caxaco - provincial urban transport axis of the Province.
- 04 Construct the north-south primary corridor to offer rapid access to the heart of the suburban at Viana, alleviating pressure elsewhere.
- 05 Upgrade Estrada de Caxaco to primary status as an extension to the Baía Marginal with rapid links to Dande.
- 06 Complete the Marginal da Corroia coastal road.

Fig. 21 – Pages of the PDGML – Plano Director Geral Metropolitano de Luanda (Luanda General Metropolitan Masterplan), 2015.

Source: www.info-angola.com [Accessed 1/11/2017]

yet recognising that the oil sector is expected to remain the most relevant to Angola's economy (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 64). The document makes constant use of statistics and generic information (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 65-66):

Angola is expected to continue to grow rapidly – at an annual average of 6.3%. It will diversify its economy resulting in the oil sector being accountable for only 25% of the national GDP in 2030.²⁸ Luanda's economy is expected to grow at an average 6.5% with significant increases in employment – expected to triple by 2030 as non-oil sectors (more labour-intensive) come on stream. Luanda is seen as Angola's growth engine to account for 86% of the GDP in 2030. (...) Luanda is one of the world's fastest growing urban areas, expected to remain constant over the next decade. By 2030, a population of 12.9 M people is projected for the Province, of which 58% will be of a working age, and 41% too young to be employed.

The masterplan description promotes a kind of 'lifestyle' that is explicitly linked to the 'formal' side of the city of Luanda (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 6):

Making happy and self-contained neighbourhoods giving communities access to reliable water, power, sanitation and communications, with formal employment, skills training, healthcare facilities and urban open space.

Statements such as this may imply that the 'informal' side of the city, which represents a very significant part of Luanda, is 'unhappy'. Within this vision, the informal city is inadequate for modern and future ways of living. The city's *musseques* "will be regenerated as high quality new centralities constructed to service the new employment clusters" (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 17).²⁹

This is a common feature of Luanda's top-down planning approach: to state that the informal neighbourhoods are not *destroyed*, they are merely displaced to a different location and *rebuilt* according to a different model. This interpretation is not clearly evident in the *Plano Luanda* document. However, it becomes clearer upon closer examination. On the one hand, new key routes and corridors are proposed (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 17):

An enhanced urban grid will accommodate a revitalized and comprehensive transport network to get the city moving again while stimulating land values and commercial activity. These key routes will form infrastructure arteries and dense development corridors, for high quality mixed use development that redefines the perception of the city.

But, on the other hand, these new arteries will certainly collide with Luanda's existing urban fabric (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 54, 58):

The Plan seeks to prioritize the renewal of poor stock while creating space for new housing to accommodate growth. This will be balanced over successive 5-year phases, with priority accorded to communities adjudged to be at risk, or obstructing any of the key proposed development corridors.

28 As opposed to 46% in 2012, corresponding to 96% of the country's exports (World Bank, 2013: vii).

29 Note that, according to the document, 49% of Luanda's urban area is formed by *musseques*: 3,550,318 people live in non-structured *musseques* and 1,439,120 live in structured *musseques* (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 55). Almost none of this population has daily access to drinking water (the document states that 42% of Luanda's population currently has access, a number expected to rise to 95% following implementation of the project) (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 35) With regard to sanitation, the document notes that only 35% of Luanda has sewage systems (although the effluents are not purified). It is expected that by 2030, 80% of Luanda Province will have sewage systems, including water treatment plants and marine outfalls (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 40).

The phased regeneration process is focused initially on the city's non-structured *musseque* neighbourhoods which are frequently overcrowded, poorly served by essential infrastructure and in areas of serious risk to health. In addition there are a number of homes in the path of the designated development corridors.

The document recognises that “a large number of people live in areas where their lives are at risk” (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 55). However, the “risk” factor is not the main justification for clearing entire areas of the city: almost as many evictions are expected to be prompted by the “obstructing” factor. The document states that the population living in areas vulnerable to floods and landslides (513,722 people) is similar to the number affected by the implementation of service and mobility infrastructure (490,485 people) (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 55).³⁰

With regard to accommodating displaced residents, the masterplan explains that “private firms will be contracted to build new housing to appropriate living standards” (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 58). This is, as we will see particularly in Chapter 5, what is already taking place in Luanda – most of the evicted people are resettled in housing colonies on the outskirts of the city (where, nonetheless, living standards are questionable) (**Fig. 22**). The document recognises the importance of fair negotiations surrounding the eviction process, and points to models used in other cities as a source for its aspirations (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 58):

An appropriate system of compensation will be devised that remains within the people's means and aspirations to enable this vast and important part of the regeneration process to take the Province forward into the next century, as Singapore and Curitiba have done in the past.

None of the references highlighted by the international company Broadway Malyan is in Africa – instead, they are located in Asia and South America (Brazil). The aim is probably to inscribe Luanda as a global, ‘world-class’ city, with iconic buildings and imported urban models. This concept, of course, ignores the Africanness of this African city. This is not an original perspective, nor is it exclusive to foreign architects working in Angola. In 2011, Angolan architect André Mingas, a planning consultant for Angolan President José Eduardo dos Santos, argued that the point of reference for Luanda's urban and architectural development should be Dubai, “full of high rise buildings and new materials shining under the sun”.³¹ However, this official strategy for urban regeneration displays scant concern for the city's history, with worthwhile considerations about sustainability or adaptation falling prey to an image of modernity which has since become outdated (Ackley, 2005: 35-36). The reference to Dubai and Singapore is an example of what Marshall Berman considers a trend in the global south, which became “remarkably adept at manipulating images as symbols of progress”, inserted in “a major worldwide industry (...) but

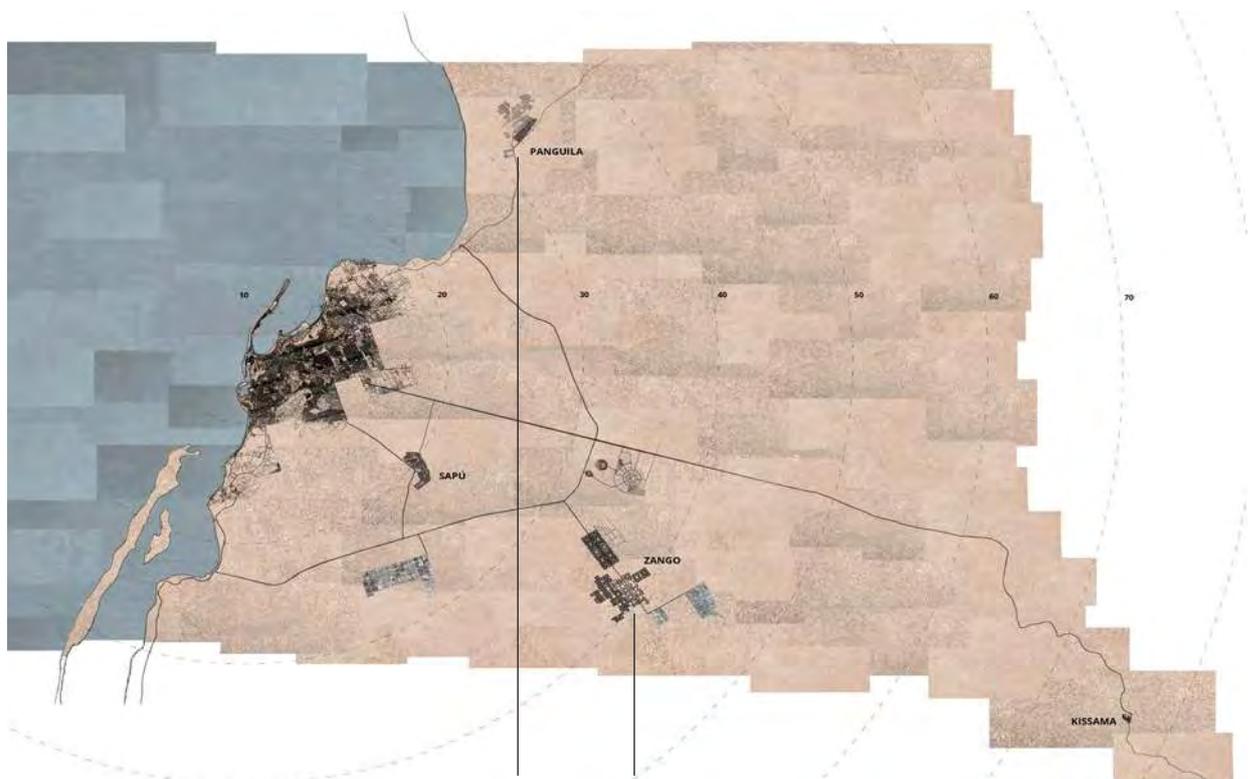
30 More specifically, the document states that 485,500 people live in areas of flood risk, and 28,250 people are at risk of landslides.

31 André Mingas interviewed in *Revista Universo* (unknown issue), cited by Dr Isabel Martins in her paper “Walking in Time Through Luanda”, at the Conference *Exchanging World Visions: Modern Architecture in Lusophone Africa (1943-1974)*, University of Minho (Guimarães, Portugal), 8/12/2012.

notoriously inept at generating real progress to compensate for the real misery and devastation they bring” (1982: 77). Jennifer Robinson, too, is critical of this unrooted approach to city-making, expressing concern regarding the “developmentalist” attitude displayed (2006: 10):

Whereas global and world cities’ approaches focus on small elements of cities that are connected into specific kinds of economic networks, and developmentalist approaches tend to emphasise the poorest, least well-provisioned parts of the city, the ordinary city approach brings the city ‘as a whole’ back in to view or, more properly, the city in all its diversity and complexity. This implies a stronger reterritorialisation of the imagination of urban studies around the individual city, or city-region, rather than its immersion in recounting transnational flows.

In Luanda, the “world-class” aspiration is situated within a context of political propaganda that seems to glorify imported urban models at the expense of local, climatically suited and culturally significant ways of living and building. This thesis looks at how both sides can actually form part of a single urban experience.



Panguila is located in a peripheral area to the north of the city, far from the public gaze. The Panguila urban intervention was promoted and financed by the President of the Republic of Angola, and featured the participation of various national and international bodies. Implementation of the project began in the period following the civil war (2002), in the framework of the Population Resettlement Programme, and it was inaugurated in 2003 (this programme was originally assigned to the Office of Special Works; currently, it is run by the Luanda Provincial Government). The construction involved various government bodies, such as the former Ministry of Public Works and, more recently, the Ministry of Urbanism and Housing (Viegas, 2015: 332).

Zango is located in the Viana district on the south east periphery of Luanda, around 40 km from the city centre. The project emerged in the framework of the *PNHS – Programa Nacional de Habitação Social* (National Social Housing Programme), which was created in 2000 primarily to accommodate resettled groups. It was initially built to rehouse the evicted population of Boavista, a central informal neighbourhood affected by landslides after heavy rains in 2000 and 2001. Since then, Zango has become a kind of “testing ground” for the state-led housing developments that have followed (Croese, 2013: 106).

Fig. 22 – Plan of Luanda highlighting the city centre and resettlement colonies. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Postcolonial Urban Studies

Urban studies on postcolonial cities, especially those focusing on the subject of informal settlements, have suffered from over-generalisation in recent practice and scholarship. This research, however, pays particular attention to concrete local conditions. Geographic differentiations should be addressed not only between different continents (Africa, Asia, South America) or regions (sub-Saharan Africa, for instance), but also on a more local scale.

Despite the obvious inclusion of this investigation within the 'African' geographic context, the thesis is centred on an analysis of the type of urban order embodied in a particular city, or part of a city – within the complex architectural and urban topography of Luanda, the Chicala neighbourhood is the chosen case study. The specificity of this neighbourhood is constantly placed within a broader urban context, with a particular emphasis on aspects of its reciprocity with Luanda. Hence, this investigation is not simply an exploration of informal architectural order. Rather, it is a contribution to understanding postcolonial Luanda, and indeed to understanding cities in general in all their depth, as opposed to the broad simplification of developer-capitalist practices.

The thesis is anchored in a postcolonial framework which reads the city as a hybrid territory (Fanon, 1963; Meredith, 2006; von Osten et al, 2010; Robinson, 2006; Simone, 2004). On the one hand, the distinction between 'formal' and 'informal' can no longer be clearly differentiated – I argue that the relationship between the two is one of reciprocity, maturing throughout the postcolonial period (since 1975). On the other hand, the thesis pays particular attention to the very heterogeneity of society itself, rendering the terms and methods familiar to the social sciences relevant to the architectural analysis of Chicala/Luanda (Jacobs, 1961; Ingold, 2013).

Luanda is a type of city that may be categorised as 'hybrid', where institutions and cultures intermingle and adapt to the urban milieu – what Herbert Gans calls an "urban village" (1962: 4). This kind of understanding aims to lend nuance to the discourse of certain architects and urban practitioners, particularly in the city of Luanda, who tend to divide the urban population into oversimplified groups and dismiss the virtues of the city's social and cultural diversity (*Plano Luanda*, 2015: 54):

Currently 30% of Angolans live in Luanda Province, putting pressure on the urban centres as a result of the influx of people from rural areas in search of better job opportunities and conditions of life.

Curiously, "pressure" seems to derive from other sources too: from the influx of foreign companies and from local governments and businesspeople. As Berman states, "through this clash and interplay of experiments in modernisation from above and below", we may find clues to some of the

“mysteries of political and spiritual life” in postcolonial cities today (Berman, 1988: 286).

In its analysis of a complex urban phenomenon, the thesis tries to move away from the term ‘slum’, which has long since acquired pejorative connotations in many different locations. In *The War Against the Poor* (1996), Herbert J. Gans observes that “one of America’s popular pejorative labels is ‘slum’, which characterises low-income dwellings and neighbourhoods as harmful to their poor occupants and the rest of the community” (1996: 58). Gans contextualises the meaning of the word throughout history (1996: 58):

In the nineteenth century, slums were often faulted for turning the deserving poor into the undeserving poor, but in the twentieth century the causality was sometimes reversed, so that poor people with ‘slum-dweller hearts’ were accused of destroying viable buildings and neighbourhoods.

Even in the 1990s, Gans already considered “slum” to be an outdated term (1996: 65):

In fact, ‘underclass area’ is basically a current version of the old label ‘slum’, which also treated indicators of poverty as behavioural failures. (...) And as in all labelling, the poor people who are labelled are left to fend for themselves.

In more recent practice and literature in the field of architecture, the term has evolved and ‘informal city’ is now commonly used, although the pejorative connotations have not entirely disappeared. Barry Bergdoll, former chief curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York – where he was responsible for the exhibition and publication “Small Scale, Big Change: New Architectures of Social Engagement” (2010-11) –, recognises that “the last forty years too have seen a dramatic increase in what has come to be called the ‘informal city’, a term intended to replace the negative connotations both of slums and of a centralised government-sponsored urban renewal often known as ‘slum-clearance’, with a valorising frame of reference” (Bergdoll, 2010: 12). Bergdoll recognises the importance of architects and researchers tackling the topic (2010: 12):

With estimates that by 2030 some two billion people, or nearly a quarter of humanity, will be living in illegal dwellings, the tactics for confronting the rising tide of the informal city is one of the most pressing and perplexing issues facing the planet.

In recent scholarship, this global phenomenon has begun to be characterised as a viable type of urban realm. The proactive attitude of Latin America towards the informal city is explained by Justin McGuirk (2014: 25):

The slums are not defined as informal because they have no form, but because they exist outside the legal and economic protocols that shape the formal city. But slums are far from chaotic. They may lack essential services yet they operate under their own self-regulating systems, housing millions of people in tight-knit communities and proving a crucial device for accessing the opportunities that cities offer. Acknowledging the informal as a vital part of the city’s ecosystem has been the great U-turn of urban policy over the last two decades.

Between the negative connotations of ‘slum’ and the broader and more ambiguous ‘informal city’, other terminology is also commonly used, such as ‘ghetto’ and ‘shantytown’ (Nightingale, 2012: 402):

If the word 'ghetto' dominates the urban politics of the wealthy nations of the Global North, the most important keywords in the exploding cities of the Global South are 'slum' and 'shantytown'. As the language suggests, the main drama in the spatial politics of most former colonial cities is about class – and specifically about the nearly one billion poor people who have made those cities home since 1960. That said, many aspects of the colonial White Town/Black Town systems of race segregation continue to help carve the deep social canyons that scar the vast expanses of the megacities. (...) These forces have brought a new version of colonial segregationism into being.

Phrases such as 'self-built' or 'unplanned' are also commonly employed. However, these capture only a certain aspect of the phenomenon in question – its concreteness – and they imply an opposing kind of 'planned' city. A word or expression capable of capturing the specificity of this global urban phenomenon on its own terms is needed. Words like 'informal', 'unplanned' or 'non-planned' seem to diverge from another concept – the formal or planned (in a sense, they describe a kind of city based on what it is not, instead of highlighting the virtues that are particular to it). This thesis attempts to move towards a terminology that goes beyond the somewhat catastrophic vision of a *Planet of Slums* (Davis, 2006), as well as the often excessively hermetic, unwavering vision of proponents of the informal city.

Another way to tackle the subject of the informal city is to look beyond its concrete built form and perceive its sociological formation and the transitory nature of its population. One of the studies that best frames this state of urbanity is Doug Saunders' *Arrival City* (2011). The author acknowledges the difficulty of defining a variety of places in single, totalitarian terms (Saunders, 2011: 19):

I am coining the term 'arrival city' to unite these places, because our conventional scholarly and bureaucratic language – 'immigrant gateway', 'community of primary settlement' – misrepresents them by disguising their dynamic nature, their transitory role. (...) In the language of urban planners and governments, these enclaves are too often defined as static appendages, cancerous growth on an otherwise healthy city. (...) Yet to see this as their normal condition is to ignore the arrival city's greatest success: it is, in the most successful parts of both the developing world and the Western world, the key instrument in creating a new middle class, abolishing the horrors of rural poverty and ending inequality.

Saunders recognises qualities and urban vitality where others might see only dangerous contexts immersed in tensions and conflicts (2011: 3, 11):

The great migration of humans is manifesting itself in the creation of a special kind of urban place. These transitional spaces – arrival cities – are the places where the next great economic and cultural boom will be born, or where the next great explosion of violence will occur.

The arrival city is both populated with people in transition – for it turns outsiders into central, 'core' urbanites with sustainable social, economic and political futures in the city – and is itself a place in transition, for its streets, homes and established families will either someday become part of the core city itself or will fail and decay into poverty or be destroyed.

For Saunders, the 'arrival city' may be readily distinguished from other urban neighbourhoods, not only by its particular brand of rural-urban miscegenation and its self-built, improvised appearance and ever-changing nature, but also by "the constant linkages it makes (...) in two directions" (Saunders, 2011: 10). In other words, these are 'hybrid' places, linked "in a lasting and intensive way to [their]

originating villages (...) and they are also deeply engaged to the *established city*” (Saunders, 2011: 10).

In many ways, the concept of ‘arrival city’ can be directly related to the study of Chicala, as I will demonstrate throughout the thesis. Chicala’s main function is the maintenance of a connecting network, creating links with the established city and the outer world, and acting as an “*urban establishment platform*” (Saunders, 2011: 20). Saunders summarises this idea (2011: 20):

[the arrival city] provides informal resources that allow the village migrant, after saving and becoming part of the network, to purchase a house (...), to start a small business (...), to reach out to the larger city for higher education or to assume a position of political leadership.

The properly functioning arrival city “provides a *social-mobility path* into either the middle class or the sustainable, permanently employed and propertied ranks of the upper working class” (Saunders, 2011: 20). And that is, in short, what arrival cities are: repositories of social capital, machines for its creation and distribution” (2011: 20). As we will see in the study of Chicala, particularly in Chapter 4, this too is the case in the neighbourhood. For instance, the inquiries conducted on site showed that residents’ places of work are predominantly located within Luanda’s city centre (**Fig. 23**). Another aspect of the arrival city is that “it should not be mistaken for a rural place” (Saunders, 2011: 23), displaying parallels once again with the Chicala case (2011: 23):

Urbanites tend to see the arrival city as a simple reproduction, within the city, of the structures and folkways of the village. (...) But this view misinterprets the urban ambitions of the arrival city, its fast-changing nature and its role in redefining the nature of urban life. The culture of the arrival city (...) incorporates elements of both [rural and urban].

This thesis endorses the concept of ‘hybrid’ urbanity, a different vision to that contained within the *Plano Luanda* presented earlier. It seems that if one does not understand the nature of the contribution, or potential contribution, of the many informal neighbourhoods across Luanda, including

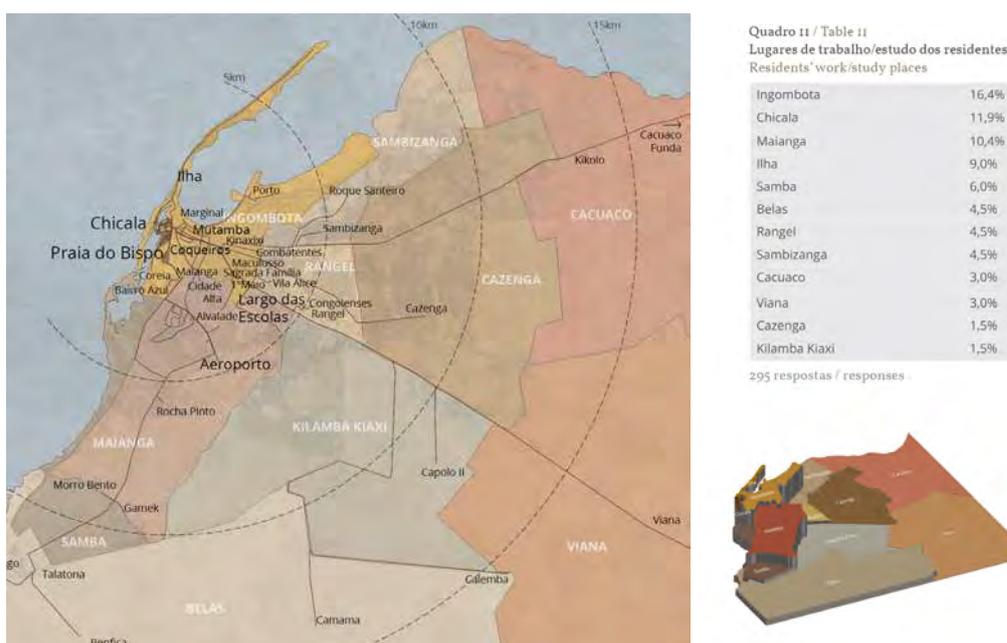


Fig. 23 – Places of work/study. © Paulo Moreira / This is Pacifica, 2014

Chicala, then one is overlooking the spirit of the postcolonial city, and maintaining a segregationist conceptualisation of the 'formal' city *versus* its 'slums'. Saunders puts it simply (2011: 75):

The arrival city wants to be normal, wants to be included. (...) If it is given the resources to do so, it will flourish; without them, it is likely to explode.

The cities that Saunders considers "normal" are the same as those which Jennifer Robinson labels simply as "ordinary" (2006: 3):

It is the argument of this book that we need a form of theorising that can be as cosmopolitan as the cities we try to describe. This would be a form of urban theory that can follow the creative paths of urban dwellers – across the city or around the world – as they remake cities (Simone 1998) and that can draw on the transformative potential of shared lives in diverse, contested – ordinary – cities to imagine new urban futures.³²

In many potential ways, this approach can inform the study of Chicala. Nonetheless, the aspect of the 'arrival city' that perhaps is not clearly replicated in Chicala – as least not yet – is the political activity of its people (Saunders, 2011: 217):

(...) There is another way arrival cities can explode: by developing their own potent political movements and sending them inward to seize the political centre of the larger city, and possibly the nation. The arrival-city takeover of the city and the nation is a new phenomenon, but is likely to become the defining political event of this century, as neglected ex-migrant communities, which in many countries will soon represent a majority of the population, demand their own representation.

In the context of Angola it remains difficult to apply the concept of political emancipation, but Saunders urges for a positive vision of the future (2011: 217):

The arrival-city is increasingly making itself heard. (...) 'the catalytic class' – people who have escaped absolute poverty, who own some possessions, who generally own their own housing, legally or not, and who expect their children to have better lives than they or their parents did. A third of Africa's population belongs to the catalytic class. Born in the fields and focused on the urban core, they arise from the arrival city. They are the class who will be causing the most dramatic changes in coming years, for theirs is the next world.

This positive perspective is echoed by other authors. Hardoy had previously pointed to a certain ambiguity of treatment by the authorities, and praised the power of self-organised communities (1989: 16):

Most governments mix indifference with repression; some illegal settlements are tolerated while others are bulldozed. (...) None have acknowledged that these people and their community organisations are the most potent force that (...) nations have for a more efficient, healthy, resource-conserving and democratic process of city construction.

In the context of an authoritarian political regime, "the most important organisers, builders and planners of (...) cities" (Hardoy, 1989: 15) are not recognised as city-builders – indeed, the government usually refuses to acknowledge that "they are citizens with legitimate rights and needs for government services" (Hardoy, 1989: 15-16).

32 *Ordinary Cities*, by Jennifer Robinson (2006).

Given the widespread global rejection of the informal city by local officials, 'slum clearance' has for decades been an academic topic in its own right. It is also one of the main focuses of this thesis. The fact that Chicala was gradually disappearing throughout the course of the investigation led to a significant effort in understanding the mechanisms behind the process of suppression and displacement.³³ Marshall Berman's *All That is Solid Melts Into Air* is one of the key studies on this topic (1988: 13, 77):

To be modern is to live a life of paradox and contradiction. It is to be overpowered by the immense bureaucratic organisations that have the power to control and often to destroy all communities, values, lives.

Millions of people have been victimised by disastrous development policies, megalomaniacally conceived, shoddily and insensitively executed, which in the end have developed little but the rulers' own fortunes and powers.

The approach of bulldozing entire urbanised areas for the sake of modernisation is best understood in Berman's take on Robert Moses' (since then widely cited) *Express Way* (1988: 290):

When you operate in an overbuilt metropolis, you have to hack your way with a meat ax. I'm just going to keep right on building. You do the best you can to stop it. Maxims of Robert Moses.

Compared with his earlier, rural and suburban highways, the only difference here was that 'There are more houses in the way... more people in the way – that's all.' He boasted that 'When you operate in an overbuilt metropolis, you have to hack your way with a meat ax'.

Several decades later, the dramatic effects of Moses' urban policies are paralleled in Luanda. Like the "corridors" opened up by the *Plano Luanda* in 2016, in the 1930s-1960s Moses seems to reach his full glory in wreaking devastation (Berman, 1988: 295):

So often the price of ongoing and expanding modernity is the destruction not merely of 'traditional' and 'pre-modern' institutions but – and here is the real tragedy – of everything most vital and beautiful in the modern world itself.

In the current global trajectory of urban overdevelopment, "neglect, disinvestment, and decline of urban space are actually necessary preconditions for renewal, gentrification, and displacement" (Murray, 2008: 128). Murray recognises that these are two sides of the same coin: "the contradictory dynamics of abandonment (...) and gentrification (...) are inextricably linked together as the conjoined outcomes of real estate capitalism" (Murray, 2008: 128).

Despite this being a problem which has been decades in the making, the scale of the current global phenomenon of expulsions (from home, land, and job) has no historical equivalent. Saskia Sassen summarises the problem of expulsions as a violent consequence of the transformation of global cities into places with one-sided advanced economic functions (2014: 1, 216-217):

We are confronting a formidable problem in our global political economy: the emergence of new logics of *expulsion*.

33 This topic will be developed further in Chapter 5.

Eventually expulsions and the instruments that enable them become part of an interconnected, often mutually reinforcing trajectory that moves us farther and farther away from our preceding age of incorporation and middle class growth.

Sassen demonstrates that this urban dilemma is quite explicit in Luanda/Angola, highlighting the country (along with Nigeria) as one of the most dramatic cases of economic inequality, with obvious implications for social and urban functioning (2014: 16, 89):

Germany and Angola had the same rate of GDP growth in 2000 but clearly had very different economies and saw very different distributive effects. Although Germany is reducing the level, it still puts a good share of government resources into countrywide infrastructure and offers a wide array of services to its people, from health care to trains and buses. Angola's government does neither, choosing to support a small elite seeking to satisfy its own desires, including luxury developments in its capital city, Luanda, now ranked as the most expensive city in the world.

Also, resource-rich countries have seen more of their people become destitute and expelled from basic survival systems because of those resources, even as another part of their population becomes a rich middle class, also because of those resources; Nigeria and Angola are probably the most familiar cases of this common pattern in the current decade.

The concluding remarks in Sassen's *Expulsions* mirror the main arguments of this thesis quite closely. The author claims that at times when dynamics of expulsion proliferate, a deeper engagement with and understanding of the places of the expelled is greatly needed. Places like Chicala, which are somewhat invisible to the standard measures of our modern states and economies, are not simply "dark holes" (Sassen, 2014: 222). Such places are crying out for recognition and "should be made conceptually visible" (2014: 222). This thesis aims to cast light on one of these incredibly diverse and vital, yet endangered, neighbourhoods. In doing so, we may potentially uncover new modes of *making*, as Sassen suggests: "making local economies, new histories, and new modes of membership" (2014: 222).

In this spirit, and recalling the acknowledgement of 'ordinariness' in postcolonial urban studies, this thesis looks at Chicala simply as a neighbourhood with its own characteristics. Given that this is a study of a particular place, local words like *bairro* or *musseque* may be used to refer to the neighbourhood.³⁴ On a broader scale, I advocate for the use of local words when discussing any kind of urban context – this may be a step towards avoiding (often negative) generalisations such as 'global city' or 'slum'.

³⁴ *Bairro* (literally, 'neighbourhood') has a more neutral meaning than the widely used *musseque* (which still has negative connotations, akin to 'slum').

Luanda: Critical Literature Review

This thesis is a study of a particular city. It is therefore important to frame it in the context of past and present research focusing on the specific subject of Luanda. The majority of the academic and generalist literature, from both the colonial and postcolonial periods, is in Portuguese. However, this does not mean that London is not an excellent place to conduct an extensive literature review of studies on Luanda: the SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies) library, which contains almost 1,500 titles on Angola (many of which are hard to find concentrated in a single place in Angola or Portugal), became my favoured study nook. The wooden tables and the large windows with views over the treetops – and of course, the relevance of the available literature – created the perfect environment for exploring postcolonial studies in London.³⁵

It is equally worth mentioning the contribution of the British Library and its archive of microfilms of the *Jornal de Angola* (issues between 1975 and 1983). These records are yet further evidence of the surprising and unusual quantity of information that London has to offer to knowledge (in this case, of the Portuguese-speaking world). As we will see throughout this thesis, the *Jornal de Angola* of the pre- and post-independence periods has been of great assistance, allowing the origins of certain concepts (and preconceptions) which gradually became rooted in the urban lexicon of everyday Luanda/Angola to be understood from an official perspective.

Analysis of this material also allows us to perceive differences in the ideological discourse of the revolutionary era (post-independence) when viewed alongside, for example, attacks on urban informality by the current state bodies (including the *Jornal de Angola* itself). There is a clear change of ideological position, despite there being no change in the party in power (the MPLA have governed in Angola since independence in 1975), with consequences for the shape of the city. This is explained by one of the most commonly cited contemporary researchers on Angola, Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (2015: 19-20):

The MPLA's agenda for post-war Angola much transcends the ambitious task of national reconstruction to encompass an ideological project of transforming the country in its own image. This project has a tool – the oil-rich state – and a vanguard: the urban, civilised, Portuguese-speaking Angolan. At its centre resides Luanda (...). Luanda is more than the power centre and controller of the nation's wealth: it is the setter of its parameters. (...) In the era of MPLA hegemony, Angola was finally to become 'the Republic of Luanda'.

The issue of the impact of the oil industry on post-war reconstruction in Luanda is so decisive that it has given rise to diverse analyses, including a chapter entitled '*The Spectacle of Reconstruction*' by Soares de Oliveira (in which he states that Luanda has been envisaged as the basis of the MPLA's "fantasies" (2013: 52) and the doctoral thesis by Ricardo Cardoso, entitled *The Crude Urban Revolution: Land Markets, Planning Forms and the Making of a New Luanda* (2015).³⁶ The contemporary phase of

³⁵ The search for material in London was supplemented by visits to various other archives and libraries around the world, above all in Lisbon (*Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical*), Luanda (*Biblioteca Nacional de Angola*), Porto (*Biblioteca Municipal*), Basel (*Basler Afrika Bibliographien*) and Montreal (*Canadian Centre for Architecture*).

³⁶ Cardoso presents three long chapters on examples of top-down planning in Luanda (all with evocative titles

rampant construction is without historical precedent. In the context of what is currently taking place in Luanda, the lack of vision of 20th century Portuguese settlers who doubted the relevance (and even the existence) of black gold in Angola seems almost comical. This 1938 description of the minimal efforts made to engage in sub-soil profiteering shows how mistaken the colonial settlers were (Rosado, 1938: 49-50):

The *Companhia dos Petróleos* [Petroleum Company] makes a profit by neither exploiting resources nor letting others do so. That is why all of us, the Portuguese, believe there is no oil in Angola. But the *Companhia dos Petróleos* concession remains, as if there could be oil...

Those days are now over. Soares de Oliveira and Cardoso form part of a wave of researchers who have begun to address postcolonial topics following several decades of widespread apathy in Portugal regarding the country's colonial past and the trail of African countries formerly under their command.³⁷ Madalena Cunha Matos refers to this period as a time of collective "amnesia" (2010: 27-33):

[After 1974] the colonies became a void, an amputated part of the body that still ached. Indeed, the colonial war is still (...) nearly a taboo in the collective conscience of the public. Feelings of shame, guilt and perplexity endure. (...) In contrast to the (...) preceding generation, a new age group is now starting to face the former colonial territories in Africa with a serene gaze, devoid of guilt and greed. (...) It seems that we [the Portuguese architects and researchers] are finally overcoming this period of amnesia in the history of architecture, bringing us into the era of rediscovery.

The 'post-amnesia' period did not inherently lead to the flourishing of a critical, problematising discourse regarding the colonial past. Chabal offers an explanation for this (2002: 19):

The history of Portugal's march to democracy is inextricably connected with that of the decolonisation of its African Empire. As a result, Portuguese decolonisation has attracted attention from historians more interested in Portuguese than African history.

In the fields of architecture and urbanism in Angola, since the turn of the millennium there has been a profusion of studies focusing on the "legacy of Portuguese influence" in Africa (**Fig. 24**).³⁸ It is important and highly recommendable that these studies are carried out, and many of them have been very relevant in duly emphasising the work of key authors such as Vasco Vieira da Costa in Angola and Pancho Guedes in Moçambique.³⁹

Within this framework, the doctoral thesis by Angolan architect and professor Isabel Martins (2000), developed at the University of Porto, deserves particular prominence for its contribution to the field of architectural history in Luanda. However, the thesis contains several gaps regarding the place

in Portuguese, a bold move in a thesis from Berkeley): 'Mirantes do Talatona', about the role of the Brazilian company Odebrecht in the construction of luxury condominiums in Luanda Sul; 'Planning Confusão', on the actions of the IPGUL - Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management; and 'Cidade do Kilamba', about the 'new centralities' that are intended to resolve the issue of housing scarcity in Luanda.

³⁷ I refer primarily to Portuguese researchers (who may be working from overseas) and to the way in which the subject is handled in Portugal, since this is the geographical and professional area in which I work, and where the final phase of this thesis was written.

³⁸ In reality, *Patrimónios de Influência Portuguesa* (Legacies of Portuguese Influence) is the title of a doctoral programme at the University of Coimbra (Centre for Social Studies and Institute for Interdisciplinary Research).

³⁹ For a study on Vieira da Costa, see for example Margarida Quintã (2009). For Pancho Guedes, see Guedes (2009)



Fig. 24 – Plan of the centre of Luanda, excluding Chicala.

Source: *Património de Origem Portuguesa no Mundo (World Heritage of Portuguese Origin)*

Between the struggles of the informal settlements and neoliberal fantasies of large-scale engineering and extravagant architectural form as an agent of economic power, there is a dense, consolidated city centre. This plan, part of a 650 page volume on Portuguese heritage around the world, highlights a selection of relevant buildings and public places in the city centre of Luanda (while the neighbourhood of Chicala - top left - is ignored, as it did not fit the scope of the study). The plan shows public squares (yellow), as well as civil (blue), religious (orange) and private buildings (green). A more in-depth survey of the city's central district would show that, over time, Luanda has integrated its entrepreneurial immigrants rather than locking them into a purely exploitative dependency.

of informal neighbourhoods. Martins acknowledges that these cannot be distinguished from the rest of the city, saying that the *musseques* “were born and grew with the city as a result of a set of mutually-influencing phenomena” (2000: 278). However, only four pages at the very end of her thesis are dedicated to the *musseques*.⁴⁰

While Martins’ thesis focuses on the architecture of buildings, the study by Manuela da Fonte (2007) presents an in-depth analysis of urban plans in Angolan cities in the Portuguese colonial period (in the 20th century in particular). Her research also represents a fundamental contribution to the history of Angolan cities, although once again the *musseques* are overlooked.

Several of the research projects focusing on architecture in the Portuguese colonial period have had considerable public reach in both Angola and Portugal, such as the project *Africa - Visions of the Colonial Town Planning Office (1944 - 1974)*, coordinated by Ana Vaz Milheiro.⁴¹ This is a textbook case of the lack of interrogation by some Portuguese researchers of the colonial past, as well as of a lack of tact in approaching the contemporary African reality. This project is so outrageous and so far-removed from the methods and objectives employed in this thesis that it merits a more detailed critique.

First of all, “Africa” encompasses an immense diversity of countries and contexts, but this project deals only with those countries whose official language is Portuguese – Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, and São Tomé e Príncipe.⁴² However, this is a minor issue compared with what lies in store in the catalogue of the homonymous exhibition. Disinterest for postcolonial thought is acknowledged as follows (Milheiro, 2013: 11):

Here, the story is told from the point of view of the colonisers. It is a calculated deviation from conventional postcolonial studies in that a less pacifying or politically correct approach is adopted.

The project description continues with an attempt at distancing architecture from any ethical and ideological responsibilities attached to that which is planned. This is conveyed with somewhat awkward statements such as (Milheiro, 2013: 11):

We know that such [colonial, ideological] connotations were absent from the technical gaze of the architects and engineers who produced these visions but very probably played a part in the decisions made by the political powers who organised and approved them.

40 Quite literally the final four pages of a 280 page thesis are devoted to ‘*The Musseques*’ (2000: 276-280). It is important to note, however, that Isabel Martins’ field of expertise is architectural history. She constantly encouraged the development of this research, and was without a doubt the main person in Luanda responsible for setting up the Chicala Observatory as a research cluster within the Agostinho Neto University (see ‘Institution Building’ later on in the Methodology section of this Introduction).

41 The research was conducted at ISCTE – IUL (Portugal). The exhibition linked to the project was displayed at the CCB – Belem Cultural Centre in Lisbon on 7th December 2013 – 28th February 2014.

42 It is very common in Portugal to refer to this small group of countries as “Africa”.

This exonerating vision of architects and other distorted, reductive visions of African cultures demand a more extensive critical review, although this is perhaps not the place to undertake this task.⁴³ To a certain extent, this absence of interrogation regarding Portugal's colonial past, which is present too in everyday conversations, on television, in school textbooks, etc., was one of the reasons for which I decided to study in London. I was seeking a context less strongly shaped by a certain colonial narrative present in Portugal, about which I have serious suspicions and doubts. It seemed necessary to approach Luanda from a currently understudied perspective. After all, "there is an exceptional wealth of sources concerning the history of Luanda; unfortunately, most have not been studied in depth" (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 2005: 285). My aim was to develop this other understanding of history and of a type of architecture and urban culture that remains underrepresented. I sought a kind of counter-praxis that would breach the boundaries of the dominant narrative defending questionable political and moral models beyond our time. What I was looking for may be better explained by these words from Teddy Cruz (2014: 53):

As we return to these informal settlements for clues, their invisible urban practices need artistic interpretation and political representation. (...) The hidden urban operations of the most compelling cases of informal urbanisation across the world need to be translated into a new political language with particular spatial consequences, from which to produce new interpretations of property and citizenship, housing and public infrastructure.

Among the scholarly literature on Luanda, fortunately, there are examples of recent studies dedicated to understanding local knowledge from a problematising postcolonial perspective. These studies do not simply aim to fill the gap in existing studies on Luanda, but seek to contribute to advancing towards a broader intellectual purpose. Indeed, in Luanda/Angola this is no easy task, and engaging in research can be a complex endeavour. There is still substantial distrust and aversion towards foreign researchers from some local government authorities.⁴⁴ Soares de Oliveira summarises the issue (2015: 21):

The [Angolan] authorities' secretive, at times even manipulative, approach to information means that they have routinely impeded access to data, especially those which are deemed unflattering. Access to Angola is much better now than in the war years, but the country remains amongst the most inhospitable and restrictive for the conduct of research in present-day Africa.

The development of this study took place at the same time as the work of other researchers in architecture, urbanism and social sciences, with whom I was able to share information and learn: among them were Sylvia Croese (2013), Claudia Gastrow (2014), Chloé Bruire (2014), Sílvia Leiria Viegas (2015), and the aforementioned Ricardo Cardoso (2015).

43 For a critical reading of *Africa - Visions of the Colonial Town Planning Office (1944 - 1974)*, I recommend the text (in Portuguese) by Isabel Castro Henriques and Miguel Pais Vieira on the blog Buala (17/3/2014).

44 My six research trips to Angola involved two trips to the police station (Lubango in 2010 and Luanda in 2013), and other equally tense episodes including harrasment by drones during my visit to the resettlement camp of Kissama/Muxima (2015). The reasons for this will be better explained in the Methodology section and throughout the thesis.

Their work will be cited throughout the thesis whenever relevant, or when the chapter in question covers their respective areas of research. Of course, I also reference other studies by architects and social scientists, whether colonial era authors (Amaral (1968), Bettencourt (1965), Cardoso (1972), Monteiro (1973) and Redinha (1964)) or Angolan authors (such as Pepetela, whose *Luandando* (1990) is an indispensable reference for this work, as will become evident in the first chapter).

Another work which is significant to this research is Marissa Moorman's *Intonations* (2008).⁴⁵ This is the study that best reflects on the rightful place of the *musseques* in Luanda's history, and hence it deserves closer analysis. *Intonations* presents a lengthy postcolonial discourse centred on the role of music in nation-building in Angola. Moorman argues that "it is in and through popular urban music, produced overwhelmingly in Luanda's *musseques*, that Angolan men and women forged the nation and developed expectations about nationalism and political, economic, and cultural sovereignty" (Moorman, 2008: 2). The cultural and political dimensions of the *musseques* are constantly referred to: "anticolonial agitation and sentiment lurked inside the capital city – inside the *musseques*" (Moorman, 2008: 3). The central role of the *musseques* in Moorman's argument is highlighted in the first chapter, 'Musseques and Urban Culture'.⁴⁶ From the first instance, the *musseques* are recognised as vibrant and socially diverse places (Moorman, 2008: 28):

Luandans are known for being very neighbourhood centred in their identities: where you grew up, where you live, and the neighbourhood with which you identify might say more about you than your political affiliation, your race, or your age. And yet, the association of particular *musseques* with particular aspects of the Angolan nation – consciousness, political leadership, and culture – transcends individual ties.

Indeed, local demonstrations of loyalty to one's neighbourhood are indicative of a wider, national fact - that the *musseques* have always been "at the centre of urban discourse and life" (Moorman, 2008: 28). Historically, however, this virtue has not been fully recognised. Moorman observes that the *musseques* have been alternately lauded and damned (in particular by the Portuguese colonisers) (2008: 28):

By the mid-twentieth century (...) the *musseques* came to symbolise, for the colonial state, all that was problematic with urbanisation (labour, race, immigration, living conditions, etc.).

In this respect, this thesis argues (in Chapter 2 particularly) that the dismissal of the *musseques* actually dates from a much earlier period – since the initial colonial settlement in Luanda. Moorman's study focuses on the late colonial/ early independence period and reviews the perspectives of several

45 Moorman, Marissa, *Intonations – A Social History of Music and Nation in Luanda, Angola, from 1945 to Recent Times*, Ohio University Press, 2008.

46 It is important to mention that to label Chicala as a *musseques* is not entirely straightforward. Indeed, the neighbourhood is somewhat ambiguous. Historically, the divide between the city's various sectors consisted of the *Baixa* (downtown, colonial city), the *Musseques* (the African quarters) and the *Praia* (beach, settlements along the coast) (Carvalho, 1989: 72). As the area of Chicala developed and densified in the postcolonial period, as did many other neighbourhoods in Luanda, it gradually came to be seen as a *musseques* or *bairro* rather than a *praia* settlement.

Portuguese (colonial) social scientists on the *musseques*.⁴⁷ The points raised by these scholars are echoed throughout this thesis: the aversion to and negative preconceptions of the *musseques* seen in colonial studies resemble the attitude of the so-called elites in the postcolonial period. For example, Moorman recognises that “the colonial government and the social scientists deemed African immigration to the city, and not white immigration from the metropole, to be the main problem and the reason for the growth of the *musseques*” (Moorman, 2008: 33). She goes on to say that in colonial times, “outside observers characterised the *musseques* as disease ridden and socially addled, bursting with unemployed, under-skilled young men with slack social and moral norms” (Moorman, 2008: 33). The author goes further, stating that “by asserting (...) that urbanisation is synonymous of Europeanisation, these works depict [the *musseques*] as unfortunate but inevitable by-products of urbanisation and industrialisation, little related to colonial relations policy” (Moorman, 2008: 36). This attitude, as we will see in the following chapters, continues to shape the current situation in Luanda and Angola. Inspired by Moorman’s approach, this thesis too will present a more integrated version of the relationship between planned (formal) city-making and unplanned (informal) neighbourhoods, which appears to be far more reciprocal than is often acknowledged.

Moorman provides a vision ‘from within’, from the Angolan perspective which is largely absent in existing studies on the city which have tended to focus more on the outsider (colonial) perspective. She does so by invoking Angolan fiction writers, who “give us a different sense of the social reality of the *musseques* in the colonial period” (Moorman, 2008: 40). Moorman presents examples of Angolan literature that uncovers and celebrates local culture and recognises that “the *musseques* are not so much the location of pathology as they are the site of cultural richness” (2008: 40). One of the Angolan authors cited is Pepetela (Artur Pestana) (Moorman, 2008: 45):

This (...) reinforces the idea that the *musseques* (and everything leads us to believe that this continues today) was a transethnic space where, in fact, the idea of nation was born and where it was constantly reinforced by the integration of elements that continually arrived from the rural areas (Pepetela, 1990: 108).

Integration of the practices and behaviours of both ‘rural’ and ‘acculturated’ habits constituted a new kind of urban *angolanidade* (‘Angolanness’). This is a particularly important point raised in Moorman’s study: what colonial specialists understood as evidence of “incomplete integration into the urbanised world” (Moorman, 2008: 47), “[nationalist] writers read as the contradictions of colonialism and the stuff of everyday life that made Angola Angola” (Moorman, 2008: 48). As noted throughout my fieldwork, prejudice among some specialists towards the *musseques* is still widespread in the contemporary postcolonial period.

⁴⁷ The Portuguese (colonial) social scientists who studied urbanisation and the *musseques* are Ilídio do Amaral, José Sousa Bettencourt and Ramiro Ladeiro Monteiro, all of whom worked at institutes organised and funded by the state (Moorman, 2008: 36). These authors will be cited and critiqued throughout this thesis, particularly in Chapter 3, in which the colonial history is analysed in greater depth.

Recognising that “for these [Angolan] writers, the *musseques* were the essence of a new Angolan culture and not a hotbed of pathology” (Moorman, 2008: 48), Moorman vigorously dismantles (colonial) arguments against the *musseques*. She convincingly notes that colonial social scientists analysed social life in the *musseques* in isolation from its root causes (Moorman, 2008: 40):

In the view of these scholars, the *musseques*’ social problems flowed from the transition from rural to urban life. In their imaginations, the urban was synonymous with European culture and modernisation while the rural idyll embodied African culture and tradition.

The author moves on to cite and deconstruct the arguments used to dismiss the *musseques*, in a fascinating exercise that also helped to inspire this thesis. In Chapter One of *Intonations*, Moorman structures her argument into four sub-sections: ‘Migration versus Immigration’, ‘Detribalisation versus Transethnicity’, ‘Prostitution versus Procurement’, and ‘Cultural Practices’.

‘Migration versus Immigration’ begins by citing Ilídio Amaral, who described the *musseques* as “neighbourhoods of misery that surround and suffocate the urbanised city” (Moorman, 2008: 41). Moorman says that “for Portuguese social scientists, urban space was European space despite Luanda’s history and despite the rural roots of recently arrived white residents” (Moorman, 2008: 41). Indeed, Portuguese immigration was not doomed in the same way that Angolan immigration was. Colonial social scientists deemed Angolan migration to be “a primary cause of urban problems like unemployment, overcrowding, and unsanitary conditions in the *musseques*” (Moorman, 2008: 42), but extended completely different treatment to Portuguese migrants, despite the fact that “the effects of white immigration had only negative ramifications for economic conditions and housing for Africans in the *musseques*” (Moorman, 2008: 43). The author pertinently notes that “from the 1950s on, many of the white immigrants coming to Angola were from rural areas of Northern Portugal, and though colonial policy makers dreamed that they would form agricultural communities, the majority ended up in Luanda and urban centres” (Moorman, 2008: 41).

‘Detribalisation versus Transethnicity’ quotes Bettencourt and his proposal of integrating Portuguese culture as “the remedy for the social disjuncture occasioned by urban migration” (Moorman, 2008: 44). Here the issues of social contrasts and segregation acquire an urban dimension (Moorman, 2008: 44):

In much scholarly work written since independence, the moment in the 1940s when Africans of every social status were pushed out of the city centre and into the *musseques* was fundamental to the identification of urban elites with the mass of exploited Africans both in the city and in the countryside.

'Prostitution versus Procurement' identifies prostitution and promiscuity as the urban social malaise that most burdens women in the *musseques* (Moorman, 2008: 49):

Prostitution is still associated with the misery of the *musseques*, but it is blamed on African migration from rural to urban areas and the universal process of urbanisation rather than on white immigrants.

However, Angolan writer Luandino Vieira presents a different perspective of the *musseques*, noting that "white soldiers and white men in general were the problem, not prostitution" (Moorman, 2008: 50).

'Cultural Practices', according to the Portuguese social scientists studied by Moorman, are the mark of a successful if incomplete transition from rural to urban life. The author explains that "culture, in this reading, is a static set of customs and behaviours" (Moorman, 2008: 50). Where, for instance, Bettencourt and Amaral find justification to dismiss the cultural practices of the *musseques*, Angolan nationalist writers perceive a rich source of urban culture. In other words, the very same features of everyday life in the *musseques* may be viewed as a failure by the urban residents to acculturate, or understood simply as characteristics, the "location of a new *angolanidade*", as Moorman puts it (2008: 54). In summary, "though beset by social problems, the *musseques* nourished this kernel of an emerging difference" (Moorman, 2008: 54).

The introductory chapter on the *musseques* in Marissa Moorman's *Intonations* (a study primarily about the history of music and politics) suggests that to understand Luanda in all its dimensions, one has to understand the *musseques*. One cannot exist without the other. Moorman summarises the chapter saying that (2008: 55):

(...) the *musseques* as a complicated cosmopolitan social space where the national imaginary was made and remade (...). More than just a stop on the way to modernity or urbanisation, the *musseques* were a place where various generations, classes, ethnic groups, races, and genders met and imagined a new world for themselves in the practices of everyday life.

Many of the arguments 'for and against' the *musseques* employed in *Intonations* to set the scene for a social history of music and nation-building in Luanda since 1945 can easily be adapted to the current postcolonial period. In this respect, as mentioned previously, little has changed: *musseques* residents are still blamed for being "rural" or for leading a double life by living in the *bairro* and working in the city. Drug trafficking and prostitution are also recurrent accusations. However, I will argue that the mass evictions and displacements promoted by the government are actually exacerbating these problems – on the one hand, it is widely known that, given the lack of access to proper employment, prostitution is becoming common in the Zango resettlement colony, for example; on the other hand, although the number of drug users in the *musseques* may be high, it would not surprise me to find that the profits of trafficking derive primarily from sales to the elite.

During my research trips, I witnessed rather revealing reactions from the public with regards to the study of Chicala presented in this thesis. One such reaction was from a female lawyer in her late 30s, who worked at the headquarters of an Angolan bank in one of the newly-completed high-rise buildings on the Avenida Agostinho Neto.⁴⁸ I told her that I was living in the adjacent self-built neighbourhood known as Chicala 2, and was astonished by her reaction (interview, 2013):

I don't even look at it, I ignore it. I prefer to face south and to see these new buildings, this is the Angola I want to live in.

She had no regrets regarding what her westward avoidance might be depriving her of, for example, the quite beautiful sight of the sun setting beyond this African city. She accepted this deprivation, as long as it meant she might continue to avoid contemplating Chicala's unpleasant edifications mixed with garbage piled up by the ocean. It is true that the view might not necessarily be 'pleasant' in purely subjective terms, but here I would recall the words of researcher Malwa Pires (2014: 95):

This scene is not only the product of the actions of the population, but also of government bodies, namely through the failure to collect the urban waste which accumulates in the streets and along the slopes of the lagoon, and which is sometimes used as landfill for the construction of informal housing.⁴⁹

Throughout the course of my research journeys, I came to realise that this persistent aversion to Luanda's informal settlements, set in motion by upper-class urbanites, has become deep-seated among Angolan and expatriate elites. When meeting architects, planners, developers, power brokers and local authorities, I would take note of the arguments they produced against these non-planned territories: these were mostly related to the "illegality", "anarchism" and "opportunism" of the homes and home dwellers, a situation seen to afford the Government and real estate agents full legitimacy in taking over the sites for rebuilding in accordance with a 'formal' planning framework. Resistance to Chicala and to informality in Luanda in general is best explained by Urban Think Tank in McGuirk's *Radical Cities* (2014: 26):

[the urban planners, architects and designers] fail to see, let alone analyse or capitalise upon, the informal aspects of urban life, because they lack a professional vocabulary for describing them.

This thesis seeks to challenge those radical opinions which refuse to acknowledge the richness pervading the non-planned territories and their contribution to a rather complex city in itself. It raises questions regarding official strategies aiming to put an end to the *musseques*. By deciphering a particular case, that of Chicala, the study presents urban informality as a coherent possibility which is deserving of its rightful place in Luanda's social and urban order.

48 Avenida Agostinho Neto is the long road extending from the Baía de Luanda promenade to the southern side of the city, defining the eastern border of Chicala 2 and 3.

49 Pires completed a Masters project on Chicala at the Faculdade de Arquitectura of the Universidade de Lisboa (2014).

Methodology: Collaborative Research in the Postcolonial City

As a neighbourhood is more than an ecological or statistical construct, some of its qualities can perhaps be captured only on paper by the socially inclined poet or artist.
Hebert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers* (1982: 11)

When I began this study, Chicala was facing imminent destruction as a neighbourhood. In the knowledge that the site would most likely be a focus of tensions and conflict, I began to delineate a set of operations that could be used to tackle the topic. Here I present the toolkit of research methods employed in this investigation, and frame them as part of a broader intellectual endeavour.

There are no magic formulae for tackling the questions and concerns posed by the informal/postcolonial city. The studies on Luanda mentioned previously reflect on the effects of colonisation (or neo-colonisation), displacement and rapid urbanisation on Luanda, through the fields of geography, urban planning, anthropology, and sociology. This thesis recognises their different approaches to the respective subjects as both feasible and effective. Here, however, terms and methods borrowed from the social sciences complement the more complex, hybrid reach of architectural techniques and know-how. This thesis is shaped in a distinctive manner. It combines archival research of historical documents and photographs, the production of plans and maps using remote sensing data, the study of official plans, and collaborative data gathering at various scales, including collecting first-hand testimonies and on-site material. All of these methods are effectively mobilised in order to highlight historical connections and make visible the gradual assembling, and slow dismantling, of a neighbourhood. Exploration of the Chicala/Luanda relationship is performed in a way that acknowledges the deeply intertwined nature of spatial analysis, political conflict and cultural identity.

The methodology employed in this investigation may itself be an object of research and interpretation (and thus it deserves attention in this introductory section).⁵⁰ First of all, the research is oriented towards 'context' rather than 'individual subjectivity'.⁵¹ Secondly, practical knowledge is the principal receptacle for understanding how the various methods contribute to the research topic. This methodology draws on the notion of hermeneutics developed by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1981).⁵²

50 The methodological approach presented here is complemented by an Appendix comprising an extensive collection of visual material and practical interventions which accompanied the research.

51 This assumption is described by Heidegger as the 'worldhood of the world' (*Being and Time*, 1962). Further philosophical insights on this subject can be found in Mearleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962), Dalibor Vesely's *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation* (2004), and Otto Bollnow's *Human Space* (1963).

52 Gadamer's *Reason in the Age of Science* (1981) presents three key essays that were particularly relevant for this study: "What is Practice? The conditions of Social Reason" (pp.69-87), "Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy" (pp.88-112) and "Hermeneutics as a Theoretical and Practical Task" (pp. 113-138). Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (2004 [1960]) was equally relevant, in particular the sections on "The Ontology of the Work of Art and its Hermeneutic Significance" (pp.102-171) and the "Elements of a Theory of Hermeneutic Experience" (pp.267-304).

Hermeneutics is the capacity to explain or interpret, or simply the “art of understanding” (Gadamer, 1981: 113). ‘Practice’ is in itself a form of understanding. In this thesis, which is concerned with understanding a concrete part of the world – a city, or part of a city, in which architecture plays a primary role – we seek a hermeneutics of practice.

The outcome of this philosophical positioning was that I found a way of navigating from very primordial local experiences of Luanda’s spatiality and materiality to more sophisticated global specialist discourses (coming from economics, politics, sociology, etc.) without absorbing the architecture into a mere ‘concept’ (rather the reverse, making the concepts answerable to architecture). This is certainly an endeavour that involves a “far lesser degree of certainty than that attained by the methods of the natural sciences” (Gadamer, 1981: 109-110). To put it differently, the methodological approach employed in this study is not a ‘science’ in itself, but instead it develops within the uncertainties of sociability and human interchange (Gadamer, 1981: 129). Given this premise, the thesis embodies a constant reciprocity between what is conventionally understood as *theory* and *practice*. The combination of methods employed here is conducted with the objective of continuously learning and acting in solidarity with others.

Collaboration is always a balance between sociability and conflict (Carl, 2012: 70). Ideally, an exhaustive methodological interpretation would have treated the institutions involved in the project with the same thoroughness as that applied to the study of Chicala/Luanda. However, due to certain time and resource limitations, I have concentrated the bulk of my efforts on the latter.⁵³ Adaptation thus becomes a research method in its own right. Charles Keil calls this research spontaneity “participatory discrepancies” (Keil, 1994 [1987]: 96). When participants perform their tasks with absolutely metronomic coordination, the autonomy of the individual becomes dehumanised (Stance, 1995: 4). Yet, when each aspect is interpreted and negotiated by the participants/collaborators (students, residents, etc.), their involvement becomes visible, and interactions between people are enacted. This is the nature of praxis: an exercise of choice, the basis for a democratic city (Carl, 2012: 67-81).

The perception of “participatory discrepancies” as life-affirming is a natural response. They may appear wrong or incomplete, but architectural design is not simply a talent or expertise; it involves solidarity with one’s fellow citizens. For the purposes of this research, “participatory discrepancies” are a methodological tool, a source of knowledge, and the foundations of a true collaborative investigation. Moreover, any dream of exhaustively converting a rich urban topography into analytical data is absurd – there is always a trade-off between ‘intensity’ and ‘extensity’, and, if forced to choose, ‘intensity’ is inevitably more illuminating.

The temporal evolution of the practical methods employed in this research was a key factor in shaping the thesis. The main methodological concern pertains to the manner in which the various

53 The research methods are further developed visually in an Appendix.

approaches and results communicate with one another. The methodology employed represented in itself a constant negotiation between Chicala and outside institutions. It seems appropriate to conclude that a promiscuity of methods was the preferred path to capture the diversity and complexity of the phenomena at work. In other words, I argue that interrogation of the hybrid conditions of Chicala/Luanda called for a hybrid, interdisciplinary methodology. In no particular order, I present here the themes that structured the collaborative research employed in this thesis.⁵⁴ The connections between the different themes and the specific parts of the argument which they support are implicit, yet there are overlaps. A full discussion would exceed the available word count; however, these links are mentioned here wherever possible. The methodological themes are complemented by an extensive visual portfolio presented in Appendix 1.

Primary Experience

Over the course of this research (2010-16), I lived in Luanda for one or two month periods at a time, spread across a total of six trips (8 months) (**Fig. 25**). These trips to Luanda taught me that gaining knowledge is a process of active following, of “going along” (Ingold, 2013: 1). Only by living in the neighbourhood, can one contribute to its defence “against outside forces that would shatter their life” (Berman, 1988: 323). Gadamer’s metaphor also reinforces this belief (1982: 124):

We realise ourselves how hard it is to read aloud a text in a foreign tongue or even a difficult text in one’s own language on short notice in such a way that one can make good sense of it. (...) Only when understands what one is reading can one modulate and introduce a rhythm in such a way that what is meant really comes out.



Fig. 25 – Plan of Luanda with houses occupied during fieldwork (2010-15). © Paulo Moreira, 2015

⁵⁴ The topics are ‘Primary Experience’, ‘Archival Research’, ‘Collaborative Fieldwork’, ‘Institution Building: The Chicala Observatory’, ‘Interpretative Modes of Representation’, ‘Public Celebration’ and ‘Dissident Practice’.

In some ways, my approach to Chicala resonates with that of Charles Booth (who contributed to the understanding of social problems in London in the 19th century), Levi Strauss (who witnessed everyday life in non-Western communities in the mid-20th century, to demonstrate common human patterns), or Jane Jacobs (who sought a process of “assimilating the language” (1961: 323) of segregated communities in New York, in order to protect them from total clearance). In various places and epochs, these authors engaged with contexts of urban conflict.

Yet, on the other hand, my observations and analysis of Chicala became tools of intervention. The site offered insights and possibilities to manifest its spatial and social coherence. My gesture of immersing myself and my practice in the place allowed me to witness a forceful change of the neighbourhood, the city and its peripheries over a lengthy period of time.

The scope and objectives of each of the six trips to Luanda were distinct. During the initial field trip in 2010, the case study was identified. A one month stay in Chicala 2 provided an opportunity for me to familiarise myself with the site’s institutional order, which allows communication between people to take place, norms to be established, and conflicts to be played out. When undertaking fieldwork in an external postcolonial and/or informal context, the issue of passive observation *versus* active engagement is a recurring dilemma. In Luanda, the former is perhaps a more common attitude among researchers. In conversations with fellow researchers, I often heard that “the less *they* know” in Angola about their fieldwork, the better.

My research challenges this passive, merely observational approach. It evolves and takes shape as a result of both my personal perceptions and my interactions with people. The research subscribes to the words of Herbert Gans, who said that by wandering through a given neighbourhood, “and using it as a resident, I developed a kind of selective perception, in which my eyes focused only on those parts of the area that were actually being used by people” (Gans, 1962: 12).⁵⁵

My engagement with Chicala and the city of Luanda, which is evident throughout this thesis, led to a constant attempt to rethink the procedures of conventional architectural research. The resulting platforms of engagement with people and institutions arose, first and foremost, from an understanding of the cultural, political and social circumstances inherent to the context. Besides my primary experience in Chicala, a key factor for developing Chapter 4, my personal involvement with the city of Luanda was fundamental in producing Chapters 5 and 6.

55 Gans adds an appendix on the methods used in his study *Urban Villagers* (1962: 396).

Archival Research

Archival research allows for a general understanding of the colonial and postcolonial history of Luanda. Public archives in Angola, the UK and Portugal all provided relevant material, both to broaden the scope of the literature review (presented in the Introduction and throughout the thesis) and to inspire creative, unorthodox ways of engaging with the past (as seen in the historical documentation and analysis presented in Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5). After all, “recollection is not simply a means of laying the past to rest” (Comaroff, 2011: 135). Archival research also contributed to the development of visual modes of representing the tensions inherent in Chicala/ Luanda/Angola and the evolution of conditions there over time (Fig. 26 – 29).



Fig. 26 – Colonial map dating from 1951, showing Portuguese sailing routes. Source: Caetano, Marcelo, *Colonizing traditions principles and methods of the portuguese*, 1951

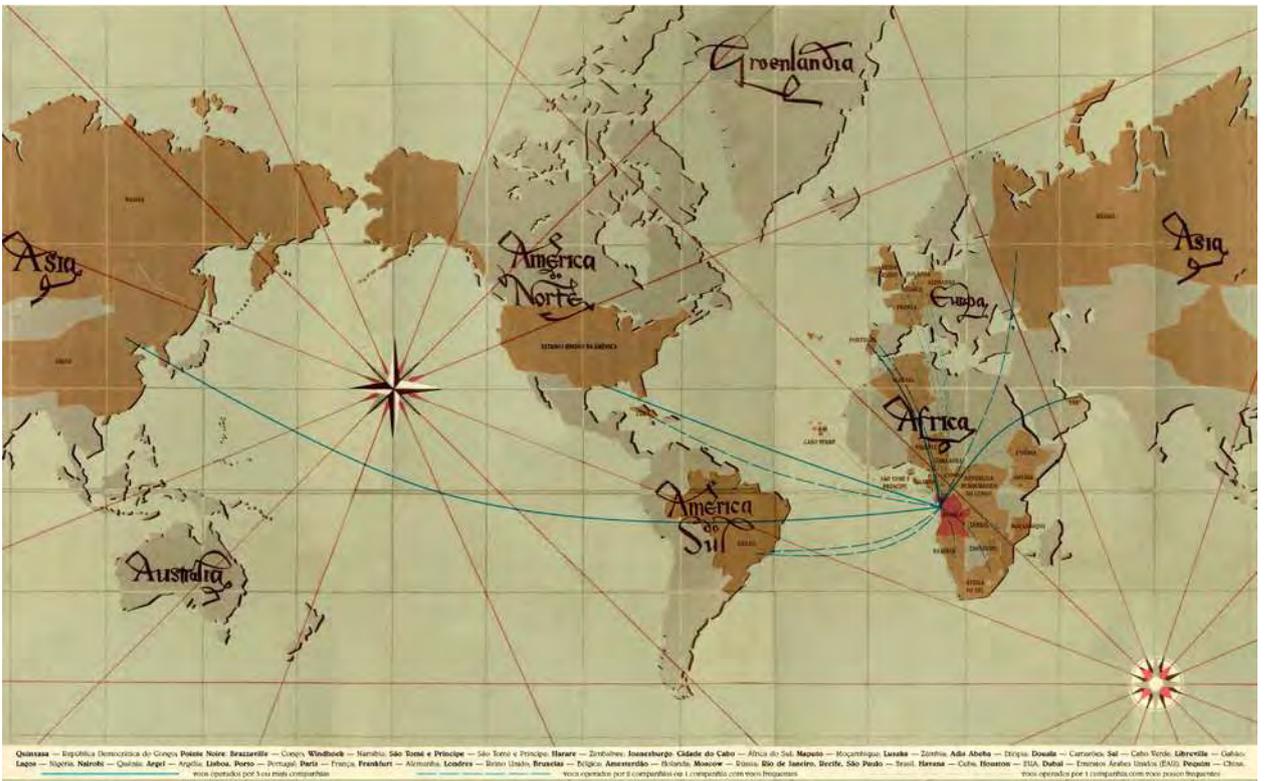


Fig. 27 – Luanda’s international flight connections (based on 2012 information). © Paulo Moreira with Monica Oliveira, 2015



Fig. 28 – “Portugal is not a small country”, 1934. © Henrique Galvão, 1934
Colonial map comparing the land area of the former Portuguese colonies with that of the European continent.

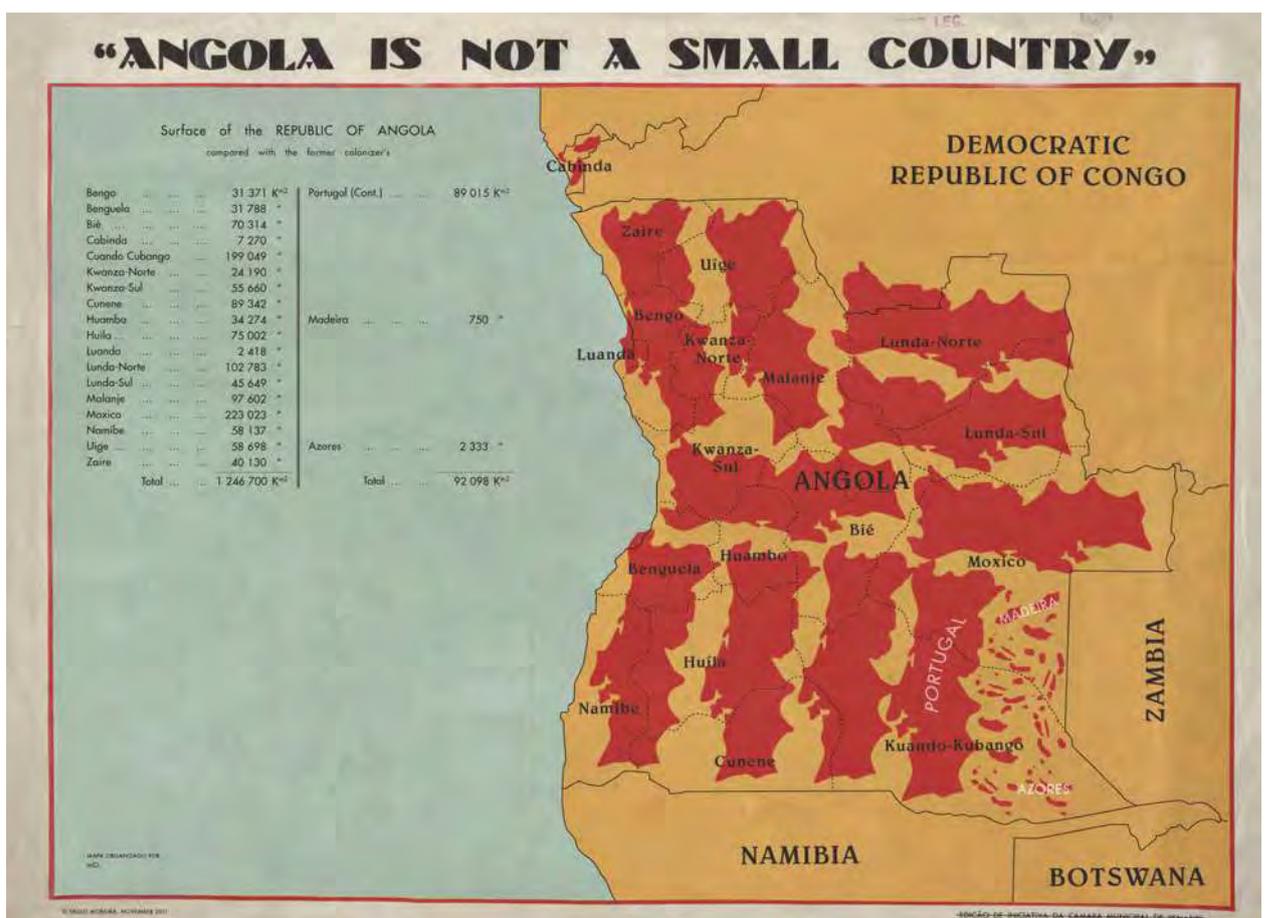


Fig. 29 – “Angola is not a small country”, 2011. © Paulo Moreira with Monica Oliveira, 2011
The colonial map was reshaped as a provocative / speculative representation of the territory. The roles of Portugal and Angola were inverted to highlight the change in economic paradigm which has taken place between the formerly colonised and colonising nations.

Material recollection also included diffuse, private collections which had previously been hidden from public view. These consist mostly of photographs of the area of study at different times in its history (**Fig. 30 – 33**). In this way, too, historical research becomes an account of the collective production of the present. Jean and John Comaroff underline the importance of presenting plural versions of postcolonial history ‘from below’, going beyond official narratives (2011: 140):

This move toward production and pluralisation has enriched the ethno-historical record; it also illuminates the subtle mechanisms through which politics inflects the idiomatic rendering of past. But it is less concerned with the need to comprehend the larger, more or less systemic forces, forces at once material and semantic, that structure the world in which those diffused, vernacular histories themselves unfold.

One of the preferred methods for communicating the “larger forces” that helped to shape the study site is mapping. This was a rather challenging enterprise, since historical maps of Luanda tend to under-represent the area of Chicala/ Ilha (**Fig. 34**). The intentions behind archival research are, once again, better summarised by Comaroff (2011: 151):

Recuperating the positive, perennially open dialectic of history and memory ought not merely to put populist and identitarian politics in proper perspective. It ought to interrogate just how things came to be as they are. And how they could be otherwise.

The nuanced reading of archival material and the editing of historical records represent one of the contributions of this thesis to postcolonial studies in African cities, as well as the architecture discipline and critical spatial practices more broadly. Archival research becomes a form of practical analysis, setting

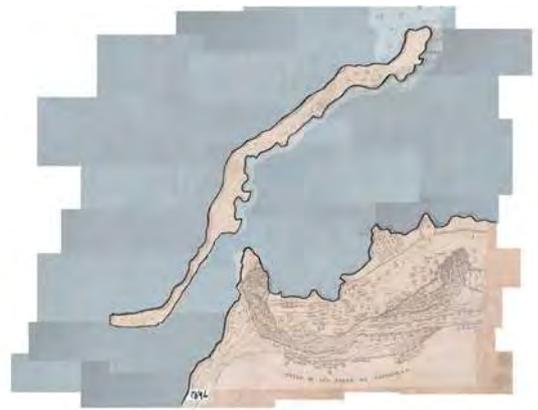


Fig. 30 – 33 – Photos of Chicala, private archive photos from different periods.

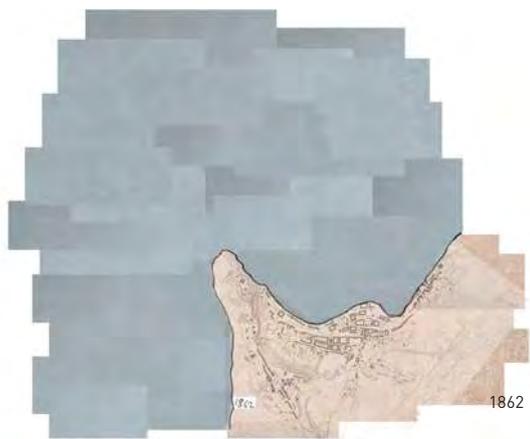
The photos convey histories which may not be adequately captured by conventional (modernist) narratives. Records such as these contribute to ‘joining the dots’ of a previously untold history. (Fig. 0.30 – © Daniel Quintã, 1971 (top left); Fig. 0.31 – © Bjorn Roos, 1984 (top right); Fig. 0.32 - 0.33 – © Paulino Damião, 1986 (bottom))



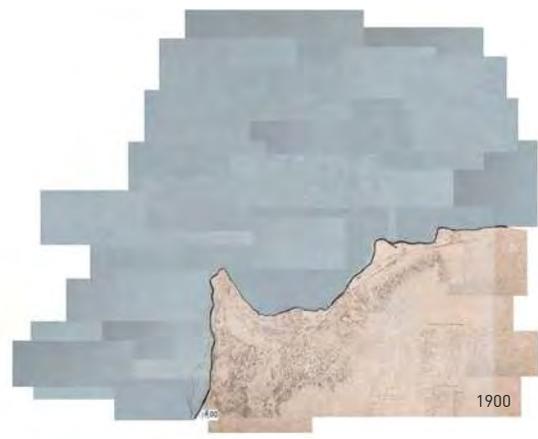
1698



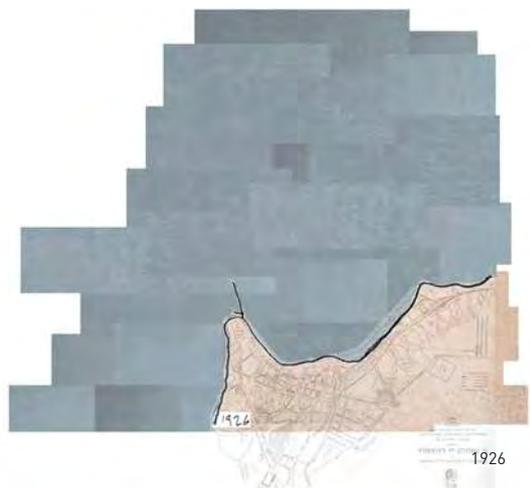
1846



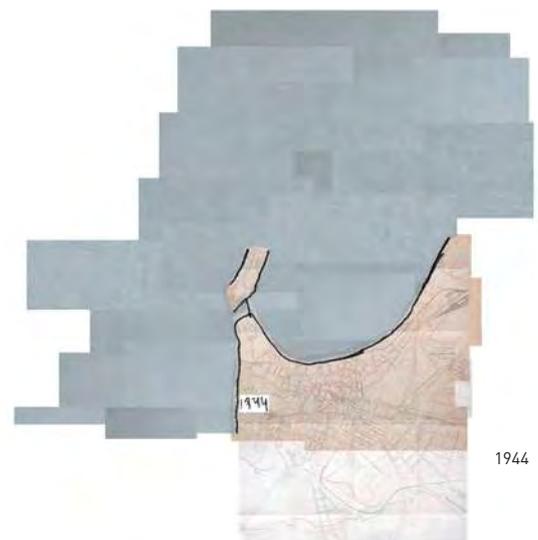
1862



1900



1926



1944

Fig. 34 – Plans of Luanda over the years. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
Often, the Ilha/Chicala was excluded from maps, and therefore from history.

up casual structures which other disciplines such as human or urban geography cannot. For example, while a historian might cease to unearth and comment upon incomplete maps of the study area, an architectural researcher is able to intervene by highlighting and tracing over historical maps to reveal relations between colonial power and planning, against the violence of omission and forgetting. Exploring and interpreting archival material is also a regenerative practice. It brings to the fore various forms of social, theoretical and political struggle, and allows present and future forms of urban conflict to be interrogated.

Collaborative Fieldwork

My initial experiences and contacts in Luanda were followed by a period of analysis, interpretation and preparation of the second research trip. In 2011, I established institutional collaboration with local architecture schools. I organised the 'Workshop for Social Architecture' in collaboration with two architecture schools, Universidade Agostinho Neto (UAN) and Universidade Lusíada de Angola (ULA) **(Fig. 35 – 37)**. The methodologies put into practice in the workshop involved the mobilisation of many constituent parts of the complex fabric of Chicala: the local authorities in supporting our work, the residents in consenting to describe their lives and show us their houses, the students in empathising with the population and documenting their experiences.

In 2012, the workshops expanded to include three architecture schools. From one year to the next, the project garnered increasing interest among students and tutors in Luanda.



Fig. 35 – Workshop for Social Architecture, 2011. Official poster.



Fig. 36 – Workshop for Social Architecture, 2011.

© Paulino Damião, 10/8/2011

Student performing questionnaire and survey with Chicala resident.



Fig. 37 – Workshop for Social Architecture, 2011.

© Willian Fernandes, 9/8/2011

The workshop consisted of: training sessions at ULA to clarify the types of inquiry and house survey to be undertaken; fieldwork conducted by 60 students divided into smaller groups; design proposals based on the students' learning and the population's suggestions, and an exhibition and debate at UAN (with residents' representatives, experts from different fields and media coverage). UAN's 2nd year students went on to further develop their work over the course of the semester, as Chicala became the study site for the History of Architecture and Cities module.

Institutional willingness to participate in this research was due to two main factors. On the one hand, presentations of our previous experiences in Luanda made it clear that the issues the project raised were very rarely touched upon or discussed at architecture schools in Luanda. Those tutors who held a genuine interest in this field of architecture saw an opportunity to motivate their students.⁵⁶ On the other hand, the project's increasing visibility may have influenced the efforts made by certain institutions to support it. The visibility conferred to the project in Portugal (exhibition, publication, media coverage, and the Távora Prize) contributed to the successful organisation of the 'Urban Exploratory of Chicala', in which more than 60 students participated.⁵⁷ The 'Exploratory' was organised in a similar way to the previous workshop, but objectives were expanded to surveying buildings of collective use (markets, schools, places of worship) (Fig. 38).

The material produced during these workshops included social data, spatial surveys and design proposals that provided a wealth of material for further study (including the basis for developing the drawings, maps, photographs and tables presented throughout the thesis, and particularly in chapter

The collaborative dimension of the fieldwork appears to represent a novel design/research approach in the context of Luanda. In this respect, it differs from the strategy more broadly employed by researchers working in/on Angola, who seem to favour more 'passive' methods and approaches.



Fig. 38 – Urban Exploratory of Chicala Workshop, 2012. © Paulo Moreira, 2012

The groups were distributed geographically and thematically across both sides of the neighbourhood. Since the houses had been widely surveyed in 2011, attention was focused on buildings of collective use. Students from UAN and ULA were asked to survey commercial and religious routes, respectively, within Chicala 2 and 3. The largest group of students (over 40) from Universidade Metodista de Angola (UMA) worked in Chicala 1 (the groups combined housing with commercial and religious surveys; special attention was given to the local fish market, which became the project site for 4th year students).

⁵⁶ As mentioned earlier, the premises of the workshop were adopted in the study plans of some modules.

⁵⁷ The Távora Prize is an annual stipend of 6,000€, promoted by OA-SRN (the Portuguese Chamber of Architects – Northern Chapter) and awarded to a Portuguese architect to undertake a research trip.

Paul Rabinow endorses fieldwork methods based on observation rather than participation (1977: 79-80):

No matter how far 'participation' may push the anthropologist in the direction of Not-Otherness, the context is still ultimately dictated by 'observation' and externality. (...) This dialectical spiral is governed in its motion by the starting point, which is observation.

In the field of architecture, this is a common approach. Karin Jaschke reflects on the subject when questioning the fieldwork of Aldo and Hannie van Eyck in Sangha (Mali), where they "made a conscious effort not to interfere with local people" and considered themselves "passive observers rather than active participants in village life" (Jaschke, 2011: 88). The architects' passive attitude seemed to extend to all aspects of public life (Jaschke, 2011: 90-91):

(...) Off-site, Van Eyck seems to have opted for a similarly reserved stance, especially in his political engagements, resulting in similar tensions. Although he was known for his outspoken and at times irate interventions in architectural and local political affairs, his response to the critical issues [in Sangha] that he targeted in his writings – including Western imperialism, colonialism, and militarism – was not an explicitly political one.

In what concerns this investigation, however, the approach towards pursuing fieldwork was one of human involvement, of testing the limits of collaboration among the various participants and constituents. In this sense, my fieldwork approach is similar to the methodology suggested by various authors in different contexts. Nabeel Hamdi states that on-site participatory programmes can "mobilise the interest of the wider community" and "provide a better way to collect, analyse, and interpret information" (Hamdi, 1995: 81). Hamdi's words are straight to the point (2004: xxii):

This kind of knowing is less normative, less easy to standardise in its routines and procedures, less tolerant of data-hungry study, and less reliant on statistics or systems analysis. (...) Instead, approximation and serendipity are the norm – the search for scientific precision is displaced in favour of informed improvisations, practical wisdom, integrated thinking and a good judgement based on a shared sense of justice and equity, and on common sense.

Collaborative work carried out over the course of the research did not only consist of workshops involving students and residents. Collaborations also resonate in the articulation with, and between, local artisans.⁵⁸ In all circumstances, collaborative work is employed ethically as a vehicle for dialogue and interpretation. All of those involved in the project were credited wherever possible. It is fair to mention, however, that being a Portuguese architect from Porto, it was easier for me to find prominence in the media, exhibitions and public assemblies than for the architecture students and the artisans of Chicala by themselves. The solidarity which the workshops so readily fomented among institutions both within and beyond Chicala appears to have generated some promise of symbiosis between the neighbourhood and the city. This is surely one of the project's main contributions.

58 For instance, in the building of the Chicala archive using wood and metal (to be described later in this section).

During the initial field trips, links were established with local institutions. Workshops and presentations of my ongoing research in local cultural and academic circles helped strengthen our collaborations. The workshop held in 2011 resulted in a 100-page publication, which compiled contributions from a group of researchers and professionals accompanying the workshop, or familiar to Chicala in some way (**Fig. 39**). The book represented a useful research instrument in various ways, such as in tightening relations with academic institutions in Luanda. The publication also served as a vehicle by which to afford Chicala (and the project itself) greater visibility. It may have influenced subsequent efforts in Luanda to support the project. Over the course of the 2012 'Urban Exploratory', I was invited by UAN Head of Architecture, Dr Isabel Martins, to apply to the University's annual research fund. The fund would institutionalise the research within the Universidade Agostinho Neto, in itself a guarantee of institutional legitimacy in Angola.⁵⁹



Fig. 39 – Chicala is not a small neighbourhood, book cover and back cover. Designed by Carla and Pedro Ferreira. The Workshop for Social Architecture undertaken in 2011 resulted in a 100-page publication. The book compiles contributions from a group of researchers and professionals accompanying the workshop, or familiar to Chicala in some way. It includes insights about the exhibition in Porto (displaying the workshop's results). The first edition, of 100 copies, was funded via a crowdfunding platform (for this book, a total of 2,000€ was raised from over 50 individuals and companies, in donations varying from 5€ to 250€). The book launch took place during the show in Porto. It sold out in 2 months (a second edition of 250 copies, funded by sponsors, was launched during a pop-up show in London. It has also sold out). The book represented a useful research instrument in various ways. It contributed to the formalisation of our preliminary collaborations with academic institutions in Luanda: it included texts from the Heads of Architecture at UAN and ULA – in itself, an unprecedented feat – and it created closer links to institutional supporters, as well as fellow researchers. The publication also served as a vehicle affording Chicala (and the project itself) greater visibility, from the attention garnered by its collective funding to its presence in bookshops both in Portugal and Angola. Involvement with Luandan institutions, where the 100 copies available were quickly sold, was a key factor in making possible further collaborations, not only with the Universities involved, but also with other institutions or groups.

⁵⁹ Being a research project based in the Department of Architecture, the application form encouraged partnerships with external institutions. As Hamdi noted, "Building partnerships is (...) a first step to strengthening institutional capabilities to initiate and then ensure continuity of work once experts pull out" (Hamdi, 1995: 81).

The research cluster developed in collaboration with the Department of Architecture, Agostinho Neto University, was named Observatório da Chicala (The Chicala Observatory). There was some concern that the formalisation of this research unit within a State organisation (the University) could lead to a loss of independence and autonomy. Would a public institution accept to fund a study which is, in essence, critical of the current urban policy? In other words, would it be viable to receive public funding and institutional support to record and reveal the urban culture of a neighbourhood condemned to oblivion? Could some aspect of this study be seen as a form of insurgency with regard to the academic or political establishment? Our scepticism concerning the institutional formalisation of the project was reinforced by other voices (Pullan et al, 2013: 5):

The variety of formal attempts to deal with urban conflicts have become embedded in common forms of institutionalisation, making conflict resemble an industry in some cities. Treaties, agreements, memorials, iconic buildings and sometimes the city itself may be constructed as scenes of fracture or resolution.

In the context of Angola, where engaging in research on the informal city is a complex issue, these concerns appeared legitimate. However, the unconditional support of the Head of the Department of Architecture, Dr Isabel Martins, was sufficient to ensure that the Observatory carved out a space for itself and achieved its proposed objectives. In Angola, as in other places, it was essential to have this unflinching support.

The 'Observatory' was formulated with the intention to be inclusive and empowering. It was designed in line with similar motifs in academic and civic spheres. The idea of 'observatories' has appeared elsewhere, and they are community-focused institutions which bring together a range of partners (local universities, NGOs, civil society groups, local authorities, etc.).⁶⁰

In *Housing by People* (2000), John Turner systematises four proposals for community engagement within informal settlements. All of the proposals derive from the aim of enhancing collaboration and communication between people. Turner's first two proposals were the most relevant to this study (Turner, 2000: 156):

Proposal One is to set up an international communication network in order to intensify the use of existing channels of communication (both formal and informal) in ways that increase universal access and reduce the risks of exploitation by centralising powers.

Here, Turner calls for case studies and materials, which he deems "by far the greatest need and the most frustrated demand" (2000: 156). He suggests content for such networks which avoids over-simplistic data compilation, because it "tends to be counter-productive, partly because they are indiscriminating and fail to distinguish data from information" (Turner, 2000: 156). This is perfectly in line with the aims and objectives of the Chicala Observatory, and is complemented by Turner's second proposal (2000: 157-158):

⁶⁰ The idea to create an 'Observatory' was a fortunate suggestion by Dr Matthew Barac, seconded by the supervisory team, in an email exchange during my 2011 research trip (email, 17/8/2011).

Proposal Two (...) is to set up a number of centres where case materials will be collected, indexed and made available to those needing access to the precedent sets. All such centres will be interconnected so that anyone can search the rest for particular documents or topics.

Turner suggests a simple idea indeed: the implementation of a publicly accessible archive. Following this reasoning, our survey of Chicala is presented in several open-access, interrelated components: a physical archive, a digital archive (website), an exhibition, a video and a book. (Fig. 40 – 47)

Another of the advantages of the Observatory is, of course, that it provides the financial means to pursue the project at full speed, providing money for materials, student bursaries and a final publication.⁶¹ The idea of creating an archive also has symbolic meaning. Here it is worth recalling the words of Jane Jacobs on 'Social Architecture and Symbolism' (1961: 155):

When there is little money to spend on architecture, then surely greatest architectural imagination is required. Sources for modest buildings and images with social purpose will come, not from the industrial past, but from the everyday city around us, of modest buildings and modest spaces with symbolic appendages.

The 'archive' format is also praised by Jean and John Comaroff as a meaningful way to address the struggle of segregated neighbourhoods in the postcolonial city (2011: 151):

The production of an archive – or its reduction – in the service of victims' rights poses a problem for historians and political activists everywhere; above all, for those who have long dreamed that decolonisation would bring with it a collective reclamation of the past, emancipating it in the service of a new nationhood.

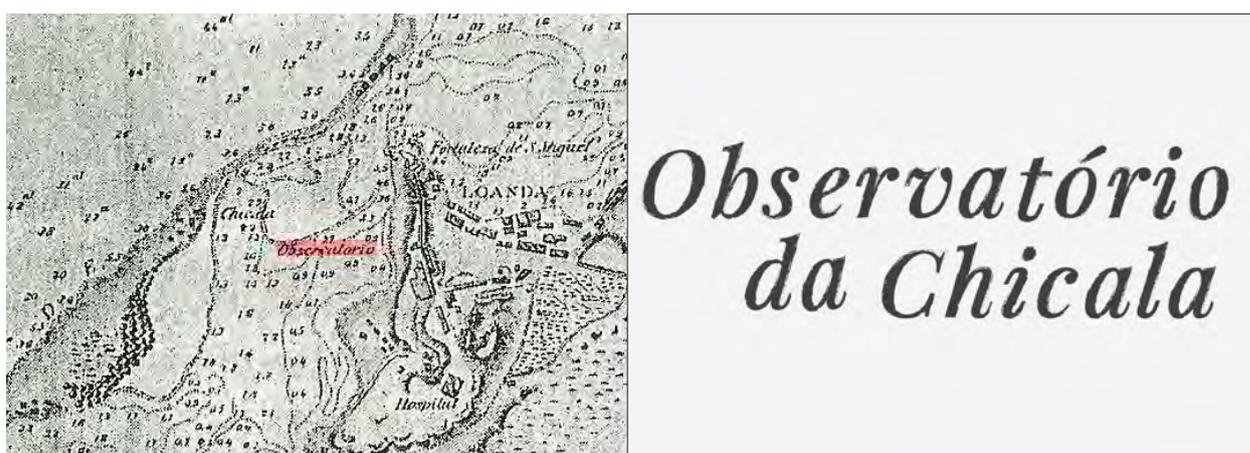


Fig. 40 – *Observatório da Chicala*, logo and inspiration (old map indicating the former meteorological 'observatory'). Researched by Paulo Moreira, 2013. Designed by This is Pacifica.

61 The application was submitted in April 2012 and the project was accepted in August 2012. Logistics were set in motion and in February 2013, during a fourth field trip, the *Observatório da Chicala* research cluster was officially launched. The funds were released by the Ministry of Oil to encourage academic research within all the departments in the Public University. The Chicala Observatory was funded with the full amount requested in the application phase, USD\$29,500.



Fig. 41 – 42 – Observatório da Chicala, physical archive. © Kota Cinquente 14/3/2013 - © Paulo Moreira, 2015
 The physical archive makes use of local materials, resources and skills. It was designed and constructed in collaboration with Chicala artisans (Tio Nelito and Tio João). Each 'box' is topped by a representation of Chicala (an old one for the historical material and a recent one for the newer material). A group of stools display motifs of daily life in Chicala.

Observatório da Chicala

Sobre / História / Metodologia / Urbanidade / Exposições / Contacto
 About / History / Methodology / Urbanity / Exhibitions / Contact

Urbanidade / Urbanity



Rua da Pracinha
Main Street, Chicala 2

47 imagens



Ruas Chicala 1
Streets

29 imagens



Ruas Chicala 2
Streets

81 imagens



Ruas Chicala 3
Streets

46 imagens



Becos
Alleys

54 imagens



Toponímia
Toponymy

46 imagens



Quintais Chicala 1
Courtyards

31 imagens



Quintais Chicala 2
Courtyards

50 imagens

Observatório da Chicala

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1975-1991

Fotografia de PAULINO DAMIÃO, 1986. Arquivo Lino Damião.

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Fig. 43 – 44 – Observatório da Chicala, website. The website address is: www.chicala.org



Fig. 45 – 46 – Observatório da Chicala, exhibition and debate. © Kota Cinquente 25/11/2013 - 27/11/2013
The exhibition and debate addressed the question of where architectural research stands against the larger forces that shape the environment today. It was concluded that small-scale interventions such as the Observatory might have a positive influence on academic and city life.



Fig. 47 – Observatório da Chicala book, held by a local resident. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

The Observatory has the further benefit of promoting, or mediating, relationships across civic and institutional jurisdictions (top-down and bottom-up) that were otherwise non-existent. Teddy Cruz clarifies how to pursue this intention (2014: 55):

In one direction, (...) bottom-up urban alterations by creative acts of citizenship can have enough resolution and political agency to trickle upward to transform top-down institutional structures; and, in the other direction, (...) top-down resources can reach sites of marginalisation, transforming normative ideas of infrastructure by absorbing the creative intelligence embedded in informal dynamics.

As a research cluster founded in an academic environment, one of the most prominent features of the Observatory is the heavy and sometimes restrictive bureaucracy and formal obligations to which it is subjected.⁶² The hours spent on these formalities allowed research paths to be opened up which would otherwise have remained closed. For example, we established an information-sharing partnership with the *IPGUL – Instituto de Planeamento e Gestão Urbana de Luanda* (something which other researchers declared to be strange, if not unprecedented) (**Fig. 48**). We made presentations to academic conferences (ECAS, 2013) and were invited to participate in publications (FAUL, DOM), and even the scientific committee of a distinguished Lusophone Congress (CIHEL, 2015).



Fig. 48 – Plan of Luanda showing commercial sites in Ingombota (city centre) and Chicala.
© Paulo Moreira, based on plan from IPGUL, 2015

⁶² Given the nature of the context under study, preparing fieldwork is a complex procedure, both at the university and local political levels. For instance, it is compulsory to secure safe conduct for carrying out interviews with common citizens and surveying buildings (by drawing, photography or video). The amount of time spent obtaining these permits can be as long as the actual time spent surveying the site. It is a strenuously bureaucratic but necessary procedure. The forms, partial reports and accounting for the project also form an integral part of the study. In this sense, the project is similar in many ways to experiments such as The Cape Urban Observatory, a well-articulated applied urban research initiative from the African Centre for Cities (2008/09).

To a certain extent, these aspects point to a dimension of the Chicala Observatory which goes beyond the purely academic. The Observatory is also, or primarily, a practical and political experiment.⁶³ It could be said that this is a feature inspired by other 'observatories', particularly in cities in the Americas.⁶⁴ It is worth exploring their relevance to this study.

In Bogotá, the extravagant mayor Antanas Mockus created the Observatorio de Cultura Urbana (Urban Culture Observatory), a kind of think tank on the city, managed by a group of young social scientists. Justin McGuirk, who studied the transformative actions undertaken by Mockus, states that "(...) he [Mockus] was able to effect change from within citizens themselves – without even resorting to spatial solutions, he was able to intervene in the city at the psychological level. A culture of good citizenship is not just a means to an end, it is the end" (2014: 229). In Medellín, the use of two architectural schools as laboratories for testing urban solutions to the city's social problems provided long-term benefits: "it was those very students who, a few years later, would start transforming the city" (McGuirk, 2014: 236). The idea of establishing research/learning centres exists in several other cities: in Tijuana, there is the 'Urban Observatory' created by Cardenas (McGuirk, 2014: 275); in San Diego, Teddy Cruz runs the Civic Innovation Lab, aiming to understand the shared interests of San Diego-Tijuana and promoting a culture of inclusion and cooperation across borders (McGuirk, 2014: 283-284).

The formulation of the 'Observatory', whose semantics appear to point to a less active stance rather than a distant one, is a tribute, a quest for linkages in this network of action in various urban contexts. The *modus operandi* of the Chicala Observatory, however, invokes a methodology of direct involvement and engagement. All the concrete situations and materials produced for the project enabled interaction, both among the participants themselves, and between the participants and the settings in which they operated.

Interpretative Modes of Representation

One of the driving forces of this research has been an attempt to portray the urban conflicts arising from the Chicala/Luanda relationship in visual form. Gathering several different types of information, knowledge and data and applying them to create a visual understanding of a given research subject is an act of practical research. Drawings are, therefore, presented as experimental hermeneutical representations, rather than 'flows of information' (Fig. 49 – 50).

63 In fact, these are indistinguishable: we know that "the human being is a political being". Gadamer often uses the word *practical* followed by *political* (Gadamer, 1982: 89).

64 The three examples are presented in the book *Radical Cities* by Justin McGuirk (2014).



Fig. 49 – Provinces of origin of Chicala residents. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
Provinces of origin of Chicala residents represented as a 'topographical' graph/axonometric.

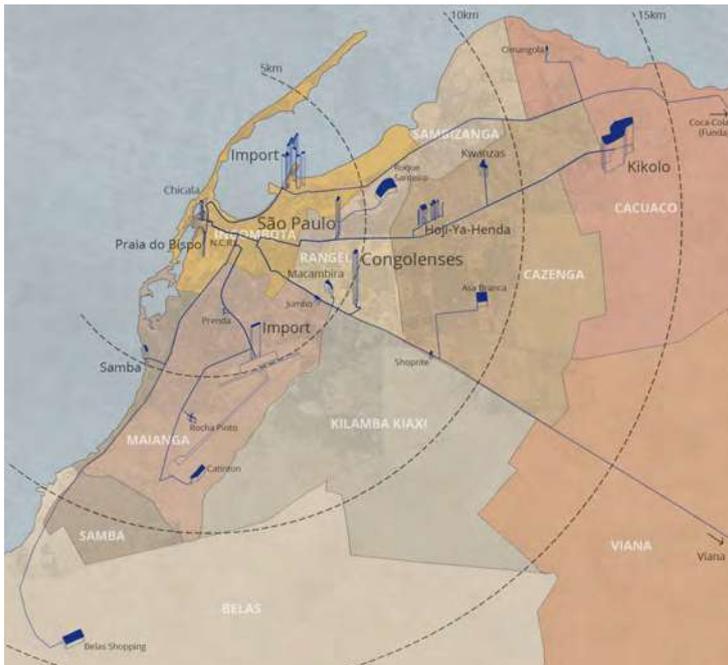


Fig. 50 – Tracing routes through the city. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
By locating the Luandan markets used most frequently by residents/traders of Chicala and tracing the routes connecting them to the neighbourhood, one starts to obtain a more concrete perception of how the city works, in a way that simplistic statistics or mere written surveys would be unable to achieve.

In this respect, the following statement by Murray in *Taming the Disorderly City* is highly relevant (2008: 120):

The failure of the cartographic representation of the cityscape to register the presence of marginalised people who inhabit unacknowledged places effectively renders them unknown and hence unknowable, expunging them from history and memory.

Gathered material is not merely transformed into quantitative data, an approach which would fall short in terms of grasping Chicala's real qualities and meaning (analytic analyses have a tendency to flatten vital urban situations into a certain statistical 'sameness'). In this investigation, quantitative information (tables and graphs) is only relevant in the sense that it sheds light on alternative forms of representing the city. The assumption here has always been that we need robust information about a place so that we can begin to seriously interrogate what is taking place there (Parnell, 2012).

As a researcher, my role was as much one of collecting data as it was of creating ways of reorganising and representing the knowledge gleaned by means of architectural tools. By editing and interpreting the gathered material, new insights on the subject in question begin to emerge.

Visuals and texts become reciprocal elements, offering different yet complementary pathways in achieving a greater understanding of the subject. Wendy Pullan and Britt Baillie elaborate upon this idea of the investigative potential of visual representation (2013: 13):

Maps bring urban conflicts to a level of visibility that may be hard to judge in text alone, and add more means of probing beneath the surface of the disputes. And at their best, they may also indicate where borders can be bridged and plurality regained.

Interpretative modes of visual representation open up new possibilities for knowledge. This is one of the contributions of this research: to represent a part of the city which was previously underrepresented by means of practical methods. Drawings, graphs and maps illustrate Chicala's architectural order and make evident its interconnections with Luanda and Angola.

Public Celebration

During the process of the investigation, it became clear that the more public and official the project became, the more dialogue it enabled, the more research possibilities it generated, and the more 'bridges' it built. Therefore, part of the methodological approach concentrated on conferring recognition to Chicala in contexts where it was typically unknown or unrecognised, both within and beyond Luanda.⁶⁵

This strategy proved to be one of the principal means by which I was able to obtain insights regarding the research topic. Firstly, the project was extensively presented in academic and specialist arenas.⁶⁶ Valuable benefits and inputs can emerge from these events, especially in terms of the feedback and connections they facilitate. Secondly, the study of an urban configuration is in itself a balance between objective distance and immediate participation, requiring a mixed approach. Outcomes arising from scholarly research and conventional architectural methods were complemented by a variety of practices, both at the local and international level. These included pop-up installations, exhibitions, videos and performances, which brought the project to life and enabled me to learn and to create the ideal conditions in which others could understand the issues at hand (**Fig. 51**).

⁶⁵ We attracted media coverage of our activities in Luanda, and were invited to present the project at prestigious international museums and cultural institutions such as: Vitra Design Museum (Weil am Rhein), Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao), Centre for Contemporary Culture (Barcelona), TA Museum (Tel Aviv), Kunsthal (Rotterdam), High Museum of Art (Atlanta), Albuquerque Museum (Albuquerque) and Blanton Museum of Art (Austin).

⁶⁶ Papers were presented at universities and institutions in Angola, Canada, Italy, Portugal, and the USA.



Fig. 51 – Spatial installation in Porto representing Chicala’s main street. © XPTO Photography, 2012
 This installation brought part of Chicala to a different context. By visiting it, architects, businessmen, politicians and urban planners could ‘walk through’ the neighbourhood, something they would be unlikely to do in reality.

Viewed at times as a ‘side effect’ of the research, media coverage was in fact consciously used as part of the strategy to confer recognition to Chicala and the research topic. It worked as a vehicle to connect Chicala with the outside world, and vice versa (**Fig. 52- 53**). As Herbert J. Gans explains in the context of segregated American neighbourhoods, “in using the mass media, West-Enders are accepting themes from the outside world” (1962: 195).⁶⁷ The mobilisation of the media towards the neighbourhood and/or research project may also be viewed as an act of empowerment and resistance. Marshall Berman would agree with the impact of such actions - after all, he recognised the role of media attention in making a neighbourhood visible (1982: 326):

What if the Bronxites of the 1950s had possessed the conceptual tools, the vocabulary, the widespread public sympathy, the flair for publicity and mass mobilisation that residents of many American neighbourhoods would acquire in the 1960s?⁶⁸

The events which took place in relation to the research were far from isolated, with each one informing the project in some way (**Fig. 54**). Conferences and discussions with the people and professional bodies of Luanda provided some evidence of the general attitudes of the city’s dominant classes to the research topic. The more exposure the project received, the more instructive the reactions it caused became.

⁶⁷ In this respect, the media may not always work in favour of the research group or the neighbourhood. Sometimes, rejection or censorship may even occur, as was the case of *RTP* (Portuguese Public Television) which covered our fieldwork activities at the fish market in Chicala 1 (2012), but which unfortunately never broadcast the piece (most likely due to criticisms of the government from some interviewees).

⁶⁸ Berman’s rhetorical question has parallels with the case of Chicala analysed here. A full reading of his *All That is Solid Melts Into Air* (1982) is relevant to this topic.

July 18, 2012 12:22 am

Nation dominated by a rich elite

By Tom Burgis and David White



On the street, Chicala, Luanda. Most of the country's 20m people live in the sort of penury that oil money is not assuaging

In the marble-floored foyer of Sonangol's headquarters, emissaries from east and west come to seek access to an energy industry vying to be Africa's biggest. The state-owned oil group's 23-storey skyscraper looms over Luanda, a monument to a company – and a country – seeking its place on the world stage.

The story of Sonangol is the story of Angola – or, at least, of one Angola. During a civil conflict that began at independence in 1975 and ended only 10 years ago, the company furnished the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) with its war chest. In peacetime, it stewarded the oil bonanza that made Angola's economy the continent's third-biggest south of the Sahara, after South Africa and Nigeria.

Yet just as Sonangol dominates Angolan commercial life, with interests spanning banking, real estate, a portfolio of international investments, an airline and a football team, so the elite that rules with a tight grip amassed fabulous wealth. Most of the country's 20m people can only look on from a position of penury that oil money is not assuaging.

"One of the big challenges, and it relates to myself and my generation, is really to diversify the source of income," says Manuel Vicente, who ran Sonangol for 12 years until his move in January to become minister of state for economic co-ordination. "So far, oil is the main

July 13, 2012 4:41 pm

Property picture reveals Angola's wealth gap

By Tom Burgis in Luanda

For decades, the residents of Luanda's waterfront slum have gazed up at the hilltop presidential compound and the colonial fort overlooking the harbour. Now the vista is changing. Little by little, other people's prosperity is eating into Chicala.

The first phase of a new development of glittering edifices that dwarf the settlement's one-floor houses includes a hotel where a sandwich costs \$30 and the offices of an oil company.

To make room, Chicala's 50,000-odd inhabitants are being relocated to new homes outside the city, part of a housing policy that looks admirable on paper but in practice appears to be cementing the gulf between wealthy Angolans and the rest.

The transformation of Luanda – the hub for Africa's second biggest oil industry – also offers a glimpse of who is benefiting from China's quest for the continent's natural resources.

Chicala has more going for it than some of Luanda's other slums. Many of the three-quarters of the capital's inhabitants who dwell in slums are confined to precarious dwellings atop rubbish dumps. Yet even in Chicala, electricity and running water are scarce. There is scant defence against the Atlantic.

But it is home and António Tomás Ana is not going anywhere without a fight. Better known as Etona, the celebrated sculptor has lived in Chicala since 1977, two years into a civil war that sparked an exodus from the countryside and turned Luanda into the cramped mass of humanity it is today.

Etona concedes that relocating some of the most overcrowded households might be a good idea. But he has no intention of leaving. He has begun work on a library for Chicala's close-knit community.

"This is also part of our culture, part of our country," he says, gesturing at the slum's early evening bustle. "If we don't speak out, we will be carried off to Zango."

Located 20km from central Luanda, as the city gives way to the lush, Zango is supposed to be the future. It is one of two main new settlements for those the government is uprooting.

Fig. 52 – Fig. 53 - Articles from the Financial Times, July 2012.

The articles, part of a wide coverage of Angola's political and economic dimensions, feature impressions from Chicala (including photography and interviews with residents). These were made possible by a tour through the neighbourhood with the journalist.



Fig. 54 – Noite da Chicala, Elinga Teatro, Luanda (7/6/2012). © Kota Cinquenta, 7/6/2012

Closing ceremony of the 2012 Workshop in Luanda, where certificates were distributed to all participants and Chicala was celebrated by means of a photography exhibition, music, film and capoeira.

On various occasions and in diverse ways, participants of the project were publicly acknowledged for their role in the research. For instance, the *Noite da Chicala* [Chicala night] was a public ceremony at which workshop participants were recognised for their efforts and the city was invited to celebrate Chicala's culture through music, exhibitions, capoeira and film.⁶⁹

The level of interest generated by the event, which was attended by more than 500 people, showed some promise of symbiosis between Chicala and Luanda. This commemoration is reminiscent of what Henri Lefebvre terms as *fête*.⁷⁰ It can be seen as a 'device' exemplifying the ways in which architects and urban practitioners can contribute to consolidating a kind of 'collective memory' of a place.

Dissident Practice

Beyond the institutional liaisons and platforms of visibility inherent to this research, lies a more silent - and equally important - dimension of the methodological approach. Documenting the dismantling process of a neighbourhood, and helping to 'preserve' it in the face of various forms of violence, necessarily involves listening and connecting with the dissenting voices which operate in and around the case.

An important part of the fieldwork consisted of finding and approaching those critical voices - local NGOs, human rights organisations and (secret) activist groups. In the context of this research, these are first and foremost Christian Aid, Development Workshop, ACC and SOS Habitat, with whom I was able to learn about forced evictions in Angola and to pursue work in the resettlement colonies (presented in Chapter 5); and the so-called Negotiation Commission, a group of residents in Chicala whose struggle relates to the conditions in which the resettlements were carried out (presented in Chapter 6).

The researcher's sympathy with these resistance movements does not imply the adoption of tactics of confrontation and active engagement against the hegemonic forces of domination (official authorities or corporate groups). Yet, neither does it mean assuming a stance of self-conscious inefficiency and evasion. In other words, 'doing nothing' in a situation of social injustice is not an effective strategy.

It is not straightforward to distinguish between being a researcher and an activist or dissident.

⁶⁹ The *Noite da Chicala* took place at the end of the Urban Exploratory of Chicala workshop, at Elinga Teatro, Luanda on 7th June 2012.

⁷⁰ Henri Lefebvre uses the term *fête* regularly in his writings (Elden, 2003: 273, n. 1). *Fête* is a festivity related to the reappropriation of the city, often spontaneous and revolutionary, interweaving formal and informal elements.

When acting in complex urban situations, these practices are often intertwined. Similarly, as Ines Weizman explains in *Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence*, “architecture is perhaps the least likely of practices to articulate a dissident position”, since the practice of producing buildings “requires political powers that control the two main conditions necessary for construction to occur – land and money” (2014: 6). While a ‘building’ is not the ultimate outcome of this research, it is framed within an Angolan academic context which remains largely conservative and institutional.

My position as an architect and researcher is, therefore, to articulate ideas of resistance and to critique institutional norms and conventional practice. It is to set up a resilient practice which continuously measures and challenges these variable distances. Weizman explains the dilemma (2014: 6):

How to remain intransigently critical of governance without seeking to take over power? (...) Even when dissidents have not sought power, they have nevertheless been supported and abused by those who did. Dissident practices have therefore faced a different order of traps and contradictions, which makes the diagram of these conflicts more complex than a simple conflict along the vertical dimension between top-down imposition and bottom-up dissent.

This type of practitioner, who acts beyond architecture’s limiting concepts, is described by Justin McGuirk as the “activist architect”. In *Radical Cities*, the author dissects the methodologies employed by these practitioners (McGuirk, 2014: 32-33):

The activists are cautious. They observe the conditions, they accumulate data, and then they experiment. The modernists began with bulldozers; activists begin with a prototype. (...) What can we say about the activists’ methodology? The essential tool of the activist is agency. Here, the architect is a creator of actions, not just forms. The form may or may not be important, but the one thing that the architect must do is create an opportunity to act. (...) Above all, they need to be extroverts. This may turn out to be one of the fundamental shifts in the character of the architect in the twenty-first century. They have to create networks. Just as they need political allies, they must ingratiate themselves with local communities. (...) To work in the community’s interest you need the citizens on your side, because the days of telling people what’s good for them are over.⁷¹

The ‘dissident practice’ embedded in this research seeks to expand the role of architects and researchers in critical spatial practice. While the discipline seems to be complicit in the state and corporate disenfranchisement of the urban poor, these discrete (or undetectable) gestures and actions from ‘below’ offer a broader understanding of urban conflict. These practices tend to escape detection and identification on the ground, but here they are implicit both in the writings and technical language employed in architecture.

⁷¹ The examples used by McGuirk in *Radical Cities*, located exclusively in South America, are insightful and diverse. The title of the book derives from the featured architects’ working methodologies: “it was the methodology that was radical” (2014: 113).

Shaping the Thesis

At a time when thinking on postcolonial cities is moving towards seeking to accept and understand informal neighbourhoods, rather than to ignore or eradicate them, the need for experiments on the ground is becoming increasingly urgent. This thesis contributes to the development of new approaches to the subject in the architectural field.

The complex historical and urban background of the Chicala neighbourhood necessitates a composite methodological approach. The issues raised by existing literature on urban studies (both generally and in the specific context of Luanda) were analysed and combined with the wealth of material obtained from extensive fieldwork and practical interventions.

With the exception of a small number of widely disseminated interventions, the ability of architecture to engage with and resolve the major problems of urban informality currently remains largely incipient and fragmented. Various scattered projects and studies, mostly situated on the frontiers of the architectural discipline, at the intersection between scholarly and artistic fields, acted as inspiration for the conceptual formulation and shaping of this research. AbdouMaliq Simone's *For the City Yet to Come* is a seminal work analysing the way in which the practices of the majority make African cities work. Despite the thoroughness of the four cases examined in the book, the author emphasises the need for more detailed analysis of the African city, which inspired the structure of this thesis (Simone, 2004: 22):

A more comprehensive analysis of the particular scenarios and practices depicted in these cases would, of course, have to consider specific historical antecedents, geographical positions, and political environments.

Another relevant reference – not visited in person – is the District Six Museum in South Africa. The creation of an archive to reaffirm the history and culture of a disappeared place is best explained by Jean and John Comaroff (2011: 139-140):

Take the edgy, justly acclaimed District Six Museum in downtown Cape Town, in many ways an exemplary instance of reclamation and re-cognition through collective recall (Rassool & Prosalendis, 2001). Documenting the triumphal return of a mixed-race population forcibly removed from the District in the late 1960s, it is quite literally a House of Memory, composed of an assemblage of aural recollections, personal documents, and prized objects. (...) In this, the museum enacts a new kind of pointillist history, a quotidian mosaic, a soundscape of multiple voicings.

Other studies reconciling urban discourses and photographic essays were also essential sources. *City of Darkness*, a portrait of the unusual neighbourhood Kowloon Walled City (demolished in 1993), was driven by a similar motivation to that which underpinned this study of Chicala, which was also facing imminent destruction (Girard & Lambot, 2011 [1993]: 7):

How could this dark, dripping monstrosity still exist in modern Hong Kong, (...) and why hadn't anybody ever described what it was really like?

The Conflict Shoreline (Weizman & Sheikh, 2015) shows how a combination of visual media and words can illuminate an understanding of the natural and man-made transformations of a particular territory (in this case, the Negev desert). Here, photography provides evidence and written interpretation helps the authors to argue their claims. *Demolished: The End of Chicago's Public Housing* (Eads, Salinas & Evans, 2014) is a website which calls for the preservation of an already disappeared place: "The buildings are now gone, as is Sanders' community, but photos and memories remain." Further examples of significant investigative projects around the world include the African Activist Archive, which preserves and makes available online a growing record of activism supporting "the struggles of African peoples against colonialism, apartheid, and social injustice from the 1950s through to the 1990s."⁷²

These and many other references inspired and contributed decisively to shaping the form and content of this investigation. Barry Bergdoll acknowledges that "in recent years, a growing number of younger architects and designers have begun to act on the commitment to the idea that the informal settlements (...) are here to stay and require selective intervention rather than wholesale demolition so as to achieve better daily living and enhanced community ties" (2010: 12). Bergdoll states that this trend "applies to a spectrum of designers, from those who perform guerrilla intervention of short-term change (...) to those who seek to prod, provoke, or stimulate the political process toward incremental realisation of fragments of what might be larger networks" (2010: 12). The platforms of engagement that sustain this thesis derive, in varying doses, from all of these intentions.

The urban specificity of Chicala/Luanda, and the mobilisation of several institutions around the research topic, became the material and creative tool for producing critical knowledge and reimagining the postcolonial city. This investigation seeks to provide evidence of Luanda's richness and complexity by examining it "from the inside" (Ingold, 2013: 1). At no point throughout the dissertation is Chicala portrayed as an isolated, hermetic context: links to the wider city during different historical periods are emphasised in order to demonstrate the existence of an equally relevant mutually-influencing relationship between the neighbourhood and the city. The words of Hardoy and Satterthwaite are relevant in describing such a relationship (1989: 303):

Two parallel urban histories, closely interconnected but visually very different, are emerging. One is the official history, represented by the explicit concerns of governments and major building firms about the construction and management of the city. (...) The other history, that of the low income urban groups, has rarely been written about. It is fragmented and ill-recorded, inevitably different from the official version. (...) But this unofficial history is the more accurate portrayal of city development (...).

72 Online reference: africanactivist.msu.edu

This thesis proposes a reinvigorating interpretation of the city and its problems, aided by collaboration with institutions based within and beyond Chicala, which have contributed to situating urban problems within a genuine understanding of local architectural, social, economic and power structures. I will now outline the structure of the thesis and a brief summary of the contents of each of the six chapters.

Chapter 1, 'Shifting Ground: The Ilha's Natural Conditions and Coastal Protection', presents the historical development of the topographical context which has contributed to shaping Chicala and the surrounding territory. Over the years, the site has been in a state of constant morphological mutation, caught between the forces of the ocean and land sedimentation. However, this historical development is not strictly linear. As stated in a study by researchers De Pippo and Duarte Morais, the history of the Ilha de Luanda has been "rather complicated" (1994: 107). Since the 20th century, man-made interventions have been made to protect Luanda's coastline from these natural conditions.

Chapter 2, 'Conflictive Inhabitation: The Ilha's Miscegenation and Luanda's Urban Expansion', focuses on the fact that the Ilha (where Chicala is located) has been inhabited since long before records began. The social and cultural specificity of the Ilha's inhabitants derives from a process of miscegenation: the site's formation and expansion were the result of perpetual migratory movements, with their attendant troubles and disruptions. Throughout both the colonial and the postcolonial periods, Luanda has been a victim of invasions and tensions between its people. As the city expanded, conflictive inhabitation progressed, partially due to a colonial urban policy whose main purpose was to keep the colonised out of the central districts. Despite the persistently negative perceptions of Luanda's rulers (and temporary foreign visitors) regarding the ways in which people settled and adapted to their environments, the city evolved and complexified. In the postcolonial period, one may affirm that "the colonial legacy has contributed much to what seem today to be intractable problems" (Hardoy & Satterthwaite, 1989: 19). Nonetheless, informality became one of the primary characteristics of the city.

Chapter 3, 'Form Fantasies: Luanda's Profitable and Secretive Urbanism' places the current neoliberal urban condition in relation to colonial planning. It recognises that the development of Luanda over time was largely funded by the profits of a small number of economic activities, from the slave trade (16th - 19th centuries) to the coffee/cotton industries (19th - 20th centuries) and the oil market (20th - 21st centuries). The Chapter discusses the various masterplans that have been designed for the Chicala area since the late colonial period. In the postcolonial period, the neighbourhood is situated at the confluence of several governmental and privately funded urban renewal projects (Bay of Luanda, SODIMO masterplan, Marina Luanda). Luanda's current phase of urban regeneration is being planned almost entirely in secret. Information on what is being planned and who is responsible for its design,

implementation and ownership is heavily protected.

Chapter 4, 'Hybrid Neighbourhood: Symbiosis Between Chicala and Luanda' undertakes a synchronic study of the neighbourhood's architectural and social topography in the timeframe of the investigation (2010-16). The formation of Chicala as a neighbourhood was strongly influenced by the redevelopment of the surrounding areas, in particular the opening of an adjacent street in the early 20th century (cutting through the hill that borders Chicala to connect the city centre to the ocean, providing the starting point for Chicala's main street – and hence the depth of the whole neighbourhood), and the construction of Agostinho Neto's Mausoleum (as construction began, the earth removed from the building site was displaced to the natural sandbank that had begun to form by the coast). The Chapter focuses upon people's activities and ambitions in every kind of setting, following the approach suggested by Nabeel Hamdi (1995: 113):

Throughout any town or settlement there will be themes that are observable and even measurable: they provide structure and continuity based on conventions, materials, technologies, and social habitat. (...) There will be systems of rules that may be implicit and will find expression in the different ways people organise and use buildings, streets, squares and parks. There will be difference in value attached to notions of public and private. There will be a nonthematic building or open space demanding its own system – the church, the town hall, the marketplace, the school.

Communication between Chicala and Luanda developed as part of a process of reciprocity, on many levels. An infinite description of every level of this relationship is obviously neither possible nor useful, and so themes must be chosen. Analysis of Chicala's services and infrastructure, street and alley network, and key institutions (places of worship, educational facilities, markets and service providers, houses) contributes to a greater understanding of the nature of the symbiosis between the neighbourhood and the city. Each of these sections includes presentation of the 'data' gathered, observations relating to architectural articulation, and a conclusion presenting the area in question as a receptacle for civic life.

Chapter 5, 'Suppression and Displacement: The Architecture of the Resettlement Camps' pays special attention to Luanda's long history of evictions of entire neighbourhoods. The Chapter aims to make visible the conditions in which Chicala is being dismantled, along similar lines to Saskia Sassen's motives for writing *Expulsions* (2014: 215):

One of the intentions of this book was to make visible the crossing into the space of the expelled – to capture the visible site or moment of expulsion, before we forget.

Once again, the ongoing process of eviction is presented within a historical framework. From the middle of the 19th century, with the urbanisation of the Bairro dos Coqueiros, the area around the bottom of the north-eastern slope of Morro de São Miguel, the word *musseque* began to be more commonly associated with low-income neighbourhoods, and evictions to more peripheral areas gained pace. The process recalls the words of Andres Lepik (2014: 93-94):

The utopian idea of *tabula rasa* has been at the core of much modernist urban planning, but the materialisation of this modernist dream always included a gesture toward the inclusion of all. (...) The satellite cities that are currently being constructed seem to have relinquished this inclusive and collective ideal.

In Luanda, as in other African postcolonies, evictions and displacements have become alarmingly frequent. The phenomenon is linked to issues of social class, while in the colonial period it had more ethnic undertones (**Fig. 55 - 56**). These processes are inextricably linked to the real estate market, both formal and informal. Not all of the evicted residents have been victimised by insensitive urban policies; indeed, some have profited from such attempts at segregation. The complexity of these mechanisms of survival, profit and power forms yet another layer in Luanda's hybrid, nuanced postcolonial urban order.



Fig. 55 - Sanza Pombo settlement, built by colonial authorities to house African workers, 1965. © Manuel dos Santos Guerra

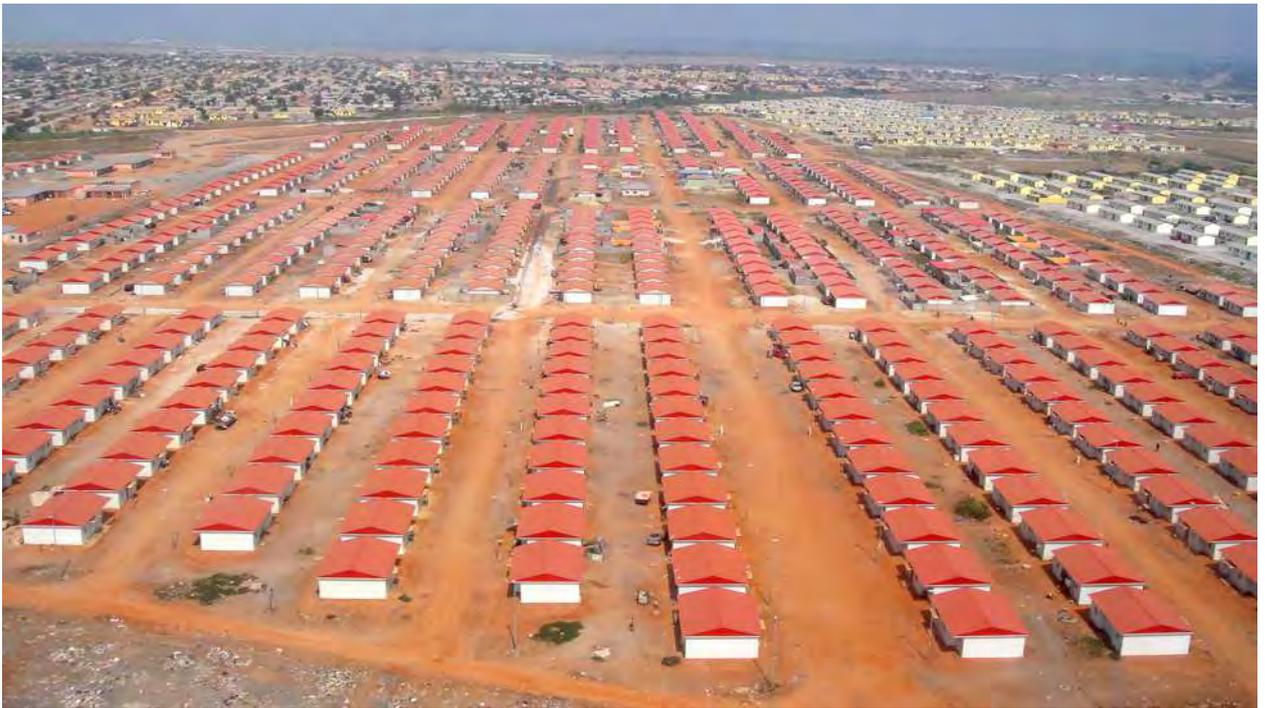


Fig. 56 – Panguila resettlement camp, 2012. © Paulo Moreira, 30/5/2012

Chapter 6, 'Practices of Resistance: Reactions to Urban Change in Chicala and Luanda' aims to understand the 'slow' and 'small' practices of resistance. The full body of Luanda's urban form emerges only if we are aware of these practices. They help to complexify the discourse on the city, bringing the dwellers of informal neighbourhoods closer to the rest of the population – everyone is aware of the ongoing changes planned for their environments, however secret they may be, and everyone reacts to change. It may be that evictions continue in many developing cities on a large scale, without us being aware of them. The Chapter attends to the actions of civic groups operating in Chicala, in particular the 'Negotiation Committee'. Actions of resistance and protest are in themselves an expression of citizenship, an affirmation of participation in the destiny of the city, which merit analysis and interpretation. Civic awareness gives rise to an alternative vision of Luanda's history and future development, questioning official governance structures. Matthew Barac's words are relevant here (Barac, 2011: 36):

Yet in this paradox it is important to theorise the role that place might, could and should have. Given our broad aim to think through tools for imagining alternative and more appropriate urban futures, it is relevant to flag the tendencies and attributes of such styles of study or work in relation to change.

The thesis concludes with remarks on the nature of 'city' through the lens of the particular kind of urban experience presented in the preceding chapters. The thesis helps to shed light on a form of urban vitality which makes evident the nature of Chicala's symbiosis with Luanda. By unravelling the history and civic topography of Chicala and surrounding areas, one can make sense of the broader topic of how informality operates in the context of Luanda and Angola. Chicala, along with any other

neighbourhood in Luanda, exists because of a history of urban development which it is valuable to document. As a 'town-within-the-city', Chicala can be compared to urban phenomena elsewhere, including segregated neighbourhoods with many years of consolidation. Cities have always harboured 'rich' and 'poor' populations, and have always contained different areas with different characters. In this respect, Luanda is no different from London or New York City – or any other city in which the urban poor have been progressively pushed to the outskirts for the sake of a homogenised global culture.

Chapter 1

Shifting Ground: The Ilha's Natural Conditions and Coastal Protection

The Luandan littoral is constantly shifting. Territorial changes in the Ilha de Luanda through the ages show that the area was a much longer and wider sandbank in the 16th and 17th centuries than in the 20th and 21st centuries. The volatility of the area largely derives from natural phenomena, from a constant battle between water and land. It was only in the 20th century, during both the colonial and post-colonial periods, that consistent attempts were made to stabilise the shifting ground of the Ilha de Luanda. As yet, these actions have not been entirely successful.

Restingas (sandy ridges, isthmuses, or sandbanks) are a common feature of Angola's coastline (**Fig. 57 -58**).¹ They take the form of barrier islands or peninsulas created by sandbars, debris and sediment, which form lagoons. In Luanda, the *restinga* is commonly known as the Ilha de Luanda, the Ilha do Cabo or simply the Ilha (island). Earlier descriptions have referred to it as Ilha das Cabras [goats], due to the presence of numerous goats there (Cardoso, 1972: 39).

The Ilha's morphological and sedimentary variation over the centuries is particularly extreme. Existing records are insufficient to fully understand its early configuration, making it difficult to trace an analytical history. Not only is there a lack of historical maps, but even the written descriptions available offer very different versions of the facts. This Chapter describes the natural conditions of the *restinga*, with a particular focus on its evolution through time (**Fig. 59**).

¹ The *restingas* are primarily formed by the natural deposition of sands displaced by the currents of the Kwanza River (75 km south of Luanda), or eroded from the southern cliffs and redistributed by longshore currents in the ocean (Lopes & Pigafetta, 1951: 31). Luanda's *restinga* has maintained a very low level of land and sand rising just a few metres from sea level (Brásio, 1952 [V]: 137; 374-392; Amaral, 2000: 80; De Pippo et al, 1994: 108). De Pippo and Duarte Morais' study "Man-Induced Morphological and Sedimentary Changes on the Ilha de Luanda and Ilha da Chicala (Angola)" describes the *restinga* as a coastal drift "from Southwest to Northeast due to winds and predominant swells coming from the third (St. Helen winds) and fourth quadrants (Abecassis, 1957) and moving in the same direction as the Cold Current of Benguela (Daniaux, 1985; Hart & Curie, 1960)." (De Pippo et al, 1994: 94).



Fig. 57 - Luanda's restinga. © Moura Machado



Fig. 58 - Lobito's restinga. © Foto Quito

Both Luanda and the city of Lobito (600 km to the south of Luanda) possess similar sandbank formations (Luanda: left; Lobito: right)

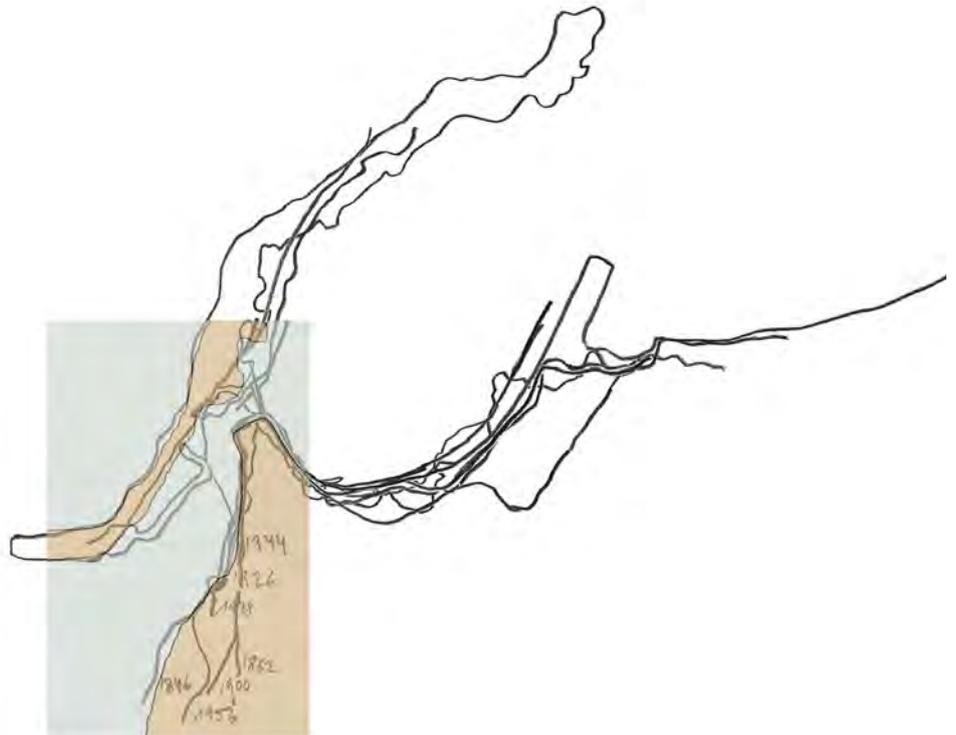


Fig. 59 - Historical evolution of Luanda's coast and the restinga, with the area of Chicala highlighted. © Paulo Moreira, 2011

The Early Formation of the Ilha de Luanda (15th – 17th centuries)

The oldest and most widely referenced document mentioning the area is a letter from Padre Garcia Simões dated 20th October 1575.² Garcia Simões estimates the *restinga* to stretch the “length of five leagues” [approximately 30 km] and the width of “a gunshot, at times even narrower”.³

Bellic references are commonly used in other early descriptions of the *restinga*. Duarte Lopes and Filippo Pigafetta (priests who were in Angola and Kongo around 1587) refer to the Ilha as “as much as 1 mile [1.6 km] wide, and in some places, as narrow as an archery shot” (Martins, 2000: 36). This same description mentions a length of 20 miles [approximately 32 km].⁴

Over time, other descriptions followed, often providing disparate dimensions of the Ilha. According to Ilídio do Amaral, a reputed scholar on Luanda, the dimensions presented in early documents suggest a length ranging from 20 to 35 km and a width ranging from 2 to 3 km (Amaral, 2000: 80). These variations are certainly justified due to the absence of an accurate cartography of Luanda until the 19th century.⁵ However, they also arise in part from the great volatility which characterised the Ilha’s early formation.

Some variation may be observed between these early descriptions and a more recent one written by Angolan author Ruy Duarte de Carvalho (1989). Carvalho notes that in 1989 the Ilha was 7 km long and 500 metres wide at its widest point.⁶ The difference in relation to Amaral’s descriptions of 20-35 km (length) and 2-3 km (width) merits closer attention.

2 For longer descriptions of the letter see *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Luanda*, 4^a serie, 7, 1885, pp. 339-346; Brásio (1952 (III): 21, 129-142); and Amaral (2000: 77). Further references to Garcia Simões’ letter include Bettencourt (1965), Cardoso (1950), Carvalho (1989) and Delgado (1901).

3 According to *The History of African Cities South of the Sahara - From Origins to Colonization* by Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, a Portuguese league measured 3.83 miles (p. 370, n. 158). The note adds the reference: F. Latour da Veiga Pinto, *Le Portugal et le Congo au XIXe siècle* (Paris: PUF, 1972: 47-65).

4 Duarte Lopes and Filippo Pigafetta’s descriptions were translated and published in Portuguese: Albuquerque, Luís de, *Relação do Reino do Congo e das terras circunvizinhas*, Lisbon: Alfa, 1989 (cited by Amaral, 2000). Another record, an anonymous report dating from 1607 (cited by Amaral, 2000 and Brásio, 1955 (V): 137; 374-392), reproduces this information, estimating the *restinga* to be “5 leagues in length and less than a league in width, and in some parts [as narrow as] a harquebus shot”.

5 According to De Pippo and Duarte Morais, “the first documents that may be judged scientifically reliable date back to 1825 and 1883; other documents that enable to reconstruct coastal morphological changes date to 1757 and to more ancient periods.” (De Pippo et al, 1994: 94). These estimates differ considerably to those of the geologists working on the 1971 *Study of the Calumbo-Luanda Canal*, which states that “centuries ago, Luanda’s geological formation consisted of a lagoonal system defined by a single *restinga* of approximately 50 km in length, extending from the Palmeirinhas to the tip of the Ilha de Luanda” (see *Grupo de Trabalho para o estudo do Canal Calumbo-Luanda*, 1971: 9; cited by Carvalho, 1989: 69). These estimates are close to those of Cardonega (1972) who, reporting at the end of the 17th century, mentions a length of 12 leagues [approximately 74 km], with the Corimba gullet “almost halfway along” (therefore including the Mussulo peninsula in this estimate, which was continuous with the Ilha at that time).

6 Carvalho, Ruy Duarte de, *Ana a Manda - Os Filhos da Rede*, Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1989.

According to Carvalho's study, this shrinkage occurred following a rupture in the *restinga*, which cut the Mussulo peninsula off from the Ilha. The long, arched sandbank, stemming from the mouth of the Kwanza River, was cut through by water at the Barra da Corimba due to the force of the *kalembas* (or *calemas*, ocean storms) that have repeatedly afflicted Luanda's coastline (Carvalho, 1989: 69) (Fig. 60 - 62).

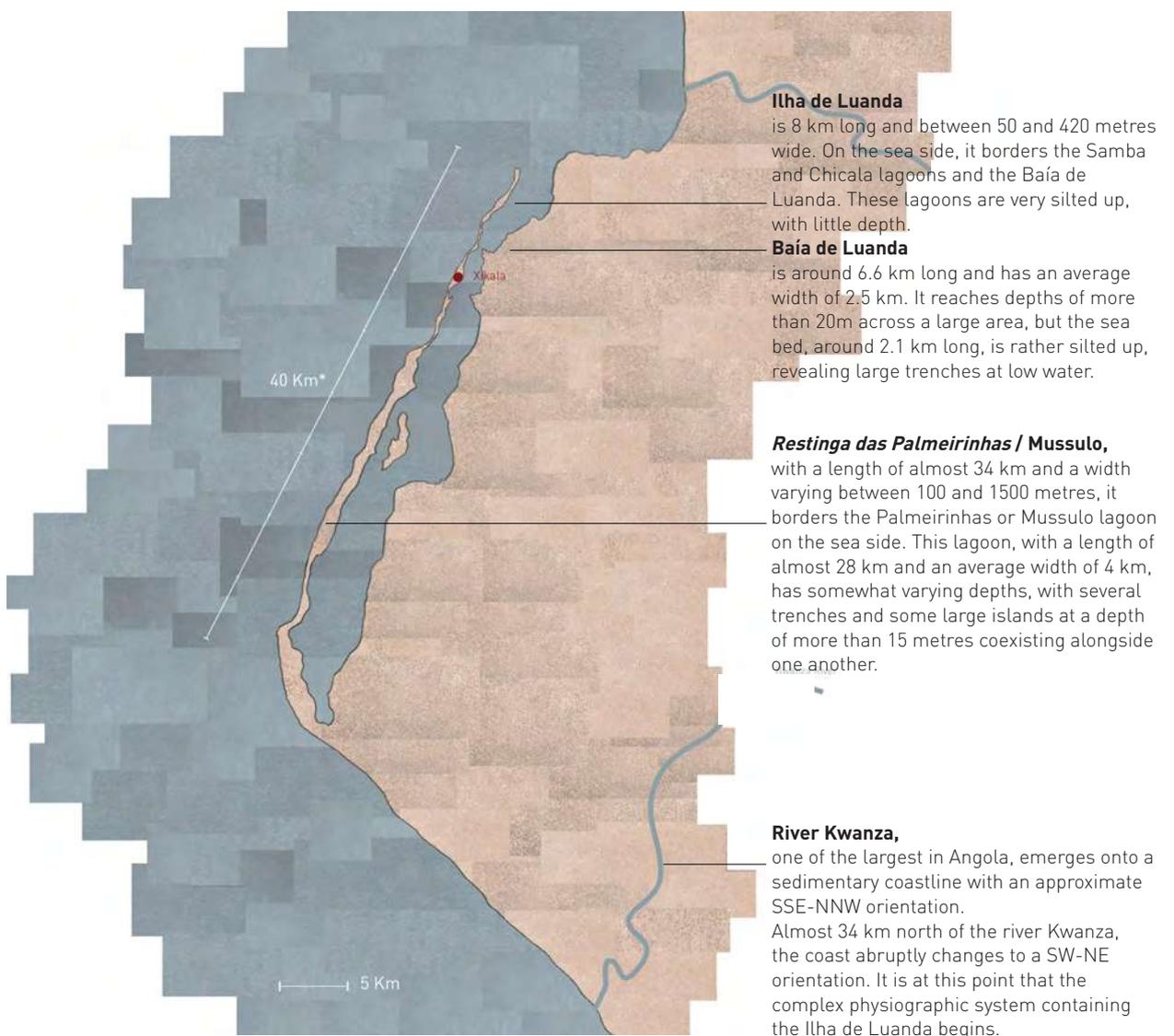


Fig. 60 - Visual representation of the *restinga* system. © Paulo Moreira, 2016



Fig. 61 - Photo of Mussulo. © Moura Machado

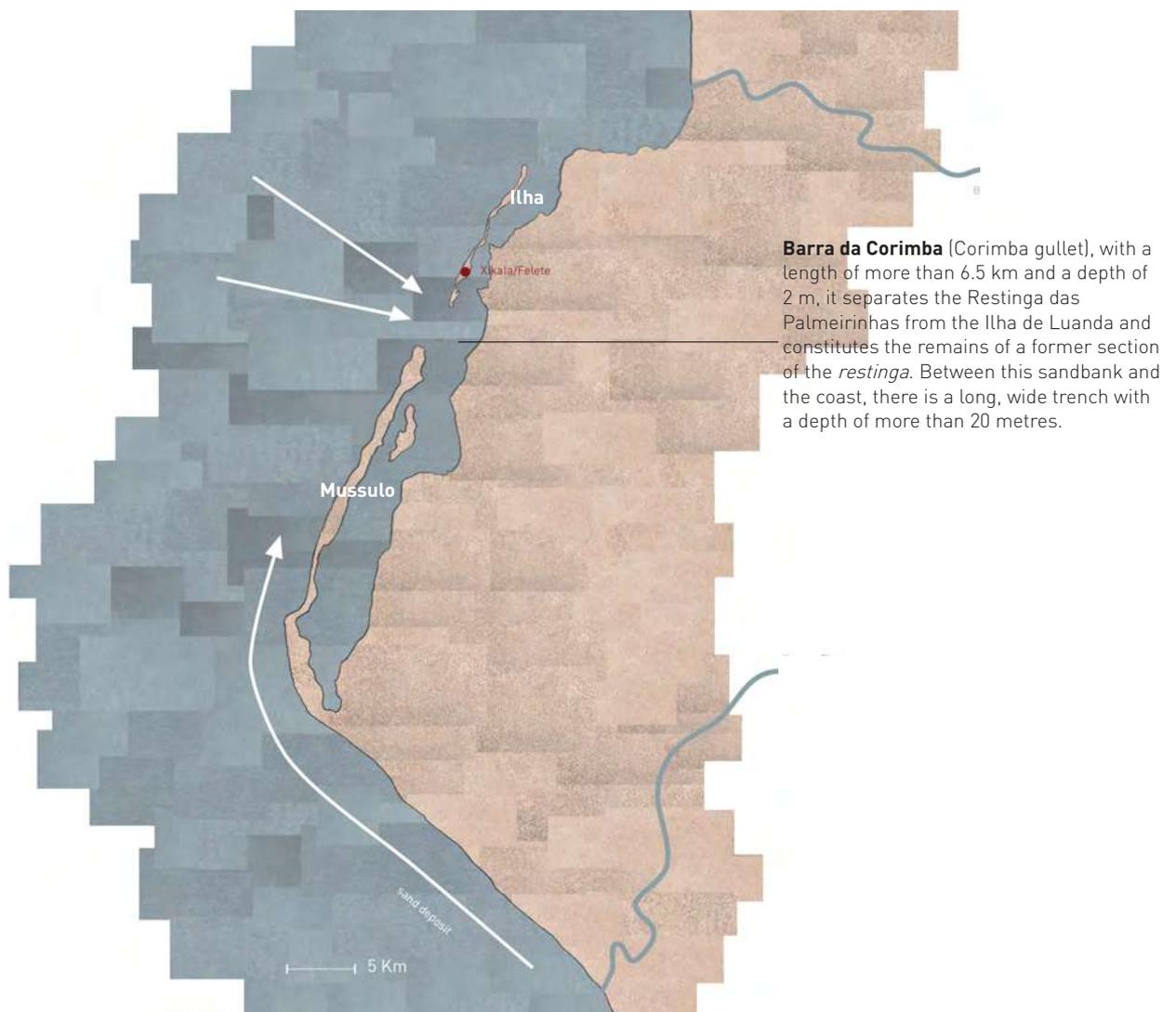


Fig. 62 – Visual representation of the impact of ocean currents and *kalembras* on the Ilha. © Paulo Moreira, 2016
Waves and currents strike the *restinga* and coast obliquely, causing erosion of beaches and coastal slopes. Throughout the ages, these actions have modified the coast of Luanda. At times, in weaker areas such as the Barra da Corimba, large *kalembras* break the sandbanks, gaining a foothold between the sea and the interior lagoons in the openings and circulation of the waters, and in the back and forth movements of the tides. As the lagoon ebb tide moves towards the north, these openings have a tendency to close up, when there is free passage for the waters to the north of them. This is what occurred with some of the openings in the *restinga* of Mussulo. If, on the other hand, the waters do not have an easier exit to the north, the openings stabilise and tidal movements largely take place through them.

Colonial Coastal Protection (20th century)

Due to the narrowing of the channel between the Ilha and the mainland, and the silting up of the Baía de Luanda and the Samba area, the Barra da Corimba became the easiest path for the ebb tide to take. Indeed, from 1925 when the landfill access to the Ilha was constructed, the Barra da Corimba became the only opening for the waters to circulate through (Fig. 63 - 66).⁷ The landfill connecting the Ilha to the mainland was the first in a series of large-scale man-made interventions attempting to reduce the impacts of the natural phenomena that had affected the Ilha over the years. From the beginning of the 1940s, various other attempts were made to halt these natural processes. These actions, however, proved to be ineffective (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983):

In the forties, as a result of studies by various committees, the urban area of the Ilha was the subject of several works consisting of the construction of raised wooden screens and the nourishment of the coast with sand and earth transported by the most suitable means of transport available at the time. Thousands of stakes were embedded in regular rows or parallel to the coast with variable spacing. In the meantime, the infra-excavation caused by the reflection of the waves off these screens provoked the fall of the stakes furthest out, and then those behind them, and these works quickly ceased to retain the sand.

Later, in 1952, the construction of a set of coastal protection works began, employing artificial nourishment of the west coast of the Ilha. Once again, the intervention seemed to be incapable of achieving its goals: "The insufficient robustness of these works required permanent maintenance and repair works to be carried out" (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983).



Fig. 63 - 64 - Connection between the continent and the Ilha. Source: Archive Paulo Moreira
The connection between the continent and the Ilha was landfilled by the Portuguese at the beginning of the 20th century.

⁷ See *Jornal de Angola* 24/5/1983.



Fig. 65 - Connection between the continent and the Ilha, 1985. © Björn Roos, 1985. Source: Brbild.se



Fig. 66 - Connection between the continent and the Ilha, 2011. © Paulo Moreira, 27/8/2011
The Baía de Luanda is currently separated from the Chicala and Samba lagoons by the landfill that constitutes the access to the Ilha de Luanda.

Faced with the poor performance of these works, and the continual advance of the sea, a committee was appointed in 1953 to suggest a set of emergency works aimed at halting erosion on the forwardmost sections of the Ilha. In April 1954, wooden stakes began to be embedded to retain the sand along 350 metres of coastline (from the so-called Praia do Banho to the roundabout at the entrance to the Ilha).⁸ These stakes were to be encased in rockfill (**Fig. 67**).

In January 1955, the *kalembas* (with waves 3 metres high) completely destroyed the works which had not yet been encased in rockfill. The work had all been in vain. In 1983, the *Jornal de Angola* published an article on the topic, stating that if these works had not been insufficiently sized, the “current critical situation” could have been avoided (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983). It is clear that the sea has never ceased to impose its erosive action, progressively shrinking beaches and rendering the Ilha coastline extremely vulnerable.

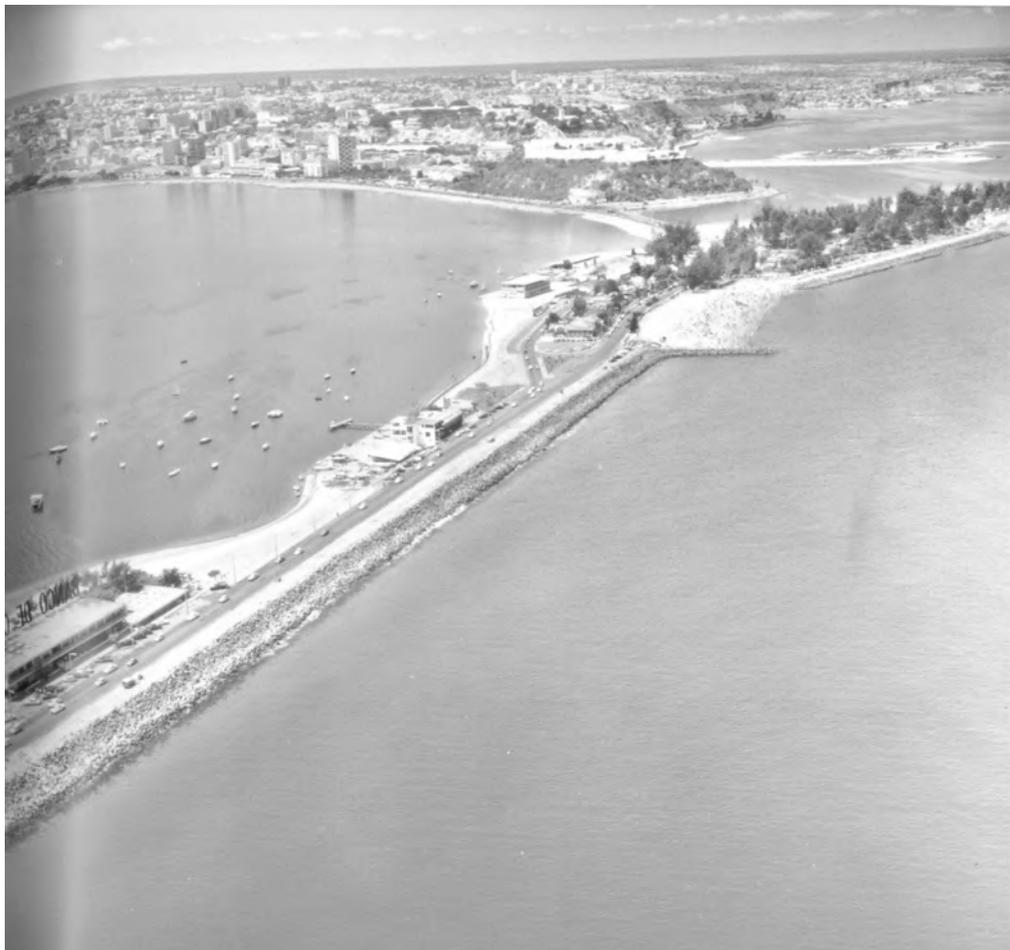


Fig. 67 - Revetments on the *restinga* (colonial period). © Moura Machado
Waves and currents strike the restinga and coast obliquely, causing erosion of beaches and coastal slopes. The revetment sought to protect the coast from these actions of the ocean.

⁸ Curiously, the *Jornal de Angola* article states that the Praia do Banho disappeared due to these works, but this is not true – it still exists with the same name.

The Ilha de Luanda Coastal Protection Plan (1983)

Towards the end of 1981, to protect the beaches in Ilha de Luanda from severe erosion, the National Directorate of Engineering Works of the Ministry of Construction commissioned a study of possible solutions from the Portuguese company Consulmar.⁹ In May 1983, the *Plano de Protecção Costeira da Ilha de Luanda* (Ilha de Luanda Coastal Protection Plan) was presented at a public round table debate, as reported by two articles published in the *Jornal de Angola* (Fig. 68 - 69).¹⁰



Fig. 68 - "Round table about the problematic of the Ilha's protection" (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983). *Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983).



Fig. 69 - "Ilha's protection" (*Jornal de Angola*, 24/5/1983). *Jornal de Angola*, 24/5/1983

Both articles aimed to inform readers of the situation in Ilha de Luanda and of the coastal protection strategy. The first article, dated Wednesday 18th May 1983, presented the preliminary study, paving the way for the round table that would take place that day.¹¹ The second article, published in *Jornal de Angola* the following day, revealed the results of the project's public presentation and debate.¹²

According to the second article, the speakers at the round table analysed the situation in the Ilha de Luanda and presented the objectives and methodology of the work they proposed, along with the

9 In Portuguese, *Direcção Nacional de Obras de Engenharia, Ministério da Construção*.
 10 *Jornal de Angola* published articles on the Ilha de Luanda Coastal Protection Plan in at least 4 issues in May 1983: on the 18th, 19th, 24th and 27th of the month.
 11 The article was entitled '*Estudos Sobre Obras a Efectuar Para Protecção Costeira da Ilha de Luanda*' (Studies on Coastal Protection Works to be Undertaken in the Ilha de Luanda), *Jornal de Angola*, 19th May 1983.
 12 The article was entitled '*Mesa Redonda Sobre a Problemática de Protecção da Ilha de Luanda*' [Round Table on the Issue of Protecting the Ilha de Luanda]. According to the article, the debate took place in the auditorium at Rádio Nacional de Angola.

conclusions of the studies undertaken.¹³ The study commissioned from Consulmar revealed that the continuous disappearance of large swathes of the surface section of the Ilha arose due to reductions in sediment transport caused by the opening of the Barra da Corimba, which cut the Ilha off from the large sand bank it once formed part of, and its adaptation to the action of natural modifying forces. Other studies were presented which included collections of historical elements of the process by which the Ilha de Luanda was formed, along with various (failed, according to the *Jornal de Angola* article) attempts made in the colonial era to protect it. The issue was summarised in the words of one of the speakers at the session (not named in the journal article) (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983):

The phenomenon of the disappearance of the Ilha de Luanda is worrying, if we take into account that 200 years ago it was 15 km long, while today it is only 8 km long. This is due to the movement of sands, which shift along the Luanda coast from south to north, accumulating at the northern tip of Mussulo.

The situation could be verified by those present at the session through the presentation of slides illustrating features of the Ilha since 1768, where the former join between the Barra da Corimba and the current Ilha de Luanda could be observed.¹⁴ It was clear that the length of the Ilha had diminished across its entirety, from the images dated 1883 (around 15 km), 1906 (still 15 km), 1938 (14 km), 1960 (7 km) and 1969 (10 km).¹⁵

Following these observations, the new coastal protection project was presented. The preliminary project was concluded in June 1982, almost a year before the public presentation. During this period, it was jointly analysed by the National Directorate of Engineering Works, Hidroportos and Consulmar, with the aim of promoting the use of existing equipment from the National Construction Company, including material resources and a national workforce, as well as the use of construction techniques which could be reproduced in similar works in the future. Consulmar presented the most suitable solution to resolve the problem of erosion: construction of a spur field covering the entire west coast of the Ilha. This solution would gradually lead to the disappearance of the works undertaken until then and would reduce the number of spurs by half, while increasing their length (**Figs. 70 - 71**). These works would allow existing beaches to be extended, with the formation of a long beach between the roundabout at the entrance to the Ilha and the Hotel Panorama also envisaged.

13 The speakers were Jorge Campinos, Technical Director of Engineering Works at the Ministry of Construction and Silveira Ramos, Technical Director of Consulmar.

14 The various articles present slightly different data. The article published on 27th May 1983 says that "the earliest known written document is 'História de Angola' [History of Angola], by Elias Alexandre da Silva Côrrea in 1782", although as seen previously, the letter by Padre Garcia Simões dates from much earlier (1575).

15 The article states that the increase in length between 1960 and 1969 was due to the closure of the Chicala channel, using artificial landfill, which linked the Ilha once again to the area of sand which had broken off in 1955.



Fig. 70 - Ilha's coastal protection: short spurs in the colonial period. © Moura Machado



Fig. 71 - Ilha's coastal protection: long spurs, 2008. © Manuel Cavalcanti, 3/9/2008. Source: Flickr

The proposed works would be entirely undertaken by Hidroportos, a state company created for this purpose, “with some use of foreign assistance” (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983). The possibility of dredging the bed of the bay of four or five million cubic metres of sand with the aim of creating a recreational area and lifeguard stations was also considered.¹⁶ According to Mr. Sonemberg from Sonangol during the question and answer session, “this large quantity of sand could also be used to enlarge Luanda’s commercial port” (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983).¹⁷

The complete implementation period would be “contingent upon the capacity for dredging”, with a period of four years predicted for the conclusion of the works “with an accelerated pace of construction”, or even “double that time” (*Jornal de Angola*, 19/5/1983). The study does not appear to be completely defined, and the way in which it proposes to tackle the problem of protecting the Ilha de Luanda remains somewhat vague.

The uncertainty surrounding the Ilha coastal protection strategy deepens when the technical strategy for implementation of the project is explained: again, this appears to remain undefined. The *Jornal de Angola* articles leave open the possibility that it would not be limited to the ‘8 km of the Ilha’, which form the Samba and Chicala lagoons and the Bay of Luanda. Instead, two different ways of tackling the issue are proposed: on a smaller scale, focusing exclusively on the defence of the Ilha, or on a larger scale, including the entirety of the *restinga*, from Ponta das Palmeirinhas (southern tip) to the Ponta da Ilha (northern tip).

The first option, to be implemented on the Ilha alone, largely maintains the physiographic conditions found there at the time. Analysing the issue on this ‘scale’, it is concluded that the sediment transport (sand) which nourishes the west shore of the Ilha is lesser than the transport capacity of sea waves. Under these conditions, the suggested solution was to construct a spur field covering the entire west coast of the Ilha. The *Jornal de Angola* article of 27th May 1983 presents a technical description justifying this option (**Fig. 72**). It begins by stating that among the “classic coastal protection measures”, this is the most convenient solution for this particular case – it is a solution which would “correct the defects which weaken existing works” (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983). The dimensions of the proposed spurs, as well as the distance between them, depend on various factors. The most important, it is stated, is the wave regime in each part of the ocean. Here, Consulmar refers to a study completed almost thirty years previously, during the colonial period (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983):

By recognising as valid the wave regime derived from the transposition of sand to the shores noted in observations carried out on the Ilha de Luanda in 1953, it is possible to determine sea wave characteristics along the Ilha.

16 The works also included the construction of roundabouts and four new car parks.

17 This is one of the characteristics of the way in which territorial transformation of Luanda’s coastal area has taken place throughout the decades: the transfer of large quantities of sand or earth from the bottom of the sea or from the ground in order to increase the area available for construction.



Fig. 72 - Chicala separated from the Ilha by the action of the kalembras (Jornal de Angola, 27/5/1983).

Jornal de Angola, 27/5/1983

In 1955, the action of the *kalembras* caused a number of channels to open up along the entrance to the Ilha, the largest of which was almost 500 metres in length, separating Chicala from the Ilha. Large sections of the Ilha retreated towards the mainland.

Having previously criticised the colonial coastal protection plan, it seems strange that the article about the new project draws upon the studies which led to its implementation. The tone of the *Jornal de Angola* articles cast doubt on the validity of studies undertaken in the colonial period (the articles blame those calculations for giving rise to an inadequate solution which did not function properly). Paradoxically, however, the proposal they present as the most efficient is based on the very same calculations.¹⁸

Regarding the southwestern area of the Ilha, where Chicala is located, there were no coastal protection structures in place at the time of the proposal. For this reason, the area was subject to severe erosion as the article explains, “would have been faster had the waves not lost the majority of their energy before reaching the beach due to the shallowness of the waters” (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983). Taking advantage of the shallow depths, much longer spurs are proposed for this area than for the others, while avoiding a subsequent increase in construction costs. At the same time, the angle at which the spurs meet the beach is smaller than of those in the northeastern zone. Under these conditions,

18 As an example, the study indicates that adopting spurs of 120m in length “means that the spur heads would, in many cases, reach depths of 3 metres”, adding the caveat “assuming the validity of the 1969 hydrographic survey” (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983).

construction of two spurs was envisaged, one of almost 140m, and another of almost 180m. It was believed that these would be sufficient to satisfactorily protect the area.

According to the 1983 project, the actions described above represent the simplest solution to tackle the issue of defending the Ilha from the action of the sea. However, the *Jornal de Angola* expresses the hope that “this isolated action does not compromise integration in a future global solution”, that is, one which covers the entire Mussulo peninsula (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983). It is noted that the ‘small scale’ works could become the first phase of a comprehensive intervention across the full length of the *restinga*. The ‘large scale’ option of extending the coastal protection plan to the Mussulo peninsula would create a single *restinga*, just like in earlier times (as described above). This would involve closing the Barra da Corimba “totally or partially” and restoring the original condition between the Ilha and the continent (by replacing the access embankment with a bridge).

Uncertainties about the Ilha Protection

The ambitious 1983 coastal protection plan was launched amid many uncertainties. It appears that those who criticised the older (colonial) protection works with such assurance had still failed to find the ideal solution. For instance, the study highlights the importance of learning from information collected on the functioning of the first spur to be implemented in this area. In this way, the article explains, “the length of the other spurs may be calculated” (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983). This option would allow greater certainty regarding suitable sizing than if a priori calculations were to be used. It seems that, although the project was developed by a team of qualified experts, the solution presented may be considered partially ‘informal’, or at least not entirely planned.

The apparent uncertainty as to how to implement the project was evident at the public presentation on 18th May 1983, along with a lack of information on technical issues, leading the *Jornal de Angola* to publish a more comprehensive article on the strategy under consideration on 27th May 1983. The article dedicates the majority of its content to justifying the ‘large scale’ option. It states that “solutions of this kind have been proposed by various authors” (without specifying which ones) (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983). The article says that implementation of this project would lead to the following “great benefits” (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983):

- 1 – The restoration of sedimentary transport along the exterior shore ensures the natural nourishment of beaches, removing the need for dredging, and would allow the Ilha to grow northeastwards, thus increasing the sheltered area for expansion of the port;
- 2 – The vast area extending from Ponta do Mussulo to Palmeirinhas, once linked by land to the city, would constitute a never-ending area of beaches suitable for bathing;
- 3 – The ebb tides which would be established in the Bay following removal of the current access embankment would reduce the current levels of water pollution by the city’s sewers;

4 – The area (...) once linked to the Baía de Luanda by a navigable channel, would constitute a supply for expansion of the current port.

The drawbacks of this solution are also presented (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983):

Some negative outcomes could result from the total or partial closure of the Barra da Corimba and the demolition of the access embankment to the Ilha, whose consequences will only be quantifiable following thorough study using a scale model, but which will not be difficult to predict, at least qualitatively.

It is worth noting that the construction of a model is proposed to clear up certain doubts. It seems, however, that such a model was not built. The article goes on to note that with the total closure of the Barra da Corimba and removal of the access embankment to the Ilha, the lagoon will have no other communication with the sea apart from the northern entrance to the Bay. Here, the text confuses readers as to the best solution envisaged. Many hypotheses, 'ifs', technical terms and specialist language are presented, giving the sense that the situation is not entirely under control (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983):

In this hypothesis, a significant reduction in the magnitude of the lagoon tide SW of the current access embankment, very strong ebb and flood tides in the section of the bridge to be constructed and a significant increase in the circulation of water in the area of the current bay are to be expected as a consequence. The difference in magnitude and phase which will exist between the exterior tide and interior tide may give rise to the formation of channels through which strong tidal currents will flow, in the case of breaches in weaker parts of the *restinga*. If these channels are not quickly brought under control, the natural tendency will be for them to deepen and widen, causing a collapse in sedimentary transport along the shore and subsequent erosion of the area to the north. Meanwhile, a significant reduction in tidal magnitude at the southernmost point of the Palmeirinhas lagoon, and the subsequent lack of water flow, could have sanitary impacts.

An intermediate position is also addressed: the only partial closure of the Barra da Corimba. It is said that this solution could mitigate or eliminate some of the negative impacts noted in the solution described above. However, this alternative gives rise to two more drawbacks. The first lies in the fact that the channel would interfere, to a greater or lesser extent, with the coastal transport of sand. In this case, the channel would either have to be very shallow to allow the large scale passage of sand (which would only be possible with a wide opening) or artificial transposition by pumping through the mouth of the channel would have to be employed. The second drawback relates to access to the Mussulo *restinga* by land, unless a bridge was built across the mouth of the channel.

The numerous doubts and uncertainties presented in the 1983 Coastal Protection Plan confirm that, despite all the expert and specialist studies, there was room for a more or less 'improvised' solution. In fact, the flexibility and adaptability of the plan was viewed as normal. The ambiguity between planned and unplanned, or formal and informal, design strategies would remain a common and widespread feature in postcolonial Luanda.

Chapter 2

Conflictive Inhabitation: The Ilha's Miscegenation and Luanda's Urban Expansion

*In this turbulent land
Container of pity and pain
Dazed mother of fear
Living hell*

Unknown author
Description of Luanda, 17th century poem, first verse¹

The Ilha de Luanda has been inhabited since long before records began. The population that settled there originally were known as the *Axiluanda* (or *Muxiluanda*, in plural). The toponymy of *Axiluanda* means 'throwers of nets', as in 'fishermen'.² Hence, the name of the city, Luanda, derives from the community living on the Ilha. Luanda means 'fishing net', or simply 'net' (Cardoso, 1972: 41). This is, *per se*, an indisputable contribution to the history of the city.

Luanda's spatial appropriation has always taken place amid several kinds of social and urban conflict. The cultural specificity of the Ilha's inhabitants derives from a process of miscegenation: the site's formation and expansion were the result of perpetual migratory movements, with their attendant troubles and disruptions. Throughout both the colonial and the postcolonial periods, Luanda has been a victim of invasions and tensions between its people.

As the city expanded, conflictive inhabitation progressed. Despite the persistently negative perceptions of members of Luanda's population (or temporary visitors) regarding the ways in which people settled and adapted to their environments, the city evolved and complexified. Informality became one of the primary characteristics of the city.

1 Nesta turbulenta terra / Armazém de pena e dor / Confusa mãe de temor / Inferno em vida, in *Descrição de Luanda - Um Poema do Século XVII*, Teixeira, Gomes Heitor, Lisboa: Separata da Sociedade de Geografia, 1978.

2 Cardoso's book *The Axiluanda* confirms that the possible origin of the word Luanda has its roots in the Ilha de Luanda. The meanings of the word Luanda are as various as 'net', 'river', 'tax', or 'mat' (*loando*). Cardoso explains that "the name of *Loanda* (city) stands for the tax which early inhabitants used to pay the King of Kongo with *zimbro* [shells] collected on the Ilha" (Cardoso, 1972: 41-43). The Luanda (taxpayers), "seem to have been known as the early natives of the Ilha de Luanda, practising not only *zimbro* collection but also fishing using rudimentary nets, giving rise to the name *Axiluanda* (throwers of nets, as in 'fishermen')" (Cardoso, 1972: 42).

The Ilha's Early Inhabitation (15th – 16th Centuries)

Many questions remain unanswered regarding the initial settlement of the *Axiluanda* on the Ilha. Carlos Alberto Lopes Cardoso, a historian specialising in Luanda in the late colonial period, agrees that “it is not known whether the early population arrived on the Ilha via the *restinga* in Mussulo on their way north, or whether they travelled directly to the Ilha de Luanda using *jindóngo* (canoes) to make the crossing.” (Cardoso, 1972: 52). The author gives more weight to the first hypothesis, due to the ease with which the first inhabitants, coming from the Kwanza River, would have found a route to access the interior of the territory via the sea (Cardoso, 1972: 52-53).

Over time, the *N'dongo*, originating from the Kingdom of N'gola on the mainland, joined the *Axiluanda*. Later, the Ilha de Luanda would be conquered and annexed to the Kingdom of Kongo, whose king lived further away to the north. The new inhabitants merged with the former two ethnic groups, the majority of the *N'dongo* having left the Ilha and settled on the mainland (Cardoso, 1972: 53). The Ilha de Luanda was thus the stage for a process of miscegenation which continues today.

It is known that the population of the Ilha settled in small, scattered settlements. Various texts on the formation of the *restinga* make reference to the presence of different populated settlements, and their particular toponymy. Carvalho notes that, before the Portuguese settled there in 1575, the *restinga* was inhabited by “a population of some 3,000 Africans”, mostly fishermen and *zimbro* collectors (a small pyramidal sea shell, the local currency at the time, which was abundant on the shores of the Ilha) (Carvalho, 1989) (Fig. 73).

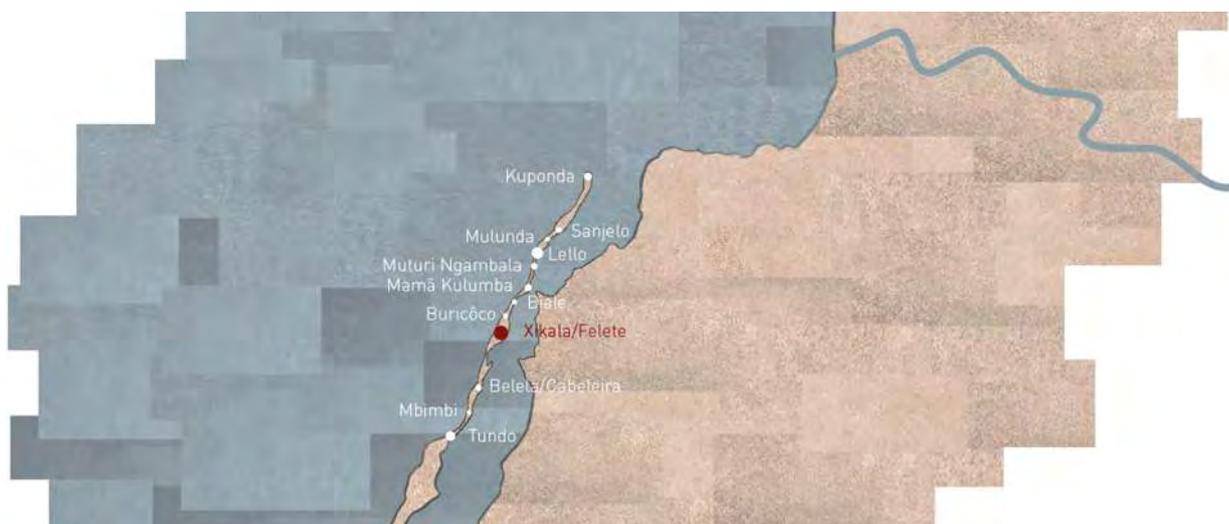


Fig. 73 – Map of the Ilha's early settlements. © Paulo Moreira, 2016

Some of the *restinga's* early settlements may have disappeared as a result of ocean storms. Regarding this possibility, Carvalho observes: “It might have been precisely the phenomenon of the *kalembras* that affected the area of Cabeleira, a place that is also referred to as Belela” (Carvalho, 1989: 69-70). He adds that “this was a demographic setting divided by settlements or areas of higher population density, which (...) spanned from the existing concentration of Xicala [...], to Belela, Mbimbi and Tundo, the latter situated close to the extremity which shaped the Barra da Corimba (gullet), bordering the tip of Mussulo” (Carvalho, 1989: 70). Cardoso notes that the Ilha (not including the southern *restinga*, Mussulo) featured seven or eight settlements, known as *libatas* (Cardoso, 1972: 39, 105). He notes that “the main settlement was the official residence of the Kongo soba [governor]” (Cardoso, 1972: 105).

There is scattered information on the early inhabitation of Luanda's *restinga*, describing the various initial *sanzalas* (settlements).³ These settlements were located around the area where Chicala would later form. With minor spelling variations, Cardoso's and Pires' studies begin by listing the same place names: Felete, Mbelela, Tundo and Mbimbi. These descriptions explain that the former settlements interacted with and were linked to the Ponta do Mussulo (tip), which was named Mussongoloque (which means 'distant'). Besides these widely-mentioned settlements, Pires' document describes other settlements on the Ilha (apparently unheard of by the majority of specialists on the origins of the city of Luanda).

The description is presented here (Pires, 2010: 42-45):

From the Chicala roundabout to the Clube Naval, there was a *sanzala* called Buricôco, a name derived from the enormous quantity of coconut palms. This place is currently known as Praia do Banho, because it was where the Portuguese came to bathe. It was also to this place that the Mbelela used to come, to the house of Mr. Peão Borges (Portuguese). From the Clube Naval to the Hotel Panorama, there was the *sanzala* Biale, where fishermen operating in the Baía were concentrated. After the *sanzala* Biale, there was another *sanzala* known as Mamã Kalumba. Mamã, matron of the *sanzala*, was a blind woman who was a midwife despite her handicap, and also offered traditional treatments. Next, there was the *sanzala* Muturi Ngambala, an expression that means Widower-Bernardo. After that, *sanzala* Lello, which means 'today' in Portuguese. This was the *sanzala* with the largest population. The following *sanzala* was Mulunda, where the Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Cabo is currently located. It was on this site that combats known as 'Bassula' took place, used in certain rivalries or even in situations of jealousy between young men, and which lies at the root of Brazilian capoeira. In the area where the Marinha de Guerra is located today, there was the *sanzala* Sanjelo, where people originating from Cabinda who had settled on the Ilha lived. They were considered the best laundresses and cooks of the era. After this, there was a *sanzala* once known as Kuponda, a site which began to be inhabited following the *kalembas* which had struck Lello. The word Kuponda means 'at the tip', and after a process of 'Portuguesation', it came to be known as Ponta. It was subdivided into two *sanzalas*, Mbanji-a-Tando and Manji-Ya-Luiji, that is the northern part and the southern part. The site where the Sector Salga is currently located was an empty area where fish were salted and sold. This sector extends to the so-called Ponto Final (the northern tip of the Ilha). Finally, we also have the Quilombo neighbourhood (at the southern tip), which emerged as a consequence of the political-military clashes which took place in the country. This neighbourhood was once a bathing area and a leisure spot, where fishing nets were also sewn.

Early Inhabitation by the Portuguese (15th – 16th Centuries)

In 1482, Diogo Cão, a Portuguese navigator, reached the Kingdom of Kongo (in the north of what would become Angola) and established a diplomatic relationship with the local king, Nkuwu Nzinga, who had as his servant the King of *N'dongo*, N'gola.⁴

With the King of Kongo's permission, Cão and his crew travelled on several occasions to the

³ Besides Cardoso's (1972) account, Pires (2010) offers a detailed description. Gabriela Pires' unpublished Environmental Impact Study linked to the Marina Luanda, a new masterplan to be implemented in the Chicala area (described in Chapter 4) presents information that is not referenced in any existing literature, so this section relies on Pires' sources.

⁴ N'gola was settled on the mainland, to the north of the Ilha, in Glounga Coamba (Delgado, n/d: 280) or Cabassa (Jacob, 2011: 16). For a more detailed description of the Kingdom of Kongo, see Martins (2000) and Coquery-Vidrovitch (2005).

Ilha to negotiate the gifts that N'gola was sending Nzinga.⁵ During these incursions by Diogo Cão, some Portuguese men settled on the Ilha (Delgado, 1901 (III): 342). They became known as the *Ana Mualunga* (or sons of the sea). This small group of merchants, "all very wealthy", co-existed with the *Axiluanda* (Delgado, 1901 (III): 342). They even started influencing them, passing on European customs and habits, along with the Portuguese language, which became established in the *restinga* (Cardoso, 1972: 52-53). By 1575, when the Portuguese occupation became denser, records indicate the presence of forty *Ana Mualunga* on the Ilha (Delgado, 1901 (III): 342).

The book *Ana A Kalunga - Os Filhos do Mar* (Raposo, 1926) presents fictional short stories set in the olden times. One of the stories, "*O Branco Moleque*", describes an instance of "Portuguese conversion to indigenous Africa", also referred to as "regressive assimilation" (Raposo, 1926: 208). The narrator appears astonished by this situation (Raposo, 1926: 208):

What was most interesting to me was the fate of that [Portuguese] countryman, ignored by the people, and who, by the nature of his newness, by the peace of mind radiating from his very being, convinced me that he was satisfied with the exchange of his natural-born advantage for his status as an adopted savage.⁶

The narrator's difficulty in comprehending this situation points to a clear attitude of superiority towards the African reality. The author, however, seems to question his prejudices (Raposo 1926: 209):

In the long pauses that interspersed our conversation, (...) I came to think, reprehensibly for sure, that perhaps all the colonising peoples were wrong to impose customs, needs, ideas, rites and feelings on those who didn't ask for them and have no reason to want them.

His doubts extended to the environment itself (Raposo 1926: 209):

It is [worth] considering whether the wonders of urbanism, of material progress and of the culture of the mind, may not have aroused protest from Mother Nature, for distancing ourselves from her bosom...

It is worth noting that reactions of surprise that a Portuguese person would mix with an African community are still present in postcolonial Luanda. During fieldwork periods in Angola, this attitude was experienced several times, in particular from some expatriates encountered along the way.

"The White Dots"

From the Atlantic to the Indian coasts, the Portuguese seem to have sought out particular morphological and topographical characteristics when choosing where to establish their settlements. In this sense, the similarities between Luanda, Bombay and Rio de Janeiro are not mere coincidence.⁷ In Luanda in particular, the site offered abundant natural protection, with the *restinga* acting as a barrier, and an extensive plateau that facilitated military control (**Fig. 74 - 77**).

5 The Portuguese would later rename N'gola's territory 'Angola' (Jacob, 2011: 15).

6 This except, as well as the following ones, was translated by the author.

7 As noted by Amaral, Luanda, like Salvador da Baía (1549) and Rio de Janeiro (1565) was a hilly site, dominated by a bay (Amaral, 1968: 11).

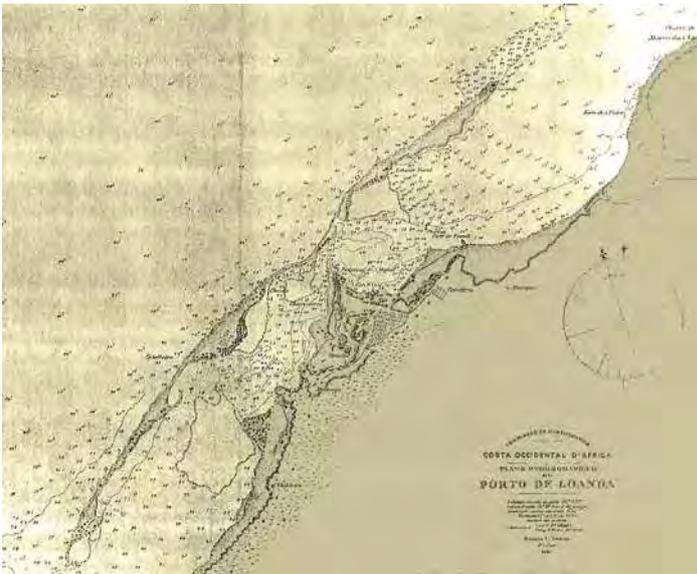


Fig. 74 – Plan of Luanda, 1893 (Founded in 1576)
 Source: Plano Hidrográfico do porto de Luanda



Fig. 75 – Plan of Bombay, 1885 (Founded in 1509)
 Source: British Library Online catalogue



Fig. 76 – Plan of Salvador da Baía (founded in 1549)
 Source: Guia Geografico, Cidade de Salvador.

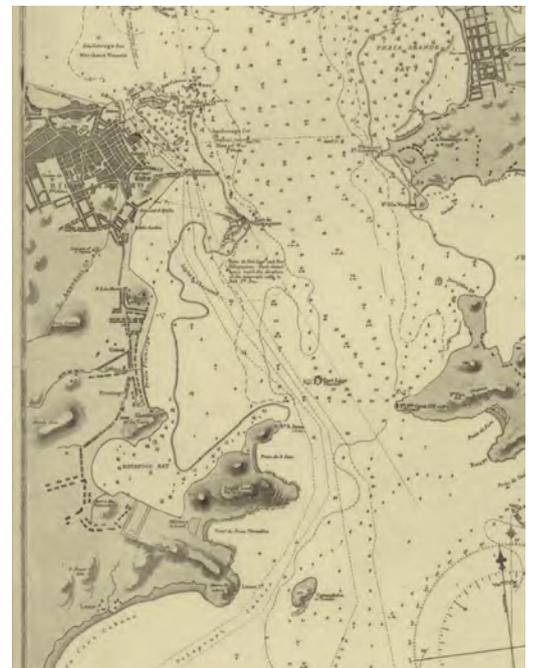


Fig. 77 – Plan of Rio de Janeiro, 1857 (founded in 1502)
 Source: British Library Online catalogue, 1857

The first chapter of *Luandando*, entitled “The White Dots”, begins with a detailed description of the moment when the Portuguese officially settled on the Ilha. Angolan author Pepetela begins by describing an (unnamed) old man awaiting a report on the *zimbro* collection being undertaken by women nearby. While standing on the beach, the old man suddenly starts to notice “white dots on the high sea, approaching from the South”, growing bigger and bigger.⁸ (Pepetela, 1990: 13) In this way, contrary to the majority of published descriptions of the arrival of the Portuguese, the author gives a perspective from within, from the point of view of someone who was already living on the Ilha when the Portuguese contingent led by Paulo Dias de Novais arrived (**Fig. 78**).

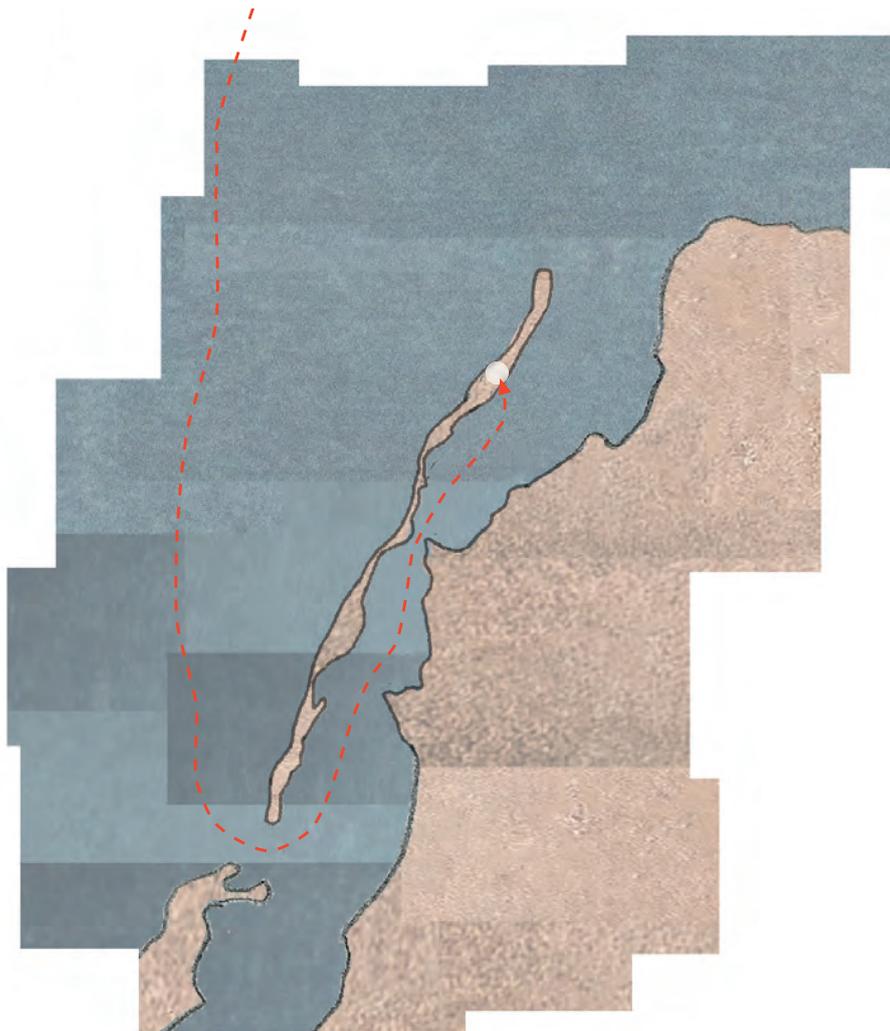


Fig. 78 - Arrival of the Portuguese, 11th February 1575. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

As Dias de Novais and his crew settled on the Ilha, a gathering was organised among the Portuguese population. Upon hearing of this event, N'gola sent more than a hundred slaves and an “infinity of cattle” (Delgado, 1901: 280). When N'gola finally arrived, “there was a sumptuous reception, which lasted for three days, in the huts of the missionaries, next to the chapel [built by the Portuguese in the place of the still existing *Nossa Senhora do Cabo* church], the most comfortable place” (Delgado, 1901: 280). Dias de Novais remained on the Ilha, but with the intention to install his men on the mainland. The Portuguese were not interested in the Ilha’s most valuable asset, the *zimbro*. Instead, they were pursuing slaves and silver from the mainland. However, since the mainland was N'gola’s jurisdiction (and not the Kongo’s, like the Ilha), Dias de Novais had to remain on the Ilha while he negotiated the move.

⁸ With this, Pepetela avoids what novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie calls “the danger of the single story”. In her TED talk, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie warns that stories about African places or people are being told in a single version, leading to critical misunderstandings of reality (Adichie, 2009).

On 25th January 1576, following protracted negotiations with the N'gola king, the Portuguese shifted their settlement to Morro de São Paulo (the hill later renamed Morro de São Miguel) on the mainland, facing the *restinga* (Carvalho, 1989: 43). They erected a military stronghold and founded the city of São Paulo de Luanda (or Loanda), “the first European-founded city on the Western coast of Africa”⁹ (Pepetela, 1990: 17-18). The area was quickly appropriated by the Portuguese, or, as Pepetela wrote simply and ironically: “The area became more and more white” (Pepetela, 1990: 61) (**Fig. 80**). Pepetela implicitly conveys the idea that the Portuguese settlement was negative, because they were Portuguese “of a certain kind”, who eventually caused problems.

According to the Angolan author, “[all] the [Portuguese] outcasts were sent to Luanda, a strategy which did not bode well for a peaceful and stable future” (Pepetela 1990: 61).¹⁰

The hill afforded strategic proximity to the Kwanza River, a route to the inner territory where Portuguese explorers were prospecting for silver and collecting slaves to trade, destined for Brazil – these were more profitable activities than agricultural production along the coast.¹¹ The river banks were explored all the way to Muxima and Massangano, where fortifications were built. As a consequence of the initial settlement, Luanda’s administrative centre gradually developed, and the city started to acquire an urban grain. The Governor’s palace was erected in 1607 and plans for the city’s fortification were drawn up in Portugal.¹²

Initially confined to the Morro de São Paulo, the city began to grow. In 1621, the Portuguese population was 400 people (the native Angolan population is not known, although naturally it was more numerous) (Jacob, 2011: 18).

9 The fortress was surrounded by barracks for the administrators. The vast majority, if not all, of the settlers were male. It is not known how many Portuguese women formed part of the initial group of settlers. Historian Marissa Moorman states that “the first women only arrived in 1595, and just 12” (2008: 35). Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch’s estimate is more extreme: “There were virtually no Portuguese women in the country [Angola] until the end of the nineteenth century.” (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 2005: 287). This is, of course, an excessive statement. Her book states that the 1777 census found that in the Sé parish there were sixteen “white” and five “mulatto” women, each of whom had more than seventeen slaves (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 2005: 288).

10 In Angola, there is a common belief that most current problems have their origins in the colonial past. The chapter entitled “Atavistic Lethargy” in *Luandando* attempts to demonstrate that the situation in Luanda in the 1980s was inherited from colonial times. For example, the lack of attention to heritage conservation seen from very early on became a recurrent feature in the development of the city over the centuries. Other accounts describe the initial Portuguese settlement on the mainland in a rather uncritical way, such as the *História de Angola* by Ralph Delgado (Delgado, 1901 (I): 287-290) and the doctoral thesis by Angolan architect and researcher Isabel Martins: “The enthusiasm of the early occupation period is evidenced by the construction of an earthen fort, a chapel dedicated to São Sebastião and on the slope of the hill, facing the Mussulo, the Palácio do Bispo [bishop’s palace], along with the House of the Jesuits and some rudimentary constructions, with a straw roof that protected the administration and sheltered the population.” (Martins, 2000: 138).

11 Ilídio do Amaral’s *Luanda: Estudo de Geografia Urbana* explains that the inadequacy of the soil, a red ochre clay containing aluminous matter, prevented agricultural production.

12 These included nine fortresses distributed along the coastline, both to the north and south of the initial settlement (Delgado, 1901 (II): 141-7).



Fig. 79 – Nossa Senhora do Cabo church, in the place of the initial chapel, in the Ilha de Luanda. © Moura

Machado



Fig. 80 – Portuguese settlement on the mainland – Foundation of Luanda, 25th January 1576.

© Paulo Moreira, 2015

Luanda's evolution into a city came about more as a result of religious motives than of political or military intentions: settlement on the mainland prompted the establishment of permanent structures such as São Sebastião church (1590), as well as a convent and the Bishop's residence, which gave its name to the beach at the bottom of the hill – Praia do Bispo (Pepetela, 1990: 17). None of these buildings remain, but a new church was built on the same site as the original São Sebastião church.

The Dutch Invasion and Portuguese Takeover

While the Portuguese were busy defending the Iberian territory from the Spanish (Portugal had been annexed by Spain in 1580), in 1636 the Dutch took the opportunity to take control of part of Brazil, where slaves coming from Angola were referred to as “black gold” (Delgado, 1901 (II): 163-5; 180-4 and Lemos, 1934: 30-34).

A Dutch takeover of Luanda was expected as the logical next step after the “conquest” of Brazil (Delgado, 1901 (II): 141-7). With a view to protecting the city, plans for the fortification of Luanda were made in Portugal and sent to Angola to be put into action. The plans included six (or seven) new fortresses which were constructed around the Ilha and mainland. However, these improvements proved insufficient, and the Dutch were able to take control of Luanda **(Fig. 81)**.

In 1648, the Portuguese managed to recapture Luanda. The city was re-baptised as São Paulo da Assunção, losing the name ‘Luanda’ because of its unfortunate similarity to *Holanda* (Holland).¹³ The triangular route between Lisbon, Luanda and Bahía was restored and consolidated during the 17th century, with the slave trade as the main economic activity (Almeida Santos, 1901: 9). Angola effectively became a “colony of Brazil” (Delgado, 1901 (II): 400). The Ilha became one of the principal slave markets south of Zaire. In time, many peasants and traders from the island of São Tomé, attracted by this profitable business, brought their ships equipped with items for commercial exchange (primarily printed fabrics and sugarcane rum) (Cardoso, 1972: 151). The never-ending supply of slaves lay in the highlands of the mainland, with the complicity of populations which were fighting one another with the aim of enslaving the conquered and exchanging them for products at the market on the Ilha de Luanda (Cardoso, 1972: 151).

¹³ However, many documents from the era refer to the city as *São Paulo da Assunção de Luanda* – or Loanda. Not long after, Luanda, or Loanda, would remain as the official name. It was only from 1927 that the provincial government ordered Luanda to be spelt with a ‘u’ in all official documents.

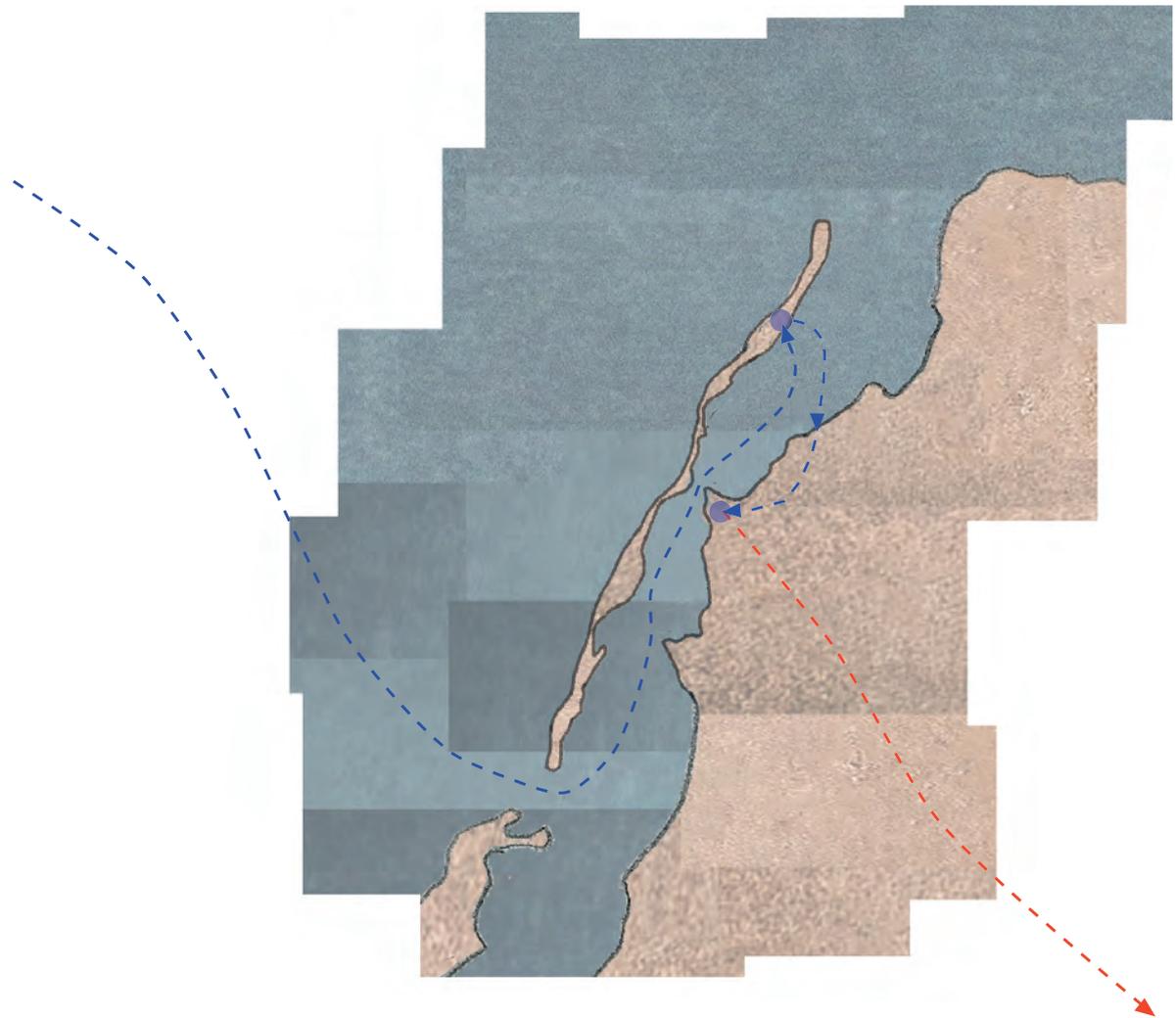


Fig. 81 – The Dutch Invasion – 22nd August 1641. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

In March 1641, the Dutch Council in Pernambuco (Brazil) sent an inspection fleet of four boats, which imprisoned some slaver ships leaving Luanda and attacked the Portuguese boat *Faísca*, which was arriving. Most of the passengers took refuge in the Corimba fortress, erected close to the Barra da Corimba (Cardoso, 1972: 132). The Dutch returned to Brazil and presented a report that included a plan of the Ilha and the city (unfortunately not found).

The Portuguese escaped to the Bengo region and, given the desperate situation, asked Brazil and Portugal for help. There was even an “anti-patriotic” attempt by some Portuguese settlers to escape to Brazil by boat (Delgado, 1901 (II): 234). The Portuguese also sent slaves to talk to the Dutch. Upon their return, the slaves reported that all of the gulleys of the Bengo and Kwanza rivers were being patrolled, and the streets leading to the square of the Governor’s palace had been closed (Delgado, 1901 (III): 227). Curiously, this is not so different from what can still be seen at the steps of the Morro de São Miguel, where militarised check-points are employed to control access to the political-administrative centre.



Fig. 82 – The Portuguese Take-Over, 26th August 1648. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

In 1647 in Rio de Janeiro, the Portuguese reached a resolution, planned by Salvador Correia and supported by a council of twenty members (who were feeling the effects of the lack of a black slave workforce from Angola). Their strategy consisted of building a fortress in the Quicombo cove, in case the areas under Dutch control could not be rescued, and as an attempt to connect the Massangano resistance to the exterior. The preparation of the fleet began: 15 boats and 1,400 men, including 800-900 infantrymen (Delgado, 1901 (II): 376-98).

Salvador Correia's army departed Rio de Janeiro on 12th May 1648, St. Michael's Day (São Miguel), and reached the African coast on 12th July of the same year. As planned, they anchored in Quicombo on 26th July, with the exception of three boats which arrived on 31st July (Delgado, 1901 (II): 380). Their arrival was not without problems: on 1st August, there was an accident with one of the boats which cost 200-300 lives. Soon, on 6th August, the navy moved in the direction of Luanda. On 11th August, they anchored next to Penedo fortress. A commission was sent to tell the Dutch of their intentions to build a fortress in Quicombo, in order to connect Massangano to the ocean, and to give them three days to agree. However, the Dutch answer was negative and the battle began (Delgado, 1901 (II): 384).

The attacks lasted for four days (14th – 18th August) without success, until the Dutch unexpectedly surrendered. Both sides spent the next two days (19th and 20th August) in conference, trying to reach a retreat agreement. On 21st August, a document was signed in the fortress to end the conflict. As the enemy withdrew, the Portuguese started a procession from São José convent to São Paulo fortress (renamed São Miguel, the 'guide' of the restorative squad). Inside the fortress, a chapel was built and opened on 1st December 1648. The commemorative procession culminated in a parade in the square of the Governor's palace.

Slave Trading and the Informal City (17th - 18th centuries)

Throughout the 17th century, the gradual natural silting of the area between the southern side of the Ilha and the mainland made navigation across the water impossible. Until 1620, entry to the city took place through the Barra da Corimba, meaning that the city was oriented towards the southwest, towards the Praia do Bispo area. However, from this date on, “the silting up of the *barra* (gullet) and the substitution of shallow water boats caused this passage to be abandoned, as a result of which the city came to develop permanently on the most extensive, open beach on the northern side” (Martins, 2000: 143).

The city’s main maritime navigation route was turned on its head, from the southern to the northern side of the Ilha. This dramatically altered the way in which the city worked. Economic and commercial activities shifted from the slope of the fortress and Praia do Bispo to the bay itself (Carvalho, 1890: 69; Cardoso, 1972: 20). With this change, Luanda began to develop in an unprecedented way.

During this period, Luanda established itself as a “trading city”, a “hinge” where slaves captured outside the city awaited transportation by ship, mostly to the vast sugar plantations of Bahía and Pernambuco in Brazil.¹⁴ The city started to expand on two levels, “randomly hollowed out by the whims of nature – small hills and valleys, dry and red, and beneath them, by the bay, a strip of reddened earth, at Luanda’s foot.” (Soromenho, 1939: 5). The *Baixa* (downtown), close to the port, evolved as the main commercial and residential district, and became more and more densely populated.

Meanwhile the *Alta* (uptown), on the plateau, reinforced its defensive and political-administrative functions, and the Governor’s palace was completely renovated and extended in 1761.¹⁵

Urban informality in Luanda began to spread throughout the course of the 18th century. Precarious wooden dwellings known as *cubatas* (shacks) were seen across the *Baixa*, coexisting alongside the imposing stone and clay *sobrados* (richer houses). Observing a 1755 map of the city, Ilídio do Amaral notes that the plan was “confusing, with tortuous streets, and everything built in an anarchic and improvised manner” (Amaral, 1968: 45) (**Fig. 83**). Another detailed description of this period is presented by Elias Correia, a Brazilian soldier who arrived in Luanda in 1783. In his *História de Angola* (History of Angola), Correia presents highly critical insights into the city and society of the time. With his sagacious views on the Portuguese living in Angola, Correia criticises “the excessive number of slaves who made up the entourages of white ladies” (Correia, 1937: 87-88; Jacob, 2011: 19-20). The author also comments on the slum-like conditions in the city, where the *sobrados* were surrounded by “dark and under-ventilated shacks, or even houses in ruins in which every kind of filth was deposited” (Correia, 1937: 78-79). He adds

14 Other activities were very scarce: mineral prospecting took place in the inner territories (for silver, copper and iron), but without results. The slave trade effectively became the main economic activity in Angola, in (official) numbers of eight to ten thousand men per year.

15 The *Morro de São Miguel* had become too small to contain the expansion, which would become known as *Cidade Alta* [uptown].

that “the streets were awash with domesticated animals wallowing on piles of garbage, which could be seen everywhere” (Correia, 1937: 78-79).

These small, apparently disorganised dwellings formed settlements from which Luanda’s informal neighbourhoods, known as the *musseques*, emerged.¹⁶ From this point on – arguably, until the present day – many urban practitioners have failed to see any signs of vitality in the *musseques*. Despite comprising by far the largest extension of the city fabric, their negative aspects became the target of all criticisms and complaints. And yet, these unplanned urban settings have since become an integral part of the city.

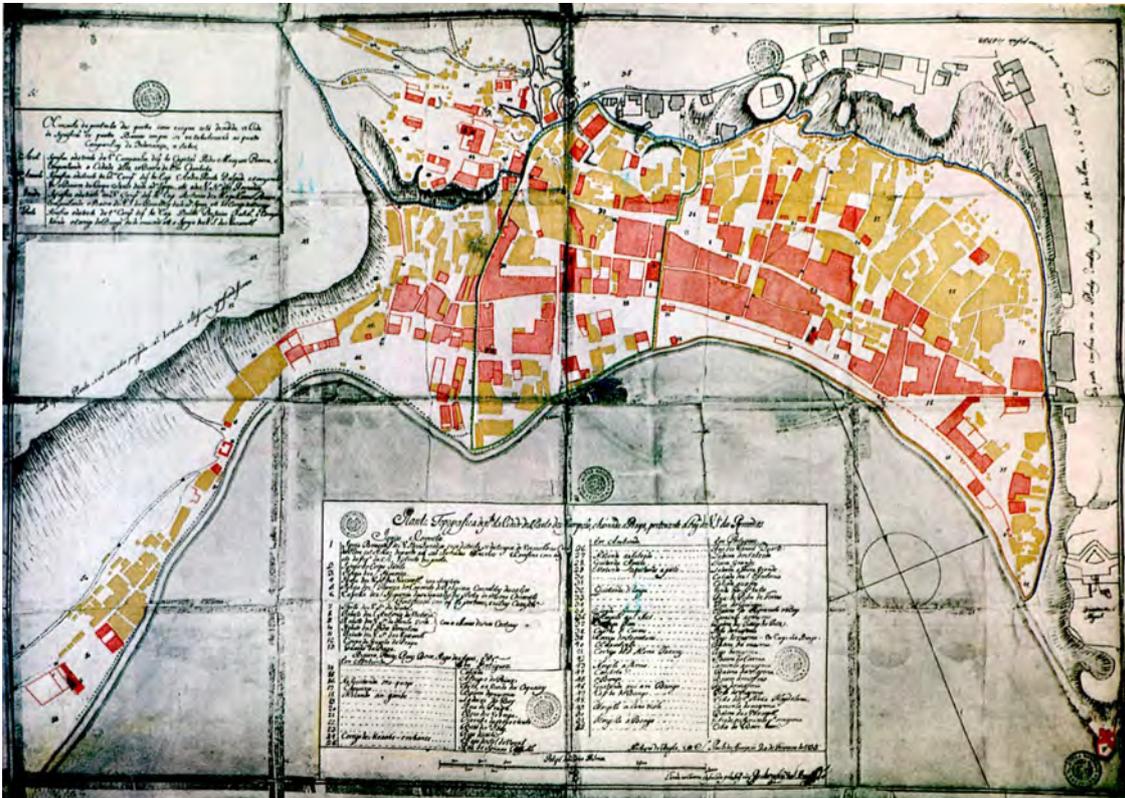


Fig. 83 – Plan of Luanda, 1755. Source: Amaral 1968

16 The etymology of the *musseques* means red sand in Kimbundu, or *mu* (place) *seke* (sand) (Monteiro, 1973: 53). In Luanda it came to mean the settlements in which the native African population lived (Pepetela, 1990: 69).

Luanda's Urban Expansion (19th – 20th centuries)

For many years, Angola was a major hub of the slave trade.¹⁷ During the 19th century, however, a sequence of three main political events forced the situation to change considerably: the independence of Brazil (1822), the abolition of the slave trade (1836) and the redrawing of Angola's borders (1884-5).

The independence of Brazil not only prompted a reorientation of Portuguese colonial interests towards Africa, but it also gave rise to political unrest in some Angolan social milieux which were financially dependent on the slave trade to Brazil (Martins, 2000: 214). It is evident that the decline in the demand for slaves provoked an economic crisis in Angola.

The abolition of the slave trade, after the Portuguese bowed to pressure from other imperialist countries, had a serious impact on the city of Luanda. According to Pepetela, the crisis gave rise to "panic and stampedes"; it was "one of the most agitated periods in Luanda's existence" (Pepetela, 1990: 68). In response, a broader politics of territorial occupation was introduced, fixing the Portuguese population in Luanda and developing urban and commercial activities.¹⁸ When the slave trade was abolished, increasing numbers of native Angolans began to settle in the inner city. Meanwhile, the Portuguese had realised that they could stay in Luanda permanently and, therefore, began to view the city as a place worth investing in (Pepetela, 1990: 69; 79-80). According to historian Marissa Moorman, the politics of Portuguese occupation in this period intensified racial stratification, and these social distinctions were mapped onto the urban geography: "A series of oppositions moulded local discourse – between the *Baixa* and the *musseques* (periphery), between the asphalt and the *musseques* (sandy places) – and between the white city and the *musseques* (African townships) – and the social-economic, racial, and cultural divisions of the city" (Moorman, 2008: 32). While the 'formal' city was expanding (albeit in a fragmented manner), very little was done to tackle the lack of infrastructural and spatial quality of the informal neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, throughout the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, the *musseques* would flourish and become one of the primary characteristics of the city (Pepetela, 1990: 68) **(Fig. 84)**.

The third event that contributed to considerable change in the political situation in the 19th century was the redefinition of Angola's borders. In 1884 and 1885, the European powers controlling colonies in Africa met at the Berlin Conference to settle the borders of their territories.¹⁹

17 In 1818, 98.6% of exports were slaves (Pepetela, 1990: 65).

18 These activities included the development of the building material and craftsmanship industries (Martins, 2000: 214).

19 In order to present its proposal at the conference, Portugal had led expeditions attempting to connect the Eastern and Western coasts of Africa, from Angola to Mozambique. Those studies formed the basis of a document known as the Pink Map. On it, the colonies of Angola and Mozambique were united, across what would later become known as Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi.



Fig. 84 – Plan of Luanda (1862) showing the origins of the *musseques*. Edited by Paulo Moreira, 2011

As the borders were defined under political pressure, Portugal was compelled to implement a more effective military and economic occupation of Angola.²⁰

A new wave of investments was planned to diversify and stimulate economic activity in Angola, particularly in the agricultural industries.²¹ More and more Portuguese people began to settle in Angola and, as a result, more public investment took place.²² Improvements included a railway line (1888), constructed with the aim of connecting the inner territory to the capital, to promote colonial settlement. Within the city, the railway line ran along the bay (from where the port would later be settled) towards the fortress, where it forked: one branch went towards Samba, through Praia do Bispo (to reach the

²⁰ All of the imperial countries present at the summit agreed with the Portuguese proposal, except for the United Kingdom. In breach of the 1386 Treaty of Windsor, Great Britain delivered an ultimatum to Portugal and on 11th January 1890 it forced the retreat of Portuguese military forces from the lands that lay between the colonies of Mozambique and Angola. On 20th August 1890, the two powers signed the Treaty of London, defining the territorial limits of Angola and Mozambique and allowing the British to maintain a connection from South Africa all the way to the north of the continent. For a more in-depth explanation of the lengthy negotiation process, see Martins (2000), pages 54-57.

²¹ Particularly cotton, coffee and sisal (Fonte, 2007: 51).

²² In Luanda, a series of public and infrastructural facilities were built. These included the introduction of public lighting (1839 from peanut oil; 1876 petrol; 1937-8 electricity), a Central Hospital (1884), telephone service (1886) and piped water from the Bengo River (1889) – the piped water infrastructure followed the earlier Dutch idea to bring water from the Kwanza River.

stone quarries), and the other to the Ilha, crossing a bridge built to provide access to the warehouses and workshops situated close to *Nossa Senhora do Cabo* church.²³ Reports state that the Ilha track was very busy at weekends, as it was used by people travelling to spend the day at the beach, most of whom were Portuguese (Pepetela, 1990: 76-77).

The Ilha was established as a leisure area for the settlers, who were not greatly interested in the Axiluanda's contributions to the city. Pepetela (1990: 52) notes that the residents of the Ilha were not counted in official statistics until the end of the 19th century.²⁴ Indifferent to this apparent lack of interest, the Ilha's native inhabitants carried on with their lives and activities in close relation with the ocean.²⁵

Late Colonial Period (20th Century)

Following the turn of the century, the pace of Luanda's urban expansion accelerated as important political developments continued to shape the territory. In Portugal, the Republic was established in 1910 and Norton de Matos was appointed Governor-General of Angola.²⁶ During Matos' rule, in the first few decades of the 20th century, a large number of buildings and masterplans were envisaged and/or implemented in Luanda (Fonte, 2007: 50).²⁷ This period has attracted the attention of many architects and researchers interested in Luanda's history. Indeed, despite the developments described in this dissertation so far, there is a general assumption among many historians and academics that Angola was only effectively

23 The railway also played an important role in consolidating the *barrocas* (the slopes connecting the *Baixa* to the *Alta*) and preventing erosion. The phenomenon of sedimentation is a common feature across the city - the ground level of Luanda has constantly increased over the years - not only on the shoreline (as described throughout this dissertation) but also inland. Pepetela, for example, reports the case of *Nossa Senhora dos Remédios* church, which was originally accessed by a flight of steps, only one of which remained by 1990 (Pepetela, 1990: 77).

24 The first official statistics on the Ilha's population date from 1898 and indicate 1,388 inhabitants living on the Ilha, 47 of whom were 'European' (curiously, a similar number to that met by Paulo Dias de Novais when he docked in 1575). The same census shows that Luanda's city centre had 20,106 inhabitants and 6,676 living in the *musseques* (Pepetela, 1990: 80, 99). Pepetela notes that "the model of a 'white city' and a 'black city' was progressively growing." (Pepetela, 1990: 80). Indeed, following the end of the slave trade, the urbanisation of Luanda developed along segregational lines, nurturing growing discontent among native Angolans with regard to the Portuguese settlers.

25 It is likely that there were tensions between the coloniser and the colonised. In one of the few references to the Ilha from this period, Cardoso says that "the houses are often subject to fires, such as those that occurred in the 19th century on the Ilha de Luanda" (Cardoso, 1972: 109). The causes of and specific sites affected by the fires are unknown, although questions may be raised about why an apparently peaceful area would fall victim to fires. Cardoso adds an anecdote that reveals some tension between the Portuguese living on the Ilha and the *Axiluanda*. He says that between the 16th and 19th centuries, there was an attempt to install a chalk industry on the Ilha, as chalk could be found in great quantities at low tide. However, he continues, some Portuguese entrepreneurs prohibited the collection of molluscs near their properties, alleging that the beaches belonged to them also. The Governor, on hearing about the issue, published a decree outlawing this prohibition on the grounds that it was baseless and unsubstantiated, as "the sea has no owner and its products belong to those who collect them, except in those cases for which there exists legislation to the contrary; as such, those gentlemen's abuse of power was brought to an end" (Cardoso, 1972: 152). The discussion regarding 'who owns the sea' is worth noting, as it would continue as time went on (see Chapter 4).

26 Soon after, in 1926, Salazar's rule would begin and later still (in 1933) he would implement the *Estado Novo* dictatorial regime, which resulted, among many other measures, in the consistent marginalisation of the African territories.

27 Manuela da Fonte explains in her doctoral research that Norton de Matos left 459 buildings, among many other testimonies of territorial-scale interventions. Fonte's dissertation recounts an episode which contributed to implementing these large investments: in an attempt to foment investment in the territory, Matos contracted a mortgage in London of £1 million, "to be used in Angola in several tranches, on whatever he considered fundamental" (Fonte, 2007: 35).

colonised in the 20th century.²⁸

Several events caused the 20th century in Angola to be considered the most important period of colonial occupation and intervention. First of all, the city's population grew exponentially, due first to the boom in the coffee industry and, after 1940, to the development of other industries and commerce.²⁹ This situation led to the construction of the port of Luanda in 1942-5 (Fonte, 2007: 52-3). Soon, the city had to respond to an influx of people attracted by its commercial development. Luanda's population growth led to an extension of its boundaries, provoking maladjustments in regard to urban growth and city management. According to Fonte (2007: 53), this resulted in "incorrect" and "unplanned" forms of territorial occupation. Once again, the lack of specialist language made it difficult to integrate the *musseques* in Luanda's urban discourse.

In the 1960s, Angola experienced impressive economic growth and significant industrial progress. This led to a rapid population increase and large construction boom, rendering some aspects of the design and management of the country's cities no longer appropriate, and giving rise to "situations of rupture" (Fonte, 2007: 59).³⁰

On the African continent, liberation parties were formed, and the idea of freedom and independence was gradually introduced and reinforced. In 1960, 17 countries became independent.³¹ Portugal became increasingly isolated on the international stage, experiencing pressure to abandon colonial rule in Africa (Fonte, 2007: 56).

In Angola, growing tensions between the colonial power and the colonised people came to a head in January 1961. In the shadow of the industrialisation process which began in the 19th century, African workers' discontent with regard to the Portuguese settlers grew. Following a strike by workers at Cotoang (a cotton company located in the province of Malanje) demanding better working conditions, the company responded with violence.³² The Portuguese army and air force intervened against the strikers, unleashing a true massacre. During this sequence of repression, reports indicate that around 20,000 people were killed (Fonte, 2007: 57).

28 René Pellesier says that Angola was effectively colonised only since the beginning of the 20th century (cited in Fonte 2007, p. 15). Architect and researcher Manuela da Fonte, whose doctoral research analyses urban and architectural production in Angola from 1920-1970, observes that this assertion leads the past to be understood as a "quasi absence of colonialism" (Fonte, 2007: 15). Such assumptions obviously raise many questions. In the case of Fonte, it is assumed that this is a partial "Portuguese view". The author acknowledges that the research she undertook was only "the beginning of a long path to be continued by other researchers" (Fonte, 2007: 16). This dissertation aims to continue on this path.

29 Between 1940 and 1960, the city's population went from 61,028 to 224,240 inhabitants (Amaral, 1968: 27).

30 During this period, the United Nations recognised the right to self-determination of all countries, prompting Portugal to modify its Constitution and replace the term 'colony' with 'overseas province'. In this way, it avoided the obligation to present reports on its African territories, as it officially no longer possessed any colonies (Fonte, 2007: 56).

31 The 17 countries were Cameroon, Togo, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Benin, Niger, Ivory Coast, Chad, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Senegal, Mali, Nigeria, Mauritania and Burkina Faso. In 1961, the *União Indiana* comprised Goa, Damão and Diu, Portuguese colonies in India.

32 The event became known as the Baixa do Cassanje massacre, the name of the place where it occurred.

Days after these unfortunate events, on 4th February 1961 in Luanda, the war for independence officially began. On that day, a group of residents from the Sambizanga *musseque* stormed the São Paulo prison and a police station in the city centre. These events culminated in a lengthy colonial war. Pepetela emphasises the role played by the *musseques* in the uprising (Pepetela, 1990: 113):

The 4th February is undoubtedly the work of the *musseques* of Luanda, where the idea was born and nurtured, where the operations were prepared. Here, in the red sand, a shout was heard. A shout that echoed unstoppably throughout the country.³³

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon observes that war was the only way to bring about the end of the colonial regimes: “colonialism is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties” (Fanon, 1963: 48). Fanon adds that colonialism “is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence” (1963: 48).

With this position, Fanon legitimates the struggle which began outside Luanda, and then continued in the capital city. He says that “the simple instinct to survive engenders a less rigid, more mobile attitude”, and that “this modification in fighting technique characterised the first months of the war of liberation of the people of Angola” (Fanon, 1963: 107). The subsequent events were an uneven struggle, as Fanon notes (1963: 107):

We may remember that on the 15th March 1961, a group of two or three thousand Angolan peasants threw themselves against the Portuguese positions. Men, women and children, armed and unarmed, afire with courage and enthusiasm, then flung themselves in successive waves of compact masses upon the districts where the settler, the soldier and the Portuguese flag held sway. Villages and aerodromes were encircled and subjected to frequent attacks, but it must be added that thousands of Angolans were mown down by colonialist machine-guns. It did not take long for the leaders of the Angolan rising to realise that they must find some other methods if they really wanted to free their country.

Here, Fanon incites the liberation movements to continue fighting for independence, “using the experience gained in various other wars of liberation, and employing *guerilla* techniques” (Fanon, 1963: 107). When Fanon called for anti-colonial combat, he emphasised that independent African countries should decide “not to imitate Europe” (Fanon, 1963: 251-2). Fanon assumed that “the European game

³³ The Portuguese, as is to be expected, offer different perspectives on these events – see, for example, Monteiro (1973: 183); or Chapter 4 of *Luanda: Estudo de Geografia Urbana*, written shortly after the events of 4th February 1961, in which Amaral refers to the 4th February as an “act of terrorism”. Until that point, the author appeared to offer a rather sharp critique of the dynamic process of Luanda’s urban evolution. For example, in Chapter 3 the author presents an acute analysis of the nature of the population in relation to the urban structure; a description of the urban expansion process and its problems (including the disappearance of the *sobrados*) and a parallel between industry and urban development, with reference to Kinaxixe market (Amaral, 1968: 106-7). He describes what “does not work” and argues for analytical study of the geographic and socio-economic characteristics of Luanda as a way to progress, in opposition to the “help from magical formulas or standardised solutions drawn from inadequate European or American schemes” (Amaral, 1968: 123-5). Amaral tackles, for the first time, the problem of the peripheries, with references to “regional planning”, although recognising that “it is too early to evaluate the influence of the recently created settlement of Viana” (Amaral, 1968: 126). Amaral concludes by saying that Luanda is a “dynamic city, of explosive development, where power and bank stock are concentrated” (Amaral, 1968: 129). He adds that there is a vast area which depends upon Luanda, whose limits however are not clearly defined: “in this contrast lies one of Luanda’s more original and delicate features, of undeniable singularity in the field of the genesis and evolution of cities.” (Amaral, 1968: 129). But the study lacks a deeper understanding of the role of the informal areas in the city. In Chapter 5, Amaral provides extensive descriptions of the spatial and social conditions of the *musseques*, but underestimates their role in the history of Luanda, something which Pepetela (1990) achieved incisively.

has finally ended”, and in his vision the newly independent states “must find something different” (Fanon, 1963: 251).

As violence in Angola intensified, especially in the countryside, so the influx of people to urban areas accelerated.³⁴ Many of the newcomers were Portuguese people searching for job opportunities. Manuela da Fonte points out that in Portugal information about the true political and economic situation was “buried, hidden, disguised with slogans of colonial prosperity and contentment.” (Fonte, 2007: 62). In Luanda, a calm peace appeared to reign, making it easy to forget what was happening in the woodlands outside the city. In reality, the colonial empire was rapidly disintegrating.

Angola’s Independence

They didn’t want Angola. They had had enough of the country, which was supposed to be the promised land but had brought them disenchantment and abuse. They said farewell to their African homes with mixed despair and rage, sorrow and impotence, with the feeling of leaving forever.
Ryszard Kapuściński, *Another Day of Life* (1988: 13)

On 25th April 1974, the political regime that ruled Portugal and its ‘overseas territories’ was overthrown. A peaceful coup d’état in Portugal brought an end to the Estado Novo and made the independence of the Portuguese African colonies inevitable. The fall of the dictatorship in Portugal brought about troubled decolonisation processes in all former Portuguese African colonies. The Portuguese decolonisation occurred against the backdrop of an attempt to understand the growing problems of postcolonial Africa (Chabal, 2002: 18).

On Tuesday 11th November 1975, Neto was finally declared the first President of the People’s Republic of Angola at the Largo 1º de Maio (renamed Largo da Independência, Independence Square). Neto moved into the former Governor’s Palace, renamed the People’s Palace, overlooking Chicala and the southern tip of the Ilha **(Fig. 85)**.³⁵

When independence finally arrived in Angola, however, an internationally-supported civil war began.³⁶ Nation-building was a troubled process from its early stages. Three opposing political movements were vying for power: the FNLA (led by Holden Roberto, receiving supplies from many different countries over the years, including the People’s Republic of China, Zaire, and also South Africa and the USA); the UNITA (led by Jonas Savimbi, with the support of South Africa and the USA); and the MPLA (which remained in control of the capital, imposing an authoritarian single-party presidential

³⁴ In the 1960s, Luanda’s population increased by 114% (Fonte, 2007: 62). Monteiro (1973: 61) offers statistical information about the number of buildings built in Luanda over the colonial years, which demonstrate the population growth. According to that study, in 1971 there were around 3,730 dwellings built in Luanda, 1,520 of which were illegal.

³⁵ At this stage, Chicala remained a sandbank created by natural silting, punctuated by a few fishermen’s *cubatas*. According to inquiries made among Chicala’s population in 2011, fewer than 1% of the neighbourhood’s population were living in Luanda.

³⁶ The war would last until 2002 almost without interruption.

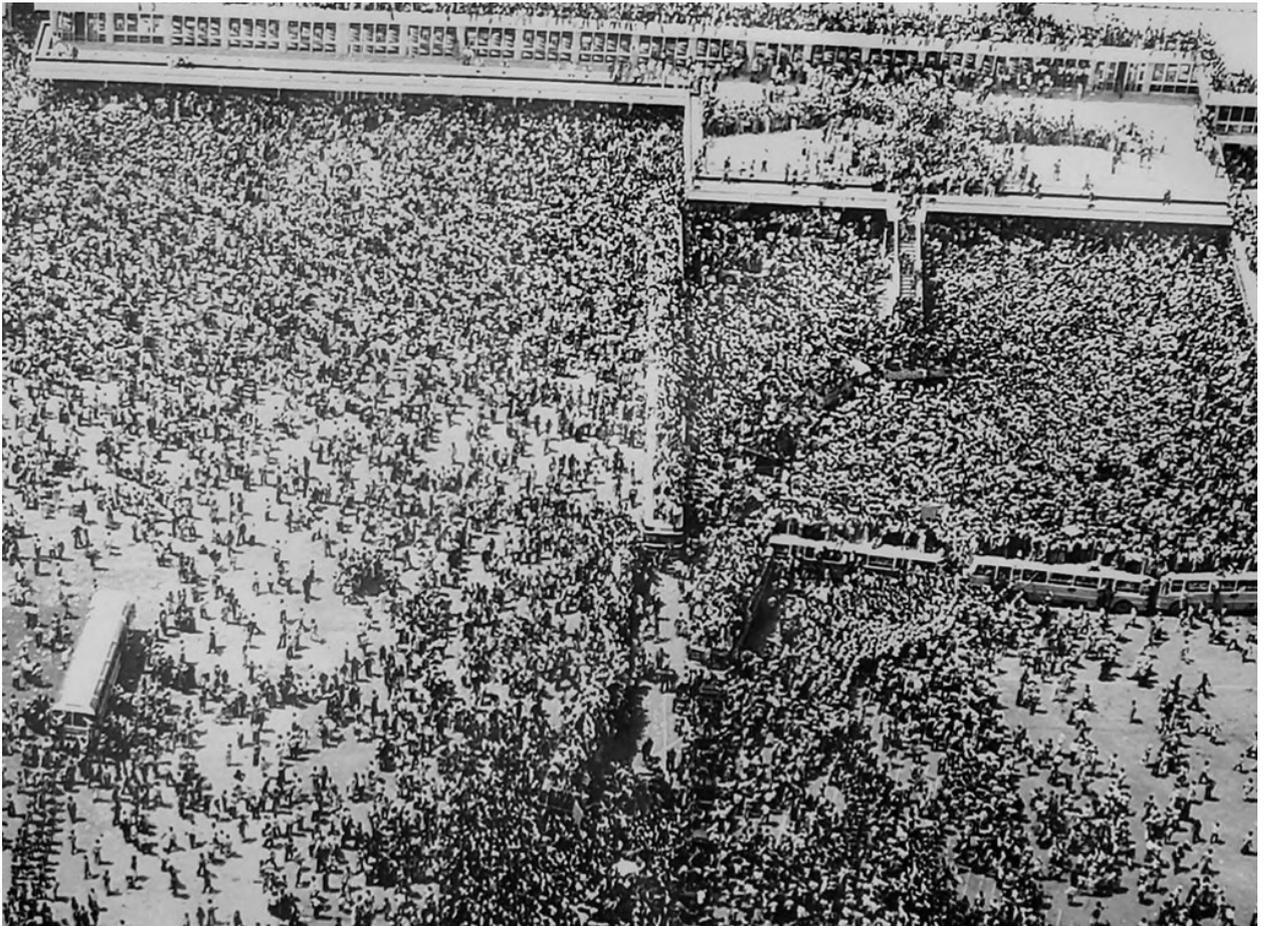


Fig. 85 – Agostinho Neto's arrival at the airport, 1975. Unknown author
During the period preceding Angola's independence, the international airport became the most crowded area in Luanda, occupied first by the departing Europeans, and then by Angolans welcoming Agostinho Neto.

system led by Agostinho Neto and backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba).³⁷ These partnerships with international players did augur something different from what Fanon had anticipated. As Africanist David Birmingham notes, “rarely had the political heirs in any African colony been more factionally divided than those who took up the reins of power in Angola” (Birmingham, 2002: 149-150). The divisions were not only between different parties: internal divisions within the parties existed also.³⁸

In architectural and urban terms, the transition period failed to adapt to the political and social context, despite numerous plans. Two distinct moments can be pictured: the emptying of the ‘colonial city’ (modernist residential buildings vacated, businesses closed down, car traffic replaced by long, tall piles of wooden crates literally displacing the city’s contents to the port, to be shipped to Lisbon); and then the ‘mussequisation’ of the city (during the post-independence period, abandoned colonial buildings, both finished and unfinished, were appropriated by low, average and high-income Angolan families, sometimes cohabitating the same buildings).

Two of the most vivid records of the troubled decolonisation period are Ryszard Kapuściński’s written memories and Alfredo Cunha’s black-and-white photographs. Their records, despite risking being partial as both authors are European (Polish and Portuguese), are of historical relevance and it is worth exploring them further. Kapuściński’s descriptions and Cunha’s photographs are complementary: Cunha reported on the decolonisation period from both Angola and Portugal, while Kapuściński was in Luanda during the months prior to independence.

With the withdrawal of the Portuguese, the city was like “a dry skeleton polished by the wind, a dead bone sticking up out of the ground towards the sun” (Kapuściński, 1988 [1976]: 27). Kapuściński (1988 [1976]: 23) observes that “rumours circulated that the black quarters would descend upon the stone city.” He experienced Luanda as a place of chaos and disorder. The Polish writer and journalist believed the country was doomed. He described the troubled period experienced by the city at the time, including the plans made by thousands of Portuguese settlers who were preparing to flee Luanda. Kapuściński

37 Upon independence, the USSR and Cuba maximised their earlier contacts with the MPLA, aiming to influence the policies of Angola, a strategically important new independent state – arguably, a colonial occupation of its kind. As Winrow states, “the wholesale withdrawal of Portuguese expertise facilitated the efforts of the socialist states to establish influence in the immediate post-independence years” (Winrow, 1990: 96).

38 Agostinho Neto had to deal with an internal factional movement lead by a former MPLA minister, Nito Alves. On 27th May 1977, there was an attempted coup d’état launched by Alves and his followers. The coup was prepared in the Sambizanga *musseque* (curiously, where Agostinho Neto was born). Different explanations have been given for the motivation behind the uprisings. Birmingham says that “one of the causes of the great uprising (...) had been the suggestion that unemployed urban youths should be dispatched to the country as work brigades to pick the unharvested coffee crop” (Birmingham, 2002: 171). He explains that “the youths were alarmed at the prospect”, since “their dignity depended on being sophisticated urbanites who, despite their minimal amount of schooling, had a taste for sharp dressing” (Birmingham, 2002: 171). Other more politicised versions state that the conflict originated in the nature of the Communist collaboration (Pawson, 2015). The fact is that, on that day, a large group of protestors was prevented from reaching the President’s Palace by a Cuban barricade. The group walked back and occupied the National Radio headquarters. There, members of the Government were arrested and taken to a house in Sambizanga, where they were executed. What followed was a purge launched by the MPLA party, killing dozens or hundreds of thousands of people including the protestors, their families, friends and acquaintances. The “27th May”, also known simply as the “*vinte e sete*” (twenty seven), is still a taboo in Angola, and many are afraid to speak out about it.

presents this transitory period with a sense of agony and pessimism, employing expressions such as “The city was dying the way an oasis dies when the well runs dry: it became empty, fell into inanition, passed into oblivion.” (1988 [1976]: 10); “This country won’t last long” (1988 [1976]: 11); “A cosmic mess prevails” (1988 [1976]: 11); “People escaped as if from an infectious disease, as if from pestilential air that can’t be seen but still inflicts death” (1988 [1976]: 12); “the city was closed and sentenced to death.” (1988 [1976]: 13); or “a stiff and alien stage set, empty, for the show was over” (1988 [1976]: 17). In Kapuściński’s negative descriptions, abandoned dogs were the only beings patrolling the streets of Luanda. The Portuguese were busy building a city of wooden crates to be shipped to the mainland. The Polish writer goes on to describe the departure of the Portuguese: “Nowhere else in the world I had seen such a city. (...) The city sailed out into the world, in search of its inhabitants” (Kapuściński, 1988 [1976]: 17-18) (Fig. 86).



Fig. 86 – Wooden crates from the departing Portuguese. © Alfredo Cunha, 1975

Post-independence Urban Appropriation

Following independence, Luanda entered a new period in architectural and urban terms. Urban appropriation blurred the distinctions between the ‘colonial city’ and the *musseques*. Appropriation of former colonial quarters became a typical feature of postcolonial Luanda. The city was the scene of a diversity of urban experiences, distinct from the traditional (racial and economic) historical dualisms which had marked the cityscape during the colonial period. It belonged to all people, in a perpetual process of adjustment of modernist architecture to an evolving way of living (Robinson, 2006: 72, 82).

Testimonies describe animals found on the balconies of multi-storey buildings, plantations in bath tubs, families of 10- 12 people living in small apartments, cooking on the floor, setting bonfires with the parquet and transforming lifts into dumps (Pepetela, 1980: 120).

Luanda's vertical appropriation developed at the same time as the exponential horizontal expansion of the self-built *musseques*, due to the arrival of thousands of internally-displaced migrants searching for security and economic prosperity in the capital. In the years following independence, despite the hasty exit of the Portuguese, Luanda's population grew over 100%, from 500,000 to over 1 million people.³⁹ Urban sprawl took hold in the absence of any formal planning. Public networks became saturated; water, power and sewerage infrastructure became insufficient and, in many cases, non-existent.

Early issues of the *Jornal de Angola* enable the socio-political and spatial events that were transforming the city to be imagined, and above all, the official position with regard to these phenomena in the pre- and post-independence periods to be understood. As a new set of urban situations began to arise, a new urban lexicon began to penetrate imaginaries of the city. Words like *ocupação* (occupation), *agitação* (agitation), *confusão* (confusion), ' *esquemas*' (schemes) and *oportunismo* (opportunism) became part of the vocabulary of Angolan society.⁴⁰ These terms became deep-seated in the postcolonial urban discourse in Luanda, often associated with pejorative aspects of the *musseques* and their people. It is worth investigating the origins of these concepts in Angola's official newspaper.

The first reference to *oportunismo* can be found in an article dated 7th November 1975, just four days prior to independence day, entitled "*Oportunismo: um mal a combater*" (Opportunism: an evil to be fought). The article critiqued and explained the meaning of this 'evil' (*Jornal de Angola*, 7/11/1975):

When we speak of the fight against Opportunism, we must not forget the characteristic trait of all Opportunism: its indecisive, imprecise nature. In the fight against opportunism, we must acknowledge its source, that is, the selfishness inherent in the petit bourgeois ideology. However, what is typical among all opportunism is complacency with the current situation, and an absence of political outlook. Therefore, every opportunist is characterised by prioritising his own personal interests above those of the Revolution and the People, defending stronger individuals or groups instead of revolutionary principles, placing himself not in the revolutionary vanguard but in the group he considers to be strongest. To overcome Opportunism, we must have a good understanding of its practical manifestations.⁴¹

The article has a didactic tone. It gives simple examples of what may be considered *oportunist* behaviour to clarify readers' doubts. Often, these examples relate to the dominance of personal interests (viewed as secondary) over the interests of "the people's Revolution". The series of examples concludes with a succession of proposals presented in an instructional tone (*Jornal de Angola*, 7/11/1975):

39 The pace of growth continued over the years, reaching an estimated 6 million residents in 2016.

40 In many ways, early issues of the *Jornal de Angola* allow Luanda's postcolonial urban lexicon, still in use, to be understood. They certainly help to elucidate the origin of certain concepts and critiques.

41 This excerpt, as well as the following ones, were translated by the author.

We must energetically fight opportunism due to its disastrous consequences upon the heart of any organisation; we must energetically fight opportunism because as a trait of a petit bourgeois upbringing, it is a focal point of decay that we cannot allow in our society; we must wage a relentless battle against all opportunist abuse, as it is in doing so that we will fulfil the revolutionary interests of the most exploited among our People, and strengthen our Organisation against the opportunist infiltration which attempts at all costs to boycott the rise of the Angolan People to Power.

Opportunism comes to acquire primarily urban connotations, in that it signifies the occupation of a particular plot of land by means of illegally constructing housing, with the aim of obtaining free resettlement from the government authorities. For example, in the knowledge that a particular neighbourhood or group of houses is scheduled for demolition and its residents to be rehoused in resettlement colonies, opportunists quickly build precarious housing in those areas, hoping to be given a house just like more long-standing residents (often creating conflicts among residents). Opportunism has thus become a characteristic of postcolonial Luanda, and part of the 'problem' must be attributed to the policy of resettlement and free housing.

Another fundamental feature sometimes linked to opportunism is the *ocupação* (occupation) of houses. A further *Jornal de Angola* article from 3rd December 1975 alludes to this phenomenon. The article "*A Política de ocupação de casas*" (The policy of occupying houses) warns of the transgressions taking place in Luanda, which must be prevented from occurring. In an imperative tone, the article publicises a solution to the problem (*Jornal de Angola*, 3/12/1975):

The indiscipline and opportunism which predominate in certain sectors of the Luandan population, occupying houses which have been shut up for various reasons (this does not mean that they have been abandoned, as the absence of their tenants cannot be considered abandonment), have come to an end with the publication of a joint press release from the Ministries of Internal Administration and Defence.

The lengthy article calls for "discipline and respect" in the face of any act of "banditry, vandalism and opportunism". It recognises that "the creation of a home is a universal right of every citizen". However, it goes on to say that acquisition of this home must ensue "from personal or state resources and not from the violation of others' homes" (*Jornal de Angola*, 3/12/1975). Immediately after this, several opinions from members of the public regarding the issue of occupation are presented. The testimonials are invariably against any kind of *ocupação*. One of the citizens complains that "there are many *oportunistas* who want to take advantage of the situation of a new Nation and want to profit from the disorganisation handed down by the Portuguese fascist government."⁴² Curiously, the solutions suggested by all the citizens are the same: the need to create intensive inspection brigades, working in collaboration with the *Comissões de Bairro* (local authorities) and the police force.

Indeed, inspection brigades began to operate, and have continued to do so until the present day. It may be said that the general public perception of the working practices of these teams is characterised

⁴² Casting blame for the state of affairs in Angola on the colonial regime, while certainly well-founded, continues to predominate in official discourse even today.

by scepticism. Many stories are heard questioning the moral principles of the inspectors, and linking them to cases of corruption and discriminatory treatment. In 1983, a *Jornal de Angola* article published a complaint from a citizen regarding one of these brigades.⁴³ This anecdotal story shows that the working practices of the inspectors were already being criticised at that time (a topic which will be explored further in this thesis). As the citizen explains, the inspector orchestrated an *esquema* intended to evict his family arbitrarily, so that another family could come and inhabit their house. The citizen referred to this as “favouritism”. According to this witness, the working methods of the head of the inspectors involved psychological and physical threats. This is an example of the criticisms made of the evictions that began to spread across the city. Examples such as these gave rise to a term which, although not new, would become a permanent fixture in the Luandan urban lexicon: the *desalojados* (displaced people).

Another article, published years later, returns to the issue: “There is no intention to evict anyone from their houses” (*Jornal de Angola*, 29/7/1979). The article aims to inform society about the true motives behind the census of the population taking place in the city (*Jornal de Angola*, 29/7/1979):

The housing census is indispensable, regardless of the legality of the houses, as – despite popular opinion to the contrary – nobody intends to evict people or oblige owners to pay rent on their houses. With regard, for example, to the straw houses, there are a series of questions relating to the need to include them in the census or not. It is evident that this is necessary. These houses must be registered too. And here we find another of the goals of the census, which also aims to improve the living conditions for each user or family unit living in those conditions.

These words display good intentions, but the population’s wariness is evident. However good the intentions behind the census process may have been, it is clear that the actions of the registration teams prompted negative perceptions among the public, as their presence was often synonymous with eviction. From this point on, it becomes clear that the teams performing the census may have engineered arbitrary evictions not in the name of the State, but through sheer extortion or threats. Over the years, this profitable and illicit practice would come to be seen as ‘normal’.

From Musseque to Bairro

In the post-independence period, characterised by constant novelty, the authorities sought to adapt to the demands of managing the governability of the city. On 29th October 1975, the new administrative division of Luanda was announced: the new map of the city was redrawn and divided into 20 zones. The boundaries of the first zone encompass the entire area from the Ilha to Chicala (**Fig. 87**).⁴⁴

43 Article entitled “Os esquemas na habitação” (Schemes in housing), *Jornal de Angola*, 10th April 1983. In the article, a citizen describes his living situation, with a family of 13 people in a house with two living rooms and three bedrooms, rented from a public body (the Junta de Habitação de Luanda). The citizen begins by expressing indignation at the fact that over the course of a few years, the rent had risen by ten times the initial amount, supposedly due to a “fine to pay in a period of nine months”. He then complains about the actions of the head of the inspectors, who “began to send multiple notices with the aim of demoralising the family”, and forcing their eviction.

44 See *Jornal de Angola*, “Nova divisão administrativa da Capital de Angola – Luanda fica dividida em vinte zonas” (New administrative division of the capital of Angola – Luanda divided into twenty zones), 30th October 1975.



Fig. 87 – “New Administrative Division of Angola’s Capital”. (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/10/1975)
Originally, Chicala was part of Zone 1, falling under the Ilha de Luanda jurisdiction.

Throughout 1975, the *Jornal de Angola* featured an (almost) daily section entitled “*A Vida nos Bairros*” (Life in the neighbourhoods). It is a kind of *tableau* reporting on various matters related to each neighbourhood (not all of the neighbourhoods are mentioned in each issue, only those with relevant information to report). Several examples referring to the neighbourhoods surrounding Chicala are presented here:

Corimba: Residents of the Corimba neighbourhood protest against the appalling state of their main road, known as ‘*estrada da Corimba*’, which although affecting inhabitants of the city in general, affects them much more because they have to travel on it every day. (*Jornal de Angola*, 11/10/1975)

Praia do Bispo: Today at 20.30, there will be a grand assembly at the club headquarters to which residents of the Ilha da Chicala are invited. The following issues will be addressed in this meeting: creation of a supply cooperative; the situation of the club’s assets; changing the name of the neighbourhood, as well as of the roads. (*Jornal de Angola*, 16/10/1975)

It is relevant to note that Chicala residents are invited to the Praia do Bispo neighbourhood, because the Chicala neighbourhood had not yet been officially formed.⁴⁵ The desire to change the names of the neighbourhood and roads is also salient, and occurred throughout the city and country as a whole (mostly, to commemorate national heroes or replace local toponymies). It was not until 24th October 1975 that the news regarding the neighbourhood’s name change appeared (*Jornal de Angola*, 24/10/1975):

45 No headline relating to Chicala was found in the dozens of newspapers consulted.

Quinanga: In Quinanga (former Praia do Bispo), there will be a grand cleaning and rubbish collection campaign tomorrow around 15.00, thanks to an initiative from the relevant *Comissão Popular do Bairro*.

The change from Praia do Bispo to Quinanga merits some reflection. Quinanga (or Kinanga) is the Portuguese version of the word *Kunanga*, which in Kimbundu means ‘spend the day, pass the time’. It is important to recall that this was the place from which the slave trade departed for Brazil and other destinations. In times gone by, it is believed that the area of Praia do Bispo, Bairro Azul and Coreia was known as Kinanga – this may be the reason behind the decision to readopt the Kimbundu name for the area.⁴⁶

The name, however, did not survive, as the neighbourhood has kept its name from the arrival of the Portuguese, Praia do Bispo. Since then, Kinanga has become a *Comuna* (commune), comprising several neighbourhoods (Chicala 2, Praia do Bispo, Saneamento, Bairro Azul, Coreia).⁴⁷ Chicala remained absent from the newspaper column, as its ambiguous position between Praia do Bispo and Ilha do Cabo did not yet grant it the status of neighbourhood.

“*A vida nos bairros*” provides evidence of the vibrant, complex collective movement which began to operate in the city of Luanda in the post-independence period. This intense period of self-organisation officially put an end to the narrative of the *musseque* as a pathological site. In her reflection on the perception of the word *musseque* in the colonial period, Marissa Moorman states that “the word’s topographic meaning gave way to a sociological one, regardless of the meaning of *musseque* in the minds of the inhabitants” (Moorman, 2008: 32). This last comment prompts the author to add a footnote indicating that (Moorman, 2008: 32):

I know of no research on the history of the word *musseque* as used by the *musseque* residents themselves.

There is a gap in the way the history of the *musseques* is being told. However, in the postcolonial period at least, we may be certain that the word that became officially and commonly used is *bairro* (which does not convey the pejorative connotation that *musseque* does).⁴⁸ The *musseques* became *bairros* (neighbourhoods) in their own right. The officialisation of Luanda’s informal settlements is a legacy of independent Angola. The postcolonial history of the city may be told, therefore, from the neighbourhood level.

46 Source: *Environmental Impact Study* by Gabriela Pires (2010), unpublished report associated with the Marina Luanda project.

47 *Bairro do Saneamento* was the area in which the highest-ranking rulers of Portuguese colonialism resided. It was there that the colonial powers were *saneado* (cleaned out) on 11th November 1975. It then came to be known as *Bairro do Saneamento*.

48 The *musseques* have a pejorative connotation, akin to ‘slum’. Claudia Gastrow agrees that “the word *bairro* has become more common as people have begun to object the often negative connotations of the word *musseque*” (Gastrow, 2014: 1).

Chapter 3

Form Fantasies: Luanda's Profitable and Secretive Urbanism

The development of Luanda as a city over time was largely funded by the profits of a small number of economic activities, from the slave trade (16th-19th centuries) to the coffee/cotton industries (19th-20th centuries) and the oil market (20th-21st centuries). Despite the different characteristics of these economic activities, important similarities exist in their impact upon the urban development of Luanda, and these will be examined in this Chapter.

The one sector economy has been criticised since early times. Pynard de Laval, who lived in Angola between 1601 and 1611, described the city as “the poorest land on Earth, where the cost of living is very high, because it produces nothing more than a few fruits; the only trade that takes place there is that of black slaves”¹ (Martins, 2000: 138-9). Another early account, by Portuguese dissident writer Castro Soromenho, states that “the slave trade was the foundation of the city of Luanda” (Soromenho, 1939: 22).² Angolan writer José Eduardo Agualusa links the early predominant economic activity to the postcolonial one: “slavery was like black gold at that time: as long as there was demand, there was supply” (2009: 278). Here, Agualusa implicitly draws attention to the complicity between African and Portuguese agents involved in the slave trade.

These profitable businesses would bring about instances of excess and greed. In 1589, Portugal's Dom Filipe I donated plots of land to Paulo Dias de Novais, “wherever he wanted and forever” (Delgado, 1901 (I): 344). One of the plots consisted of “20 leagues [76.6 km] of *Vila de São Paulo* (Luanda), including water” (Delgado, 1901 (I): 344). Soon after, Dias de Novais was charged with corruption due to sub-soil

1 Translation by the author.

2 Soromenho adds that the Church played an important role in this process: “It is not a scandal that priests in Angola pay their debts with slaves, because, just as in Europe the currency is gold and silver coins; and in Brazil, sugar; in Angola and the neighbouring kingdoms, it is slaves” (Delgado, 1901 (I): 384, citing a document from c. 1593).

prospection, accusations which he always denied (Delgado, 1901 [I]: 345-7).³

In just 14 years, Dias de Novais went from having it all to losing everything. This distant story is worth bearing in mind as we learn how major land concessions have been granted by the maximum authority to a single individual or private company in recent times. It is also important to note that at that time, over-ambition for profit already characterised the actions of those in power. Parallels may be drawn here with contemporary practices in Luanda. The similarities grow stronger when we observe that ‘plots of water’ were included in the concessions of land. I argue that something quite similar is taking place in the urbanisation process in Chicala, the Ilha and surrounding areas.

A Late Colonial Masterplan

During the 1960s and 1970s, the intense architectural production seen in Luanda reached the Ilha. The changes hanging in the air prompted Cardoso to sound the alarm, stating that the *Axilunda* culture was “in danger of extinction, absorbed by other groups or by the imposition of new structures” (Cardoso, 1972: 15), and that “in relatively little time, the remaining *sanzalas* will give way to modern, functional districts” (Cardoso, 1972: 106). The author also complained that “an entire system of traditional life is being transformed by the acquisition of new forms, brought to the region by European civilisation” (Cardoso, 1972: 106). This way of life, in his view, was being “slowly sacrificed to progress, with the regrettable loss of many customs which have been conserved until the present day” (Cardoso, 1972: 163).

In the late colonial period, Cardoso’s concerns were likely to have appeared unwarranted. Praia do Bispo, on the coast of Luanda to the south of the Baía (bay), was a quiet and affluent place to live (**Fig. 88 - 89**). Opposite, by the ocean, was the Praia do Sol beach, which was particularly popular among the Portuguese, many of whom spent their weekends either there, or in Chicala on the Ilha side (**Fig. 90 - 91**). There, fishermen lived their quiet lives, closely linked to the ocean. With this picture in mind, it seemed difficult to believe Cardoso’s prophecies.

During this time, a masterplan for the area of Praia do Bispo and Chicala was suddenly made public. An article in *Notícia* unveiling the project, entitled “Giving Luanda Back to the Sea”, described it as “the most daring urban masterplan Luanda has ever seen” (**Fig. 92**).⁴ Lavishing praise upon the project, it welcomed the masterplan by offering “Congratulations to Luanda”.

3 Dias de Novais, the first Governor of Angola, moved to Massangano, where he died on 9th May 1589. He left no descendants. For more information, see Martins (2000: 49).

4 The project was published on 29th December 1973 in the weekly magazine *Notícia*. The article, which followed a press conference held in Luanda, is the only written source found mentioning this project. It was shared by Verónica Leite de Castro and Jorge Fernandes at the end of a presentation I made in Lisbon on 3rd December 2013. This unrealised masterplan remains largely unheard of in the context of architecture and urban studies in Luanda. Over the course of my research, I tried to find further evidence of this project yet I could find neither records nor any other masterplans proposed for this specific site during the colonial era. However, the article suggests that there were previous proposals to redevelop the area, with its opening line: “This time it’s going to happen!”. What follows in the article is a detailed description of the proposed intervention and the stakeholders involved. All passages here presented were translated by the author.



Fig. 88 - 89 - Praia do Bispo. Source: Amaral 1968 - © Victor Nogueira, n/d
Praia do Bispo was close enough to the city centre, yet not densely built up. The area was punctuated by single-family houses along a waterfront fringed with palm trees and beaches.

Fig. 90 - 91 - Chicala in the late colonial period.
Unknown source, 1967 - © Daniel Quintã, 1971
Praia do Sol, as the beach was called in the late colonial period, was a place for leisure, inhabited by a small number of fishermen.





Fig. 92 - Notícia article, 29/12/1973.

The proposed project consisted of building and developing two areas: a dense housing section on the site of the former Morro de Santa Barbara to the north (the hill bordering Praia do Sol and mainland Chicala), and Praia do Bispo / Samba to the south; and a massive land reclamation from the ocean, connected to the mainland by an "umbilical cord", where a "vibrant social life" was expected to take root.

The article presents a short description of each of the specialist studies which were undertaken. According to the landscape architect in charge, Viana Barreto, the terrain and topography were the most distinctive features of the site. Barreto noted that "the [proposed] urban fabric was a consequence of its topography". A comparative study was made, contrasting how comfortable conditions were in Samba, compared with the *planalto* (highlands, uptown). This was particularly due to the influence of the winds coming from the ocean (West - Southwest). These conditions could be further enhanced with the partial destruction of the Santa Bárbara hill and the opening of a valley with trees, following the direction of the "predominant evening winds", which could even "contribute to the refreshing of the *Baixa*". In short, this privileged geographic situation was ideal to accommodate residential, civic and cultural facilities. According to engineer Ulpio Nascimento, responsible for the geotechnical viability of the study, there would be no difficulties in destroying the hill. Regarding the landfill to be placed in the Samba bay, the specialist believed that the compactness of the sand would support it, and concluded that the landfill would be easy to make and relatively quick to stabilise. The foundations of the new buildings, both in the former hill and in the reclaimed areas, would not pose any major difficulties. Regarding the water supply, the company Hidroprojectos assumed that there would be no difficulties. With regards to sewage, the new development would double the existing water flow to this area of the city. Meanwhile, a simple system of gutters would solve the rainwater drainage problem. The article gives the impression that everything was easy and simple to implement.



The article's title is rather intriguing. In a place where the sea has always been present, it may refer to the fact that the Ilha was overlooked by the colonial elites, who failed to grasp its potential in comparison with the central areas of the city. Indeed, until the end of the 19th century, the population of the Ilha was not included in the statistics.⁵ Furthermore, the area was clearly under-represented, if not completely ignored, in maps of the city over the years: it was generally seen as a mere leisure area where the Portuguese who were investing in other areas of Luanda could spend their weekends at the beach.

The article states that the new project discovered that the area where most *Luandenses* "sought fresh air", was "staggeringly abandoned" (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). The tone of the text suggests that someone finally took the initiative to provide the right conditions to accommodate the large flow of people wanting to live in, or visit the area. According to those responsible for the masterplan, despite "Luanda's spectacular development over the past decades", its urban fabric and potential "were not completely seized" (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). "The central areas", the text continues, "offer outdated solutions, or at least are not properly developed" (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). In order to reinforce its arguments, the article includes an analysis of the downtown which concludes, most conveniently from the promoter's perspective, that the *Baixa* lacks sufficient capacity to remain the city centre. The article mentions that this area is expected to become "the real *Baixa* of Luanda" – not a downtown focused on business, but on leisure, cultural life, sports, cinemas, theatres, cafés and restaurants. It is described as nothing less than "Luanda's Venice", intersected by canals, in close relation with the water.⁶

The ambitious scheme was made possible thanks to what was considered the "lucky factor": the fact that Santa Barbara hill had never been covered by houses. One of the engineers credited as responsible for the study, Mr. Barreto, was "astonished by this fact". In his view, the reason that this climatically privileged area had never been settled was because it was a private site whose owner neither built on it nor wanted to sell it. The article gives the sense that it was only natural that the project should be built on the site. To confirm these premises, the text presents testimonies from the technical team. However, it does not include insights from the architect who designed the masterplan, Tomás Taveira (although he was present at the press conference, according to the photographs published with the article).⁷ The article gives the impression that the masterplan seemed simple and easy to implement. However, closer observation of the model photographs shown reveals that the Chicala 2 sandbank is visible, punctuated by the small houses that were starting to proliferate at that time. The article mentions that the urban study also included an analysis of the "illegal" settlements surrounding the site: it makes

5 See Chapter 2, note 24.

6 Despite the canals seen in the plan, it seems difficult to compare the new skyline with Venice.

7 I tried to contact Mr. Taveira, who has been based in Lisbon for decades, for a first-hand testimony about the project. After several attempts by telephone and email, I finally received a response to my request: "Unfortunately this was one of the projects that was left in our office in Luanda and ended up being stolen." (email sent on 16/5/2014). Mr. Taveira did not want to add further statements, and was unavailable for an interview. His short, bitter reaction was typical of the many Portuguese people who lived in Angola at the time of independence and lost everything they had earned in the decolonisation process, having to start again on their return to (or, in many cases, their first arrival in) Portugal.

reference to Bairro de Santa Bárbara, Praia do Bispo and the *musseque* of Samba Pequena (also known as Coreia). Apparently, the “re-systematisation” of these areas was intended. However, according to the article, it was not the project’s role to present proposals, because the intervention depended on the “policy to be adopted by the council”, the one institution with the “competence to develop ideas for intervention [in these areas]”, as well as the “formulation of the respective ordering principles” (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). In other words, the masterplan did not accommodate the population living in and around the site of intervention.⁸

The masterplan also displays certain doubts and uncertainties: the possibility of completing the first part of the project “and waiting to see” was equally envisaged, leaving space for some flexibility and adaptability.⁹ This confirms the fact that, despite all of the expert and specialist studies, there was room for a more or less ‘improvised’ solution.¹⁰ Uncertainty and improvisation seem to have been a commonly accepted design tool.

The Transition Period

Soon after the late colonial masterplan was presented, Angola became independent (as seen in Chapter 3). In order to mitigate the uncontrolled urban expansion that afflicted the city in the post-independence period, a series of governmental plans were implemented.¹¹ These, however, often failed to adequately respond to the exponential urban growth. At the same time, new projects were developed by the international partners that settled in Angola following independence, in particular by the Cuban cooperation. Around 90 Cuban-designed estates were implemented as a model in 1976-77 in an attempt to solve the city’s housing problem.¹²

8 In this respect, the article mentions another project developed before this one, with the same strategy concerning the informal settlements surrounding the site. The article says that “more recently the defence of the hill against illegal occupation was made in regards to a project that, far from achieving the level of the present project, also considered its destruction” (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). No information about this supposed earlier masterplan was found during the course of this research.

9 Indeed, the ocean hydraulics solution for the area proposed in 1973 by engineers Mr. Pires Castanho, Mr. Reis de Carvalho and Mr. Vera-Cruz also belies some uncertainty. In order to ascertain the implications of the “Abecassis line” (the project’s western limit) for coastal forces and currents, the three experts commissioned to analyse the issue concluded that the proposed limit might need minor adjustments, depending on “careful observations”. “Most probably”, the experts said, “these adjustments would need to be made at the northern limit, close to the connection with the Baía de Luanda”. Therefore, the proposed works were to start from south to north, in order to gain time to respond to the results of the “pending studies which might determine the adjustment of the northern limit of the ‘Abecassis line’”.

10 In case of poor performance, the 1973 plan had an alternative study in progress, consisting of both connecting the Baía de Luanda to the Samba lagoon, and closing the Barra da Corimba. It was said that “this hypothesis might provoke sufficiently strong currents as to improve sanitary conditions in the Baía de Luanda” (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973).

11 Plans developed by the Luanda Urbanisation and Housing Office (later, the Ministry of Construction and Housing, 1974-77), and the Department of Physical Planning at the Ministry of Construction and Housing (later, the Department of Spatial Planning at the Ministry of Planning, 1979).

12 Some testimonies said that these were largely rejected by the population because of their typological mismatch with local customs (small rooms, fixed furniture in concrete, no balconies). As the project was abandoned, families squatted incomplete, multi-level concrete frame structures. The informal appropriation and use of ‘formal’ buildings during this period is better described by certain Angolan writers and social scientists writing since independence. Examples are Manuel Rui’s *Quem me Dera Ser Onda* (1982), Pepetela’s *Luandando* (1990), and Ondjaki’s *Os Transparentes* (2013).

Contrary to Kapuściński's fatalistic descriptions during the transitional period in Angola (presented in Chapter 2), not all of the Portuguese left the territory in a hurry, nor did the city's routine completely grind to a halt. Surprisingly, despite the aforementioned disruption, the late colonial masterplan still went ahead (although it would soon be interrupted). This, at least, is what is made apparent by an equally surprising article in *Notícia* magazine (which was also still being published during this chaotic period). The article documented "the last photos before the destruction of Santa Bárbara hill" (*Notícia*, 31/8/1974). It concludes with prophetic sentences about the future of Santa Bárbara hill: "May it rest in peace. Its remains will be replaced by a land business, as everyone knows." (*Notícia*, 31/8/1974) (Fig. 93).



Fig. 93 *Notícia* Magazine, 31/8/1974.

On 31st August 1974, *Notícia* published a 2-page article by "M.G.", entitled "*Nem Santa Bárbara lhe vale...*" The *Notícia* article shows black-and-white photos of the hill and its magnificent views towards the ocean, alongside a short text explaining that the article was the product of "Mr. Sá's insistence". Mr. Sá, introduced as "a shell collector and resident of Praia do Bispo", claimed that someone should document "the last photos of the hill", which was "dying from bulldozer smashes, motor graders, lorries and excavators" (the article credits "Lucas, who suffered vertigo" for the photos). The story goes on to explain that on his tenth attempt, Mr. Sá convinced the *Notícia* editors to visit the site, and two journalists were sent with him to the hill. "You will thank me one day", Mr. Sá promised the journalists. The article ends on an ironic note, saying "these are the last photos of the Santa Bárbara hill, threatened with extinction" (the article notes that Mr. Sá calls it Santo Amaro hill, and not Santa Bárbara – this could be the subject of a follow-up investigation by an interested historian).

The *Notícia* articles demonstrate that, in some ways, the transition from the colonial to the post-independence periods was smoother than is often presented. They also show that in the late colonial period there was already a clear top-down strategy of investing and transforming this part of Luanda. This raises at least two topics worthy of discussion. Firstly, it is a strategy showing great complicity between private investors and public authorities: responsibility for the project lay with the company, even on sites that belonged to the city council (such as the roads, streets, paths, sewage and outdoor spaces). This evidence is important to understand the new masterplans to be described below. Indeed, a study focusing solely on the postcolonial period would probably display surprise and amazement at the spectacular effects of the 'neoliberal trajectory' upon the regeneration of the city. However, a historical analysis offers

a more contextually-situated perspective on current events. To put it differently, the current post-war reconstruction projects that are transforming Luanda are simply a magnified version of what was already being planned during the colonial period.

The second aspect worth noticing here is the resolution of the 'social problem'. The article clearly shows that it was the government's responsibility to solve the burning issue of the existing settlements and their residents. Although attempts were made by the project's promoters and designers to avoid responsibility for the residents of Chicala, they nonetheless recognised that there were people living in the area and that this was a 'problem' which needed to be solved. The role played by architects, planners and real-estate agents in regards to the 'social question' has been a recurrent dilemma throughout the eras. The most common approach is to transfer responsibility to the government. Meanwhile, the role played by the people living in Chicala in the process of its future urbanisation is also of relevance. This topic will be addressed in Chapter 4.

Postcolonial Masterplans



Fig. 94 – Plan showing the various postcolonial masterplans in Chicala and the surrounding area (Bay of Luanda, Sodimo, Marina Luanda). © Paulo Moreira, 2016

Note: at least 2 different versions of the SODIMO masterplan have been produced. The most recent, shorter version had still not been made public in 2016. After several attempts to view the most recent masterplan, in particular via DAR - Luanda, I was repeatedly told that "alterations were still being made and perhaps by the end of the year (2015), we should have completed the new version" (interview, March 2015). Over a year later, in March 2016, I was allowed to view the current masterplan informally at DAR - London. I was not allowed to document or to keep a copy of the plan, therefore the drawing presented here shows a mere approximation of the area occupied by the SODIMO masterplan.

During the post-colonial period, several large-scale masterplans have been proposed for Chicala and the surrounding area, of which the redevelopment of the Bay of Luanda, the SODIMO masterplan and the new Marina are the most significant. These masterplans may be seen to represent the epitome of efforts to position Luanda as a “world-class city” (Croese, 2016), reflecting the aim for economic and political affirmation inherent to the city as a whole. The economic argument can be understood by examining the history of the city (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 2005: 285):

Luanda was built on a long island in the bay of the same name, but it also had a business district on the mainland.

Despite the difference in magnitude, the new projects display functional similarities with this description. Meanwhile, the desire for political affirmation has always been present in such interventions. This political dimension is most evident in the case of the Bay of Luanda, as the timing of the project’s opening ceremony confirms: the new Baía de Luanda was inaugurated on the President’s birthday, 28th August, 2012, just three days prior to the second general elections in Angola since the end of the civil war (2002).

The Bay of Luanda redevelopment began to be conceived just after the end of the civil war in 2002 (**Fig. 95**). The project was concluded in 2012. It was acclaimed nationally and internationally as “a successful waterfront redevelopment project and promoted as the face of the ‘new Angola’ and the ‘mirror of the modern economy’” (Croese, 2016). In Angola, the project was widely praised by both public and private media. The front cover of the debut issue of Angolan magazine *Rumo* reads: “Bay of Luanda: mega-investments in the new face of Angola” (*Rumo*, 12/2011) (**Fig. 96**). The opening paragraph of the cover article, entitled “The millions that are changing Luanda” sets the tone (*Rumo*, 2011: 32):

July 2012, Kalunga and Maria are sitting peacefully on a promenade on the Ilha, looking out at the Bay of Luanda. The young couple frequently come to this place, but this time they encounter a new cityscape. Before them, they can see more than three kilometres of seafront, more than three thousand palm trees, lawns, cycle paths, play parks, new squares, and a car park in place of the old ringroad. They smile and ask themselves whether it’s the gin or whisky making them hallucinate. Maria confirms that Kalunga is sober: Luanda really does have a new face.

The Bay of Luanda project is complemented by three large-scale real-estate developments, already underway (**Fig. 97 - 102**).¹³ These are divided into three plots. Plot A is located next to the port, to the far north of the bay. It consists of an area of 9 hectares, intended to receive 20 blocks of offices and high quality housing. The second plot (curiously, officially presented as Plot 1, creating some confusion between Plot A and Plot 1) comprises 6 hectares and is located at the southern edge of the bay, between the continent and the entrance to the Ilha.¹⁴ According to reports from the *Rede Angola* news portal, this

13 On 15th January 2016, the *Rede Angola* news portal reported that the first building on Plot A was already under construction, and that it would be occupied by a unit from an international hotel group. The *Rede Angola* article does not name the hotel chain. The leader of the Sociedade Baía de Luanda, Miguel Carneiro, is quoted in the article, stating that “the promoters have a window of up to three years to begin construction works” (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016).

14 See official promotion video for Plot 1 (*Baía de Luanda*, 12/9/2013b)



Fig. 95 – Bay of Luanda – initial project. Unknown author. Courtesy: Sylvia Croese

The initial project was commissioned in 2003 by the Ministry of Public Works to a Portuguese businessman, José Carlos Moreira Récio (who had been working in Angola since the late 1980s), in collaboration with his Angolan partner, António Mosquito (a businessman with ties to the ruling party) (Croese, 2016). The expansion of the Bay's public promenade was also a reason for developing an ambitious private real estate project: to offset this venture in the public space, private entrepreneurs negotiated the concession of plots of land (and water). The initial project to complement the public promenade consisted of two artificial islands on reclaimed land, with an area of 900 m², located between the bay and the Ilha (an estimated investment of US\$462 million). The plan triggered critical reactions from (upper) civil society, and was eventually abandoned (see Chapter 6 – Practices of Resistance).



Fig. 96 – Rumo magazine, front cover (12/2011).

The new Bay has since been built in only 30 months, thanks to a record construction time achieved by the Portuguese contractors Mota-Engil and Soares da Costa. There is hardly any mention of the architects responsible for the masterplan, with the promoter and contractors taking the spotlight instead.

Plot 2 will comprise 58 buildings with 8-14 floors. Eight of the buildings will be used as offices, each with an area of 10,000 square metres. A 40,000 m² shopping centre is also envisaged



Plot 1's location next to the fortress road junction allows easy access to the Avenida 4 de Fevereiro, Chicala and the Ilha.

Plot A envisages buildings of 37 floors and 18,000 square meters (the total gross construction area is around 400,000 square meters). The promotional video notes that "around 50% of the area on this plot will be used for leisure and public spaces, consistent with the project carried out on the Marginal public promenade." However, it does not hide the fact that the primary objective of this plot is to create "the new business centre of the city of Luanda, the ideal place to host the headquarters of benchmark companies."

Fig. 97 – Bay of Luanda real estate project – Plots A, 1, 2. Source: *Sociedade Baía de Luanda*, 2015. p.6. The initial proposal was eventually renegotiated by the *Sociedade Baía de Luanda* (Luanda Bay Society), and compensation for the redevelopment of the public space was set at three plots of land reclaimed from the sea using landfill, with a total area of 39,000 hectares. According to Croese (2016), the compensation also included a 30 year concession of all outdoor publicity along the waterfront, a 30 year concession of all retail spaces along the waterfront, a 30 year concession of all newly built parking spaces along the waterfront, and land development rights to reclaimed land for a 60 year period. The *Sociedade* thus obtained the right to expand its intervention and sell the plots to real estate investors. This real estate operation was clearly aimed at the upper classes. This is confirmed by the executive administrator of the *Sociedade Baía de Luanda*, Miguel Carneiro. In a published interview, he acknowledges that the project is aimed at "a previously identified section of society" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013). In another published interview, the administrator says that the apartments are being sold for around US\$3,500 per square meter, "below the prevailing prices in the area" (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016). News articles from the beginning of 2013 mention prices of US\$1,500 per square metre (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013). The finances of the project are particularly impressive: "We are talking about an investment of US\$2.2 billion in construction, to which US\$70 million invested by the *Sociedade Baía de Luanda* in infrastructure will be added" (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016). According to the executive administrator, all investment in construction will be made by private investors. *Rede Angola* states that the promotion of the project involves construction companies Mota-Engil, Soares da Costa and Teixeira Duarte, as well as investors from Angola, Portugal and Israel (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016).



Fig. 98 – Bay of Luanda – new project 2 (Parcela A). Youtube, Baia de Luanda channel, printscreen, 12/9/2013



Fig. 99 – Bay of Luanda – new project 2 (Parcela 1). Youtube, Baia de Luanda channel, printscreen, 12/9/2013



Fig. 100 – Bay of Luanda – new project 2 (Parcela 3). Youtube, Baia de Luanda channel, printscreen, 12/9/2013
 According to the Luanda Bay Society's executive administrator, "the typology of the apartments will be left to the respective investors to decide, and 30% of the total plots for construction have already been sold, despite the financial and economic crisis affecting the country" (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016). The January 2016 article reports that the first of the residential buildings has been completed and the second will be delivered by June, with two more under construction. "In the next three years, we are likely to have nine of the buildings completed and delivered; since the beginning of this year, we have closed the equivalent sales of two more 14-storey buildings; investors are aware that they must invest quickly in order to preserve the value of their savings [in Kwanza]", said the administrator of the *Sociedade Baía de Luanda* (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016). This statement suggests a certain alarmism among investors, due most likely to the restrictions on money leaving the country imposed since 2015 (investors are unable to convert liquid assets held in bank accounts in Kwanza into American dollars, and thus take the money out of the country).

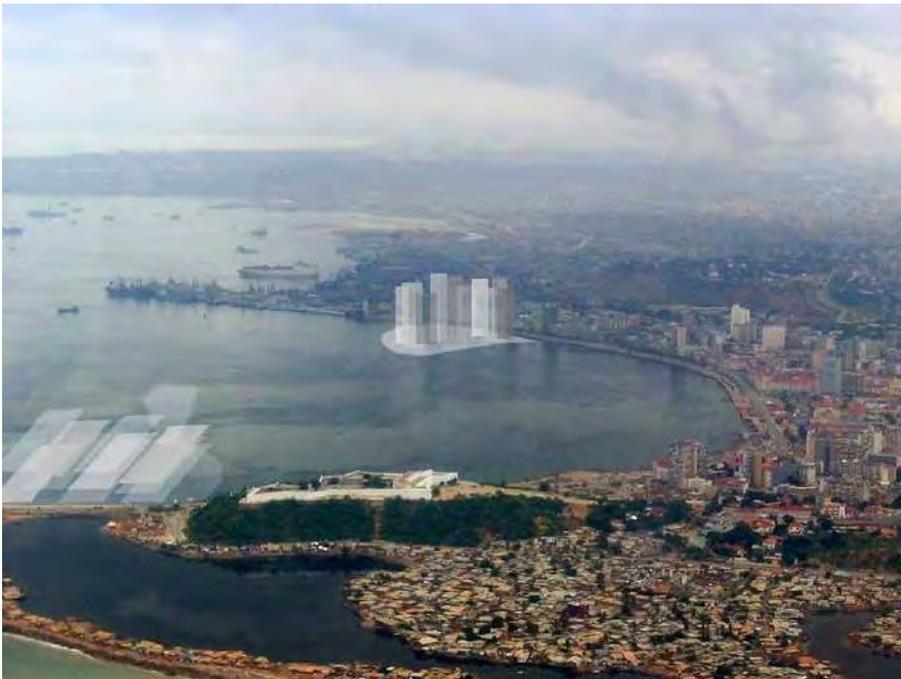


Fig. 101 – Bay of Luanda – Aerial photo of Plot A vs landfill in Chicala. © Paulo Moreira, 2016

For many, the Bay intervention goes beyond what was imagined to be possible in Luanda. While reclaiming land from the sea is not a new strategy, the dimensions and construction density of these projects propel them to another level. Despite all of this, the plan is not entirely surprising as land reclamation on various scales has been a constant feature of Luanda's development. In the case of Chicala, for example, 'plots of water' are also sold, that is, there are residents who cede their access to the sea via their *quintais* so that other owners can create landfills and build houses on the new surface. Due to this strategy, the coastline has been increasing at considerable speed. The trade in plots of water has always seemed to be one of the most creative examples of 'informal city-making', a subversive means of circumventing the lack of available land. The landfill project in the bay takes this creativity to stratospheric levels. However, it continues to be the case that the informal city has the ability to develop ideas first hand, which are only later (often, a lot later) transposed into real-estate practices and official planning.



Fig. 102 – Bay of Luanda – Aerial photo of Plot A. Sociedade Baía de Luanda, 2015. p.29

This coastal project is the right ticket to keep the real estate market flowing, particularly during an oil price crash (with an accompanying shift from oil to land capitalism). The money flow from both the initial investment and the returns from the 'reclaimed-land-from-fantasy' are quite easy to control.

new site has been sold in its entirety to a single promoter (*Rede Angola*, 15/1/2016).¹⁵ Next to this plot, a canal is envisaged to allow water to circulate between the bay of Luanda and the bay of Chicala. However, the canal has not yet been opened for fear that the water from Chicala will pollute the Bay of Luanda.¹⁶ Plot 3 completes the project, alongside Plot A and Plot 1. It has an area of 27 hectares, and is located on the Ilha de Luanda, facing the bay. The promotional video for this plot describes what will be constructed there (*Baía de Luanda*, 12/9/2013):

With views over the Bay of Luanda, this zone with an intervention area of 600,000 m², allows the creation of a new urban hub, primarily residential but with a significant component of offices, services and amenities which will address the current deficiencies in the surrounding area. This will be a place to live and work, to enjoy both the tranquillity of the waters of the bay and the possibilities for recreation and entertainment offered by the beaches of the Ilha. With several bicycle paths, a seafront promenade more than 2km long and public piers for catering and leisure, Plot 3 promises to be the new town of the Ilha do Cabo (...).



Fig. 103 – Phrase highlighted in *Economia & Mercado*, issue no. 101 (February 2013). *Economia & Mercado*, issue no. 101, 2/2013 The executive administrator of the *Sociedade Baía de Luanda*, Miguel Carneiro, states that “first of all, this is not a social project” (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013). It is common to use the “social” label to promote certain urban and architectural interventions, but it is certainly atypical to praise a project as “anti-social”.

15 At the beginning of 2016, all five buildings on this plot were under construction, intended for business, offices, hotels and housing.

16 This argument was used by a spokesperson for the Baía de Luanda public space project, in a public presentation at the Viking Club in Maianga, Luanda (August, 2011). At that time, the presentation represented a rare public information session on the content of the project, with an almost exclusively expatriate audience. The Q&A session seemed somewhat previously rehearsed. Months later, the Sociedade Baía de Luanda built an information point with a model and promotional videos in the Bay (focusing on the public space only, without the plans for the new plots).

The SODIMO – *Sociedade de Desenvolvimento Imobiliário* (Real Estate Development Company) masterplan has direct implications for the future of Chicala. The projected urbanisation spans the whole of Chicala and several adjacent areas. As far as has been made public, the company was created with the sole purpose of promoting and managing the ‘Luanda New City Centre’, a real-estate project in the Chicala area.¹⁷ The masterplan was designed by Dar Al-Handasah (also known simply as Dar), a global building contractor company of Lebanese origin, operating in Angola since the 1980s. The first stage of the SODIMO plan was completed in 2010-11, and it comprised a small set of affluent villas and several buildings opposite Chicala 3, in an area that did not affect the neighbourhood (**Fig. 104 - 109**). The Dar website presents some public information about the project (Dar, 2002-5):

Commissioned by SODIMO, S.A.R.L in 2002, Dar Al-Handasah executed a wide scope of tasks for the development of Angola’s capital, Luanda. Comprising a site area of 90 ha and 20,000 inhabitants, Dar executed a Master Plan, the engineering studies, the parcellation plan, the infrastructure design and supervision of construction. In order to cater for the increasing demand of developable land in the capital, the area extends into the ocean and involves new reclaimed areas that intertwine commercial and residential uses with touristic and coastal recreational facilities.¹⁸

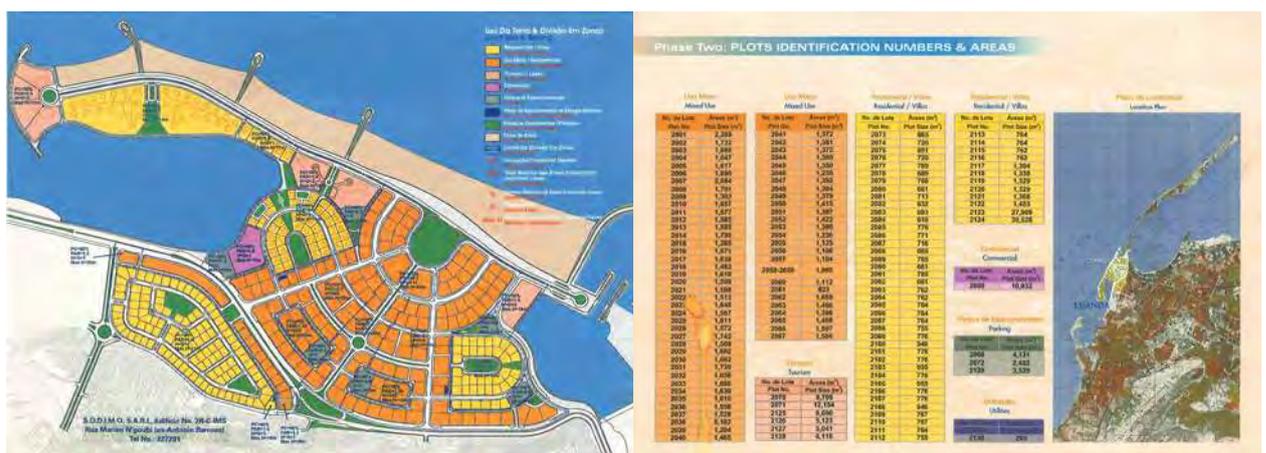


Fig. 104 - 105 - SODIMO leaflet, 2009. Courtesy: Margarida Quintã

The leaflet presenting the SODIMO masterplan includes plans and virtual images of the project. The SODIMO masterplan follows the same principle as older projects previously designed for this site: a tabula-rasa intervention reclaiming land from the sea. As with the masterplan of the late colonial period drawn up in 1973, it is proposed as a solution to the increasing demand for developable land in the capital.

17 The company was officially founded on 1st November 2001 (Diário da República de Angola III SÉRIE, no. 50). It was founded in 2001 as a mixed-capital venture in which Sonangol, the State-controlled oil company, and the private bank BAI (Banco Angolano de Investimentos) are the majority shareholders.

18 Source: DAR website. Project title: Luanda New City Centre. Date: 2002-5.

Luanda New Satellite City, Angola



We carried out a master plan and infrastructure concept designs for a new satellite city to the south east of Luanda for an ultimate population 890,000. The 10,700 ha site will provide serviced plots & housing, employment, and community facilities to counteract informal urban expansions.

The new city is planned as a fully-integrated, self-sufficient urban community independent of the adjacent Luanda, especially in terms of transport infrastructure and employment. The master plan includes detailed parcellations relating to a time-bound phasing programme. Land budgets, cost indicators and development regulations were prepared to support the implementation.

Fig. 106 – SODIMO masterplan, Dar website.

One of the strongest reactions to this image during my fieldwork in Angola came from a civil engineer during a debate held in Luanda. He criticised the lack of technical knowledge about Angola's natural coastal conditions and defined the images pejoratively as mere "paintings". His arguments were based on his own, professional observations: "with so many technical teams that have tried to solve the problem of the currents for decades... this has literally no relationship with reality". He said, with irony: "maybe it will look like this for the opening ceremony, but soon all that sand will vanish with the ocean's currents".



Sasbu Chicala Headquarters

Angola

Fig. 107 – SODIMO building – Phase 1.

Phase 1. Dargroup website
 The row of eminent SODIMO buildings (with no public space between them) includes the Chinese-designed AAA insurance agency headquarters, the long, curved, high-tech headquarters of US oil company Chevron, and the luxurious Hotel Baía, which neighbours the Mauseoleum of Angola’s first president, Agostinho Neto.



Fig. 108 - 109 – SODIMO buildings – Phase 1, photo taken from Chicala. © Grupo L22, ULA, 8/2011 - © ULA, Willian Fernandes, 5/2012

This first phase of the SODIMO masterplan has created an awkward urban situation. This group of plate-glass, six-to-eight floor office buildings represents the introduction of a neoliberal regeneration agenda to the Chicala area. Viewed from the neighbouring single-storey houses in Chicala, these new buildings form a barrier. It is an architectural equivalent to the natural slope that surrounds the eastern side of the site. Not only are these new buildings ‘boundaries’ in the territorial sense, but their logistics and security apparatus contribute to separating them still further from the neighbouring reality. A visit to Chevron’s headquarters in March 2013 gave me a sense of the security measures faced by workers and visitors. Identification documents must be shown in the entrance lobby; fingerprints and an electronic card then allow access to a second lobby, where stairs or an elevator lead to the office floors. These security measures are a tangible manifestation of the patterns of fear, segregation and ‘paranoia’ emerging around the world, in which Luanda is no exception.



The Marina Luanda is located in an area partially reclaimed from the sea, extending the Chicala area towards the south and running parallel to the coastline, in the vicinity of the SODIMO masterplan (where the Kilombo neighbourhood was previously located) (Fig. 110 - 112). Of the three postcolonial masterplans presented here, it is this plan which offers the most complete access to its architectural, urban and landscaping strategy.¹⁹ The project description begins by stating that one of the main characteristics of the project is its “exclusive location on the southern tip of the Ilha de Luanda, at Ponta da Chicala” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 12). From the very beginning, no reference is made to the Kilombo neighbourhood, or to any human activity in the area. Instead, the study focuses on the action of the sea, noting that “the Chicala district is a complex area, where highly dynamic erosive action is somewhat unstable” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 32). According to the document, the first objective following implementation of the project was that the site would have “reduced occupation constraints” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 9). In other words, the possibility of informal occupations on the site is thought to be slim.



Fig. 110 - Marina Luanda. © Costa Lopes Arquitectos, n/d

The document constantly employs architectural jargon which seems difficult to relate to the city of Luanda, and much less to this area in particular. It says, for example, that “Marina Luanda rises up as the final flourish of a platform that reaches out into the sea, like the last breath of a built system before it becomes fragmented and diluted”, and that “taking advantage of the alignment dictated by the large road providing access to it, a series of uneven strips (*faixas*) were created, with different functions, fluidly forming a collection of built spaces and empty spaces between inert areas and green areas”, going as far as to say that “a symbiotic system is created in which the built and the bare, the mineral and the vegetable complement and complete one another” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 27).

¹⁹ The content here presented and discussed is based on a 79-page unpublished (and undated) document by Portuguese architects Costa Lopes, entitled *Marina Luanda - Estudo Preliminar* (Preliminary Study). Costa Lopes is a studio based in Lisbon and Luanda. The following descriptions on the Luanda Marina are also based on the unpublished *Estudo de Impacto Ambiental* (Environmental Impact Study), enclosed with it, authored by Gabriela J.P.T. Pires and dated September 2010. Far from being a mere appraisal of the architectural proposal itself, the following section examines the numerous elements of the wording and argumentation of the aforementioned documents which merit closer attention. All excerpts presented here were translated by the author.



Fig. 111 - 112 - Marina Luanda. © Costa Lopes Arquitectos, n/d
 The Marina Luanda will have a total area of approximately 24 hectares, as well as 19 hectares of water to the west of the complex, which will feature a floating walkway and the marina itself with capacity for 700 pleasure boats. One of the characteristics considered fundamental to the project's success is its dimension of 'regional development', meaning that the marina as a facility is reconciled with "the real estate operation necessary for its future financing and functioning, boosting investment in commerce, services and housing". The real estate component proposes an area of approximately 243,000 m² for construction, including facilities for "boosting tourism and the hospitality sector".

The complexity of the language employed in the project description reaches its peak in the communication of urban and architectural concepts. Fantastical phrases appear, such as “[the concepts] are based on a solid vision, fundamentally on a civilisational structure, on the construction of a solid, balanced base from which a sustainable society with a balanced, interdependent relationship with the environmental, social and economic trinomial may be developed”, and “the multifunctional agglomerate where living, leisure and work spaces are located simultaneously, guarantees principles of experiential rotation and promotes experiences/encounters that only the urban space can allow” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 13).

The project description becomes more complex when the two fundamental points of the ‘Urban Strategy’ are set out, introduced by the phrase “the project is based on an underlying concept founded upon two basic principles: FLOW (*fluxo*) and FABRIC (*trama*)”²⁰ (Costa Lopes, n/d: 14). An excerpt from the project description in which these two terms are presented follows below (Costa Lopes, n/d: 14-15):

Flow

The CITY gradually and inevitably fades towards the SEA. First dry land, then a platform reclaimed from the sea, followed by a floating walkway, and finally small platforms (boats) floating off towards the horizon. The energy of the city is naturally dissipated in the marina, a place of osmosis from a solid to a liquid state. This energy is distributed by branches which, despite originating from a common trunk, enjoy autonomy and individual identity. The fluidity and dynamism present in maritime architecture inspire the simple yet sensual lines which structure the design of the public space and, as a natural extension, of the buildings themselves. Hydro and aerodynamics teach us that beauty invariably emerges from the most basic functionalism. That’s how Nature is...

Fabric

The relationship with the environment and pre-existing constructions (for example, the Mausoleum, main highways, etc.) defines a set of fundamental axes and alignments. The proposal aims to be sensitive to these features of the site and promote them. Relations with the environment – EXTERNAL AXES – and neighbourhood relations – INTERNAL AXES – define the structural matrix of the proposal, with the aim of continuing and strengthening a design unifying the different historical layers present in the city. From the intersection of these 2 systems arises a FABRIC or template which becomes the system by which relations with built and unbuilt space are organised.

This excerpt is demonstrative of the specialist language used by the architects, which is difficult to understand even for an expert. This type of vocabulary continues in the presentation of the ‘Architectural Strategy’, with phrases like “a multifunctional programme, with overlapping uses, promoting rich and complex experiences”; “the constructive impact of this programme and its infrastructural complexity led us to opt for an architecture with the capacity to mask and camouflage a very substantial part of the construction in a serene dialogue with the natural context”; “a new piece of land reclaimed from the sea demanded a topography recreated with emotion”, and “the rooftops,

²⁰ These terms are capitalised in the original version (both in this sentence and every other time they appear throughout the document).

sometimes public and sometimes private, allow a dynamic fluidity between the various levels in a smooth transition between natural and artificial” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 16). Let us allow the words to flow just as the project description presents them (Costa Lopes, n/d: 16):

The dynamics of these strips point to three possibilities of topographical relation which form part of the morphological vocabulary of the proposal:

ELEVATION results from the fusion between architecture and landscaping, where the strip is raised, allowing usable space to be created.

SUPPRESSION results from the fusion between architecture and landscaping, where the strip is sunk, allowing a link to a lower level.

IMPOSITION occurs when a stand-alone building is built on a strip; delicately placed upon the strips, stand-alone buildings rise up like landmarks and hold within their genesis the dynamic expression present in maritime architecture; impositions relate metaphorically to the lightness and instability of boats on land...

Finally, a further conceptual term is presented: the Sea. According to the text, “the architectural image of the proposal strongly relates to the main theme of any Marina – the Sea” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 16). This is justified with the intention to seek “a relationship of mutual contamination and communication between the terrestrial system and the maritime system” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 16). To conclude, the text states that “ultimately, the infrastructure of the Marina should be understood in its nature as a transitional space connecting Land and Sea” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 16).

Innovative Plans or *Déjà Vu*?

Urbanism and economic profitability are certainly linked in the post-war phase of Luanda’s development. However, this was also the case during the colonial period, as evidenced by the late colonial masterplan presented above. In the aforementioned *Notícia* article (1973), the CEO of Sagricol (the company who promoted the masterplan) said (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973):

The idea is to continuously invest. Always. And to earn a lot of money, too, of course.²¹

Even the Ilha Coastal Protection Plan (1983, presented in Chapter 1), was underpinned by economic reasoning: the plan acknowledged that whichever solution for coastal protection was adopted (small or large-scale), the cost of the works involved would remain extremely high. A solution was therefore proposed: “cost-effectiveness will only be achieved if the benefits listed here are linked to others of greater economic value” (*Jornal de Angola*, 27/5/1983). According to the article, one of these

21 The CEO was Dr Joaquim Fernandes Vieira, and “some of the largest companies in Angola were shareholders”. The company was the owner of *Fazenda América*, one of the main livestock industries in Angola at the time. *Fazenda América* was located outside Luanda, possessing 10,000 hectares (500 km of wire) and 6,000 cattle units – and it was expected to reach 20,000. On the southern side of the country, it was devoted to agriculture: coffee, soybean and corn.

benefits would be the reclamation of buildable land from the sea. This appears to suggest that both the 1973 and 1983 plans presented similar solutions, in particular the idea of reclaiming land from the sea to ensure economic profitability.

The Marina Luanda Preliminary Study presents a rather sophisticated discourse. However, in truth, the language masks a content lacking in innovation, which is regressive in some aspects and even prejudiced regarding the role of the existing context. In reality, many of the Marina Luanda features and arguments appear identical to those of the 1973 project. To substantiate this claim, a number of these arguments will be explored and compared to the descriptions employed in the article published more than 30 years ago, at the end of the colonial period.

Firstly, the nostalgic notion of a 'return to the sea' appears in both projects. In 1973, the article in the *Notícia* newspaper entitled "*Devolver Luanda ao Mar*" ("Giving Luanda Back to the Sea") noted that the implementation of the project would be "a return to the most pleasant sites in the city which today, have shockingly been abandoned" (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). Meanwhile, the new Marina Luanda project took the sea as a source of inspiration and as a metaphor for architectural creation: "maritime architecture and the swell of the Sea are fundamental references underpinning the rationale and compositional principles of urban design and its natural extension into architecture".

A second aspect which merits attention is the supposedly innovative nature of Marina Luanda, reinforced by the idea that the project would fill a gap in the city (Costa Lopes, n/d: 12):

The primary aim of the Marina Luanda project is to provide the city of Luanda with an infrastructure absent until now, which will greatly contribute to improving quality of life in an ever more cosmopolitan city.

In relation to the 1973 plan, it was said that following a study of "the potential and capacities of the area in question, its vocation as a site for some activities which either do not exist in the city or function in poor conditions in the *Baixa* was confirmed" (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). In other words, almost 40 years after the first project, the lack of certain uses and functions in that area of the city continues to be discussed, despite the significant transformation and development which has taken place there over the decades.

In both cases, the project proposals are primarily linked to leisure and the creation of a site able to embrace multiple activities. This is another key idea of both plans. On the one hand, we read that the 1973 project sought "a downtown area promoting relaxation, cultural life, sport, a zest for life. Cinemas, theatres, cafés, restaurants, and entertainment venues will live in harmony, in a prime location right at the heart of the city" (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973). Meanwhile, the Marina Luanda project states that (Costa Lopes, n/d: 12):

Besides its principal vocation as a site for nautical activity, the Marina Luanda project aims to be a multifunctional space focused on leisure, comprising a balance of services, commerce and housing duly served by a system of support facilities and high quality public spaces.

It is worth considering, once again, the architectural jargon used to present these ideas (Costa Lopes, n/d: 12):

The aim is to construct a new space in the city with a variety of uses promoting multiple experiences. A truly self-sufficient space which has a positive influence on the spirit of the city of Luanda.

Multifunctionality is always presented as the logical result of expert studies which, after analysing the (mal)functioning of the area common to both projects, conveniently conclude that the city does not offer everything that it could – a gap which these projects, at their respective times, would fill. It is also relevant to observe that these project decisions are always made with pronounced complicity between private initiatives and public powers. The Marina Luanda project description and the 1973 masterplan state this explicitly:

“The aspiration presented in this document is based on a set of assumptions that aim to bring together public and private initiatives, including social, environmental and landscaping strands, as well as regional development. (Costa Lopes, n/d: 13)

Given the complexity of the issues under study, a team was formed which undertook six compartmental studies in close collaboration with the Urban Development Department of the City Council. (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973)

A further salient feature concerns the way in which these new projects view the city. Marina Luanda proposes an alternative connection to the Mausoleum, “predominantly for pedestrians and cyclists, which could establish a future link between these two parts of the system of public spaces in the city” (Costa Lopes, n/d: 26). Pedestrian bridges of this kind relate to an urban imaginary common to both projects discussed here: the image of Venice. The Marina Luanda and late colonial masterplans draw upon similar imagery in the following descriptions:

Two very light metallic walkways are suggested, which rise up and curve in the centre, like a Venetian bridge, to allow recreational craft to pass below. (Costa Lopes, n/d: 26)

A sort of Island [is proposed], linked to the land by an ‘umbilical cord’. (...) The Island would be a kind of Luandan Venice. Intersected by canals, it would interact closely with the water. (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973)

In other words, these ideas are nothing new. The Marina Luanda takes up the idea of the masterplan design from almost forty years earlier. These analogies suggest that, in the minds of architects and planners, the topographic conditions of the area – a landfill and waterfront – automatically invoke the poetic imaginary of Venice. However, these studies fail to realise that the existing urban grain already reflects this sort of spatial condition. Like Venice, Chicala was built incrementally over time, contrary to these one-off attempts to reproduce a water-city (**Fig. 113 - 116**).



Fig. 113 – 114 – Aerial photographs of Chicala and Venice. Google Earth, 2012
 The images display the urban grain of Chicala and Venice, on the same scale. The density of construction and the curvilinear roads and alleys, organised hierarchically, are common to both images.



Fig. 115 – 116 – Boat crossing in Chicala and Venice. © Kota Cinquenta, 3/10/2010 - Unknown author, 2012
 The images show the close relationship between both Chicala and Venice and the water: a gondola on a canal in Venice, and a boat crossing from Chicala 2 to Chicala 1, with a boy rowing (*ximbicar*, in kimbundu).

Secrecy and Lack of Collaboration

The colonial and postcolonial masterplans proposed for the Chicala area largely ignore the urban and social context for which they are designed. This is most explicit in current projects, as the area of intervention is now experiencing a very different situation to that of the colonial period, with a far greater level of inhabitation. However, evidence of this is less explicit in the supporting documents. For example, Marina Luanda promotes the “superior relationship” between the new Marina and “a vast territory, establishing itself as a prestigious landmark which will strengthen the urban image of the City of Luanda” (Costa Lopes n/d: 12). The denial of the existing context does not only concern Chicala’s informal settlement. The project proposes the complete alteration of the existing spurs built in the 2000’s as part of the coastal protection project (1983, see Chapter 2) and the SODIMO masterplan. It is strange that the Marina Luanda project description makes no reference to the neighbouring SODIMO masterplan, since both projects are adjacent to one another. It should be noted that Marina Luanda considers links to other ongoing projects, such as the Ilha highway and the future Corimba ring road (**Fig. 117 - 118**).²² It seems clear that this ‘oversight’ is far from innocent.



Fig. 117 – Marginal da Corimba, Dargroup. © Paulo Moreira, 2013

In March 2015, when my architect interviewee Mr. Rodrigo entered the room at Dar headquarters, he immediately said: “Chicala will disappear, you know? It will become a tourist area, because money is stronger than anything else; those who put the money there are the ones who decide which model to implement” (interview, 23/3/2015). Questioned about who ‘they’ were, Mr. Rodrigo responded evasively: “there are many interests in the area: the Baía de Luanda, the Marina Luanda, and the Marginal da Corimba, which will turn the road into a high speed carriageway” (interview, 23/3/2015). Mr. Rodrigo’s statement confirmed that the area was the subject of various State and private interests, and that several plans converged there. Pointing upwards with his finger, he added that there were several more “undisclosed projects planned for the area” (interview, 23/3/2015). According to the architect, one of the projects was from the *Gabinete do Desenvolvimento Turístico do Mussulo* (Office for the Tourist Development of Mussulo) – nothing was found about this supposed project. The other project was the Political-Administrative Centre, developed by the GOE – *Gabinete de Obras Especiais* (Office of Special Works).

22 The project description speaks of a bridge link, to be located “in the narrowest part, between the northern and southern edges of the sand banks that shape the mouth of Chicala, allowing less expensive construction work to be combined with increased efficiency in Luanda’s road network, both in terms of links to the city centre, and of links to Luanda-Sul and the future airport.” On the relationship with the airport, it is also relevant that the project description document notes that the site “is located very close to both the city centre and the airport”. Taking into account the fact that the new Luanda International Airport, initially projected to become operational in 2017, is being constructed almost 40 km southeast of the city centre, in Bengo Province, this is an argument which is questionable at best.



Fig. 118 – Chicala 1 – the ‘constraints’ on implementation of the SODIMO masterplan. © Paulo Moreira, 2016

The ‘constraints’ or obstacles to the full implementation of the SODIMO masterplan were identified by a technical report commissioned by SODIMO (accessed in 2012), including both public entities and private businesses. It is unknown how these ‘constraint’ areas would be integrated into, or compensated by, the new masterplan. However, what does seem clear is the fact that all of the remaining areas not considered ‘constraints’ would be disarticulated from the new masterplan. These include all of Chicala’s existing housing areas. Since this plan was drafted, the SODIMO masterplan has been reduced to the continental area, and secret plans to transform the area of Chicala 1 remain unknown.

The seven areas considered ‘constraints’ are: the Hidroportos headquarters, the IPGUL (municipal planning entity), the playground, the João Melo car scrapyard, the Sihela nursery school, the Poupa Lá supermarket and the Governo Provincial de Luanda (GPL) / National Police car park.

Publicly available information about the SODIMO and Marina Luanda masterplans has always been scarce and has only sporadically come to the attention of those immediately affected by it. In an attempt to learn more about these masterplans, interviews were undertaken with the respective technical teams. Interviews at Costa Lopes office (2012) and Dar offices in Luanda (2013 and 2015) and London (2016 and 2017) were particularly relevant.

In 2012, I had the opportunity to visit the Costa Lopes studio in Luanda, a glassy top floor with spectacular views over the city in various directions.²³ The meeting focused more on me explaining the aims of my research than on discovering the projects of Costa Lopes. There was great secrecy surrounding the projects; indeed, I left the meeting with no information about what was being proposed for the site. I was told that in six months' time, "in principle", the architects' Chicala study would be presented to the public (five years later, no such event is known to have taken place).²⁴

Faced with the impossibility of obtaining clarifications from the Marina Luanda team, I tried to gather information at the Dar headquarters. With Mr. Rodrigo, architect at Dar, I tried to find out about the emergence of the marina project, and was able to confirm a lack of communication between the plans proposed for the area.²⁵ I had the feeling that I had 'touched a sore spot'. When asked about the justification for the competing project, and if there was any dialogue with the designers, promoters, or urban planning bodies on the subject, Mr. Rodrigo became visibly uncomfortable and reluctant to talk. The Marina project, proposed for the insular side of Chicala and which had forced SODIMO to retreat, seemed to be an unwelcome topic. The architect hesitated before answering and was visibly upset – he said that the marina had caused SODIMO "to lose" 15-20% of its total footprint. There was no relationship or collaboration between the two teams. As the projects were to be implemented simultaneously, this would seem to be a logical procedure, but the answer was a firm no (interview, 23/3/2015):

There is no relationship. The level of confidentiality is high. Each one tries to hide things from the others. Only when machines are on site do we see what is going to happen.

Despite Mr. Rodrigo's obvious discomfort with the topic, I asked about the reasons for the change of plan (the introduction of the Marina to an area previously designated for SODIMO). The architect hesitated and said: "The reason? Well, you know, '*Cumpra-se*'", using the imperative of the verb *cumprir* (to comply). In Angola, orders issued by President José Eduardo dos Santos end in this way (usually written in capitals, sometimes with a space between each letter). As the saying goes, 'a word to the wise

23 The meeting had been arranged by a Portuguese Angolan businessman I had met during a presentation at Clube Naval some days earlier (who, on that occasion, offered to introduce me to the architects).

24 I was able to glean some of the architects' opinions of the city from the conversation. For example, the fact that Luanda, and particularly the Chicala area, had been "invaded by migrants". At one point, it was said that the trains connecting Malanje province to Luanda "arrive full and leave empty", and that the city "is incapable of accommodating all these immigrants". The solution, therefore, was to "send them back to their provinces". This is a commonly held opinion among Angolan and expatriate elites.

25 The exception seems to be the relationship between SODIMO and the Coastal Protection Plan (described in Chapter 2). These plans seem to be well synchronised: the construction of five retaining spurs at the southwestern tip of the Ilha / Chicala 1 is integrated in the SODIMO masterplan (**Fig. 104**).

is sufficient'. It was clear that the decision to confine the SODIMO masterplan to the continental side, where Chicala 2 and 3 are located, and to concede the southern section of the Ilha to Marina Luanda, was an order from above.



Fig. 119 – Political-Administrative Centre. © Paulo Moreira, 2016
The Political-Administrative Centre bordering the area of Chicala is developed by the GOE – *Gabinete de Obras Especiais* (Office of Special Works), under direct responsibility of the President.

When asked if it was possible to see the revised version of the SODIMO masterplan, Mr. Rodrigo replied that alterations were still being made to adapt the plan to the new, smaller area. He said that “by the end of the year (2015), we should have the new version finished” (nearly three years later, there is no indication that this has been the case). Access to the latest version of the SODIMO masterplan would be made possible via the Dar office in London. In November 2015, I was contacted (via the Chicala Observatory email) by a staff member from the Dar London office. His message, entitled “Using research from Chicala”, read as follows (Dar staff email, 5/11/2015):

My company is involved in many master planning projects around Luanda, which unfortunately involve large changes to areas such as Chicala, and sometimes the rebuilding of these communities on other sites. I came across your website today and it is an amazingly thorough record of this one community and I would love to use some of the images and information to support some of our plans for redeveloping these sites, or rebuilding other sites elsewhere to house people from these communities. Would you be happy for us to use some of the pictures in one printed report in this way? I don't have an exact number but I would estimate that around 10 of the pictures would be very useful in making our case in this report.

Previous experience suggested that there was unlikely to be any exchange of material. Nonetheless, I answered promptly and gave him permission to use the material (it was made public for that reason), provided that all the images were credited appropriately, and adding that I was interested in reading his report and that it would be good to exchange some information about the SODIMO masterplan.

I also said I understood that some information might be confidential and that I would use the information only for the purposes of my research. As expected, the response was evasive (Dar staff email, 5/11/2015):

I am not sure how confidential this project is at present but I will seek to find out and send you what I can about the new development.

The message finished with a promise to “keep me in the loop as much as possible”, and some praise (Dar staff email, 5/11/2015):

It is great to see the positive pictures of functioning societies you show to give more weight to my arguments of keeping as much as possible, similarly seeing the sewage infrastructure gives us fantastic insight into how we can upgrade it all.

During one of my subsequent visits to London in March 2016, I re-established contact and restated my desire to learn about the proposals for Chicala. The meeting (informal conversation) took place in a coffee shop near the Dar headquarters in Bond Street. It was only on the way out that I was invited to visit the office. With great hesitation, an updated report of the SODIMO masterplan was released for consultation. The document showed graphs and satellite studies (I learned that the topography and the main characteristics of the site were studied using satellite images, a rather distant way to learn about Chicala). It also included several photographs from the Chicala Observatory archive. Once again, the answer to my request to record some of this information was evasive.²⁶ A final answer came by email a few days later (Dar staff email, 18/3/2016):

I did finally get a reply back from my project manager for the Chicala project, but unfortunately the design is still being decided over by the government and we are not expecting to get any more work from this development, so I can't show you any drawings until the government officially announces it. Hopefully I will get more input into this project though and we can use your research to improve the designs going forward.

Unsurprisingly, there was no reciprocal exchange of material, and the masterplans remain highly secretive. Contrary to the late colonial and early postcolonial publication and public discussion of a large masterplan and a coastal protection project (discussed earlier), Luanda's current phase of urban regeneration is being planned almost entirely in secret. Decisions are highly centralised and only a limited number of people have access to them. There is heavy fortification around what is being planned, and who is responsible for its design and ownership.²⁷

Paradoxically, despite the communication difficulties and lack of collaboration between the various teams involved in the 'secret' masterplans, these agents themselves lavish praise upon a collaborative and open-access study such as the Chicala Observatory, and they are willing to use it and learn from it in their own undisclosed projects.

²⁶ Meanwhile, I posted a book by mail, expecting that both parties would gain from exchanging material. The subsequent occasional email exchange would result in an invitation for a lunchtime talk at Dar headquarters (8/8/2017), in which I presented a brief summary of the research.

²⁷ Most of the material used in this Chapter was released anonymously. Many questions remain unanswered.

Chapter 4

Hybrid Neighbourhood: Symbiosis Between Chicala and Luanda

Since Angola's independence, the strengthening of the relationship between the MPLA party and its Eastern Bloc allies was a political and ideological priority. The intention was to materialise the strategic partnership in architectural and urban terms. A document dated 1st February 1977 sets out the studies proposing to redevelop the area surrounding the 'People's Palace' (renamed after the colonial 'Governor's Palace') (Fig. 120).¹ The document, entitled 'People's Palace and Praça da Revolução – Preliminary Studies for the Development of Socio-Political and Administrative Centres', evaluated two possible areas where the project could be implemented (INOT, 1977) (Fig. 121):

Evaluating the locality of the People's Palace and the Praça da Revolução, urban simulations of the two areas analysed are presented, as it will be the urban and architectural design projects that will provide the final solution.

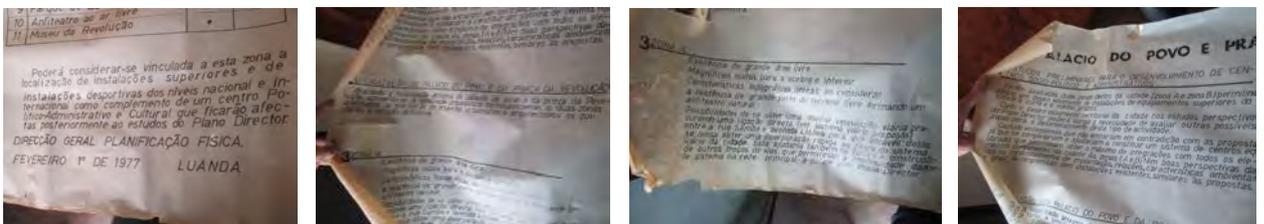


Fig. 120 – 'People's Palace and Praça da Revolução – Preliminary Studies for the Development of Socio-Political and Administrative Centres' Source: INOT - *Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território* archive in Luanda, signed by *Direção Geral de Planificação Física*. Courtesy: Ricardo Cardoso
Document dated 1st February 1977, evaluating two possible areas where the project could be implemented. INOT - *Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território* archive in Luanda, signed by *Direção Geral de Planificação Física*.

1 The document is held at the INOT - *Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território* archive in Luanda, signed by *Direção Geral de Planificação Física*, and was kindly shared by researcher Ricardo Cardoso. These are rare documents pertaining to the original Mausoleum project. Archives and architectural material from the period of the Cuban/Soviet cooperation in Angola are scarce. In fact, the contents of Soviet archives from 1976-80 are practically unknown. According to Lara Pawson, Moscow generally denies access to the Angola files (Pawson, 2014: 333).

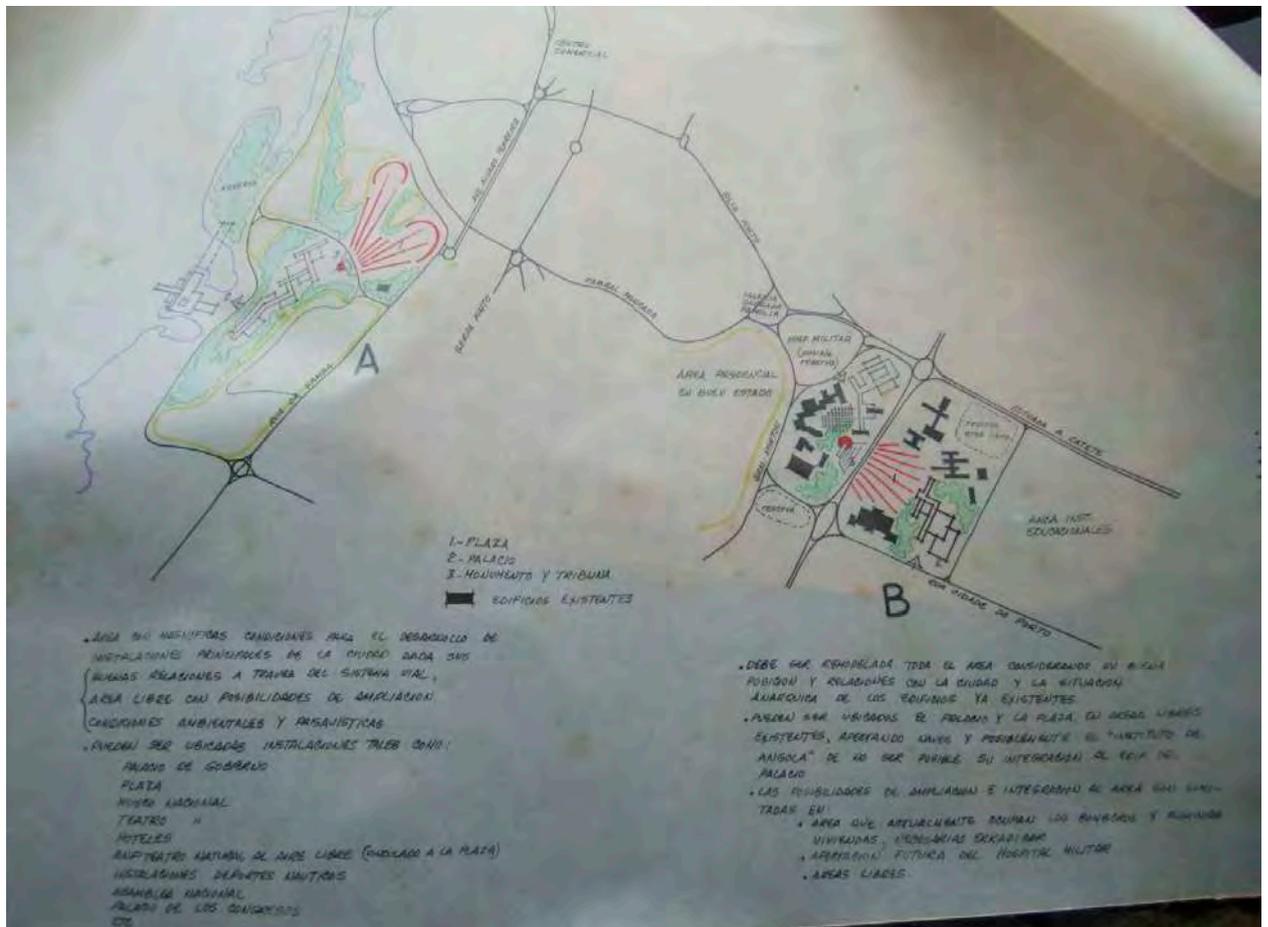


Fig. 121 – Preliminary Studies for the Development of Socio-Political and Administrative Centres – Cuban plans, options A and B
Source: INOT - Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território archive in Luanda, signed by Direcção Geral de Planificação Física.
Courtesy: Ricardo Cardoso

The document was based on a hand-drawn study attached to it, which was hand-written in Spanish (most probably by Cuban architects). It presented the advantages for each of the two pre-selected zones.

Zone A:

Excellent conditions for developing primary installations in the city given its good links to the road system; open space with possibilities for expansion, good environmental conditions and landscaping; could host installations such as: government palace, square, national museum, national theatre, hotels, natural open-air amphitheatre (linked to the square), water sport installations, national assembly, conference centre, etc.

Zone B:

The whole area requires remodelling considering its good position and links to the city, and the anarchic situation of the existing buildings, affecting sheds and possibly the "Angola Institute" if it is not possible for it to be integrated into the palace building; The possibilities for expansion and integration of the area are limited to:

- the area currently occupied by the fire station and some houses, which must be removed;
- future impact of the military hospital;
- open spaces.

The chosen solution was zone A, the one closest to the presidential palace. This option would be developed as five architectural schemes, with different arrangements of the position of the monument and proposed buildings (**Fig. 122**). The governmental studies were based on a “preliminary analysis” developed by Cuban architects, as the site plan with captions written in Spanish demonstrates. It includes possibilities for the development of each option, the relationship between the two zones and the rest of the city, and possible buildings that would form the complex. The Cuban study considered Zone A to be a “magnificent” solution. Zone B was dismissed in part because its built context would require a larger intervention (INOT, 1977):

The whole area must be remodelled considering its strong position and relationship with the city, and the anarchic situation of the existing buildings; (...) The possibilities for expansion and integration of the area are limited as the area is currently occupied by the fire station and some residences, which would need to be demolished.

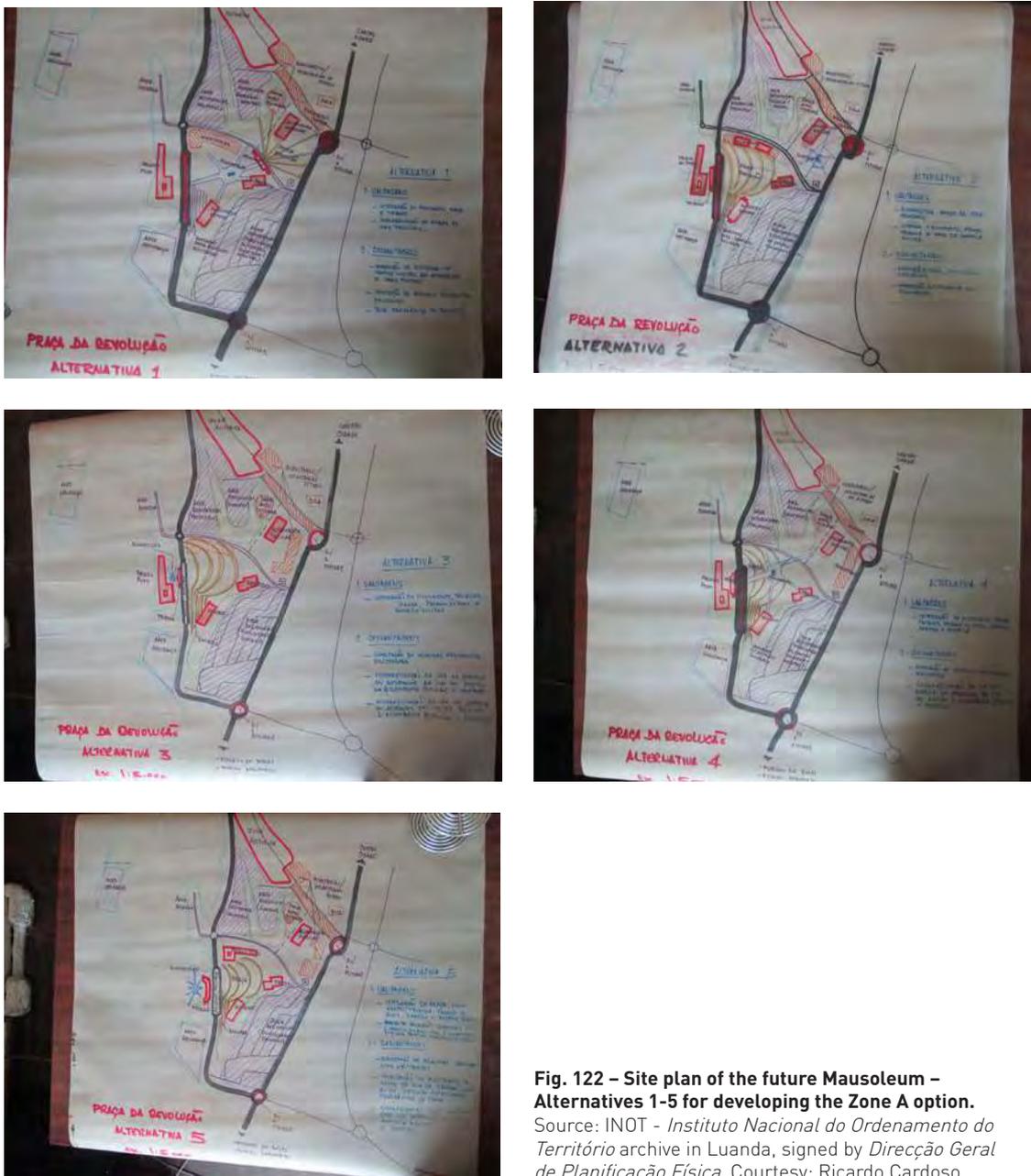


Fig. 122 – Site plan of the future Mausoleum – Alternatives 1-5 for developing the Zone A option.
 Source: INOT - Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território archive in Luanda, signed by Direcção Geral de Planificação Física. Courtesy: Ricardo Cardoso

It is clear that the 'anarchic' constructions limited, or influenced, the government's regeneration plans. It is also evident that the political and military partnership between the Angolan and Cuban governments extended as far as the planning of the city. Despite the plans to reconfigure the political-administrative centre, the post-independence years in Angola were marked by internal conflict. In 1979, Agostinho Neto's health deteriorated.² On 10th September 1979, Angola's first president died in Moscow. His rule had lasted only four years (1975-9). On Monday 17th September 1979, on what would have been his 57th birthday, Neto's funeral was held in Luanda.³

The MPLA announced that the body of their *Herói Nacional* (National Hero) was to be preserved in a Mausoleum. This would become the centrepiece of the 'Revolution Square' already planned in 1977. The monument would be built in a slightly different position from the Zone A presented above. A drawing dated 11th October 1979, just 3 weeks after Neto's funeral, indicated that the Revolution Square would be erected on the site of the Santa Bárbara hill (**Fig. 123**). This decision allowed the political-administrative centre to be extended to include the Mausoleum.⁴

Construction of the Mausoleum began in September 1982, but took three decades to complete, mainly due to the civil war afflicting the country (**Fig. 124 - 125**).⁵ With the war and the Soviet and Cuban retreat in 1991, the Mausoleum's construction was suspended, or at least slowed, throughout the following years.⁶ In light of these political changes, the project was reviewed and modified. The Mausoleum was eventually built with a number of significant changes to the original design, which merit further interpretation and analysis (**Fig. 126**). The original name of the monument was *Mausoléu - Praça da Revolução* (Mausoleum – Revolution Square).⁷ The complex lost its *praça* (square), and with it its status as an open public place. It became a high security complex enclosed by tall railings, gates and 24 hour

2 The book *The Foreign Policy of the GDR in Africa* dedicates a sub-chapter to 'The Importance of 1979', in which Angola assumes a central role (Winrow, 1990: 113-120).

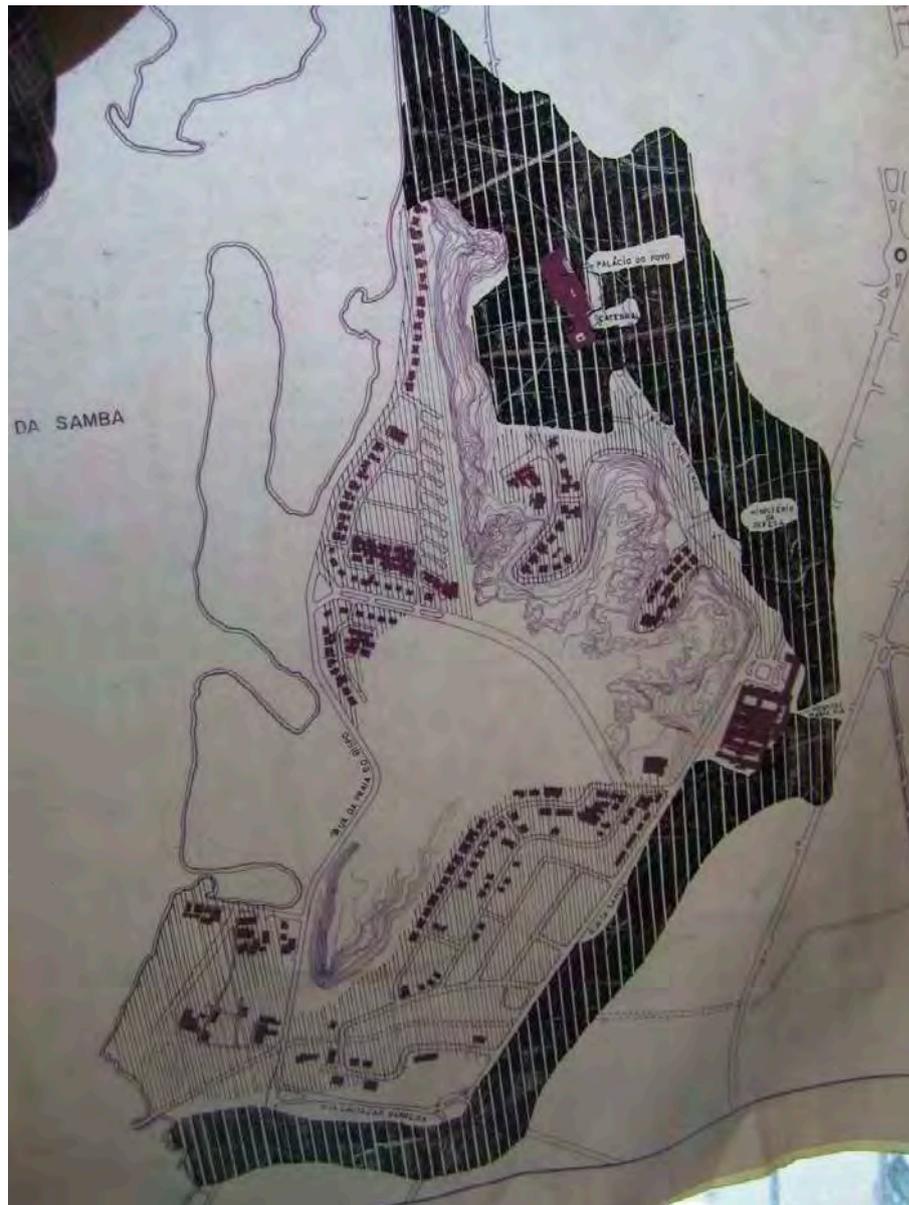
3 José Eduardo dos Santos, an engineer in the petroleum industry trained in the Soviet Union, was nominated his successor, becoming the second president in Angola's history (he has remained in power ever since). Dos Santos moved to the *Alta* and renamed the People's Palace the Presidential Palace. He has lived there for 37 years, and counting.

4 The area had already begun to be levelled a few years previously, but the late colonial masterplan (see Chapter 3) had been halted.

5 There are several reasons for this delay, which should be contextualised politically. After the end of the Cold War (1989), the MPLA began to supply oil internationally to countries previously considered enemies. First the Soviet and then the Cuban contingents (which were responsible for building the Mausoleum, among many other projects in the city) left Luanda. On 1st July 1991, 1 million people bade farewell to the last Cuban troops leaving the country as a consequence of the collapse of the Soviet Union, yet some Cuban deserters stayed in Angola (for a fictional, yet vivid, description of the period during the construction of the Mausoleum, and life in the surrounding Praia do Bispo, see Ondjaki's *Avó Dezanove e o Segredo do Soviético*). Internally, following lengthy negotiations, the opposing parties in Angola were able to reach a Peace Agreement in 1991. The Bicesse peace accord was signed by the leaders of MPLA and UNITA on 31st May 1991 (the third political and military force, FNLA, had previously been dismantled). According to Birmingham, from May 1991 to September 1992 Angola witnessed "the most spectacular period of optimism and freedom" (Birmingham, 2002: 171). However, the subsequent election process left UNITA dissatisfied, and the conflict re-ignited in 1992 with even greater brutality.

6 The monument, re-baptised the Dr Agostinho Neto Memorial, was officially inaugurated on 17th September 2012, 30 years after the groundbreaking ceremony.

7 The official title is now *Memorial Dr Agostinho Neto* (Dr Agostinho Neto Memorial), but Mausoleum remains the popular name of this complex.



DIRECÇÃO NACIONAL DE PLANIFICAÇÃO FÍSICA DEPARTAMENTO NACIONAL DE PLANIFICAÇÃO URBANA					
ASPECTO: PRAÇA DA REVOLUÇÃO					RE
CONTÉM: DELIMITAÇÃO					DATA: 11/10/79
LUANDA	DESENHOU: M. G. G. G.	PROJECTOU:	VERIFICOU:	APROVOU:	ESCALA: 1:5000 CODIFICAÇÃO:

Fig. 123 – Plan dated 11th October 1979, with a void representing the Santa Barbara hill where the Mausoleum would be built. Source: INOT - *Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território* archive in Luanda, signed by *Direcção Geral de Planificação Física*. Courtesy: Ricardo Cardoso



Fig. 124 – Agostinho Neto Mausoleum - original project Courtesy: Lino Damião

The project for the Mausoleum complex consists of a central block with a tower 116 metres high, which became commonly known as the *foguetão* (the rocket), a reference point visible from several areas in the city. This is the original text published in a pamphlet distributed at the ground-breaking ceremony for the Mausoleum (translated by the author):

MONUMENT - MAUSOLEUM - PROTEST SQUARE DETAILS

The Revolution Plaza project has been developed as part of the 'City of Luanda Preliminary Plan'. The area is to be levelled into a series of terraces, descending towards the sea. The central section of the assimilated area, 25 hectares in size, will feature the Mausoleum – Tribunes – Monument – Protest Square Complex, and the new National Political-Administrative Centre will be built on the ample surrounding area, comprising the Presidential Palace, the M.P.L.A. – P.T. [Partido do Trabalho - Labour Party] headquarters, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Permanent Commission of the People's Assembly, along with other governmental institutions. This entire area, including a number of regenerated residential areas, will be set in the configuration of an amphitheatre surrounding the monument's majestic vertical element which will function as the centrepiece of the entire urban aggregate. The area in front of the Mausoleum complex will contain a 1500m long parade area, as well as the Protest Square. The paved parade area, 30m wide, is intended for the circulation of military parades and for marchers on mass organisations or the People in general, and will be oriented north to south. The Protest Square, 650m x 250m in size, will have capacity for approximately 280,000 people. The development of parking spaces for public and individual modes of transport, as well as pedestrian access for local inhabitants, is planned. One of the Square's most notable components will be its clock tower, with four clock faces facing the four cardinal points; its time signals displaying the official time in the People's Republic of Angola, and prompting changes of the guard. The project includes the Square's illumination from eight spotlights set within it. The bright illumination of the monument and of other structures within the square, as well as of the surrounding area, will produce a magnificent nocturnal effect. Together, the Monument, Mausoleum and Tribunes will constitute a single edified body, a vertical spectacle crowned by the victorious banners of the Angolan Revolution. This vertical structure will hold within its base the special installations in which the Eternal Guide of the Angolan Revolution, Founder of the Nation and of the M.P.L.A. – Labour Party, Comrade President Dr António Agostinho Neto will rest for all eternity. In the verticality inherent to their development and structure, the five support bases bearing the banners of victory will symbolise the Angolan people's fight for liberation. The Monument, standing at a height of approximately 116m, is to be erected with a metallic structure at its core, covered in polished granite slabs. The Mausoleum itself will occupy the base of the edified body of buildings, and the mortal remains of the Immortal Guide will lie in a special sarcophagus directly beneath the dome of the funereal room. Public access to the sarcophagus is to proceed through the central doors, under the vigilance of the guard of honour, with visitors circulating through the gallery as they gradually adjust to the funereal room's temperature and lighting. Once inside this softly-lit room, visitors will collectively circle the sarcophagus, lit by a strong, special light. Visits by Official Delegations are to proceed through the building's eastern entrance. Further to visiting the funereal room, visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy an exhibition dedicated to the life and works of the Immortal Guide Comrade President Dr António Agostinho Neto. This exhibition is to be held in a circular hall, illuminated by stained glass windows that will depict, through their monumental artwork, the life stages of the First President of the Angolan Nation. The edified body will also comprise tribunes, intended for the Presidency of the Republic, Party and State Leadership, as well as for the diplomatic corps accredited to the Nation and its guests, facing the grand Protest Square. Outside the monument, on its eastern side, the Memorial Garden, in the form of an amphitheatre connecting the Monument to the buildings that house the Political-Governmental Centre, will be dedicated to the national heroes



Fig. 125 – Agostinho Neto Mausoleum - under construction

Unknow author

The dismantlement of the Santa Barbara hill is visible.



Fig. 126 – Agostinho Neto Mausoleum - built version © Paulo Moreira, 17/9/2010

The Mausoleum complex currently occupies an area of 18 hectares, less than the 25 hectares announced in the original version. This could be viewed as a rather irrelevant change, if the whole concept of this symbolic monument had not been significantly altered between its original conception (1980s) and final execution (2012). The project description of the built version, published just after the opening ceremony (17/9/2012), read as follows:

“Two wings emanate from this central body, each one over 60 metres in length. The central block comprises the sarcophagus, museum, gallery, function rooms, offices, library, multimedia library, video library, archive, and the outward-facing presidential platform. In the left wing there is an exhibition room, workshops (for crafts and printing), and facilities such as a cafeteria and toilets. The right wing has a multi-purpose hall, rooms for internet use, training and conferences, and an outward-facing platform. Outside, the Mausoleum (or Memorial, as it became commonly known) has a walkway for processions, which is around 500m long, facing a platform with a symbolic 1979 stalls. Completing the complex, there are garden areas and a car park for over 300 vehicles.” (Angop, date)

It is important to note that, despite the Mausoleum’s symbolic and historical relevance, Angolan architects often dismiss, or diminish, its architectural quality. A distinguished Luandan architect told me not to be impressed by this majestic architectural project. Yet the same architects often have a completely different reaction to the modernist buildings and monuments of Portuguese origin. I noticed that, generally, the architecture and urbanism of the post-independence period has not sparked the same interest among Angolan architects as colonial-era architecture.

armed guards.⁸ The most significant change in relation to the original description, however, is the removal of *'Revolução'*, the complex's classification as a protest square for 280,000 people in "mass organisations or the People in general" (pamphlet, c.1982). The Protest Square plans were abolished when the compound's fence was extended all the way to the edge of the Avenida Dr Agostinho Neto.⁹

The construction of the Mausoleum deeply impacted upon the redevelopment of the surrounding areas, including the formation of Chicala 2 (**Fig. 127-128**). As construction began, the earth removed from the Morro de Santa Bárbara was displaced to Praia do Sol, the natural sandbank that had started to form by the coast, opposite insular Chicala (Carvalho, 1989; Mingas, 2012; Ondjaki, 2009; Pepetela, 1990).¹⁰ The landfill began to raise the surface of the northern side of the natural sandbank which, at that point, was punctuated by some wooden houses inhabited by fishing families (**Fig. 129-132**).¹¹



Fig. 127 – Plan showing the area of the Mausoleum, 1989
Courtesy: Iperforma

Fig. 128 – Plan showing the area of Chicala, 1989
Courtesy: Iperforma

8 Despite this, the complex does offer a programme of public events and ceremonies.

9 The company Dar Al-Handasah, which would also become responsible for the SODIMO masterplan, was commissioned to redesign the Mausoleum complex and recommence its construction. Opposite the main gate, a semi-circular area would soon be occupied by thousands of families, in what became known as the Favela settlement. Favela was evicted and dismantled in late 2011 (see Chapter 5). For a more in-depth discussion of the meaning of the Protest Square, see Chapter 6.

10 The testimonies I gathered from Chicala 2's older residents say that the earth removed from the Mausoleum building site was transported in lorries driven by "the Cubans". Angolan writer Ondjaki describes the period of the construction of the Mausoleum in the book *Avó Dezanove e o Segredo do Soviético*, which offers a detailed account of the transformation of the area in the 1980s.

11 There are a number of different explanations for the existence of this landfill. Most people say that it was made by *Hidroportos*, a company likely to have derived from *Hidroprojectos*, founded in 1976 to protect Luanda's coast from the *kalembas* [ocean storms]. Some testimonies recall that the landfill used not only soil from the Morro de Santa Bárbara, but also debris from building sites around the city. It was not possible to confirm this fact.



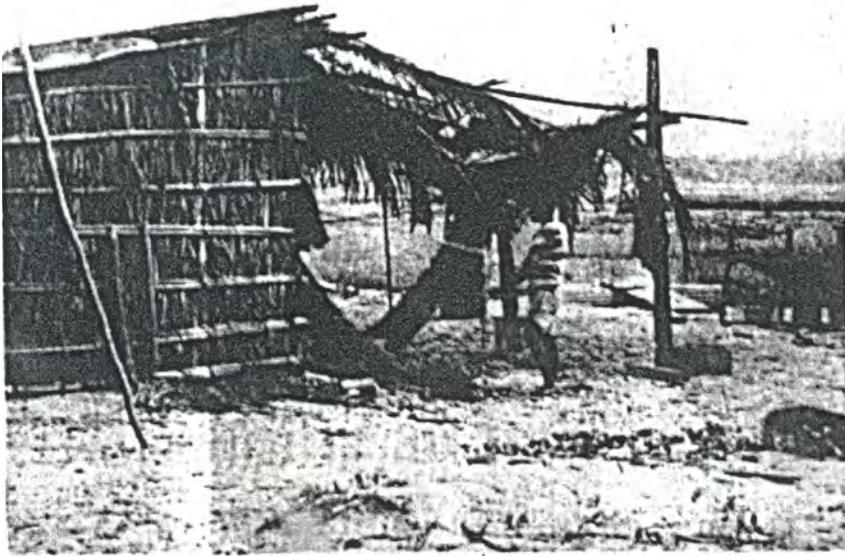
Fig. 129 – View of Chicala and surroundings, 1975. © Vasco Costa Antunes, 1975

Source: *Revista Cajú* 445, 20/11/2015.

The earth removed from Santa Barbara hill displaced to the ocean, next to the natural sandbank that had begun to form by the coast.



Fig. 130 – Current view of Chicala and surroundings, with the Mausoleum on the background. © Paulo Moreira, 2010



A OBJECTIVA DE PAULINO DAMIÃO CAPTOU este bonito postal da Ilha de Luanda ao pôr do Sol. O pescador conserta a sua rede para mais logo lançá-la ao mar à procura daquilo que tem como o seu "ganha pão": o peixe, que ali mesmo é vendido ao preço que der e vier.

Fig. 131 – Ilha de Luanda / Chicala – fisherman hut, *Jornal de Angola*, 1982. *Jornal de Angola*, 1982. © Paulino Damião



Fig. 132 – Photo showing the development of Chicala 2 as a neighbourhood, 1984. © Björn Roos Source: brbild.se
 The site became dotted with wooden houses painted in different colours. Only one or two of the original houses remain in the neighbourhood.

At this time, civil war continued to rage in the country. In 1992, after a failed peace accord and electoral process, the civil war erupted with even greater brutality than in the previous phase (1975-1991). Hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people arrived in Luanda, fleeing the conflict which was severely affecting other provinces in the country.¹² As the population grew in Chicala 2, the settlement was granted the status of ‘neighbourhood’ – at that time, attached to the Ilha jurisdiction.¹³ Our fieldwork showed that most of Chicala’s population settled in the neighbourhood in the period between 1991 and 2002 (the end of the civil war). Contrary to the widespread perception that residents occupied the site as soon as they arrived in the capital, coming directly from the provinces to escape the war, site surveys show that they did not settle in this neighbourhood immediately upon arrival in Luanda. On-site surveys show that 75% of the population lived in other parts of the city before moving to Chicala (half of whom took over 11 years to move there) **(Fig. 133 – 136)**.

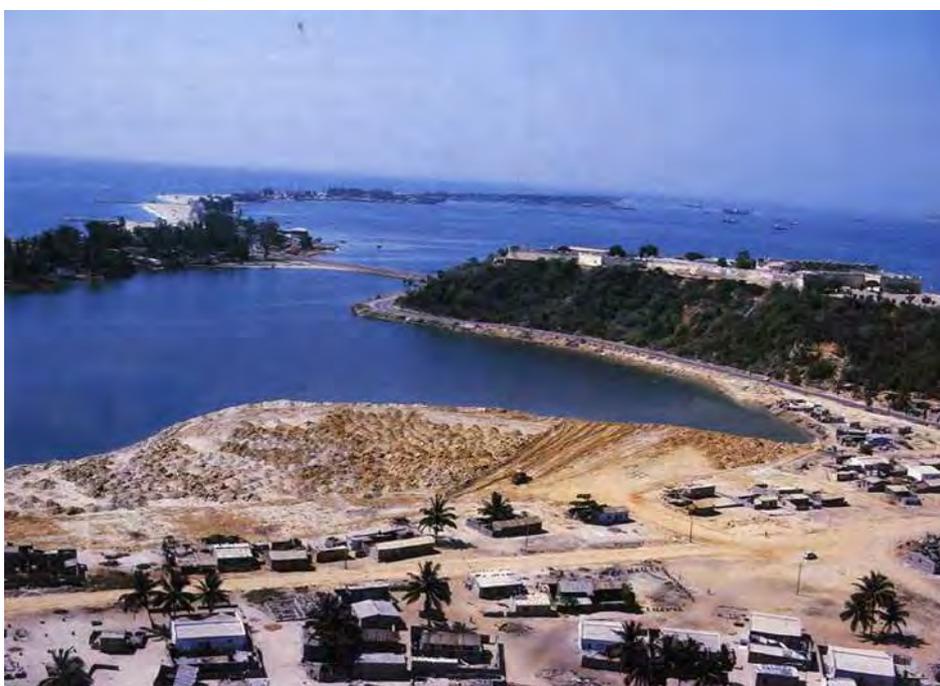


Fig. 133 – Chicala 2 – Landfill with earth from the Mausoleum building site, 1990.

Source: Pepetela, *Luandando*, p.15

By the time of the Mausoleum’s construction, the Ilha coastal protection works (described in Chapter 1) began to be implemented by Hidroportos. The coastal protection plan was most probably behind the landfill of what would later become Chicala 2, with earth removed from the Mausoleum building site (the former Santa Bárbara hill). The landfill upon which Chicala 2 was established did not come about entirely peacefully. In a conversation in May 2012 with an upper-class Luandan citizen who attended the beach in this area, he recalled watching the nearby residents complaining on the television news. He said that the residents who lived on the slope of the neighbouring Morro de São Miguel and Praia do Bispo complained about the landfill process, saying that the displacement of earth there “was a mistake”, assuring that “the land would be occupied illegally” (interview, 2012). As predicted, many people settled on this vacant land during the civil war years, and it began to expand and densify. Given its unplanned nature, located where previously there was only sea, the site initially had no jurisdiction or official status. Due to its proximity to Chicala on the Ilha side, the area became popularly known as Chicala 2.

12 Many sought refuge in neighbouring countries, particularly in the Belgian Congo, producing a new generation of Angolans born in western Zaire (Birmingham, 2002: 156).

13 Initially, Chicala 2 was attached to the Ilha jurisdiction. In 1998, it became part of the Kinanga commune, as part of the mainland. The change took place for administrative reasons, as authorities sought an effective way of managing Luanda’s neighbourhoods (Moreira et al, 2014: 25-26). The Kinanga commune has remained stable since then, but the municipality of Ingombota to which it belongs has now become a district. The area has been quite volatile not only geographically, but also in jurisdictional terms.



Quadro 1 / Table 1
Provincias de origem - Chicala 1
Provinces of origin - Chicala 1

Luanda	36,6%
Kwanza-Sul	14,1%
Zaire	12,7%
Uíge	8,5%
Bengo	5,6%
Bié	5,6%
São Tomé e Príncipe	4,2%
Benguela	2,8%
Huambo	2,8%
Kwanza-Norte	1,4%
Cabinda	1,4%
Luanda-Norte	1,4%
Portugal	1,4%
Cabo Verde	1,4%

71 respostas / responses

Quadro 2 / Table 2
Provincias de origem - Chicala 2
Provinces of origin - Chicala 2

Uíge	32,1%
Luanda	19,8%
Zaire	10,4%
Kwanza-Norte	6,6%
Kwanza-Sul	6,6%
Bengo	5,7%
Benguela	4,7%
Malange	3,8%
Huambo	3,8%
R.D. do Congo	1,9%
Cabinda	1,9%
Huíla	0,9%
Moxico	0,9%
São Tomé e Príncipe	0,9%

106 respostas / responses

Quadro 3 / Table 3
Provincias de origem - Chicala 3
Provinces of origin - Chicala 3

Uíge	55,9%
Luanda	13,6%
Kwanza-Norte	8,5%
Zaire	5,1%
Kwanza-Sul	3,4%
Malange	3,4%
Bié	3,4%
Bengo	1,7%
Benguela	1,7%
Huambo	1,7%
R.D. do Congo	1,7%

59 respostas / responses

Fig. 134 – Table showing areas of Luanda formerly inhabited by Chicala 1 residents © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Rural-urban migration flows were not the main driver of the neighbourhood's post-conflict densification. Of the 28% of residents who have settled in Chicala since 2002, two-thirds came from other parts of Luanda. Site surveys conducted in Chicala 1 reveal that almost half of the recent arrivals were displaced from other areas within Ingombota (central district), most probably due to the rising number of evictions and/or the high prices in the city centre.



Quadro 4 / Table 4
Zonas de Luanda de onde os residentes da Chicala 1 se mudaram
Areas of Luanda formerly inhabited by the residents of Chicala 1

Districto / District	Zona / Zone		
	Maculusso	1	3%
	Coqueiros	3	10%
	Mutamba	2	6%
Ingombora	Rainha Ginga	1	3%
	Baleizão	1	3%
	Praia do Bispo	1	3%
	Ilha do Cabo	4	13%
Sambizanga	Sambizanga	3	10%
	São Paulo	1	3%
Samba	Bairro Azul	1	3%
	Samba	2	6%
	Cázenga	1	3%
Cazenga	Haji-Ya-Henda	1	3%
	Graude	1	3%
Provincias	Uíge	2	6%
	Zaire	1	3%
Maianga	Prenda	2	6%
	Prenda	2	6%
Chicala	Chicala	2	6%
Rangel	Congolenses	1	3%
Cacuaco	Cacuaco	1	3%

Fig. 135 – Table showing residents' regions of origin © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Site surveys conducted in 2011 and 2012 show that every region in Angola is represented in this confined neighbourhood, with people from the northern region (particularly Uíge province) particularly numerous. It is common for there to be a predominant region of origin among the populations of Luanda's *musseques*, due to the fact that people tend to settle where they have family ties.



Fig. 136 – Naming of Chicala’s streets. © Paulo Moreira, 2015 Source: *Observatório da Chicala* archive

The diversity of the places of origin of Chicala’s residents is visible in the naming of the neighbourhood’s streets and alleys. Important dates or regions of Angola metaphorically represent the whole country and its history within the neighbourhood’s bounds. This contributes to creating a sense of place and history. Most names were given by a committee comprising some of the oldest residents, but there are exceptions. Certain sub-areas are named according to their ethnic or social characteristics. For example, Rua Kuando Kubango features both a ‘Con-go’ and a ‘Jamaica’ sector, the first thus named due to its high concentration of Congolese inhabitants and the second, according to some people, is known as an area where youths meet to smoke *liamba* (marijuana), conferring it not only a particular smell, but also a reputation for being a ‘dangerous place’ (depending on the time of day/night). Some areas are named according to the individual interests of influential residents. For instance, the area known as ‘Noézia’ was named after one of the resident’s daughters.

In 1992, perhaps yielding to the promise of profit from the construction and recreational potential of the Ilha de Luanda, or aware of the rapid development of the Chicala site and of other parts of the Ilha, the Government developed a masterplan for its redevelopment.¹⁴ The original design package (drawn in ink) included a side page with a hand-drawn plan for Chicala (**Fig. 137**). The arrangement was aimed at consolidating the character of a site connected historically and culturally to the ocean.

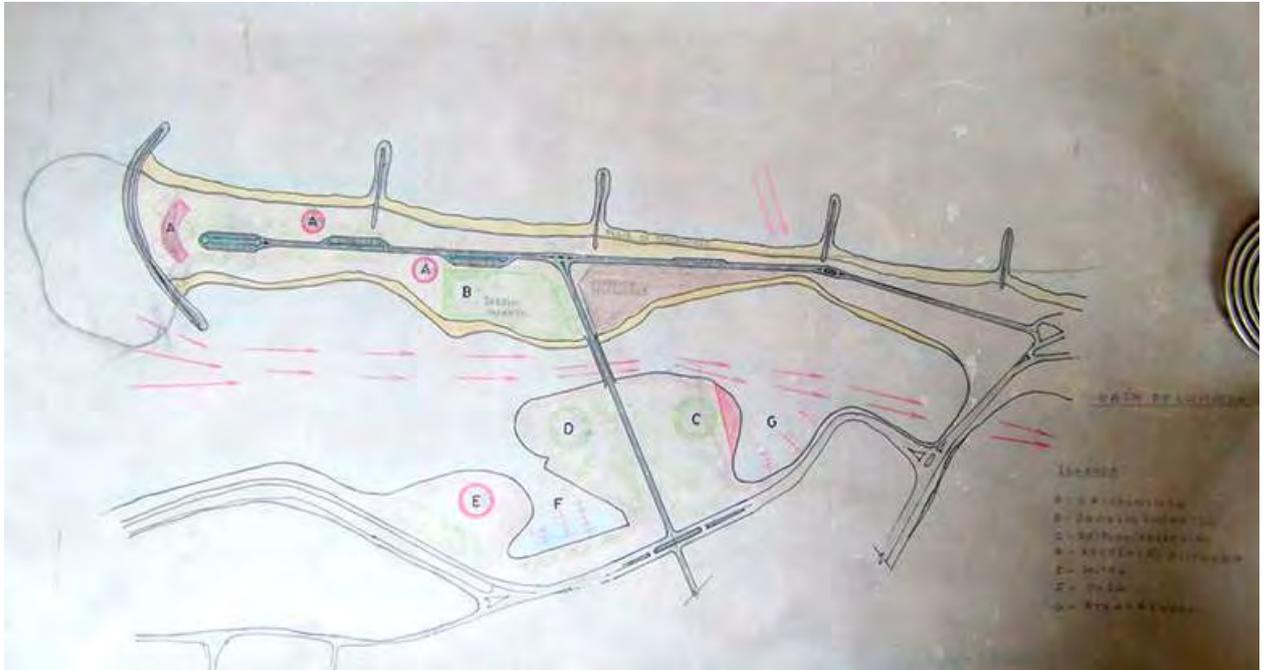


Fig. 137 – Government plan to redevelop Chicala, 1992. INOT - Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território archive, Luanda.
 INOT - Instituto Nacional do Ordenamento do Território archive, Luanda. Courtesy: Ricardo Cardoso
 The 1992 plan to redevelop Chicala included a revision of the 1983 coastal protection plan, proposing the construction of 5 spurs and sand landfills to protect the shoreline from the *kalembas*. It also included the urbanisation of both sides of Chicala (1 and 2), proposing the creation of recreational areas (restaurants, a kindergarten, sports facilities, nightlife venues, hotels, a pier) and “fishermen’s housing”. The plan included a bridge connecting Chicala 1 and 2, in continuation of Chicala 2’s main street (which became known as Rua da Pracinha). The implementation of this plan would have allowed Chicala to develop gradually over time and to connect more fluidly with the city centre (to the east via Rua José Pedro Tuca and to the north via the Ilha).

The plan to consolidate Chicala may be understood as part of the authorities’ open attitude towards the informal neighbourhoods in the period immediately following independence. This openness is evidenced by several *Jornal de Angola* articles published at the time. The tone of these official newspaper articles differs greatly from the way in which informality has been tackled in Luanda’s recent neoliberal phase. The article ‘Self-building is a solution to the housing problem’, dated 7th July 1982, notes that this is an increasingly widespread phenomenon in the post-independence period, pointing to the activities of a pan-African non-governmental organisation and a Swiss architect (Jacques Vautherin, resident in Luanda) as an example to follow (*Jornal de Angola*, 7/7/1982):

Self-building is the only solution African state coffers have to tackle the enormous housing problem in suburban and rural areas, as the increasingly high costs of imported construction materials leave them few other options.

¹⁴ The original drawing package of the 1992 Ilha masterplan was found in the INOT archive in Luanda by fellow researcher Ricardo Cardoso, who kindly shared the information.

The article acknowledges, however, that this solution could become a business opportunity in the eyes of cement importers and foreign construction companies. According to the *Jornal de Angola*, the idea would be to build popular housing cooperatives in the sites inhabited by the population, "making people responsible for their own social organisation" (*Jornal de Angola*, 7/7/1982) (Fig. 138). The article glorifies the participatory and social ideology underpinning projects of this kind, in comparison with those driven by market and economic incentives. The two authors defend their position (*Jornal de Angola*, 7/7/1982):

"We do not wish to become a construction company and find ourselves obliged to sell the technology we use to companies. That would not only contradict our very aims, but it could also lead to a dangerous normalisation of a construction system that would immediately be imposed on the people: we would thus be back to square one. In the same spirit, we would say 'no, thank you' if we were asked to build a batch of ten thousand residences (...) That is not our goal".



Fig. 138 - 'Self-building is an Appropriate Solution to Resolve the Housing Problem', *Jornal de Angola*, 7/7/1982. The *Jornal de Angola* article praises self-building and the use of local materials:

"Studies on the stabilisation of local materials – earth, clay (...) and others – show that if we add 15 or 20% of cement to these materials, we can produce adobe or bricks and build houses much cheaper than with entirely imported materials. By means of the semi-industrial production of adobe bricks, private companies from France or Brazil, for example (...), propose the construction of thousands of houses: "we will resolve your housing problem at reasonable cost", say these companies to interested governments. With comparable and at times even superior resistance to that of cement, the processed materials preserve great flexibility and plasticity, whether clay, earth or gypsum are used, "allowing the artistic talents of the population to flourish, as they can decorate and improve the houses as they please". Stabilisation of these materials allows the cost of A.D.A.U.A. constructions to be reduced by at least half in comparison to those using cement, which the majority of these countries have to import" (*Jornal de Angola*, 7/7/1982).

The attention devoted by the authorities to Chicala with the 1992 consolidation study, and to informal neighbourhoods in general (as some articles from *Jornal de Angola* suggest), were suddenly forgotten. Informal neighbourhoods became either a matter of indifference (most commonly), or the subject of large-scale, long-term sanitising projects often too ambitious to be implemented. Under these circumstances, the neighbourhood and the city would develop and mature informally (**Fig. 140 - 142**).



The reason behind the formation of this small bay in the Northern edge of Chicala 2 has to do with a drainage outflow connected to the water supply within Nova Marginal (Avenida Agostinho Neto)

The border between Chicala 2 and 3 is defined by the location of a drain providing the source of a canal which prevents the formation of an urban continuum in that area.

Fig. 139 – Territorial Boundaries – Shaping of Chicala 2 and 3.

© Paulo Moreira, 7/8/2011

The territory of Chicala 2 and 3 is bounded by their bordering elements. The physical boundaries have been continuously expanding (or shifting) over time, due to the sites' inner development mechanisms and ongoing external transformations. Boundaries are partially defined by the drainage systems of surrounding areas: their positioning contributes to shaping the edges of the neighbourhood itself.



Fig. 140 - Northern edge of Chicala 2.

© Paulo Moreira, 7/8/2011

At the northern edge of Chicala 2 a small bay has appeared, resisting the continuous informal landfill process which has been expanding the area.



Fig. 141 - Border between Chicala 2 and 3.

© Paulo Moreira, 7/8/2011

The canal bordering Chicala 2 and Chicala 3 flows from an in-situ T-shaped concrete plinth, measuring approximately 8 metres long by 3 metres wide. Local informants confirm that this drainage outflow comes from the Cidade Alta, most probably from the Presidential Palace. The canal is a potential source of disease, yet its waters are used for fishing and washing clothes, particularly by those who lack the financial resources to afford an alternative.



Fig. 142 – The banks of Chicala.

© Paulo Moreira, 12/5/2012

The neighbourhood's banks are covered with all kinds of waste, from construction debris (most commonly) to rusty car frames and even rubbish bags. These elements constitute the common foundations of Chicala's reclaimed land. Waste materials are constantly being pushed to the margins, where land is formed to become the foundations for new buildings.

Services and Infrastructure

Services and infrastructure are key factors mediating the relationship between Chicala and Luanda. The widespread impression that the neighbourhood is isolated from the 'official' city loses weight when the nature of its infrastructure is analysed. Concrete channels exist by which external institutions (electricity, water, etc.) penetrate the civic, political and commercial orders of the neighbourhood. Infrastructure networks simultaneously connect and separate Chicala from Luanda, and as in any other part of the city, services and infrastructure are partially disruptive and improvised. This is one of the ways in which the ambiguous relationship between formal and informal order manifests itself.

Basic domestic electricity infrastructure is quite unstable. Official distribution has been implemented in Chicala 1 since the 1980s, but in Chicala 2 and 3 mains power only arrived in time for the 2008 and 2012 election campaigns respectively (**Fig. 143**). Fieldwork carried out in 2011 and 2012 (4 months before the general elections) demonstrates the way the situation has changed. It proves that upgrading is possible, if only decision-makers take sufficient interest. This was an important moment: it seemed that residents' voting power was able to exert significant influence upon Luandan politics.¹⁵ However, in January 2014, Chicala 3 was destroyed. Over the space of a few days, around 4,000 families were evicted. This took place just under two years after they had benefited from the installation of an electricity supply to their homes, a sort of electoral promise purportedly aiming to improve conditions in the neighbourhood. Prior to the infrastructural upgrade, most of the electricity available came from an assortment of generators and *puxadas* (diverting electricity from an external source – including Chicala 1 and the political-administrative centre – with or without the owner's consent) (**Fig. 144**). As mains power became more widely available, the installation of electrical appliances such as satellite TV, air conditioning, freezers and internet access (surveys in 2012 showed that 42% of houses had pre-paid internet service) became more common. Telephone landlines do not exist, but many Luandans carry two mobile phones, one for each network (Movitel and Unitel). Despite the generalisation of electricity access, domestic generators are a common asset among Angolan families (**Fig. 145**).

¹⁵ On the contrary, interviews carried out at the resettlement colonies of Zango and Panguila show that people lose this influence upon being displaced. This is a highly significant negative aspect of the resettlement policy.



Fig. 143 – Electricity service in Chicala. © Paulo Moreira, 2012
 The neighbourhood's electric power infrastructure includes the EDEL power station in Chicala 2 and the UNITEL communications antenna in Chicala 3. These were implemented within the Chicala area, but were designed to serve the broader surrounding area, in particular the Political-Administrative Centre and SODIMO Phase 1.



Fig. 144 – Neighbours sharing electricity. © Grupo L22, ULA, 8/2011
 When owners consent, the practice of sharing electricity can be a simple way of reducing electricity expenses.



Fig. 145 – Use of generators. © Paulo Moreira, 7/8/11
 Generators run on fuel and produce sounds and vibrations much like a car engine (tyres may be placed under the generator to absorb its vibrations). Most houses with an electricity meter also have a generator for use in case of power cuts (which are frequent, particularly in the evenings of the summer months, when more electronic equipment is used). This is a common practice throughout the city, as all areas are subject to power cuts.

In terms of basic sanitation, existing sewers are often poorly planned, consisting simply of waste expelled from households directly into the ocean, or the use of septic tanks (Fig. 146 - 147).



Fig. 146 – Sanitation in Chicala (borders). © Grupo A32, UAN, 8/2011
Buildings situated on the western (Chicala 2 and 3) or eastern (Chicala 1) borders of Chicala release waste directly into the ocean.



Fig. 147 – Sanitation in Chicala (inner houses). © Paulo Moreira, 18/9/2010
Houses further away from the water make use of septic tanks. Once a septic tank is full, it is sealed with cement and a new septic tank is opened next to it. The tops of both sealed and current septic tanks remain visible in the courtyard (this may create, in some cases, a collection of septic tank tops). In the photo, a group of girls plays on top of a sealed septic tank.

As for clean water services, three main categories summarise the type of access in Chicala: official tap water from the EPAL – *Empresa Pública de Água de Luanda* (Luanda Public Water Company), underground water tanks and above-ground water deposits topped up by non-official providers (with tanks seen as an upgrade from deposits) (Fig. 148 - 150). Water distribution is one of the main activities taking place in Chicala and throughout Luanda (Fig. 151). Service provision may not be entirely ‘formal’ or ‘informal’, but both at the same time: informants explained that during the work undertaken to connect SODIMO’s phase 1 with the bay water system, some residents requested that the technicians working on the route connect their houses or shops to the official water infrastructure. We can conclude that, in these cases, service provision began as an informal ‘business’, before later becoming an official contract with monthly bills.



The most extreme example of ‘official informality’ in water provision can be found in the heart of Chicala 2. Fieldwork carried out in 2011 showed that a nucleus of houses in the area known as Noésia had been provided with piped water. Further investigation in 2013 revealed how this was made possible: the Nova Marginal (Avenida Agostinho Neto) drainage outflow, which has created a small bay on the northern side of Chicala 2, had been used to connect the road’s clean water system to the inner fabric of the neighbourhood through a hidden tube submerged with the help of heavy stones. The system becomes even more surprising when we take into account that some of these houses provide water, in turn, to the entire length of Chicala 2’s main street, thanks to hidden hoses, several hundred metres long, running through the secondary streets and alleys. This system brings high profits: the owner pays a monthly bill of \$20 to EPAL, and fills a neighbour’s 1,000 litre deposit for \$100.

Fig. 148 – Plan of water provision in Chicala. © Paulo Moreira, 2012

Chicala 1 is better served in terms of access to water than the continental side of the neighbourhood. The fact that it is a longer-established settlement partly explains the introduction of basic infrastructure by official service providers. In the mainland section of Chicala, only a very limited number of houses have tap water, most of which are located along the Nova Marginal (Sector Flamingo, Chicala 2 and 3, already demolished).

Conversations with residents show that service provision, like many other areas in Angola, is subject to high degrees of informality (for instance, by paying off official technicians or interfering with neighbours’ connections).

Tank and deposit water is much more expensive than tap water. A study undertaken by DW-Angola in 2009 shows that the value of Luanda’s informal water market is approximately \$250 million per year (Cain, 2011: XX). In 2008, EPAL supplied approximately \$17 million of water, representing less than 10% of the total market. In reality, ‘free water’ only benefits richer residents, who have access to the municipal water network. The *musseque* dwellers pay much more for water than those living in ‘formal’ areas of the city. The latter pay only 30 cents/cubic metre, whereas the former pay up to \$20-30/cubic metre for lower quality water.



Fig. 149 – Water storage in Chicala (deposits). © ULA, 5/2012
 A deposit consists of one (or more) plastic container(s), usually with a capacity of approximately one cubic metre. The deposit is generally placed outdoors, to make refilling easier. It is usually placed above ground level. Sometimes wells are created, although their brackish waters are used only for cleaning purposes.



Fig. 150 – Water storage in Chicala (tank). © Grupo A32, UAN, 8/2011
 A water tank is a reinforced concrete structure, usually built underground so that water is kept cool. It is commonly situated outdoors, although in some cases it may be located indoors. In some cases, when tanks are placed indoors, the overlying room has usually been built after the water tank, rendering it an indoor structure. The deposits and tanks supply smaller containers used for most activities requiring water: cooking, washing, brushing teeth, showering, etc. In most cases, the water in the containers is disinfected with pills. This water is not recommended for drinking, but it is often consumed nonetheless.



Fig. 151 – Water distribution by the *roboteiros*. © Grupo L23, ULA, 8/2011
 Water distribution is carried out by trucks, cars, motorcycles and even on foot: *roboteiros* ('water boys') manoeuvre wheelbarrows adapted to carrying water containers or other goods.

The ambiguity between informal and official infrastructure, between existing and non-existent services, is highlighted by the registration numbers stamped on houses' facades: despite most areas of Chicala 2 and 3 not having access to tap water, by the 2012 election campaign most houses had been labelled with an EPAL sign, an electoral promise that was clearly not intended to materialise (**Fig. 152**). In other words, it was a false promise aiming to ensure that the regime was not voted out of government. The EPAL insignia is significant as it denotes an official connection between the neighbourhood and the infrastructure of Luanda. However, the Sector Flamingo and a large portion of Chicala 2 have since been demolished. These 'people-pleasing' tactics may be seen as creative (and evil) acts. Martin Murray says that in the process of making way for the new, "city officials embrace destruction as a creative act in itself" (2008: 152).



Fig. 152 – EPAL [water service] and EDEL [electricity service] registration numbers. © Kota Cinquenta, 2012

In February 2013, on the occasion of the Carnival parade, two water fountains were installed on the Nova Marginal, opposite Chicala 2 and 3. During the preparation week and the festivities themselves, these two sites provided the local population and visitors with free water. However, as soon as the week of celebration was over, both fountains were dismantled. In this case too, it is clear that even a modest gesture could improve many people's lives. Unfortunately, such gestures are often nothing more than temporary, unfulfilled promises intended to create false expectations (Fig. 153 - 154).



Fig. 153 - Carnival parade - 9/2/2013 © Paulo Moreira
Fig. 154 - Carnival parade - 26/2/2013 © Paulo Moreira

During the Carnival parade, the area unofficially known as 'Chicala 4' (south of Chicala 3) is usually improved with fixed lamp posts and a grid defining plots for temporary restaurants. In 2013, heavy rains eventually forced all the restaurants to leave and a linear assembly of blue tents was improvised along the road. This spirit of improvisation often characterises both official/planned and informal procedures – in this case, in fact, the improvisation contributed to giving the Avenida Agostinho Neto a livelier atmosphere, as bystanders could eat and drink while enjoying the parade closer up. This occurrence, however, produced an awkward situation: a large, landfilled area was left entirely empty, punctuated only by a grid of lonely lamp posts, while the crowded adjacent areas lacked any form of street lighting. On the day after the main Carnival parade, the lamp posts were dismantled until the following year. A similar procedure took place with regard to water provision – during the Carnival days, a public water fountain was installed in Avenida Agostinho Neto, but it was immediately dismantled after the parade ended.

Street and Alley Network

The street and alley network is the principal channel of communication between residents, and between Chicala and Luanda proper. The network can be classified into three main categories: *ruas* (main streets), *becos* (secondary alleys) and *quintais* (private or semi-public courtyards). This definition may not always be apparent in practice, as transitions are often diffuse, unclear or mixed. However, this classification allows several basic characteristics to be recognised: the *ruas* allow vehicular access and are used for both residential and commercial purposes; the *becos* are pedestrianised paths which can be as narrow as 70-100cm, connecting the streets to the inner world of the blocks; and the *quintais*, often shared between a group of houses, form literal 'condominiums'.

In both Chicala 1 and Chicala 2, the main street is where the complex inner network of streets, alleys and sub-areas converge, and the co-existence of the various different pathways is supported by the main streets' capacity to connect them (**Fig. 155 - 161**). The main streets play an important role in the daily functioning of the neighbourhood, on many different levels. At the local level, these streets afford opportunities for sustenance and recognition. Creativity and contemporaneity come into their own: here, despite a lack of infrastructure, personal styles and cultural practices converge, as well as local habits and customs (Robinson, 2006: 86). Chicala's main streets serve as barometers of cosmopolitanism (Robinson, 2006: 86). At the city level, they are the routes taken every day by many of Chicala's residents, on their way to distinct points throughout Luanda. They form the main arteries of connectivity between the neighbourhood and its surroundings.



Fig. 155 – Chicala's main street. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
Location scheme



Fig. 156 – Plan of Chicala’s main street and surroundings. © Paulo Moreira, 2015



Fig. 157 – 3D visualisation of Chicala’s main street and surroundings. © Paulo Moreira / Prompt Collective, 2014



Fig. 158 – 3D visualisation of Chicala’s main street (close-up). © Paulo Moreira / Prompt Collective, 2014



Fig. 159 – *Rua da Pracinha*, Chicala's main street. © Luís Damião and Paulo Moreira, 2012



Fig. 160 – Chicala's main street © Kota Cinquenta, 8/5/2012



Fig. 161 – Chicala's main street © Kota Cinquenta, 8/5/2012

Chicala's main streets are testimony to the reciprocal relationship between Chicala and Luanda. Their history bridges the colonial and postcolonial periods – something which is often ignored. In Chicala 1, the Avenida Massano de Amorim is a unique example in Luanda: it is the only large artery in the city which, following Angola's independence, maintained the name of a former soldier and colonial governor (Jacob, 2011: 79).¹⁶ This fact led researcher Berta Jacob, who studied the toponymy of Luanda in the colonial and postcolonial periods, to question the motives for this failure to reject colonial reminders: "is this a case of ignorance of historical events?" (2011: 79). According to the researcher, this explanation does not seem logical given the policy of removing those names which were most offensive to the sovereignty of the native people (Jacob, 2011: 81). Jacob explains that "such an oversight may be explained by the period of upheaval that marked the country and which did not allow a systematic revision of the toponymy" (2011: 79). This case seems to highlight a degree of absent-mindedness or 'informality'. It is relevant to note that this 'oversight' took place in Chicala, and not in another area of the city, suggesting a certain disinterest in the neighbourhood, which remained on the margins of the toponomical changes which were taking place all over the city.

Rua da Pracinha is Chicala 2's main road. The street's name has a double meaning, as in Angola 'square' also means 'market' (*Pracinha* is a diminutive of square). The concept of 'street-square' or 'street-market' implies the exchange or sale of goods. At the main intersection, there is a bustling open-air market, consisting of dozens of outdoor wooden stalls where all sorts of products are sold (food, drinks, toiletries, electronics, etc.) (Fig. 162 - 165).



Fig. 162 – Mercado da Pracinha (Pracinha market). © Kota Cinquenta, 8/5/2012

16 Upon Angola's independence, the names of Portuguese navigators and heroes ceased to be present in the streets of Luanda. Avenida Massano de Amorim is an exception. Pedro Massano de Amorim was a lieutenant colonel, a veteran of the Mozambique campaigns and a follower of Mouzinho de Albuquerque between 1916 and 1917 (Fonte, 2007: 33. N.20). His military action included putting down the popular uprising in Bailundo in 1902, for which he was decorated with the Order of the Tower and Sword, and, as governor of Angola, he crushed the Seles and Angoche revolt in 1917 (these revolts were motivated by the difficult working conditions imposed upon the natives) (Jacob, 2011: 79). The maps of the city provided by the official body *Instituto de Gestão e Planeamento Urbano de Luanda* (Luanda Institute of Management and Urban Planning) make reference to only two avenues on the Ilha de Luanda: Avenida Massano de Amorim and Avenida Murtala Mohamed.



Fig. 163 – Mercado da Pracinha (Pracinha market). © Kota Cinquenta, 21/5/2012



Fig. 164 – Mercado da Pracinha (Pracinha market). © Kota Cinquenta, 8/5/2012



Fig. 165 – Mercado da Pracinha (Pracinha market).

© Paulo Moreira / Prompt Collective, 2014.

Pracinha Market, at the main intersection in Chicala 2. The street market consists of dozens of wooden shop stalls, the *bancadas*. Although the wooden *bancadas* are somewhat fragile and adaptable, they have become permanent structures, emptied overnight as they await the daily display of all kinds of products (food, drink, hygiene, entertainment, etc.). Interviews with 12 *quitandeiras* (mostly women selling wares at the market) revealed that the food products on sale were purchased at large peripheral open-air markets which grew and developed following the dismantlement of Roque Santeiro in 2010 (e.g. Congolenses, São Paulo, Kikolo, Hoji-Ya-Henda, Kwanzas, Katinton). It is important to note that Roque Santeiro was considered West Africa's largest open-air market, visited by 200,000 people every day. It was dismantled in September 2010, and it remained vacant for almost all of the following 3 years. In 2012, Bento Bento, Luanda's provincial governor, declared that one of his priorities was to eradicate the *quitandeiras* from the streets of Luanda (Angonoticias, 22/10/2012). Many *quitandeiras* continue to suffer mistreatment by the police authorities.

This artery provided the foundations for the urbanisation of Chicala 2. Here too there is a direct relationship with the historic city of colonial origin. In the early 20th century, a new street was built by cutting through São Miguel hill, linking Coqueiros to Praia do Bispo (**Fig. 166 - 167**).¹⁷ Following independence, the street was renamed Rua José Pedro Tuca (Jacob, 2011: 177).¹⁸ Rua da Pracinha became a natural continuation of this artery, along which most residents in Chicala 2 settled and built their houses (**Fig. 168**).

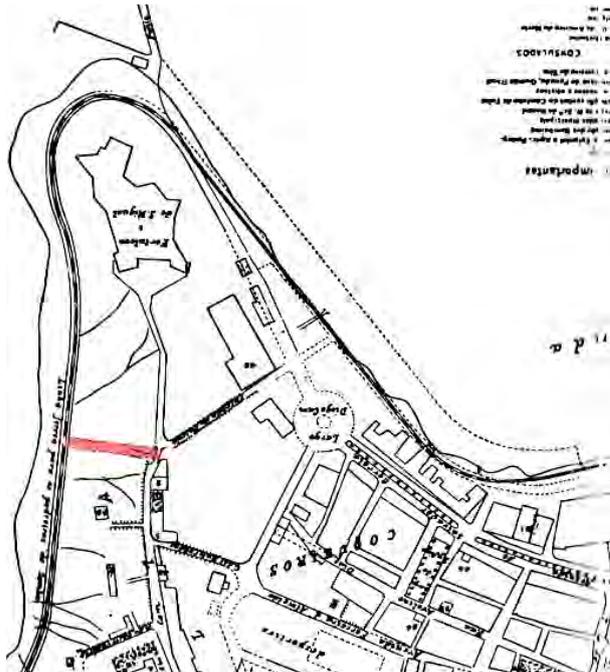


Fig. 166 – Plan of Luanda, 1926. Edited by Paulo Moreira, 2016. Rua D. Francisco Soveral street planned (dotted).

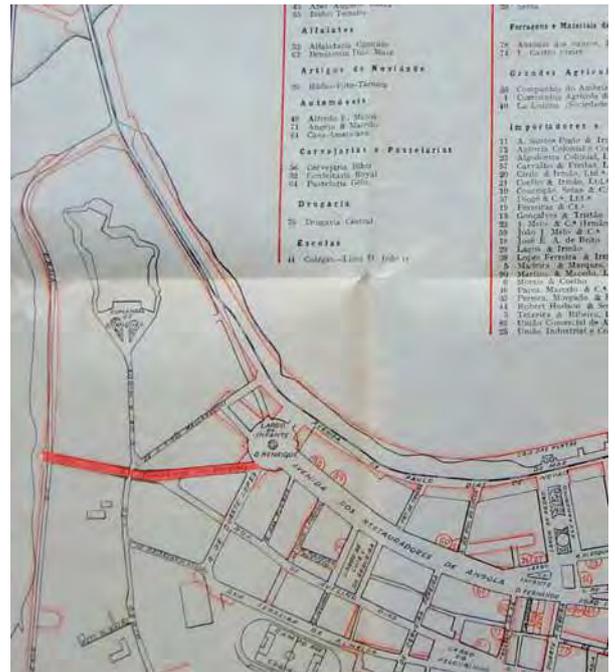


Fig. 167 – Plan of Luanda, 1944. Edited by Paulo Moreira, 2016. Rua D. Francisco Soveral street – built by cutting out the hill.

The centrality of Avenida Massano de Amorim and Rua da Pracinha suggests that much of Luanda's postcolonial urbanism is enacted in the streets. The urban vitality and complex architectural and social networks found in these arteries relate to a type of urban setting that can be found in other arteries in Luanda. There are certainly aspects that distinguish Chicala's main streets from other cases but, generally, there are features that can be considered 'typical' - in fact, they appear to be common and necessary to any human settlement.

17 Originally, the new street was named after D. Francisco Soveral, former bishop and governor of Luanda in the 17th century, who established the Corpo Santo parish in Luanda (Jacob, 2011: 66).

18 José Pedro Tuca was a MPLA soldier.



Fig. 168 – Origins of Chicala 2's main street – continuation of Rua José Pedro Tuca (former D. Francisco Soveral street, renamed after Independence). © Paulo Moreira, 2015

The street was built in the early 20th century in order to curtail the spread of diseases in Coqueiros, but it divided the São Miguel Fortress from the Cidade Alta (uptown) - only much later was a bridge built to connect the fortress to the political-administrative centre. Testimonies recall that the earth removed during the road building operation was used as landfill to connect the mainland to the Ilha, substituting a previously existing wooden bridge (however, archival photos dating from the 1930s still show a wooden bridge connecting the mainland to the Ilha). Years later, this street would be the origin of the Rua da Pracinha, the main street of Chicala 2.

Key Institutions

Chicala's public activity unfolds in many settings that communicate with the street network. The neighbourhood is punctuated by playgrounds, squares, schools, places of worship, shops, restaurants, markets, and so on. These places contribute significantly to reinforcing civic solidarity within the neighbourhood.

The feature which best represents the neighbourhood's multi-faceted urban life is perhaps the proliferation of places of worship associated with a number of different religions (**Fig. 169**).¹⁹

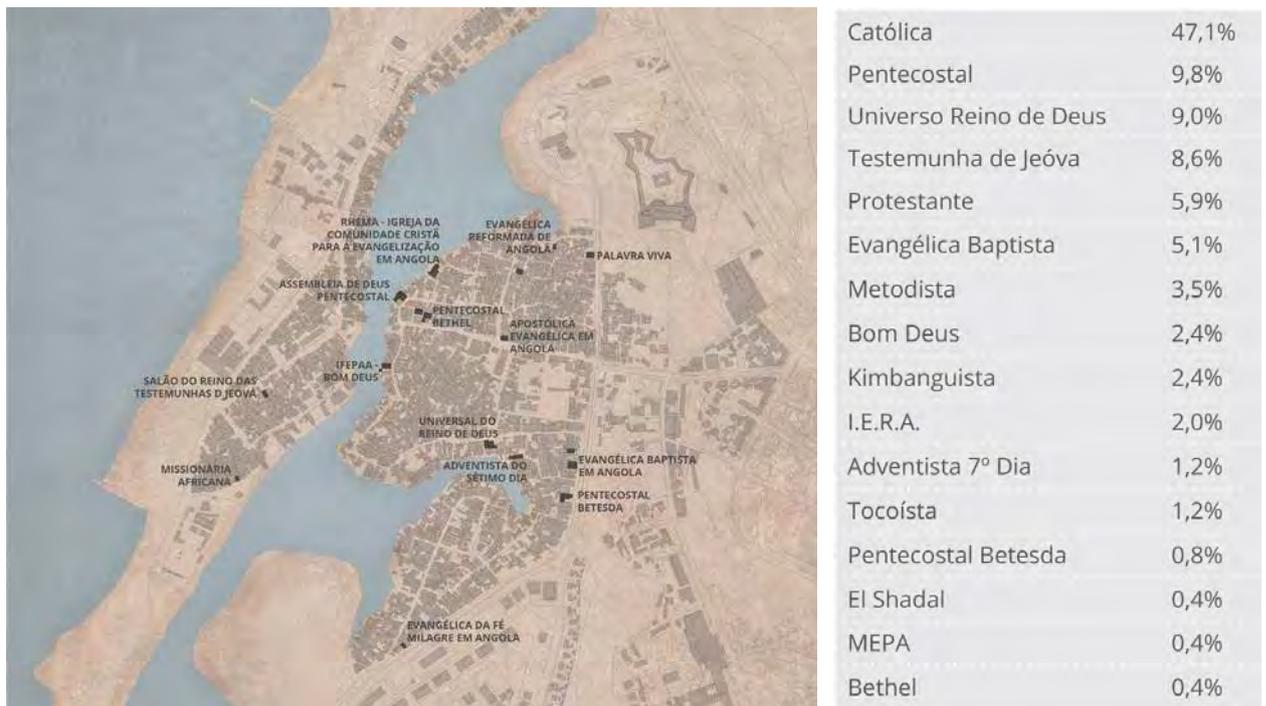


Fig. 169 – Places of worship in Chicala. © William Fernandes, ULA, 20/5/2012

Exchange between 'formal' and 'informal' Luanda is a key feature of local religious practices. Fieldwork carried out in 2011 and 2012 identified 18 places of worship across Chicala and neighbouring Kilombo. The neighbourhood's representative (*Primeiro-Secretário*) confirmed the existence of 36 places of worship in Chicala 2 and 3 alone (worship may also take place in private houses, invisible from the outside). Regardless of the exact figure, these remain high numbers for a relatively confined and apparently socially cohesive urban setting.

Most of Chicala's residents are Catholic (40%), yet there are no Catholic churches in the neighbourhood (Catholic devotees would go to church in the city centre or in Kilombo (already demolished – this helps highlight Chicala's continual dialogue with Luanda). The remaining population holds a wide variety of religious beliefs. In certain cases, religions may have local origins (*Tocoísta*, *Kimbanguista*), but the relationship between people's place of origin and the religion they practise is not necessarily reciprocal. For instance, amongst the population originating from Uíge (the majority of Chicala's population), surveys registered at least 11 different religions. Catholics were found to come from at least 13 different provinces. This may lead us to conclude that many of the residents' religious affiliations are as recent as their arrival in Luanda. For example, the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (IURD) was founded in Brazil in 1977 and has spread to Portuguese-speaking countries, with over 5,000 temples and 13 million devotees. In December 2012, during an overcrowded concentration at the Cidadela stadium in Luanda, 16 devotees were killed. Following the incident, the Angolan government declared the church suspended for a period of 60 days. The suspension was lifted in March 2013.

¹⁹ Places of worship include churches, temples and *salões* belonging to several different religions. The designation is a direct translation of the terminology used by Luanda's municipal planning authority (IPGUL) to refer to religious places (*Lugares de Culto*).

The RHEMA church is the only mother-church in Chicala (**Fig. 170**).²⁰ Over 60% of the 300 devotees who attend the church weekly come from outside the neighbourhood. This demonstrates the mutual dialogue between Chicala and Luanda. The neighbourhood's location not only allows its residents to commute to institutions proliferating in the city centre, but the flux of people also works in the opposite direction. The population is predominantly Catholic (47%), yet there are no Catholic churches in Chicala (there are two colonial churches a short distance away, in Ingombota, and another (adapted church) was located in Kilombo, a neighbouring informal settlement which was demolished in 2014) (**Fig. 171**). Once again, this demonstrates the open relationship between the neighbourhood and its formal and informal surroundings.



Fig. 170 – Rhema Church. © William Fernandes, ULA, 20/5/2012

The Rhema church may be considered an incremental development, just like almost every other building in the area. The church began to operate in the home of the deacon of Chicala 2 in 1996. In 2002, the temple took its current form: a covered space with an altar, seating area and areas for musicians, equipped with a sound system and adorned with painted murals. Construction began as a result of the efforts and donations of the devotees. It was later completed by a Chinese contractor. The following phase would involve increasing car parking capacity and creating a new building to house activities for children and young people. In order to prepare the necessary landfill, debris began to be deposited by the shore with the help of the neighbours (however, due to imminent removal, these plans are suspended).

20 Mother-church is the main temple of a given religion within the city.



Fig. 171 – Places of worship in Ingombota (Luanda city centre). © Paulo Moreira, 2015
Comparison of the plans of places of worship in Chicala and Ingombota suggests that a variety of faiths is common in both formal and informal Luanda. The relationship between the number of places of worship and the area covered is also reciprocal (the plan was drafted thanks to institutional collaboration between The Chicala Observatory and IPGUL – *Instituto de Planeamento e Gestão Urbana de Luanda*).

With regards to educational facilities, there is an evident lack of facilities in the neighbourhood. The disparity in investment between the different sections of Chicala is evident (**Fig. 172**).

Sérgio Mukau Primary School no. 3021 – the first public school to be established in Chicala. Originally, it consisted of 6 classrooms designed and built by the Cubans in 1982-1983. The building was extended and renovated in 2013, with the construction of a second floor containing 6 additional classrooms. The school now has capacity for 420 students (aged 5-15), with 35 per classroom. Children come from both sides of the neighbourhood: field surveys undertaken in 2012 show that 75% of pupils live in Chicala 1, 20% in Chicala 2 and 5% elsewhere.

Sihela nursery school – inaugurated in 2009. Its 200 pupils (aged from 18 months to 5 years old) are supervised by 5 teachers (not Chicala residents). Fieldwork carried out in 2012 showed that 15% of students live in Chicala 1, 15% in Chicala 2 and 70% elsewhere (most children are dropped off and picked up by car). The reason for the predominance of children from other areas of the city is that, much like the neighbouring public institutions, the nursery school has been relocated from a different area (Rua do 1º Congresso do MPLA in Ingombota). Like the primary school, the building represents a significant investment. However, the teachers interviewed complained that the building is not suitable in either functional or climatic terms. For instance, the classrooms have fixed windows (no ventilation) and the air gets extremely hot. As a result, a shed has been built in the courtyard, where most collective activities take place (gymnastics, music, etc.).



Matchey-Malembe School (or Ingombota School no. 03)

The school is also known as 'Kimbango School', due to its early association with the Kimbanguista church. Prior to its foundation in 2005, it was an after-school tutoring centre. In order for it to become an officially recognised school, the owner had to establish a partnership with a local institution. An agreement with the Kimbanguista church was made and the tutoring centre was converted into a school. The project developed rapidly and in 2009 a second floor was built to accommodate increasing numbers of students (the school is attended by 410 1st – 9th graders, who are residents of Chicala and the Ilha).

Imagination Centre (or Ingombota no. 04 Co-Funded School).

The oldest school in Chicala 2. The project began as a charity programme aimed at providing food to disadvantaged children. It was created on the initiative of Mr. D. (a Chicala resident originally from Kuando Kubango province and a former military man), with support from an NGO. In 1993, having understood that offering food was not a solution to the children's problems, Mr. D. decided to open a school. "It provides only relief, not a solution" – he emphasised during an interview in March 2013. The Ministry of Education allowed the project to proceed in Mr. D.'s courtyard, located near Chicala 2's main street. Initially functioning under a fig tree, the school gradually grew and improved. The complex represents an estimated investment of \$200,000 during the 20 years it has been running. Improvements were carried out using Mr. D.'s own money, as well as students' fees.

Fig. 172 – Schools in Chicala © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Chicala 1 boasts a public nursery school (Centro Infantil Sihela, or *Creche* (kindergarten)) and a public primary school (Sérgio Mukau, school no. 3021) (**Fig. 173**). The primary school was the first state school to open in Chicala, originally designed and built by the Cubans in 1982-1983. Children from outside Chicala represent two-thirds of the total number of attendees at the nursery. The predominance of children from other areas of the city is such that the nursery school was relocated in 2009 from a central area in Ingombota. This demonstrates that it is possible to connect the neighbourhood to the city – even with public buildings – and vice-versa. In Chicala 2 and 3, there are no state schools, and the few private ones available are in poor condition. There are, however, two *escolas comparticipadas* (co-funded schools), a programme that distributes official school manuals and offers certificates to students (**Fig. 174 – 175**).²¹ The fact that both schools are co-funded by the State underlines the principle of reciprocity between informal and official Luanda. Furthermore, both institutions are used for more than just learning. Besides the usual sporadic parents’ meetings, both places served as voting stations during the 2008 and 2012 general elections. In 2012, *Centro Imaginação* had so many voters arriving that additional ballot boxes had to be carried to the Hidroportos site a few metres away – curiously, the public company was not the first choice for holding the elections, and was instead overlooked in favour of an ‘informal’ institution.

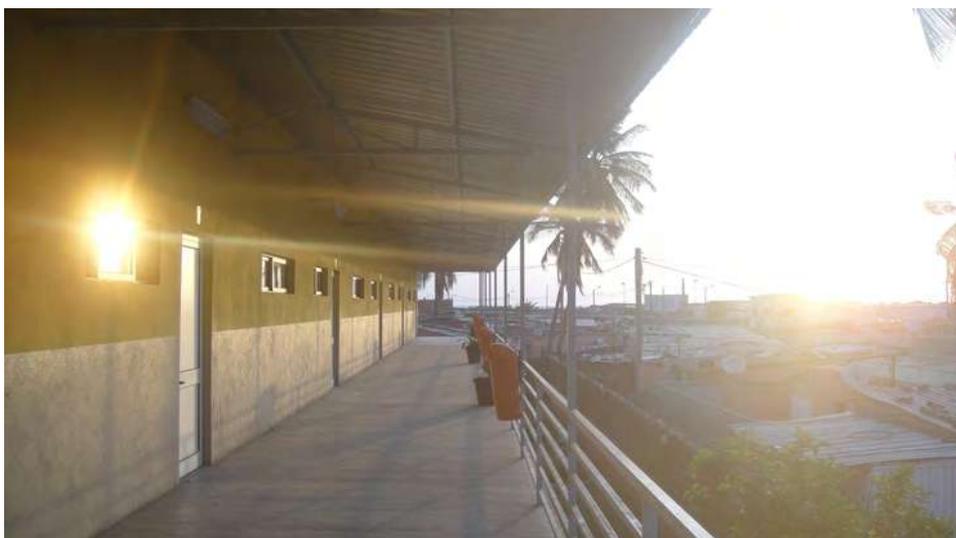


Fig. 173 - Primary school Sérgio Mukau (school no. 3021), Chicala 1. © Paulo Moreira, 10/2/2013
 Students from the Universidade Metodista de Angola encountered several difficulties while carrying out a survey of the school in 2012. Initial attempts to visit the building were constantly barred (refurbishment works were still underway). After some insistence, the school was surveyed and a representative was interviewed. Local informants later explained that a possible reason behind this lack of cooperation was that renovation work was not being carried out in accordance with the design project. The general opinion is that considerable overspending is a common feature in public buildings in Angola.

²¹ The two schools are the *Centro Imaginação* (Imagination Centre, or Ingombota School no. 04) and the Matchey-Malembe school (or Ingombota School no. 03).



Fig. 174 – Centro Imagemão (Imagination Centre (or Ingombota School no. 04)). © Paulo Moreira, 24/5/2012

Up until 2003, the school only taught children at primary level (Years 1 - 4). Since then, it has evolved to include children up to the 9th grade. Each student pays an average of \$10 per month to attend the school. The money is used to maintain and improve the facilities and pay the teachers (local residents, mostly university students themselves). Every year, at Christmas, a group lunch and gifts are offered by the oil company which employs Mr. D (who, meanwhile, has moved to a gated community in Luanda-Sul thanks to his job in the oil sector).



Fig. 175 – Matchey-Malembe school (or Ingombota School no. 03). © Grupo L.2.3, ULA, 11/8/2011

The school is run by 20 staff members, including both teachers and employees. During a conversation in February 2013, the director confessed that "if it wasn't for the threat of eviction, the school could develop even further". The complex includes a corner shop in Avenida Agostinho Neto, which provides extra income to run the school. The shop functions independently, connecting the institution directly to the city. It shows that the functional 'hybridity' and entrepreneurial spirit seen in domestic spaces can be expanded to larger institutions.



Fig. 176 – Playground and football pitch, Chicala 1.

© Willian Fernandes, ULA, 10/8/2011

The playground in Chicala 1 has received considerable investment. It was built in 2009-2010 thanks to an agreement between the local MPLA committee and contractors who settled in the area between 2006 and 2009 (Odebrecht, a Brazilian construction company with major concessions all around the country, set up their base in the area later occupied by the Luanda Provincial Government). In the 2006-2009 period, Odebrecht built a street connecting Chicala to Kilombo, the Ilha's southern limit. With mediation from a not-for-profit organisation, Hope & Space, the project went ahead: authorities and contractors agreed that a relatively modest investment in a playground could have a significant impact on the neighbourhood. With this intervention, not only did children gain a place to play, but new civic, educational and recreational facilities were also created, such as a public water fountain, an arts and crafts centre built from stacking containers led by artist Etona (who owned a smaller studio nearby), and a football pitch. In September 2011, the pitch received authorisation as a site for public demonstrations from the Luanda Provincial Government, along with 16 other locations across the city (see Chapter 6). This particular case helps to clarify the mechanisms underpinning decision-making procedures. It becomes clear that when negotiations involve both local authorities and (the right) external private contractors, an 'informal' project can become official.



Fig. 177 – Chicala 2 playground.

© Willian Fernandes, ULA, 10/8/2011

Central area without any special adaptation or infrastructure, mostly used by children to play football. Before demolitions started, it was the last remaining public, open patch of land in the heart of the neighbourhood (besides the street network). The site's common use derives from an agreement between the residents' representatives and the local authorities. If the neighbourhood had resisted complete demolition, this could have potentially become a hub for activities in Chicala 2, as has occurred with the playground in Chicala 1.

Chicala's service providers show how the site contributes to the city's economic activities. These are representative of an official strategy to condense city-wide services and industries in the area: João Melo's is the city's largest car scrapyards; the National Police car park receives every towed car in Luanda (tow fees average \$800), and the IPGUL (Luanda Institute of Planning and Urban Management) headquarters, as well as other public services, are located in a fenced area on Chicala's western edge. The largest industry operating in Chicala is Hidroportos, occupying extensive sites in Chicala 1 and Chicala 2. Its cement silos are among the site's principal landmarks (**Fig. 178**).



Fig. 178 – Hidroportos. © Grupo A23, UAN, 8/2011

Hidroportos produces 2.4 ton concrete blocks, of the kind used in the coastal protection spurs in Chicala (and the Ilha). The activity involves constant traffic of trucks during daylight hours, making access to Chicala 2 difficult. In late 2012, production was halted due to a machinery malfunction. Work resumed in 2013, and since 2014, the area has been rented to a private cement factory.

Chicala's bustling markets are an example of how trading has become an intrinsic activity in postcolonial Luanda. The many dimensions of consumerism are among the main features of the local urban culture. Trading is distributed throughout Chicala's streets, which are replete with shops selling many different kinds of products. Of the more than 250 building surveys undertaken in 2011 and 2012, only 2% of buildings were found to be purely commercial; 23% combined a shop/service with housing. For this reason, an analysis of Chicala's industries and markets cannot be separated from an interpretation of its residential provision (to be addressed later on in this Chapter).

Commerce is widespread throughout the entire neighbourhood, distributed along the site's main and secondary thoroughways. Often, it consists of outdoor stalls or indoor shops in direct connection with private houses. These represent some of the neighbourhood's primary places for public dialogue and communication, the city's most authentic reason for being (Berman, 1982: 322). Small businesses and services are intertwined with public areas and domestic structures: sales counters, *janela aberta* ('sales windows'), *cantinas* (groceries), cement block mini-factories, beauty parlours – all part of a complex system in which sociability and labour, but also conflict, go hand-in-hand.

In Chicala 2, most shopping activities are concentrated in two areas: *Nova Marginal* (or Avenida Agostinho Neto) and the *Pracinha* (street market in Rua da Pracinha). The shops along the Nova Marginal were demolished in April 2015, whereas the Pracinha, full of outdoor stalls, remains the most prominent market used by local residents and daily commuters (**Fig. 179 - 182**). Merchants at these outdoor stalls usually pay a fixed rent to the adjacent house owner (implying that the area in front of the entrance is considered part of the dwelling), and/or to municipal controllers that visit the market daily. The distinction between legal and illegal selling is not related to the indoor or outdoor location of the activity (it would be expected that an indoor shop would be more official, as opposed to a temporary stall situated outdoors). Just like in many other services across Luanda, the distinction between formal and informal sales may be ambiguous.

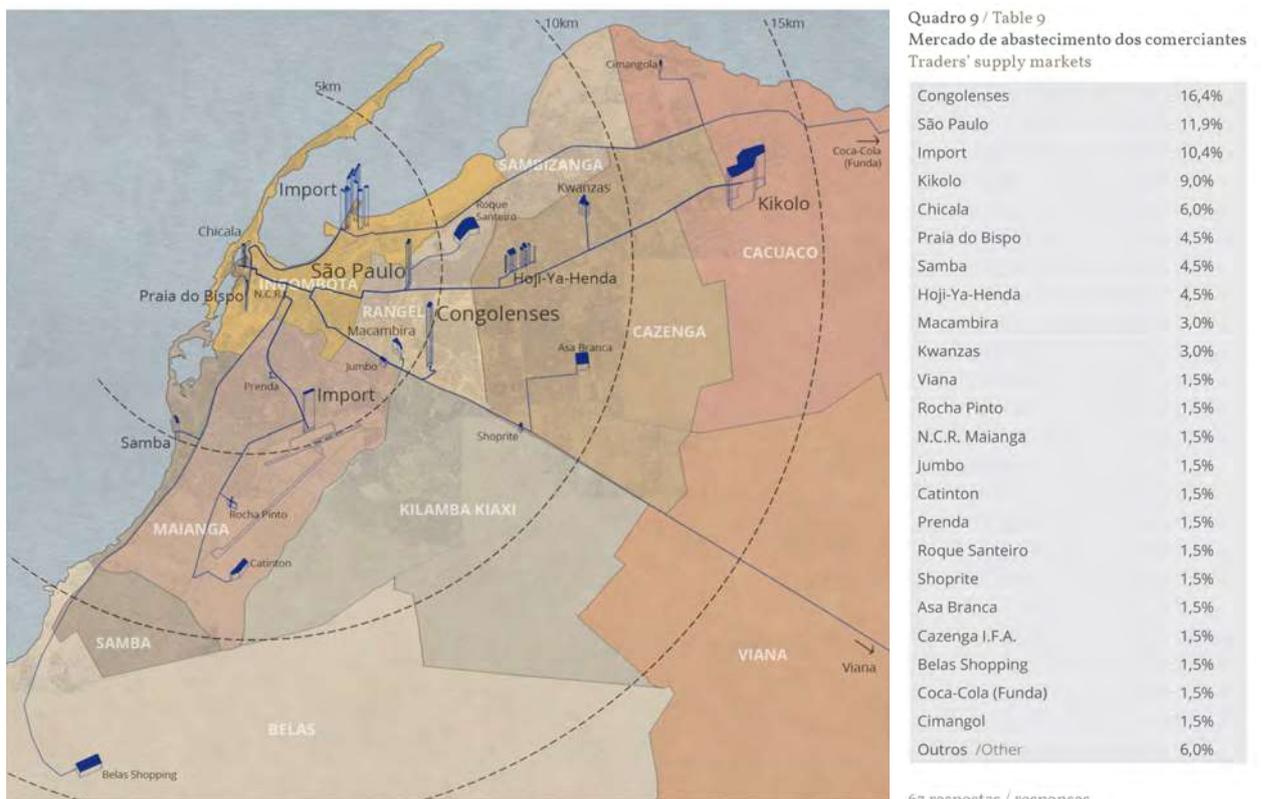


Fig. 179- Traders' supply markets. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
Field work carried out in 2011 and 2012 showed that over 10% of the traders in Chicala import their selling goods.



Fig. 180 –Businesswoman importing from China and selling in informal markets in Luanda. © Paulo Moreira, 1/12/2013

The relationship between informal markets and global purchasing practices is a key factor in understanding the “everyday economics” of Luanda. An excerpt from the first-hand testimony of Alberta (2012), a Chicala resident and global *comerciante* (businesswoman), follows:

I started going to Namibia, back when I still didn't have much money. Buying sheets, bedspreads, then I'd come back. I'd give you the set of sheets, and at the end of the month, when you got your salary, you'd pay me. So that's how I started saving some money. When I got to a certain amount, I started going to Brazil. I'd buy clothes in Brazil, come back here, sell them. I'd buy shoes, come back here, sell them. When they'd finished, I'd go back... Always like this. So then I amassed even higher amounts.

(...) I would sell at the Roque Santeiro Market. And here at home too. The neighbours would come, choose and I'd write their name in the diary. I'd write: "he took two pairs of trousers, a skirt and a pair of shoes". When the neighbour received the money at the end of the month, he'd pay me a slightly higher amount than he would have paid if he'd had the money at the time of the purchase. And that's how I went about raising funds. So I started going to Thailand. I'd bring back clothes, pay the customs tax here at the airport. I'd always sell the clothes at Roque Santeiro. Then I stopped selling clothes and I started going to Dubai. In Dubai, I bought phones. I entered via the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC]. Sometimes I went by car, via M'Banza Congo [Northern Angola, close to the border]. I arrived in DRC and bought a flight for Dubai via Ethiopia – the price was a bit lower. It was better to bring the phones back via the Congo. From there, I travelled back by car, with the suitcases full of mobile phones... It took all day, we only arrived back here at night time.

(...) I stopped going to Dubai [and] started going to China. In China [Guangzhou] the phones were a lot cheaper! Then, I stopped with the phones and started bringing back clothes, in suitcases. After bringing back clothes in suitcases I realised it was too much work, so I started packing containers. Now I just get the goods and put them in a container. I bring everything: clothes, furniture, household appliances, I bring tiles, everything!

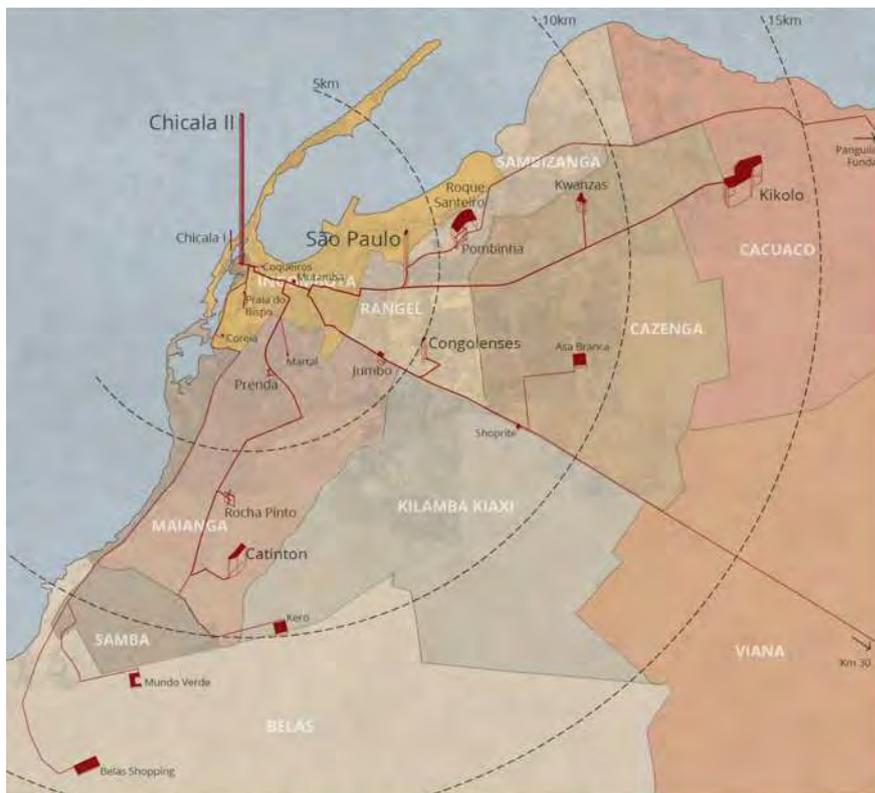
(...) Now that the Roque Santeiro Market doesn't exist anymore, I distribute the tiles to the women who sell at the Madeira Market. I sell the clothes at Kicolo, which is now called Hoji-ya-Henda Market. I've got two employees there, three including me. I bring the furniture over on order.

(...) I had a stall at Km 30 Market, but the market started dying, there weren't many shoppers. I was paying more to my employees than I was earning. That meant I was paying the employees in vain. So, I cancelled the "Thirty" and the employees transferred to the Hoji-ya-Henda.

(...) The Roque Santeiro was really close to my house. It was better there, it was a very big market and the business was going really well. Lots of people went there. Now, the Kicolo Market is a bit further away and the clients are sometimes too lazy to go that far. But there's always a bit of movement, there's always some money coming in... There are days when you don't sell much and days when you sell a lot... There are even days when you sell really well!

(...) If the product is new – for example a nice item of clothing –, I bring the model from Brazil and I take it to China. I have it sewn, I have 1000 or 2000 pieces of that clothing made. And it's a novelty in the market. I can take 300 items in a suitcase and it sells out!

(...) The first time I set foot in China it would have been hard to find another Angolan. Even when going to a factory to have some clothes sewn, the Chinese would be afraid of you. They'd hold you... They'd hold your skin and do this [scratching], to see if the [black] colour came out, if the colour didn't change, if the skin didn't change.



Quadro 10 / Table 10
Mercados mais frequentes para os residentes/
Residents' most frequent supply markets

Chicala II	40,8%
São Paulo	13,6%
Congolenses	5,8%
Chicala I	5,2%
Kikolo	5,2%
Catinton	4,9%
Roque Santeiro	2,9%
Pombinha	2,9%
Kwanzas	2,9%
Rocha Pinto	2,6%
Jumbo	2,3%
Prenda	1,6%
Praia do Bispo	0,6%
Martal	0,6%
Shoprite	0,6%
Kero	0,6%
Asa Branca	0,6%
Km30	0,6%
Panguila	0,6%
Coqueiros	0,3%
Mutamba	0,3%
Coreia	0,3%
Belas Shopping	0,3%
Mundo Verde	0,3%
Funda	0,3%
Outros /Other	2,9%

309 respostas / responses

Fig. 181 – Residents' most frequent supply markets. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Field work carried out in 2011 and 2012 identified the types of business taking place in the main commercial areas of Chicala 2 (what kind of goods were sold, by whom, where they were produced or purchased, etc.). 41% of the population surveyed named the local *Pracinha* as the market they most frequently visit, demonstrating its importance in the day-to-day life of the neighbourhood.



Fig. 182 – Fish Market, Chicala 1. © Kota Cinquenta, 24/5/2012

Chicala's fish market is a volatile place. In March 2013, large volumes of earth were deposited on the beach between the market and the ocean. Hidroportos (responsible for the coastal protection works along the Ilha) is said to be unaware of the origin and intentions behind this activity. At interview, the company's director confessed to being surprised by the amount of land moved there (interview, 2013). The specialist said it would be "a tremendous mistake" to use earth instead of sand in any landfill process on the beach: "Earth does not combine well with the ocean, it turns into mud and people get stuck" (interview by the author, 2013). As far as it is known, these concerns provoked no apparent reaction. Meanwhile, the president of Chicala 1's residents committee said in an interview that he was going ahead with the market's extension, "even without the consent of higher entities" (interview by the author, 2013). By 2015, a new roof structure was built, increasing the market area and creating new restaurants. There seems to be a lack of communication even among the official institutions in Chicala/Luanda, which exposes a reciprocal relationship between informal and formal city-making processes.

The fish market in Chicala 1 is visited by people from all over the city. A *peixeira* (fish seller) may sell a fish that she does not have in stock by fetching it from a fellow seller (in which case, profits would be shared between the two). If another customer arrives, priority will be given to the sellers who have sold the least on that day, demonstrating practices of common solidarity in Chicala's fish market.²² A focus on the local fish industry helps to shed light on issues of gender organisation, among other matters. For instance, men catch fish while women sell fish; while men manufacture cooking utensils, women cook.

Chicala is an excellent destination for diners seeking fish restaurants in Luanda. Since 2002, dozens of restaurants have opened on an empty plot of land in Chicala 1, on the west coast. The spot became known as 'Chicala Point', consisting of several rows of blue tents with long tables and outdoor kitchens (**Fig. 183**). In 2011, the area was dismantled by the city authorities and new establishments have cropped up on the opposite side of the Avenida Massano de Amorim, under roofs in the front yards of the existing houses, either run by the house's owners or rented out. The fish industry, historically the main activity in the area, remains one of the main assets of the Chicala neighbourhood.



Fig. 183 – Chicala Point. © Paulo Moreira, 3/10/2010
Chicala Point was visited daily by hundreds of diners seeking fish restaurants who came not only from Chicala, but mainly from other parts of Luanda. Since 2002, dozens of restaurants have opened on an empty plot of land on the west coast. The spot consisted of several rows of blue tents with long tables and outdoor kitchens.

²² Until 2009, the market was located closer to the entrance to the Ilha, for those arriving from the continent. Following its sudden dismantlement by the city authorities, protests by users led to the provision of a new area, where the market currently stands.

Controversial Fish Restaurants

The projects planned for the Chicala area seem to dismiss the existing neighbourhood and overlook its main contributions to the city. In the Marina Luanda Environmental Impact Study, references to Chicala are never employed to link the project to the existing context. Instances of the word are limited to maintaining the toponymy of the site and describing technical issues.²³ While the 79-page project description simply ignores the existing neighbourhood, the 68-page Environmental Impact Study is slightly more incisive. Often making poor use of punctuation, it makes superficial comments such as (Pires, 2010: 15):

The Baía da Chicala has become very polluted due to intensive dumping of rubbish and other waste, in the marine environment as well as displaying insufficient water circulation.

Further negative arguments are presented, invariably in rather badly written Portuguese (Pires, 2010: 46):

Other sources [of pollution] are abandoned cars (scrap metal) which accumulate around the spurs (around the spurs and other areas, disposal of waste, rubble – mixtures of soils of diverse particle sizes and rubbish), which damage both terrestrial and maritime environments so badly.

It is unclear here whether the text refers to the Luanda scrap heap, located in Chicala 1, where the Luanda Provincial Government deposits towed vehicles from around the city. As for the rest, while it is true that rubble of various particle sizes is used, once again the same could be said of any other landfill project in the Ilha de Luanda, including Marina Luanda (on a much larger scale than any other construction works ever undertaken in the Chicala neighbourhood). The report goes on to state that there are “repair workshops for vehicles and small boat engines that use hydrocarbons and produce oils which are dumped on the beaches” (Pires, 2010: 46). Pollution which, incidentally, will also be produced by the luxury yachts that will use the Marina. The expert study adds (once again with grammatical and punctuation errors) (Pires, 2010: 46):

As a consequence of the presence of rubbish dumps where there are, besides the products already listed, one can find decomposing organic matter and excrement. These sites provide food and shelter for animals and insects which carry diseases, therefore the threat of signs of disease outbreaks is constant.

The report also notes that “a lot of this rubbish is carried to the water” and that “various equipment, materials and metal tubes have been identified which remain at the site for a long time, giving rise to various problems” (Pires, 2010: 46). The latter probably refers to the posts located on the route from Chicala 1 to Kilombo, normally used to form the structure of foundations in buildings (**Fig. 184**). In other words, they clearly do not correspond to the type of construction carried out in Chicala, and were

²³ Examples of the use of the word ‘Chicala’ in the Marina Luanda project description include: “the breakwater will allow the Chicala entrance to be fixed, impeding its shift towards the coast, as is the current trend, which if nothing is done will result in the closure of the lagoon with serious environmental consequences arising from the eutrophication of the body of water” (Pires, 2010: 6).



Fig. 184 – Abandoned metal tubes between Chicala 1 and Kilombo. © Paulo Moreira, 1/12/2013

most likely left there from some large construction works and forgotten.

With regard to the population living in the Chicala neighbourhood, the Environmental Impact Study notes that it is “heterogeneous and originates from different parts of the country, in search of better living conditions and greater security, due in part to the war which raged in the country in previous years” (Pires, 2010: 15). The study even observes that “the inhabitants are not completely or mostly autochthonous”, assuring that this fact was “confirmed by a number of testimonies who stated that the majority of the residents came from elsewhere in Luanda province or from other provinces” (Pires, 2010: 40). There is little to be said about this, aside from noting the total absence of these people in the framing of the new project, which does not even consider proposals for their resettlement.

In summary, the Marina Luanda project claims to be “a proposal for upgrading and improving the region, reversing the current situation because it will recover an area of *ocupação anárquica* (anarchic occupation), with clandestinely built houses, with a landscape in disrepair, in which living conditions take place in an insalubrious environment” (Pires, 2010: 5). It is curious that the rhetoric of *ocupação anárquica* has become widely used in the urban lexicon of Luanda, as seen previously in this thesis. The origin of the expression is unknown but it has come to be used constantly, not only in colloquial language but also by architects, experts in urban issues and politicians, both in the colonial era (by the Portuguese) and in the postcolonial era (by Cubans, as shown earlier in this Chapter, as well as by Angolans). It is strange that with such erudite vocabulary used to describe the Marina project, a diverse and highly complex neighbourhood should be reduced to ‘anarchic occupations’. The phrase has been long used in the urban lexicon of the city of Luanda, including the Angolan academic community. One of the earliest reference to ‘anarchic occupations’ found during the investigation process dates back to 2002, in a scholarly article included in the proceedings of a debate held at the Department of Architecture of Agostinho Neto University in Luanda (Miguel, 2005: 15, 18):

This period, characterised by unbridled individual property ownership, must move towards a system of guarantee, in the struggle against disorder and anarchy in the contemporary city, giving rise to a system of social and urban order. (...) Architecture enables the city to deal with anarchy and informal construction, outlining differences and encompassing distances as

an object of cultural restoration.²⁴

It is useful to examine past references to a similar subject during the colonial period. In 1973, regarding the contact made by the late colonial masterplan proposed for the same area (described in Chapter 3) with areas of informal construction, it was said that (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973):

This Urban Planning study also includes a detailed analysis of the current situation in Bairro Santa Barbara (infringement), Praia do Bispo and Musseque da Samba Pequena, and displays intentions to engage in interventions to resystematise these areas.

It seems that, faced with the context already present, private promoters in the colonial era divested themselves of responsibility for the issue, passing the 'hot potato' to public authorities (*Notícia*, 29/12/1973):

Any intervention strictly depends on the policy adopted by the Council, under whose jurisdiction fall visions of objective intervention and the collaboration of their respective ordering elements.

Meanwhile, the Marina Luanda plan appears to simply ignore the population residing in the area. The preliminary study overlooks their informal constructions, and the subsequent intervention proposed anticipates that the site will be empty of people and property.²⁵ Mentions of the existing neighbourhood are reduced to "onshore, informal residences have been constructed, on land reclaimed from the sea which is very close to the lagoon" (Pires, 2010: 15). Curiously, this phrase could equally be used to describe the new project, if we remove the word 'informal'. The study states that environmental conditions in the area "are very poor, as a result of urban and domestic pollution, draining of rainwater and wastewater, industrial pollution and uncollected rubbish" (Pires, 2010: 45). The text adds that the accumulation of urban waste "derives from human activity, housing, commercial establishments such as mixed markets selling perishable goods, particularly fish, and non-perishable goods wrapped in paper and/or plastic, as well as tinned and bottled products" (Pires, 2010: 45). Here, not only the actions of the population but also those of government authorities are noted, namely the failure to collect urban waste which accumulates in the streets and along the edges of the lagoon (and which is often used as landfill for the construction of informal housing). The document goes further, pointing out that "another important source is the waste produced by informal catering establishments" (Pires, 2010: 46). In this way, it helpfully informs us that just as in all restaurants around the world, the restaurants in Chicala also

24 Miguel, Francisco Barros, "Cultura Urbanística", in *O Homem e o Território*, Pedro, Benga and Martins, Isabel (Eds.), Luanda: Departamento de Arquitectura, UAN, 2005. pp. 15-18 (Proceedings of the debate *O Homem e o Território* held on 14th - 15th November 2002).

25 In this regard, I would like to add a similar example: while at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Lisbon to participate in a seminar, I was informed that there was a final year module focusing on the city of Luanda, more specifically on Chicala. I went to visit the class, and noticed that it was based on a perception of Chicala as a large empty space, with proposals sought from students for the area. Curiously, the theme proposed by the lecturers was "formal architecture", while the other area of intervention in Luanda, the Prenda neighbourhood, would have an "informal" theme (as Prenda is a district that was planned in the colonial period and evidently subject to appropriation and alterations in the post-colonial period, this division appears strange). The situation became even stranger when one of the students told me that she had asked the lecturer what the people who had to leave the area would do, and the lecturer replied "that's not our problem".

produce rubbish.

This sanitising vision of what is arguably Chicala's main asset in the eyes of most Luandans, the fish restaurants, is fundamentally different to several testimonies I collected during my six field work trips to Angola, even from non-residents in the neighbourhood.²⁶ One of the most complimentary opinions was that of Roberto Goycoolea Prado, professor at the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares in Spain, who I took to have lunch in Chicala.²⁷ Goycoolea Prado wrote about the experience (2014: 116-118):

The restaurant in Chicala didn't have a name; it was just another of its 'fish restaurants'. It was located on a dusty road, full of cars and with various food 'businesses', from poor street stalls to other, better establishments like the one we visited. The restaurant was connected to the street, participating in life outside. Built in different parts, it had a large metallic roof attached to various compartments made from cement blocks which housed the kitchen, storeroom and lavatory. The bustle of the street, mixed with the restaurant's interior, created a festive atmosphere, further enhanced by the local colours: lilac and green walls, blue chairs and reddish tables with a crimson ceiling. The clients were easily mistaken for the waiters who treated us as if we were regulars. There was no menu; we chose our fish from a tray and it was served grilled with traditional accompaniments. The food was hearty and appetising.²⁸

This complimentary tone towards Chicala's fish restaurants is not confined to my circle of acquaintances and friends. They were also mentioned in an article published by television news channel CNN (Silva, 2013) **(Fig. 185)**:

At Ilha, where many of the city's best restaurants are located, two low-key favourites are *Casa do Peixe da Gabela* (Rua Massano de Amorim, Chicala) and *Restaurante da Dona Bela* (Rua Massano de Amorim, after Poupa Lá [supermarket] on your left side; it has blue walls and white bars on the outside). At both places you can eat a feast - featuring excellent *mufete*, a local delicacy of beans stewed in palm oil, grilled tilapia, onion vinaigrette, boiled plantains, sweet potatoes and yucca -for about \$17.²⁹

These testimonies, as well as my first-hand experience drawn from months living in Chicala over a six year period, suggest that the conclusions reached by the so-called technical studies commissioned to consultants are somewhat dubious. In the particular case of the Marina Luanda, it seems that these experts had very superficial contact with and knowledge of the context they studied, and this has the potential to cause problems. The environmental impact study serves only to legitimate the aims of the project with which it is associated.

26 I collected numerous testimonials from around the city, from people of diverse origins and social classes, both locals and visitors, which confirm the quality of Chicala's fish market and restaurants. I recall, for example, the RTP (Portuguese public television) reporter Paulo Catarro, who covered the survey I carried out with students at the Chicala 1 fish market (the interview had been scheduled to discuss the Távora Prize trip and ongoing fieldwork). At the time, the journalist appeared a little uncomfortable recording the opinions of the sellers, who were complaining that they did not want to leave the market and criticising the government. Indeed, the report was never aired, most probably because of the controversy surrounding the people's statements. Despite this subtle form of censorship, at the end of the filming I saw Paulo Catarro buy fresh fish – that this journalist should engage in such an activity was certainly high praise for the quality of the fish in Chicala.

27 We had lunch in Chicala as a group following one of the sessions of the conference we organised at the Department of Architecture in November 2013.

28 Goycoolea Prado, Roberto, 'Chicala: Urban gastronomic metaphors', in *Xikala: History and Urbanity of a Neighbourhood in Luanda*, Martins, Isabel and Moreira, Paulo (eds.), Luanda: Universidade Agostinho Neto, 2014. pp. 116-118.

29 'A Day and Night in Luanda, the world's most expensive city', article by Claudio Silva, published on 1st August 2013.

Angolan cuisine

Angola has a culinary tradition influenced by 500 years of Portuguese colonization and seafood from more than a thousand kilometers of coastline.



Angolan cuisine takes advantage of more than a thousand kilometers of coastline. Presumably these fish don't know how much they'll end up costing.

In the Mutamba, Luanda's central business district, a good spot for lunch is [Tendinha](#) (*Rua da Missão 16, Mutamba; +244 923 542 868*), a friendly Angolan bistro where the beer is cold and the food is cheap. It's within walking distance of some of the city's most popular hotels and the average check is \$20.

At Ilha, where many of the city's best restaurants are located, two low-key favorites are [Casa do Peixe da Gabela](#) (*Rua Massano de Amorim, Chicala*) and [Restaurante da Dona Bela](#) (*Rua Massano de Amorim, after Poupalá on your left side; it has blue walls and white bars on the outside*).

At both places you can eat a feast -- featuring excellent mufete, a local delicacy of beans stewed in palm oil, grilled tilapia, onion vinaigrette, boiled plantains, sweet potatoes and yucca -- for about \$17.

Fig. 185 - Chicala fish restaurants.

Article by Claudio Silva, CNN online printscreen, 1/8/2013
After 'Chicala Point' was dismantled in 2011, new establishments have cropped up on the opposite side of the road, under roofs extending the existing houses. The full tables and car park opposite the restaurants regularly offer proof that the quality of the fish served in Chicala continues to be recognised by many citizens of Luanda.

The Role of Houses

The feature that most clearly typifies Chicala (and Luanda's *bairros* in general) is the nature of its dwellings (**Fig. 186**). Self-built houses, in accordance with the Angolan *modus vivendi*, became symbols of urban adaptation, traces of family cycles, a demonstration of the effort and investment which went into the building of Luanda's informal neighbourhoods (**Fig. 187 - 192**).³⁰



Quadro 6 / Table 6
Número de residentes por casa
Number of residents per house

n° habitantes no. of residents	Chicala 1	Chicala 2	Chicala 3	Total
1-5	38%	25%	30%	29%
6-9	38%	44%	46%	43%
10-15	20%	26%	21%	23%
> 16	4%	6%	3%	5%
Média / Average	7,4	8,3	7,3	7,7

215 inquéritos para um universo de 1118 indivíduos.
215 surveys on a sample of 1118 individuals

Quadro 7 / Table 7
Idade da população
Population Age

	Chicala 1	Chicala 2	Chicala 3	Total
< 18	44%	39%	43%	41%
18 - 30	31%	35%	27%	31%
31 - 50	22%	23%	25%	24%
> 50	2%	4%	4%	4%
Média / Average				

universo de 1118 indivíduos
sample of 1118 individuals

Fig. 186 – Housing density (number of residents per household).

© Paulo Moreira, 2015

Overall in Chicala, over 80% of houses are in use by a single family (only in relatively few cases do two, or sometimes up to five, families share the same dwelling). Occupation density per household in Chicala 1 is lower [5.7 people per house] than that of Chicala 2 [8.3] and Chicala 3 [7.3 – already demolished]. These differences reveal distinct forms of spatial organisation. Chicala 1 can be generally considered to be more consolidated with regard to infrastructure and building quality (for instance, many houses have two floors and better infrastructure services). In Chicala 2 and 3, houses have (or had) predominantly one floor – as a result, the density of residents per room is higher than in Chicala 1. The fieldwork undertaken covered a total of approximately 250 houses. Results are based on this sample.

30 Financial analyses of the actual construction costs of self-built houses have been largely ignored in studies of Luanda's rising economy. Gastrow presents one of the most detailed exceptions. She estimates the cost of building the most simple, poor quality two-room house (the basic unit in Luanda) to be at least US\$6,000 (2014: 175). This shows the relevance of the informal construction market, when compared to the spectrum of wealth in Luanda. These facts help to underline the financial capacity of the *musseque* inhabitants. Turner adds that the economy of housing should be "a matter of personal and local resourcefulness rather than centrally controlled, industrial productivity" (Turner, 2000: 102).



Fig. 187 – Plan, fragment of Chicala 1. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

The entrance to Chicala 1 takes place in the transition between the colonial era city and the more recent urban development, both planned and unplanned. At the end of the 1960s, the narrow stretch of sand which linked the southern tip of the Ilha to Chicala disappeared as a result of the *kalembas* (sea storms). This site became the end of the Ilha, finished off with an asphalted roundabout. At the end of the 1980s, the link between Ilha and the part of Chicala which had been cut off was restored by means of an embankment made of dredged sand and rubbish brought from shipyards in other parts of the city. As the years went by, the earth began to eat away the asphalt, and the old road became almost invisible. Indeed, the uneven terrain continues to make the road impassable in periods of heavy rain. In this area, colonial era houses (mostly transformed) co-exist with more recently built residences.





Fig. 188 – Plan, fragment of Chicala 2. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
 The neighbourhood's banks are covered with all forms of waste, from construction debris to rusty car frames and rubbish bags. These elements constitute the common foundations of Chicala's reclaimed land. Waste materials are constantly being pushed to the margins, where land is formed to become the foundations for new houses. The urban pattern along the shore comprises a variety of modes of land use, illustrated here by the proximity of two places of worship mediated by an incremental number of houses.



Fig. 189 – Studio / house

© Tiusa Damiao, 10/2010

The latent creativity found in Chicala is embodied in the work of several inter-generational artists. Creativity is visible in houses such as this live-work unit by the bank. The house and studio was built in stages from 1998 on land reclaimed from the sea. It comprises a living room, three bedrooms, a kitchen and a bathroom, organised around a small courtyard which is open to the sea. In 2012, the development grew vertically, due to the lack of available land, with a second floor housing an art studio.



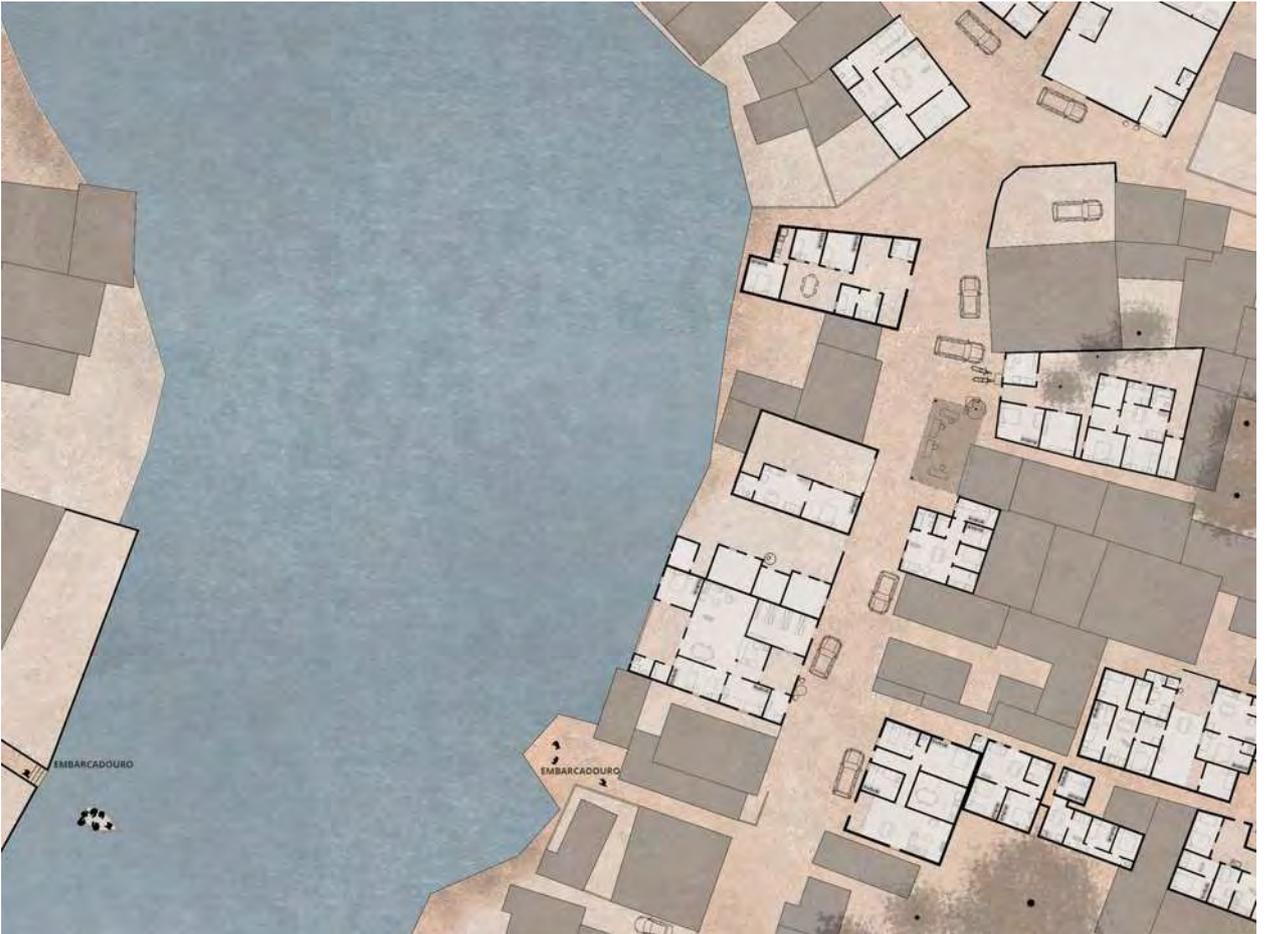


Fig. 190 – 191 - Pier/ water crossing in Chicala.

© Paulo Moreira, 2015; Tiusa Damiao, 10/2010
 Chicala 1 and Chicala 2 are connected by boat.
 A pier has been in place since the early 2000s,
 installed by a group of local male youths.
 Organised into shifts, the group transports
 hundreds of commuters on a *chata* (small
 boats for transporting people or for fishing in
 the lagoon), from dusk to dawn. The trajectory
 of their crossing forms a parabola, according
 to the currents, and care is taken to follow the
 shallowest path (navigation is conducted with a
 pole, no oars – this sailing technique is called
ximbicar). A significant number of young children
 living in Chicala 2 attend school on the opposite
 side of the neighbourhood (due to the lack of
 educational buildings on the continental side)





Fig. 192 – Plan, fragment of Chicala 3. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
The urban structure of Chicala 3 (already demolished) was not substantially different from that of the adjacent Chicala 2. A network of streets was hierarchically arranged following two main directions: running parallel to the Avenida Agostinho Neto (right), or perpendicular to it, establishing connections between the inner settlement and the main perimeter road. The houses in this part of the neighbourhood were also largely organised around *quintais* [courtyards].



It is common for houses to be adapted and extended over time, depending on the family's growth (Fig. 193 – 196). This generally leads to a separation between the *casa principal* (main part of the house) and the *anexos* (external rooms), connected by the *quintal* (outdoor courtyard). The semi-covered areas connecting the different parts of the house (verandas, porches, corridors) become rooms themselves, often with larger dimensions than the actual internal rooms. Therefore, their typological classification tends to be a matter of some complexity.



Fig. 193 - 'Twin House' original house, 1986. © Carlos Lousada, 1986, Archive Lino Damiano.



Fig. 194 – Typical house development over time. © Paulo Moreira, 2010-14

These 'twin houses' in Chicala 2 are an example of incremental building. The development of the houses over time intertwines with the history of the family and of the neighbourhood. Analysis of the houses' evolution since 1986, when the family settled in the neighbourhood, shows that social and urban order is often the result of constant dialogue and negotiation between the private and the collective (Mills, 1959).



Fig. 195 – ‘Twin houses’ and surrounding context. © Paulo Moreira, 2015



Fig. 196 – ‘Twin houses’ and surrounding context, 3D representation. © Paulo Moreira / Prompt Collective
The symmetry between the two houses can no longer be perceived, as each brother changed their house according to their family’s needs.

In Chicala's houses, there is a preponderance of what might best be called 'hybrids': courtyards used as kitchens, living rooms used as bedrooms, a freezer by the bathroom door and by the bedroom window, within a covered courtyard used as a living room, pots and pans sharing a table top with a DVD player and a TV, a wall used for hanging both clothes and kitchen utensils, an oven placed a metre away from a bed, etc. (Fig. 197 - 199). Hybrid rooms may include cases in which a given activity has no room whatsoever in which to be carried out. For instance, a woman may be found working on her sewing machine in the street in front of her house, while neighbours may gather on the street nearby to watch TV (Fig. 200 - 201). The concept of 'flexibility' is insufficient to describe the full scale and ambiguity of the phenomena observed – the word 'hybrid' may be a more precise categorisation, as it implies a simultaneity of uses, while 'flexible' tends to denote different functions taking place sequentially.



Fig. 197 – Hybrid room. © Grupo L12, ULA, 8/2011

The 'hybridity' of rooms may be more a matter of variations of use over time (between day and night, for instance) than of spatial configurations or architectural features. These photos of internal rooms in Chicala are part of the visual archive of The Chicala Observatory, which consists of hundreds of houses and thousands of photographs. The archive focuses on uses and orientations. It depicts the variety/similitude of situations from house to house, as well as demonstrating any unusual variations. The visual archive supports the main conclusions about the meaning of 'house' in Chicala. There is scope here for a deeper architectural analysis of the elements that feature in most houses (appliances, cesspit lids, clothes lines, decoration, furniture).



Fig. 198 – Hybrid room. © Grupo L12, ULA, 8/2011



Fig. 199 – Hybrid room. © Grupo L12, ULA, 8/2011



Fig. 200 – The street as ‘room’ (living room, office, etc.). © Grupo L22, ULA, 9/8/201

Hybrid rooms include cases in which a given function takes place in the public space, as an extension of leisure/working activities. This demonstrates that there is an open relationship between the private and the public spheres.



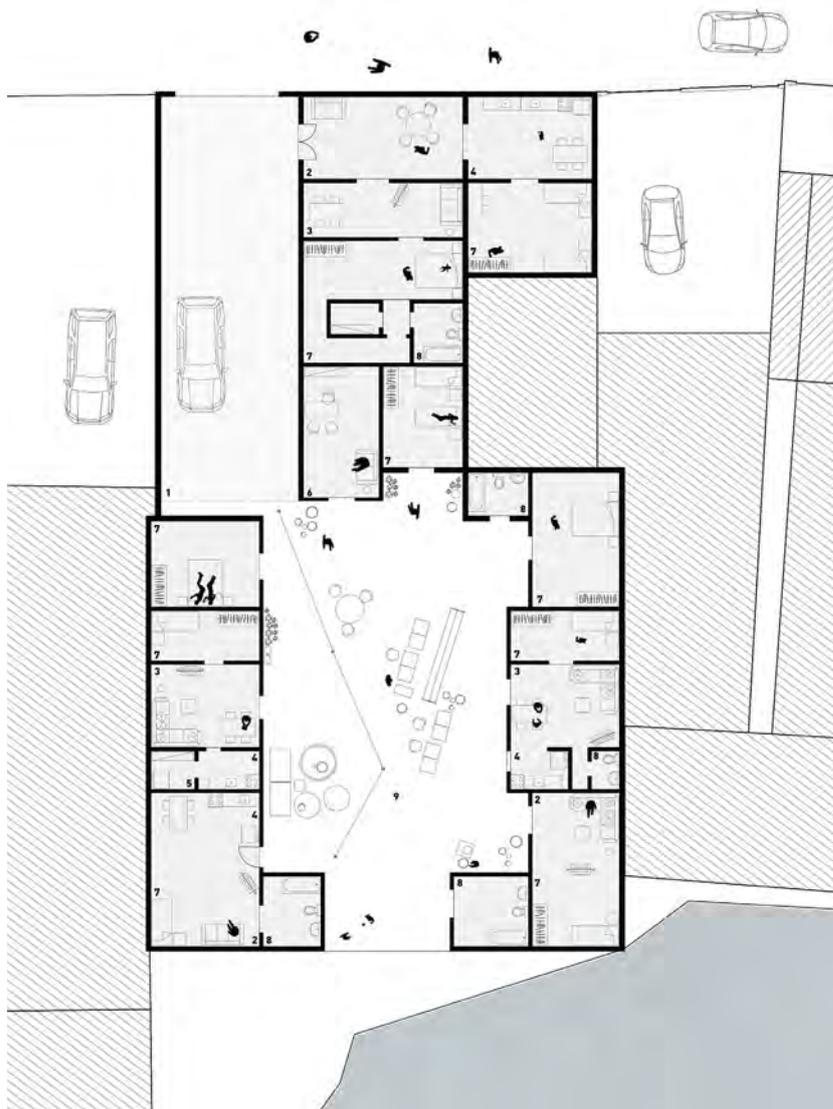
Fig. 201 – The street as ‘room’ (living room, etc.). © Kota Cinquenta, 10/5/2012

In terms of articulating all of the activities taking place in the house, the *quintal* has remained the most important feature in both social and typological terms (**Fig. 202 - 212**). Culturally, the *quintal* is the primary receptacle of collective life in the domestic space. Historically, the *quintal* is considered to be the key mediator between private and public life in Angola's *musseques*. José Redinha classified the presence of the *quintal* as "indispensable to the functional, social and moral processes of the house" (cited by Monteiro, 1973: 269). Both Redinha and Monteiro go further, observing in similar writings that "in Luanda it is felt that a house with no courtyard is not the house of self-respecting people" (Redinha, 1964: 32; Monteiro, 1973: 269).³¹



Fig. 202 – Plan of Chicala locating examples of houses with *quintais* [countyards]. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

31 For further studies on housing in the *musseques*, see for example the following publications: Redinha on the role of the *quintal* (1964: 19, 32) and sociological aspects of the house (1964: 36); Monteiro on the nature of housing in the *musseques* (1973: 30); Amaral on housing typologies (1968: 119-121); Fonte on the role of the *quintal* (2007: 160); Oppenheimer and Raposo on the relationship between house types and resident social groups (2007: 107). The latter offers a detailed description of house types and lifecycles in Luanda (2007: 130) and of the 'levels of urbanity' in informal settlements, based on factors such as proximity to industry and other job opportunities, date of urban occupation, periods of settlement / urban experience, type and characteristics of urban occupation, types of intervention (2007:111-117).



House 1
 Covered area: 315 m²
 Quintal: 272 m²



- Legend**
- 1 - Entrance
 - 2 - Living room
 - 3 - Common room
 - 4 - Kitchen
 - 5 - Storage
 - 6 - Office
 - 7 - Bedroom
 - 8 - Bathroom
 - 9 - Quintal

	House 1						
	<18	19-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>	Tot
Number of residents	13	6	5	2	2	-	27
Province of origin	Cabinda, Luanda, Kwanza Norte						
Year of arrival in Luanda/ Initial residencial district	- /Ilha de Luanda						
Year of arrival in Chicala/ Actual residencial district	1991/Chicala 1						
Working/studying district	Ilha, Marginal, Maianga						
Most frequent markets	Kero, Halimentos, Coqueiros						
Transport	Private, Collective						

Fig. 203 – House with *quintal* in Chicala 1 (house 1). © Paulo Moreira, 2015
 The *quintal* is often located at the back of the main building. Here, the domestic rooms of the house converge (whereas rooms of a commercial nature – for example, a shop – face the street).



House 2
 Covered area: 281 m²
 Quintal: 225 m²



- Legend**
- 1 - Workshop
 - 2 - Trade
 - 3 - Pátio
 - 4 - Living room
 - 5 - Common room
 - 6 - Kitchen
 - 7 - Bedroom
 - 8 - Bathroom
 - 9 - Marquise
 - 10 - Quintal

	House 2						
	<18	19-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>	Tot
Number of residents	5	15	3	4	-	-	22
Province of origin	Kwanza Sul						
Year of arrival in Luanda/ Initial residencial district	1982/ -						
Year of arrival in Chicala/ Actual residencial district	1982/Chicala 1						
Working/studying district	Ilha, Chicala 2						
Most frequent markets	São Paulo						
Transport	Collective						

Fig. 204 – House with *quintal* in Chicala 1 (house 2). © Paulo Moreira, 2015
 The *quintal* organises the various parts of the house. As Ramiro Monteiro explains, “the family structure takes the form of extended family, constituted by a constellation of nuclear families, whose connecting element is [...] generational, i.e. from parents to children” (1973: 137). Most commonly, the family group is coincident with the population of the neighbourhood – the neighbourhood becomes a kind of nucleus of families. However, this is not a rule across the site: there are many rented rooms within a family house, for instance.



Fig. 205 - 206 – Quintal in Chicala 1 (house 2).

© Grupo E, UMA, 5/2012

Courtyards are historically and culturally the main receptacle of collective life in the domestic areas of the *musseques*. They are key mediators between private and public life (the *Festa de Quintal* [courtyard party] is perhaps the main custom that demonstrates this).



House 3
 Covered area: 111 m²
 Quintal: 95 m²

House 4
 Covered area: 115 m²
 Quintal: 90 m²



- Legend**
- 1 - Cellar
 - 2 - Living room
 - 3 - Workshop
 - 4 - Kitchen
 - 5 - Storage
 - 6 - Bedroom
 - 7 - Bathroom
 - 8 - Marquise
 - 9 - Quintal

	House 3, 4						
	<18	19-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>	Tot
Number of residents	7	2	5	1	1	1	17
Province of origin	Bengo						
Year of arrival in Luanda/ Initial residencial district	1975/Hoji-ya-Henda						
Year of arrival in Chicala/ Actual residencial district	1986/Chicala 2						
Working/studying district	Ingombota, Chicala 2, Mutamba, Airport						
Most frequent markets	Chicala 2, Kikolo, Km 30						
Transport	Private, Collective						

Fig. 207 – ‘Twin houses’ in Chicala 2 (houses 3, 4). © Paulo Moreira, 2015

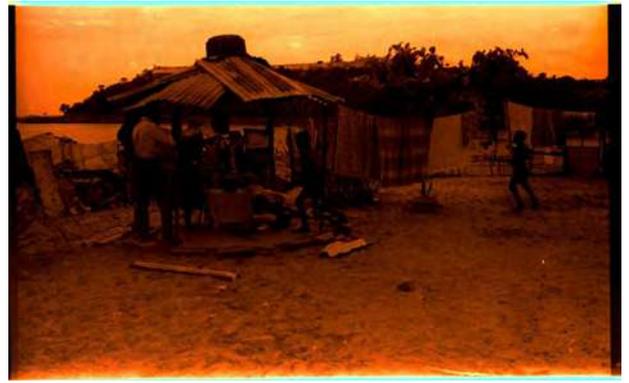


Fig. 208 - 209 – Twin house, *quintal* [courtyard] 1986. © Kota Cinquenta, 1986
 The building started as a single house built from metal, facing the ocean. The original house was soon transformed into a larger, more permanent structure made from cement blocks. These photographs show its history from within – they were taken by the owner of the house, photographer Mr. Cinquenta, in 1986. Here we can see the *quintal* facing the ocean, a circular *jango* [canape], and the fortress in the background.



Fig. 210 – Twin House 3, *quintal* [courtyard], 2010. © Neves Damião, 31/5/2014



Fig. 211 – Twin House 4, *quintal* [courtyard], 2010. © Paulo Moreira, 10/9/2010



House 5 (right)
 Covered area: 105 m²
 Quintal: 83 m²

House 6 (left)
 Covered area: 125 m²
 Quintal: 75 m²



- Legend**
- 1 - Trade
 - 2 - Living room
 - 3 - Common room
 - 4 - Bedroom
 - 5 - Kitchen
 - 6 - Storage
 - 7 - Bathroom
 - 8 - Quintal
 - 9 - Garage

	House 5							House 6						
	<18	19-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>	Tot	18	19-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>	Tot
Number of residents	3	2	2	-	-	-	7	5	2	1	-	-	-	8
Province of origin	Kwanza Sul							Luanda						
Year of arrival in Luanda/ Initial residencial district	-							- / -						
Year of arrival in Chicala/ Actual residencial district	1997/Chicala 3							1997/Chicala 3						
Working/studying district	Praia do Bispo, Chicala 2, Mutamba, 1º de Maio							Airport						
Most frequent markets	Pracinha da Chicala 2, Ex-Roque Santeiro							Pracinha, Chicala 2						
Transport	Collective, on foot							Collective						

Fig. 212 – Houses with quintal in Chicala 3 (houses 5, 6). © Paulo Moreira, 2015

The configuration of the *quintal* depends on the financial resources of each family. This raises the question of whether or not houses might be categorised into sub-classifications, based on their material characteristics. Development Workshop - Angola have applied tangible methods for measuring urban poverty (established by UN-Habitat worldwide) to Luanda's *musseques*. For example, the type of materials used for floors (clay, cement, parquet floors, mosaic) or roofs (corrugated sheets, tiles or concrete) were placed on a scale and, because all indicators are tangible, the process was relatively easy to implement in the field. The same applies to the number of floors – this could be a possible gauge, but only a handful of houses have two floors or more. If such a scale was applied to Chicala, the results would probably show that the 'poor' condition is very rare (particularly in Chicala 1 and 2, more common in Chicala 3); 'regular' would be the most common categorisation, while only a few houses would be categorised as 'rich'. However, measuring housing quality by reference to building materials and construction techniques might not capture the full extent of the meaning of 'house'.

The fact that most houses are organised around a *quintal* does not imply that there is not a wide variety of housing situations found throughout Chicala's dense built environment. Immediate, superficial observations would point to a straightforward division of houses into 'poor', 'regular' and 'affluent'. However, the categorisation of houses based purely on their material formation fails to acknowledge their true virtues and spatial qualities. As Turner suggests, "it is what housing *does* for people that matters more than what it *is*, or how it *looks*" (Turner, 2000: 96). In other words, the aesthetics and appearance of most houses in Chicala may appear hazardous, imperfect or unfinished from Western normalised standards, but they generally possess their own qualities: local materiality, climate adaptation, functional organisation, and incremental growth, for example.

There are other distinctions which apply to the field of housing in Chicala. A 'front gate' or 'front door' may be shared by two or more houses (assembled around a common *quintal*) (**Fig. 213**). However, the distinction between what constitutes the front and rear of a house may be complex (in some cases, the official 'door number' may be shown at the rear or side of a house). This may be explained by the fact that houses are frequently connected to the street by a public area, be it a shop, an office or a workshop – hence, the living area is accessible through the rear. As noted earlier, the *janela aberta* (open window) may be the main mediating element between the houses' inner world and the neighbourhood outside (**Fig. 214**).



Fig. 213 – Front gate, shared by several houses.
© Grupo L23, ULA, 8/2011



Fig. 214 – Janela Aberta [open window], shop within a private dwelling.
© UAN, Maio 2012

Symbiosis between Chicala and Luanda

Living in Chicala and the centre of Luanda for periods of one or two months since 2010 (for a total of eight months) contributed decisively to defining the ground on which this research project is built. By observing and reading the city's built environment, experiencing local customs and habits, and interacting with several institutions, both within and outside Chicala, an interpretation of a possible symbiosis between Chicala and Luanda began to take shape. It was equally meaningful to live in three different houses in Chicala – including the unique “Bottle house” (**Fig. 215 – 220**) – and in the Bay of Luanda, in a modernist building which had been renovated and fitted with all mod cons.



Fig. 215 - 216 – The bottle house. © Willian Fernandes, 12/5/2012
The bottle house is an example of the inventiveness with which everyday materials are reused as building materials. While some of these solutions may not comply with either urban regulations or the protocols followed by the construction industry, they do denote a creativity which may provide inspiration for architects. Any object may take on a different function from that for which it was originally intended. The apparently unexpected symbiosis between objects, pavements, walls, windows, roofs, etc. acts to define a series of architectural situations typical of Chicala and of Luanda's informal neighbourhoods.



Fig. 217 - 218 – Bottle window. © Willian Fernandes, 12/5/2012
Interior (left) and exterior (right)



Fig. 219 – Covered living room / quintal. © Paulo Moreira, 13/5/2012
On the side of the main house, an outdoor room covered with a wooden shading canopy, functions as a *quintal*/outdoor living room. It has a long wooden table for meals and a grill for cooking outside.



By the beginning of 2013, the owner of the bottle house had left Chicala and moved to the new town of Cacucaco, where he had bought an apartment (those residents who can afford to do so prefer to anticipate imminent eviction). Meanwhile, the bottle house was rented out, and a new house was built in the backyard. This decision was related to the owner's intention to ensure the right to an extra house in the resettlement camp once the *fiscals* came to register the area (I was later able to confirm that the *fiscals* embargoed the new house and registered only the main house and side courtyard). The main house was emptied out, most of its furniture and materials were removed and taken to Cacucaco (palette sofa, artefacts that once decorated the living room, etc.). The new house at the back of the plot was rented out. It blocked the air flow that once filled the living room, bringing a fresh breeze from the waterside and cooling the interior. The pleasant spatial experience completely changed with these modifications. With this case, it became clear that the rehousing system attracts further illegality (everyone knows that he/she will receive a house for free). This has serious implications for the densification of the neighbourhood – with the subsequent loss of housing quality, hygiene, natural ventilation, etc. The case of the bottle house is just one example of how much the *bairro* densifies as the eviction approaches. Incessant and simultaneous building and demolition become part of Chicala's final urban choreography.

Fig. 220 – The bottle house and surroundings, plan. © Paulo Moreira, 2016
 Besides the material imagination applied to the house – the way in which objects become part of the spatial experience, including sculptures and wooden artefacts surrounding the living room on the walls, tables, balcony, and hanging from the roof –, the layout is also a significant feature. The house was built close to the street, leaving the area in the backyard directly connected to the water (next to a shower also built from bottles). The prevailing winds coming from the ocean flowed through the living room, creating a natural cooling system.



Fig. 221 – Cacucaco New Town, overview. © Paulo Moreira, 24/2/201

In 2013, when the owner of the bottle house moved to Cacucaco, 45 km away from the city centre, the new town had just been opened. He occupied the only inhabited apartment in the whole 8-floor housing block. The feeling was almost one of living in a ghost town. The new apartment was located on the ground floor, “so that a closer relationship with the outdoors could be kept” (interview, March 2013). The apartment had a small balcony, and the building’s common entrance door was kept open most of the time, as well as the apartment door, with the common entrance hall and the front garden becoming an extension of the house itself.



Fig. 222 - 223 – Cacucaco New Town, new apartment: window grating, detail. © Paulo Moreira, 3/11/2013

A new window grating with decorative motifs anticipated the way in which the whole housing block would soon be appropriated by newcomers.



Fig. 224 – Cacucaco New Town, new apartment: living room.

© Paulo Moreira, 3/11/2013

The apartment was decorated with the same artefacts that had been brought from Chicala. Like in Chicala, there was no water provision in Cacucaco at that time, but there were promises that ‘it was coming’.

In Chicala, there is a true 'real-estate market'. There are cases where a single landlord rents out several houses (often, he/she owned an initial house and began to landfill the backyard in order to build several more). Just as in any other part of the city, rent prices depend on both tangible characteristics (such as the size of the plot and the number of rooms) and market-driven factors (proximity to the ocean or the main street, views, etc.). The rental business can be extremely profitable, even by Luandan standards. Some landlords do not live in Chicala, merely renting out houses there. In other cases, Chicala residents may rent out an apartment 'in the city' to expatriates or international companies, with the high rents allowing them to live a wealthy life in Chicala.

During several of my trips to Angola, I also lived in the Marginal de Luanda. It was highly significant for my research to experience these two living situations simultaneously, in such different houses separated by only a few kilometres. Living in the Bay of Luanda was an opportunity to expand and complement my urban experience in the city **(Fig. 225)**.

On the floor where I stayed, there were two recently renovated apartments and one in which refurbishment was beginning. The main reason for these refurbishments was the intention to add an extra bedroom and/or bathroom to the apartments. Each apartment gained an internal bedroom (without windows), created by reducing (or substituting) the living room. The densification of these flats is not so different from what I had observed in Chicala, where every house had an increasing number of bedrooms over time, depending on the family's growth and economic situation. In the bay, this densification strategy was also underpinned by economic motivations, reducing the high rents for each apartment (6 - 10,000 USD) when divided by the number of inhabitants.³² Despite the high prices, the water or electricity supply to these expensive apartments would often fail – this is a problem of public infrastructure that cannot be fixed simply through private investment.



Fig. 225 – Apartment in the Marginal, window view, 2013. © Paulo Moreira, 3/11/2013
The window of my room gave a glimpse into various historical periods. In the foreground was the most recent magnum opus in the urban area of Luanda, almost complete – the new Bay would be inaugurated several months later, days before the 31st August 2012 elections, which would return José Eduardo dos Santos to yet another mandate as President of Angola.

³² At that time, rent was paid six months or a year in advance. With the economic crisis taking hold in Angola, rents are now paid 2-3 months in advance.

The three apartments shared a veranda (**Fig. 226**). It reminded me of a *quintal*, where people living in different apartments met and had meals together. Every day, a *zungueira* would enter the building and walk up the stairs to sell vegetables and fruit. The *empregadas* (housekeepers) did business with the *zungueiras*. This was very similar to what I observed in Chicala, where the *zungueiras* do not only sell in the market, but also knock door by door. The informal market covers the whole city. From the veranda, we had views over an office roof on the first floor. The roof partially covered what used to be an open common area of the building, which was privatised to extend the office area. This was another example of the densification strategies also seen in Chicala (and considered 'informal'/'illegal' there). Once I asked the office administrator how they had managed to obtain permission to cover the whole area of the plot. He admitted, laughing, that they had had to deal with the *fiscais*, but that "everything was sorted" (interview, May 2012).



Fig. 226 – Apartment in the Marginal, common veranda, 2013.

© Paulo Moreira, 21/5/2013

The apartment was part of a mixed-use modernist building, built in the 1960s. There was a large office occupying the whole of the first floor, and three apartments in each of the upper levels. At the front entrance, attached to the neighbouring buildings, there were *zungueiras* and *kinguilas* (female sellers, selling mobile phone cards and changing kwanza for US dollars) during working hours. The common stairway was spatially generous: it led to a common veranda on each floor, shared by three apartments. The verandas were separated from the common stairs by metallic gratings for security reasons. The same applied to the parapets facing the inner side of the block. The gratings had decorative motifs and/or geometric patterns, which helped to identify each floor as you climbed the stairs. These gratings are typical features of Luanda's post-colonial building appropriation, and they add a 'customised' flavour to otherwise extremely rational and functional modernist blocks.

Behind the former common area/office, there was a backstreet. Here, several homeless children washed and looked after parked cars, and were tipped or offered food by the privileged Angolans or expatriate owners. Several tower blocks under construction formed part of the view. At night, they were lit with spotlights, and the loud sounds of the construction site reached the veranda. On the building sites surrounding the bay, there are likely to be contractual deadlines which force non-stop working times.³³ This is also similar to what can be observed in Chicala, where some people build overnight.³⁴

Besides the obvious differences, there are common or at least similar routines in the Baía, Chicala and across Luanda as a whole. The borders between the 'formal' city and the 'informal' neighbourhoods seem to be based more on superficial appearance and people's perceptions than on observation of the actual situation on the ground. To some extent, the experience of living in both Chicala and Luanda assisted me in demystifying the differences and understanding the reciprocity between the so-called 'formal' and 'informal' parts of the city. Having lived for some time along the Bay, while simultaneously living in Chicala, I realised that the ways in which the city is built and made to work are more similar than one might expect at first glance.³⁵ In other words, the material that forms Luanda's urban culture, in both material and human terms, stretches right across town.

33 I discussed this once with an expatriate flatmate who was working in the construction sector – he explained that at night there is less traffic, and it is the only time that truck mixers can drive from the cement factories to the construction sites.

34 Some say that people build overnight to avoid the *fiscals* (although probably "everything would be sorted" there, too, if a *fiscal* were to comment). As I was able to confirm, night-time tends to be the only time the owner can build, because he/she is busy working during the day.

35 I lived in the Bay in 2012 and in 2013 (twice), while simultaneously living in Chicala 1 (2013) and Chicala 2 (2012, 2013).

Chapter 5

Suppression and Displacement: The Architecture of the Resettlement Camps

Luanda has a long history of evictions and displacements of entire neighbourhoods. From the middle of the 19th century, with the urbanisation of the Bairro dos Coqueiros, the area around the bottom of the north-eastern slope of Morro de São Miguel, the word *musseque* began to be more commonly associated with peripheral, low-income neighbourhoods (Martins, 2000: 277). As the *Baixa* became more densely populated, however, sanitary conditions became increasingly precarious. In 1864, there was an outbreak of smallpox in Coqueiros. The exact number of deaths it caused is unknown, but the toll was significant.¹ The Portuguese authorities used the smallpox outbreak as an excuse to clear the areas in which the illness would most easily spread (Pepetela, 1990: 78-79)(**Fig. 227**).²

The initial evictions had ethnic undertones. As Pepetela points out, “so began the systematic rejection of those deemed economically weak, towards the *musseques* of the periphery, whilst the centre was reserved for the dominant class” (Pepetela, 1990: 80). The fact is that despite these ‘clearing’ actions, the *musseques* were expanding and the city was already acquiring many of the features it would retain in centuries to come.

During the 20th century, the formation of new *musseques* corresponded with the removal of the population, usually native Angolans, from a particular area in order to construct new neighbourhoods (Martins, 2000: 278). From that point on, the *musseques* have been constantly mobile, moving progressively further away from the city centre. Their expansion was and continues to be intimately linked to the development of the city. But in contemporary Luanda, the will for eradicating the informal neighbourhoods is stronger than ever.

1 Pepetela mentions a high number of “white” deaths in the areas of the *sobrados*, and comments that if it was like that in the *sobrados*, it was probably much worse in the *cubatas* (Pepetela, 1990: 78-79).

2 The first eviction in Luanda is described by Amaral (1962: 59), Fonte (2007: 148), Pepetela (1990: 79), Carvalho (1989: 68) and Monteiro (1973: 56), among others.

Colonial Housing Alternatives

In the second half of the 20th century, in the face of intense international criticism and pressure to decolonise, the Portuguese state attempted to justify its colonial occupation by arguing that it “had a unique ability to create harmonious racially egalitarian societies in the tropics” (Moorman, 2008: 37). A few sporadic solutions began to be presented to solve the ‘problem’ of the *musseques*. Several low-income housing estates were built, located in close proximity to the colonial city, for the “workforce comes from there” (Fonte, 2007: 149-150; 415). Fonte explains that “these new districts were to be Europeanised and serve as examples to follow, built as they were from hard-wearing materials, contrary to the *musseques* which were growing, naturally, around consolidated cities, built without rules and without sanitary conditions”. The Indigenous Residential Units were to contain between 5,000 and 15,000 inhabitants, “organised according to modern principles of urbanisation strategy” (Fonte, 2007: 149-150).

Late colonial attempts to ‘reproduce’ the *musseques* with a ‘formal pattern’, however, appear to have failed. In one of the only colonial studies fully devoted to understanding the nature of the *musseques*, Ramiro Monteiro offers a very critical description of the poor quality multi-level housing policy which aimed to solve the housing crisis in the 20th century.³ Monteiro discusses the first example of such housing complexes, the so-called Bairro Indígena [Indigenous Neighbourhood], an experiment built in the 1950s in two phases (**Fig. 228-229**). Monteiro viewed this operation as unsuccessful. As a simple example, he describes a situation he noticed immediately, the fact that “the verandas were full of women and children, used to living outside” (Monteiro, 1973: 271-2).⁴

3 Ramiro Monteiro presents himself as the first researcher dedicated to the in-depth study of the *musseque* population (Monteiro, 1973: 15). His book *A Família nos Musseques de Luanda – Subsídios para o seu estudo (Families in Luanda’s Musseques – Subsidising their Study)* was published in 1973. Before this, there were several superficial studies, such as *Luanda - Alguns aspectos dos Musseques de Luanda (Some Characteristics of the Musseques of Luanda)*, Castro Lopo, 1948). Monteiro’s study is based on direct observation and contact with the population. Despite some inconsistencies (highlighted earlier via Marissa Moorman’s analysis), this study presents a detailed investigation of the facts observed. There are limitations: Monteiro describes the *musseques* almost exclusively from the point of view of the family. Architecturally, this translates into a deep concern with the nature of the *cubatas*, “the factor that most obviously typifies the *musseque*” (Monteiro, 1973: 30). With this, Monteiro omits many other civic factors, or touches upon them very superficially, something which this section of the dissertation aims to rectify. Monteiro offers a comprehensive background to the history of the *musseques*, including aspects of the main social characteristics and the reciprocity between the *musseques* and the city (Monteiro, 1973: 30-63). He also presents several examples, such as the history of the Sambizanga *musseque*. According to the author (confirmed in conversation with a group of *Axilunda* on the Ilha), the population of this charismatic Luandan neighbourhood had its origins in the population that fled the Ilha (more specifically the areas around *Samba* and *Zanga*) because of the *kalembas* that afflicted the area, giving rise to the name Sambizanga (Monteiro, 1973: 102-3). The displacement of people followed by the displacement of the names of their places of origin may also be observed in more recent times.

4 Amaral (1968) and Fonte (2007) also address the construction of the *Bairro Indígena*.

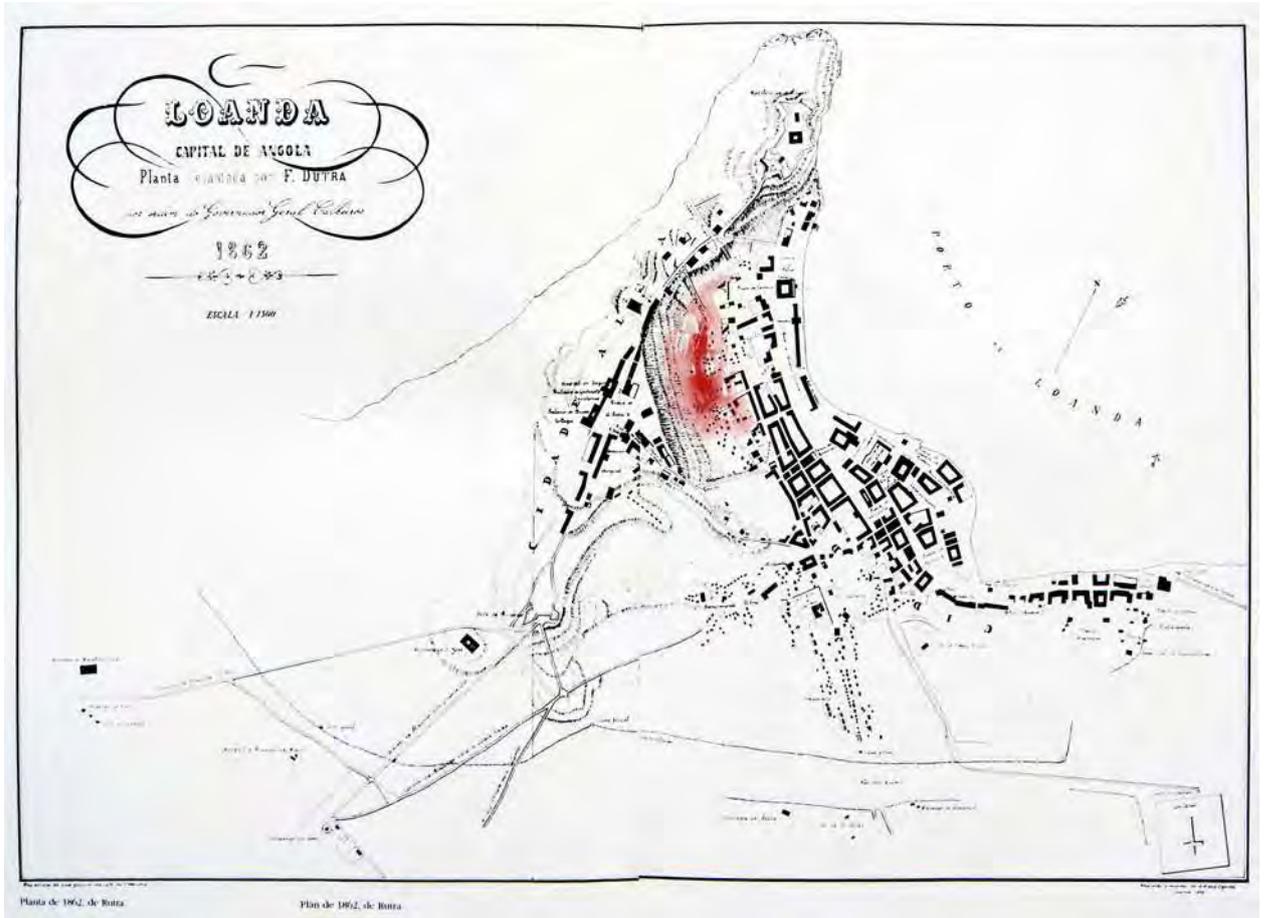


Fig. 227 – Map illustrating the first evictions in Coqueiros, 1862. Edited by Paulo Moreira, 2016
 The city authorities razed 227 *cubatas* in the Bairro dos Coqueiros, and resettled their residents in Ingombota and the area around the Alto das Cruzes cemetery that would later become Maculusso. This eviction process was followed by others: in subsequent years, the Bairro dos Cabindas and Bairro de Samgandombe were also demolished, and their former residents pushed to Maculusso and other areas further away from the bay (Pepetela, 1990: 84-85).



Fig. 228 - 229 – Bairro Indígena, phases 1 and 2. Sources: Manuela da Fonte (2007) and Amaral (1968).
 The first phase consisted of single-storey houses, while the second phase consisted of two-storey housing blocks.

The *Bairro Indígena* marked a historical moment in colonial policy in Luanda, but all evidence suggests that it was not an original model in Angola. According to Ruy Blanes, a researcher who studied the Tokoists (an Angolan religious movement, with many believers living in the *Bairro Indígena*), the first houses in this neighbourhood replicated the settlement model used in Vale do Loge (**Fig. 230 - 232**).

The Portuguese eventually sent a group of Tokoists who had been repatriated from Belgian Congo there to provide manual labour. According to Blanes, the operation was successful in terms of production, and in the second half of the 20th century there was significant investment in infrastructure and residences for the settlers (a new residential typology). Ruy Blanes notes that the group was resettled in Luanda, initially near the neighbouring *cacimba* (lagoon), until the construction of the *Bairro Indígena* was finalised (Blanes, 2014: 100, n.10).⁵

The type of colonial housing operation represented by Vale do Loge and the *Bairro Indígena* bears resemblance to the post-colonial resettlement colonies of Zango, Panguila and Sapú, implemented by the Angolan state on the periphery of Luanda since the 2000s.



Fig. 230 - 231 – Vale do Loge settlement, Uíge province (north of Angola). Courtesy: Ruy Blanes
The Vale do Loge settlement was created in 1950 by the colonial authorities to farm coffee and palm.

Fig. 232 - Vale do Loge, houses of the settlers.
© Ruy Blanes, 3/2/2012
There was an intention to settle more Portuguese in Vale do Loge. However, following the start of the war in 1961, the compound was quite literally abandoned.

5 Blanes affirms that the neighbourhood is still inhabited by the survivors and descendants of this group.

Post-war Resettlement Policy

In contemporary Angola, the subject of evictions and resettlement is considered sufficiently important to be addressed by the National Assembly of Angola. It is a fact that there are conflicts between public law on the topic and actual practices on the ground. On 27th February 2015, the Parliament held a debate entitled 'Demolitions and the right to housing and quality of life'. Two days later (1st March 2015), the *Jornal de Angola* covered the parliamentary debate (Fig. 233). In order to discuss the resettlement policy implemented by the government in contemporary Angola, this section draws on an analysis of the *Jornal de Angola* coverage of the parliamentary debate. The main article, published on page two and written by the newspaper's editor, Filomeno Manaças, summarises the outcomes of the debate (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

[This is] an issue dear to the country because we have all followed the efforts of the Executive to provide decent housing for citizens, through initiatives taking place in all provinces, such as the construction of new towns, the promotion of guided self-building and the constitution of land reserves intended for the development of housing projects.⁶



Fig. 233 – *Jornal de Angola* 1/3/2015.

6 The text, entitled 'Demolitions and the right to housing', presents some considerations that reflect the government's position on the issue of evictions and demolitions in Angola. As is often the case with the *Jornal de Angola*, the editor's opinion may be said to reveal governmental positioning in relation to the issue in question.

The article goes on to make additional arguments dismissing and homogenising the self-built neighbourhoods. The writing style features long sentences, containing many concepts and ideas (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

[population growth] is a situation which has led to the disorganised emergence of neighbourhoods, whose construction conflicts with the interests of the state, primarily with its policy of territorial planning and with the execution of large projects aimed at creating new economic ventures or even plans designed for the construction of housing in areas of sufficient infrastructure and urbanisation, in accordance with a model which will confer a different quality of life upon its beneficiaries.

This long, complex sentence encompasses the principal aspects of state-led urban regeneration in Luanda. Firstly, praise is reserved for the 'large projects', with which the existing neighbourhoods 'conflict' (and not vice versa). Secondly, the new models in 'areas of sufficient urbanisation' are presented as the sole solution for solving the issue of population growth.

Subsequent paragraphs in the article praise government good practice regarding demolition. Demolitions are perceived to contribute to avoiding "higher risks for the population". Most of the arguments presented by the journalist subscribe to the idea that all demolitions take place in 'areas of risk' (such as the *barrocas*, or slopes), failing to recognise that demolitions occur in almost all areas, particularly in the city centre. It is clear that demolitions answer to higher economic and real estate interests – if this were not the case, new developments would not be built in so-called 'areas of risk'. The article continues (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

The idea that the population cannot be blamed for building in areas of risk is a way of colluding with irresponsibility and negligence (...). And this occurs primarily when constructions are built with poor materials, on unsafe land, on slopes which may visibly give way at any moment, on riverbanks, in short, in places where danger is imminent.

Dismissing the evicted residents (the 'victims' or 'undesirables' as William Ryan calls them in *Blaming the Victim*) is a common practice in these situations.⁷ The article goes on to quote the 'correct' conclusions of the Assembly members (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

Demolitions of huts must take place in compliance with the principle of social justice, clarifying the grounds, conditions offered by the state, and the conditions faced by groups subject to demolitions.

In view of the "general opinion that the state orders demolitions of informal constructions indiscriminately and without any specific criteria", the article proposes an improved educational strategy, "because information does not always reach recipients in the best way" (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015). However, the "social justice" grounds for the demolition of the majority of "huts" are not clarified. The *Jornal de Angola* article continues with the editor praising the government's attitude to evictions and introducing the "intersecting" subject of construction and land rights. Here, he refers to Angola's constitution, stating: "it was intelligent of the legislator to enshrine in the Angolan Constitution (article

⁷ *Blaming the Victim* is a classic book by William Ryan (1971), raising several relevant points for a greater understanding of the social problems arising from evictions and slum clearance.

15) 'land as the original property of the state, which may be transferred to individual or collective persons, with a view to its careful, effective use'" (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015). The editor then advances the (quite common) argument that this is a matter of political ideology: "UNITA (the opposition party) has a different understanding, and has not tired (...) of arguing and propagating the idea that the land does not belong to the state, but to the people" (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015). He discredits this argument with an attempt at ironic comparison: "Nothing could be further from the truth. It is the same as defending the *soba* (traditional authority) which facilitates the entry of an illegal foreigner in exchange for a hundred dollars and sells his supposed patch of land for a few more. It is a crime and it is an attempt to curtail the right of the state to exercise authority over its territory" (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015).

The article cites further examples of what is most likely MPLA's reaction to the parliamentary debate: "In the Angolan context, the issue of demolition, of the right to housing and quality of life must be framed not as 'a recently discovered phenomenon', but as 'a phenomenon to be constantly addressed'", and "[the debate] contributed to revealing a series of aspects entangled with the issue, but which nevertheless deserve deeper consideration" (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015). These are rather vague, generic comments.

This article is followed by a shorter, unsigned column entitled 'Populism and the demolitions' (**Fig. 234**).⁸ It is worth reproducing the text in its entirety, as it contributes to a clearer understanding of the friction and tension underpinning portrayals of the issue of evictions and demolitions in state media outlets (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

Nobody expects a legislator to live in conflict with the law and commit crimes while exercising his functions. The recent parliamentary debate on the demolition of illegal huts in public and private spaces revealed a worrying propensity for crime on the part of certain opposition representatives.

Populism is a dangerous political trend with potentially serious consequences for democratic society. When a deputy argues that everyone has the right to build on state land reserves or on private land, he demonstrates his populist nature and defends major crimes.

Building illegally on state land reserves makes what belongs to everyone the property of a small number of citizens. Usurping the property of others by building a hut from metal sheets on private land is a crime and must be tackled by the authorities. But [the] opposition deputies defend these criminal practices.

Demolishing huts constructed on state land reserves or private land is a legitimate act which society demands of the authorities. But even when huts are constructed in 'no man's land', they must still be demolished. Patriotic Angolan men and women will never accept that one of their number should live in a shack lacking basic living conditions. Everyone has the right to decent housing.

8 Anonymous opinion column in *Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015, page 7 (all other opinion articles on this page, relating to various topics, are signed). Translation by the author.

POPULISMO

As demolições

A Assembleia Nacional é a sede do Poder Legislativo, o que dá aos deputados especiais responsabilidades. Ninguém espera que um legislador viva em conflito com a Lei e cometa crimes no exercício das suas funções. O recente debate parlamentar sobre a demolição de casebres ilegais em espaços públicos ou privados revelou uma inquietante propensão para o crime, por parte de alguns deputados da Oposição.

O populismo é uma perigosa deriva política que pode acarretar consequências graves para a sociedade democrática. Quando um deputado defende que todos têm direito a construir nas reservas fundiárias do Estado ou em terrenos que são propriedade de privados, está a mostrar a sua faceta populista e a defender crimes graves.

Construir ilegalmente nas reservas fundiárias do Estado é tornar de poucos cidadãos, o que pertence a todos. Usurpar a propriedade alheia erguendo lá um casebre de chapas, é crime que deve ser combatido pelas autoridades. Mas deputados da Oposição defendem essas práticas criminosas.

Demolir casebres construídos em reservas fundiárias do Estado ou terrenos privados é um acto legítimo que a sociedade exige às autoridades. Mas ainda que os casebres estejam construídos em “terra de ninguém”, eles têm de ser demolidos na mesma. As angolanas e os angolanos patriotas jamais poderão aceitar que um de nós viva em barracas sem as mínimas condições. Todos têm direito a uma habitação digna.

Fig. 234 - *Jornal de Angola* 1/3/2015 - populism and demolitions

This unsigned opinion column reveals the authoritarian, dismissive tone characterising discussions of the issue among public figures and their followers.

During a fieldwork trip in March 2015, I sought to obtain first-hand testimony from somebody linked to the official bodies promoting evictions in the city of Luanda. It was important to discover the way in which the teams carrying out the evictions functioned, as well as other relevant technical issues. A member of the management team of the *PPHS – Programa Provincial de Habitação Social de Luanda* (Luanda Provincial Social Housing Programme) was contacted by email.⁹ The questions and answers are reproduced verbatim below (email, 3-12/3/2015):

How are the houses/families registered?

My limited practical experience did not involve matters of registration, and you would be better informed on this issue by another colleague [name and contact – never replied to an interview request].

How are negotiations with the population conducted?

[no response]

What are the different stages of the process?

I can tell you that it generally depends on the availability of funds for compensation of the peasants that occupy the land, the state of the land itself and the construction of houses and basic infrastructure such as water supply networks, sewage systems and electricity.

How are areas of resettlement assigned to individual families?

The area is usually one defined by the provincial strategic management plan, Decree 59/11, as an area allocated for resettlement. As well as Zango, we have Panguila which is another site with a social housing development. In the case of the conversion of Cazenga, Sambizanga and Rangel [known as Luanda-Norte], *in situ* resettlement is already planned by means of the snowballing method, identifying unoccupied sites where single or multi-family dwellings are built to empty other areas, prompting a process of urban development in these areas of informal settlement.

What are the types and material characteristics of the resettlement houses?

As for the types, [colleague who never replied] will also be able to help, but they are houses with three bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and sanitary facilities, on a 15m x 15m plot. Construction varies according to the company contracted, but they are generally made from bricks or polystyrene with shotcrete, covered with aluminium sheets with the interspaces sealed with aluminium framework.

Who undertakes the urban development projects and the construction of resettlement houses?

I think this question could also be expanded upon by the colleague I mentioned above. However, I can say that often it is the investors who are responsible for the construction of these houses, in joint social participation with the state in the promotion of the families' wellbeing, taking into account the guaranteed return on their investment. The urban development plan is the responsibility of the state, and is based on provincial initiatives with the approval of the central bodies (Ministries) represented by the supervisory minister.

⁹ The programme was previously known as *Programa de Habitação Social e Requalificação das Áreas de Realojamento* (Programme for Social Housing and Regeneration of Resettlement Areas). Following an exchange of messages intended to clarify the aims of my study, I was asked to send the questions I would like answered via email, as this was "more convenient". It was only after these initial email messages that the informant explained that she was actually a former member of the management team; nevertheless, most answers were provided. The emails were exchanged between 3/3/2015 and 12/3/2015.

The responses of this informant who was once linked to the PPHS are somewhat inconclusive, especially regarding the specific case of Chicala evictions (**Fig. 235**). It is worth noting that the 'investors' are responsible for the construction of resettlement houses.



Fig. 235 – Plan of Chicala's evicted areas. © Paulo Moreira, 2016

Fig. 235 – Plan of Chicala’s evicted areas

Entire areas of the existing neighbourhood have been gradually removed. The emptied sites remain as powerful reminders of the major urban change yet to come.

Favela

At the time of the demolition, Favela had around 2,000 inhabitants. At the turn of the millennium, the Angolan government promoted forced evictions in the area, initially offering neither resettlement nor compensation to the affected families. Since 2001, the area has once again become populated by new and former residents. In 2010, Favela was completely evicted. The eviction began on the night of Thursday 18th November 2010, when a number of bulldozers set to work, protected by a powerful security cordon. According to an informant who witnessed the process, around two dozen trucks parked along Avenida Dr Agostinho Neto, carrying people and belongings. Some reports published at the time, quoted in Sílvia Viegas’ thesis, note that “anyone who was in their house was transferred to Zango or Panguila, and anyone who was out was no longer able to enter” (Viegas, 2015: 336). Since then, this strip of land has been transformed into a public space, temporarily occupied by stands during the yearly Carnival celebrations.

Sector da Fortaleza

The Sector da Fortaleza, at the foot of the São Miguel fortress on the northern edge of Chicala 2, was evicted in May 2010. The area had expanded along the waterfront since the end of the 1980s, with the rate of growth intensifying during the first few years of the 1990s. To place the situation in context, the eldest descendants born in Sector da Fortaleza in Chicala 2 were adults when the eviction occurred. Demolitions took place in this area as a result of the urban renewal operations carried out on the southern edge of the Baía de Luanda project. One of the evicted citizens, who was among the first 22 displaced families, described the scene:

“We agreed that we would leave at 6am. At 8pm the night before, the coaches to transfer people arrived, as did the lorries to transport our belongings and the police convoy. They spent the night there, waiting”.

Kilombo

Kilombo was a well-confined settlement, situated at the southern tip of Chicala 1. It was connected to Chicala 1 by Rua Massano de Amorim, leading to the *Entrada da Ilha* (the gateway to the Ilha peninsula) and to mainland Luanda by a continuous boat service, harboured on the Nova Marginal, opposite the Mausoleum. On 21st January 2014, all of Kilombo’s residents were evicted and resettled. Kilombo was closed down in the morning, and no one was allowed in or out of the site. Throughout the day, several buses came and went, collecting people to be taken to Zango. At 10pm, the last buses arrived to collect the final load of people.

Sector Flamingo

On 16th March 2013, the northern side of Sector Flamingo was evicted and demolished. There was quite a bustle that morning. While some people emptied their homes, piling furniture, clothing and appliances onto trucks operated by China Jiangsu workers, others hurried to salvage fixtures from the buildings destroyed, as the backhoe progressed under the guidance of Soares da Costa technicians. As houses were torn down, certain materials and building fixtures became more accessible and some people ventured among the machines to pull them out of the rubble. Gratings, sheet metal, doors, windows and cement plaques slowly piled up on the adjacent pavement. Exclamations of both protest and delight could be heard among the sounds of destruction.

Chicala Point

Besides the demolition of housing, the process of transforming Chicala also involves large landfill operations. From 2002, sand was dragged to the western side of Chicala 1. The area was occupied by several public and private organisations, with dozens of informal fish restaurants appearing simultaneously next to the GPL - *Governo Provincial de Luanda* fence. The area became known as ‘Chicala Point’. It was visited daily by people arriving from Chicala and other parts of Luanda. In 2011, Chicala Point was dismantled by the police and municipal authorities.

Chicala 2

In the first week of April 2015, a 40 metre strip of Chicala 2 bordering the Avenida Agostinho Neto was removed. The residents were transferred to Zango 2. Reports say that around 150 families were evicted during this period.

Chicala 3

The clearance of Chicala 3 has been a gradual process. In 2005, the southern edge of Chicala 3 was demolished and its inhabitants resettled in Zango, to the south of Luanda. The intention may have been to eventually clear the whole neighbourhood from one side to the other. The evictions prompted a group of residents to write complaint letters to Luanda’s higher authorities, aiming to negotiate the resettlement conditions. Eventually, representatives of the residents were received by the municipal authorities and, coincidentally or not, the eviction process was stopped. The cleared area has since been re-occupied, partially by the originally evicted residents (who were unhappy with the living conditions they found in Zango and its remote location), and by immigrants from the Republic of Congo (the southern edge of Chicala 3 has become popularly known as ‘Congo’). In January and February 2014, Chicala 3 was completely demolished, and its residents resettled in Zango.

‘Chicala 4’

In 2010, a large volume of earth was transferred to the ocean bordering the south of Chicala 3. Local residents reported that the soil was moved from the construction site of the new National Assembly, 2 km away in the political-administrative centre. However, these assumptions were denied by landfill technicians in charge of the operations. A number of questions remain unanswered.

Areia Branca

Areia Branca was a sandbank situated just south of Kilombo, opposite the Barra da Corimba. The settlement was evacuated between 26th May and 6th June 2013, with around 680 families evicted without compensation (DW, 18/8/2014). One of the evicted residents in Areia Branca said that she was held at the police station for two nights because of her attempts to save her belongings during the eviction.

This issue was brought up in the interview at Dar headquarters in Luanda (March 2015). It is known that after several years of design development (Dar's website dates the SODIMO masterplan as 2002-5), implementation of the project began, involving the resettlement of several families. SODIMO was the driving force behind the demolition of several dozen houses at Chicala 3's southern edge in 2005. On this occasion, house clearances in the area stopped less than a week after they had begun.¹⁰ Evictions then ceased for a while before resuming with a different strategy, as explained by Mr. Rodrigo, architect at Dar (interview, 23/3/2015):

[Now] whenever we buy a house, we negotiate with a family and move them to Zango; it is the only way we can keep the project moving, little by little.

Viewed differently, this may be interpreted as a strategy to render evictions less spectacular and aggressive. The more 'quiet' and 'gentle' deletions are, however, equally violent (Easterling, 2007: 178).

Another strategy to reduce controversy surrounding evictions is to restrict their public visibility (in particular in the media), or delay reporting until long after events have taken place and the situation has become more settled. There are many examples of this latter strategy, for instance, in the case of evictions in Kilombo. On 21st January 2014, all of Kilombo's residents were evicted and resettled (**Fig. 236 - 238**). The State news agency *Angop* did not report on these events until almost two weeks later (*Angop* (I), 3/2/14):

Around 2,000 families who had been living in Chicala 2 and Kilombo (...) have been transferred to the Zango estate, due to poor housing conditions [in Chicala/Kilombo].¹¹

On the same day (3rd February 2014), nearly two hours later, *Angop* published another article online with further information about the case. The article reported that residents had been transferred to Zango 4 and Cabala, and criticised the actions of some of these residents (*Angop* (II), 3/2/14):

The Provincial Government of Luanda made public today a list of 17 citizens evicted from Kilombo in Chicala 2, who sold the houses they had received in Zango 4 under the rehousing programme.¹²

Both articles followed a press conference by Adriano Mendes de Carvalho, the vice-governor of Luanda Province, which aimed to clarify "rumours circulating in the media, which suggest that the people evicted from Chicala and Kilombo were displaced without any state support" (*Angop* (II), 3/2/2014). The second article includes details of the Cabala site, while the first omits any such information. The article publishes the following explanations (*Angop* (II), 3/2/2014):

10 Possible reasons for this will be discussed in Chapter 6.

11 *Angop*, 3rd February 2014, 6.44 PM.

12 *Angop*, 3rd February 2014, 8.35 PM.



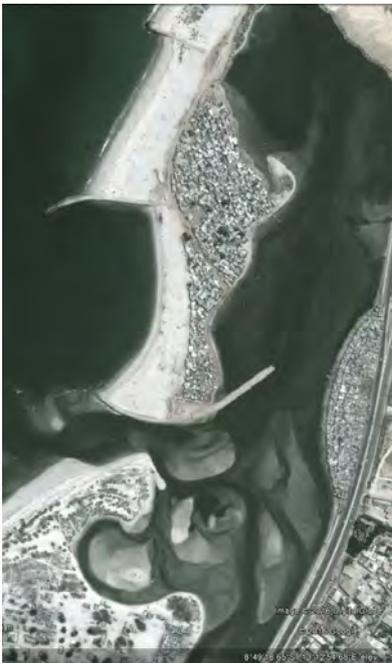
28/5/2006



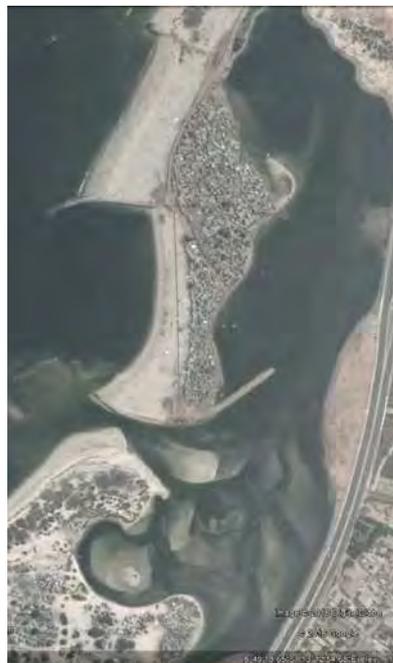
7/6/2008



27/1/2009



25/6/2010



15/8/2011



10/6/2014

Fig. 236 – Kilombo and Areia Branca transformation process. Source: Google Earth, 2006-2014



Fig. 237 – Kilombo seen from the Hotel Baía. © Paulo Moreira, 12/2/2013

At first sight, seen from the terrace bar of the luxurious Hotel Baía on Luanda’s Nova Marginal (also known as Avenida Dr Agostinho Neto), Kilombo may seem to be a dense and irregular amalgamation of shacks, closed off and difficult to access, interrupting a beautiful ocean view. However, closer examination provides a different understanding of this place. Fieldwork undertaken in Kilombo (despite being insignificant in comparison to Chicala) allowed me to recognise the neighbourhood’s vital urbanity, as well as to learn a little about its relationship with Chicala and Luanda. In 2013, while living in Rua Massano de Amorim (Chicala 1’s main street), I would take a starlet (informal public transport) at least twice a day from the house to the gateway to the Ilha, or vice versa. These poorly maintained Toyota Starlet vans served as the main means of transport connecting Chicala 1 and, further away, Kilombo, to the city. The service was quite frequent: the number of people commuting continuously from the entrance to the Ilha to Chicala 1 and Kilombo was significant. At rush hour, the waiting time (before the van was full and ready to go) would never exceed 5 minutes at the departure point. More often than not, I would ride in the front seat of the starlet (because I was offered that seat). This allowed me to converse with the drivers. I realised that most of them lived in Kilombo. Our conversations gave the impression that the majority of the more than 1,000 Kilombo residents worked in direct contact with the ocean, either fishing (men) or selling fish (women).



Fig. 238 - Performance in Kilombo’s main street. © Luis Damião, 1/12/2013

Early in the morning of Saturday 1st December 2013, I drove to Kilombo with a photographer friend (resident in Chicala) and his assistant for a photographic session. The photographer had asked me to take part in the photographic series he was working on. I had photographed or filmed him on many occasions, so it was time to return the favour. The idea was straightforward: I had to jump in the middle of the main street, bare-chested and bare-foot, pretending I was flying. He wanted to capture a moment of contrast and detachment between the central character and the built environment in which the scene took place. As we parked the car in Kilombo’s main street, the photographer went to talk to the *mais-velhos* (older people) who were sitting outside their homes. He explained our intentions and received no objections. The photos were successful in portraying a rich context, showing children staring and the street perspective of the aligned, corrugated iron buildings, punctuated by several lamp posts (placed there before the 2012 elections, but no longer functioning). In the background stands the acclaimed Prenda modernist housing project, an object of study for Portuguese researchers and young academics (see for instance Milheiro, 2010 and Venâncio, 2013). This short session made me aware of the courtesy shown by the neighbours, and made me question whether things may have been different in 2012 (when some students had problems with Kilombo residents), if the students had approached the *mais-velhos* before starting to take photographs.

The vice-governor stated that former residents of Kilombo who were registered by the government would be awarded permanent housing in the Viana municipality, within the Zango 4 zone. (...) After the residents had been registered, new shanty houses suddenly appeared in the location whose residents claimed they should also be rehoused. (...) As a gesture of goodwill from the government, the President of the Republic José Eduardo dos Santos and the governor of Luanda, Bento-Bento, it has been decided that a transfer will take place to the area of Cabala, where the appropriate living conditions are being prepared.

This declaration, including the stated intention to resolve the issue of opportunism, is confusing and misleading. Firstly, the resettlement was not made in Cabala, but in Kissama, on a previously vacant site to which Cabala is the closest village (at a distance of 3.5 km, crossing the river Kwanza) (Fig. 239 - 243).



Fig. 239 – Plan of Kissama resettlement camp.

© Paulo Moreira, 2015

From the entrance to the resettlement colony, one drives along a bumpy mud path alongside a group of corrugated metal shacks. The shacks appear to have common dimensions of around 6 x 4 x 2.5 metres. Often, the *capim* (grass) has grown tall in front of these constructions, a sign that the adjacent dwellings are unoccupied. It is common for many of those relocated to this new location to move back to another settlement or inner-city tenement.



Fig. 240 – Kissama resettlement camp. © Paulo Moreira, 21/3/2015

Kissama resettlement camp described by one of the *desalojados*, as seen on arrival:

“On arriving in Kissama, at night, we were told to stay in [military] tents which we ourselves were required to assemble. Each tent was crammed with between thirty to fifty people who were made to sleep there until their homes were built. Each of the families [residing in the military tents] was given thirty-two sheets of corrugated metal, a box of nails and wooden sticks, and instructed to build what would later become their homes. On those initial days, there were three helicopters, one constantly flying over us with the other two stationary. The atmosphere was understandably tense and uneasy.” (interview, March 2015)

The standardisation of these building packages explains why each dwelling was roughly the same size and followed predetermined and more or less organised ‘blocks’ and ‘streets’.



Fig. 241 – Kissama resettlement camp.

© Paulo Moreira, 21/3/2015

As one nears the Kissama resettlement camp, it is advised not to take photos – there is a police station nearby (although it appeared closed and unoccupied during the site visit in March 2015). An informant explained that it was either lunchtime or, more likely, that the police station was no longer being used – a long time had passed since people had been resettled there and “probably the situation has become much calmer” (interview, March 2015).



Fig. 242 - 243 – Kissama spotted house.

© Paulo Moreira, 21/3/2015

One of the houses in Kissama, at the top of the settlement, was clearly differentiated: the outside walls were painted black with white dots. Someone had added this decoration, probably in order to make it feel more like a ‘home’.

Secondly, the “appropriate living conditions” were certainly not prepared in Kissama. The article reports that there were three lists of people who were transferred: the first two lists contained families living in Chicala.¹³ The third list, published in *Jornal de Angola’s* ‘*Edital nr. 2*, on 23rd January 2014, featured the names of 1,048 families “all resettled in Zango and Cabala, respectively” (“respectively” refers to the fact that those on the third list were resettled in Cabala – or more accurately, Kissama).¹⁴ The *Edital* was entitled ‘Nominal List of Kilombo Neighbourhood Residents’, with the sub-headline ‘The Administrative Commission of the City of Luanda releases the list of families resident in Kilombo, who have been granted plots in January 2014’ (*Jornal de Angola*, 23/1/2014). The newspaper made no mistake: these families would indeed “benefit from a *terreno* (plot of land)” (*Jornal de Angola*, 23/1/2014) (**Fig. 244**). There is no mention of an actual house, as in Panguila or Zango, but only a plot of land. To transfer someone from a house to a mere plot of land can hardly be considered “appropriate living conditions”, as stated in the *Angop* article (*Angop* (II), 3/2/2014). There seems to be a conscious strategy of ‘softening’ the eviction process and the actual resettlement conditions. One of the *desalojados* from Kissama, Mrs. Mariana, described the day of their eviction (interview, March 2015):

Apparently, someone ‘forgot’ to inform us on board that the bus was in fact heading to Kissama – we thought we were going to Zango, we only became aware of this because the journey began to feel unusually long. When I eventually asked for an explanation, I was told that those people whose names were on the list published in *Jornal de Angola* would be taken to Zango; those whose names were not on the list would be taken to Kissama.

This testimony diverges from the aforementioned article in *Angop*, which states that the people on the first two lists were resettled in Zango 4, whereas those on the third list would go to Kissama. I tried to clarify the facts with Mrs. Mariana. She said her name was on the list, but her middle name was spelled incorrectly. Her desperate attempts to convince the people in charge of registration that the name on the list was in fact hers were ignored. They all refused to believe her claims. As confirmed by SOS Habitat members, this is a technique commonly employed by the *fiscais* and the authorities: purposefully misspelling the names of residents in order to withhold the homes promised to them under the resettlement programme.¹⁵



Fig. 244 – *Jornal de Angola*, *Edital nº 2* (23/1/2014), stating that the *desalojados* “will benefit” from a plot of land.

13 The first list had 548 names and the second 1,226 names.

14 The list of 1,048 names was spread over 10 columns across 2 full pages.

15 Two activists from SOS Habitat explained that, in relation to this case, they had approached the Luanda administration to enquire as to why people had been relocated to Kissama. According to both activists, the response they received was that “these people were drug dealers and prostitutes” and that “it was their duty to eradicate this for the greater good of Angolan society” (interview, March 2015).

Secrecy and Absence of Public Consultation

The degree of secrecy surrounding evictions and the resettlement process is almost as pronounced as that which characterises the high-standard developments planned for the sites once cleared. The Angolan government failed to hold any public discussion when developing the resettlement urbanisations, and the displaced communities were not consulted before implementation of the projects began.

The urban structure of the resettlement colonies was decided by the government and the technical teams alone.¹⁶ The implementation of these projects has resulted in the segregation, exclusion and marginalisation of their inhabitants. Sílvia Leiria Viegas, a researcher who dedicated a chapter of her doctoral thesis to Panguila, explains that “due to the absence of state media coverage, which focuses largely on programmes for urban renewal and expansion, Panguila has not been a target of government propaganda” (Viegas, 2015: 306).

Instead, resettlement areas such as Panguila or Zango are often hidden from the public sphere. This becomes apparent by observing the reactions of people linked to urbanism and business with, or by, the state. For example, when I mentioned that I had been, or was going, to Panguila, I received comments like “be careful, watch what you’re getting yourself into...”. Equally, I was advised not to show people ‘out there’ the conditions in which Angolans live (**Fig. 245 - 246**). This secrecy was not easily understood. As a project promoted by the State supposedly aimed at resolving the problem of informal neighbourhoods (themselves subject to secrecy with regard to the publication of images and testimonials abroad), and even advertised in some official media sources, what could there possibly be to hide? It is clear that on the one hand, there is a taboo surrounding the discussion or portrayal of precarious conditions in these neighbourhoods, while on the other hand, requests for ‘caution’ in the reporting of official resettlement programmes suggest the embarrassment of certain people linked to the government, as if there are reasons to be ashamed of the solution chosen.

¹⁶ The Law of Urban and Territorial Management (2004) does not stipulate the public discussion of plans (Viegas, 2015: 371).



Fig. 245 - 246 – Panguila resettlement camp overview.

© Paulo Moreira, 30/5/2012

Many of the displaced families from Chicala depended on the sea for their livelihoods, and were resettled in a completely different environment. New sources of funding often come as a result of the reinvention of residents' professional capabilities. In many cases, they now work in the informal market offering services or selling products. As an anecdote illustrating the *desalojados'* capacity for adaptation, an informant said that even taps from the sanitary facilities had been removed and sold: "it's better to go to the market than to wait around, no water comes out" (interview, 7/5/2012).

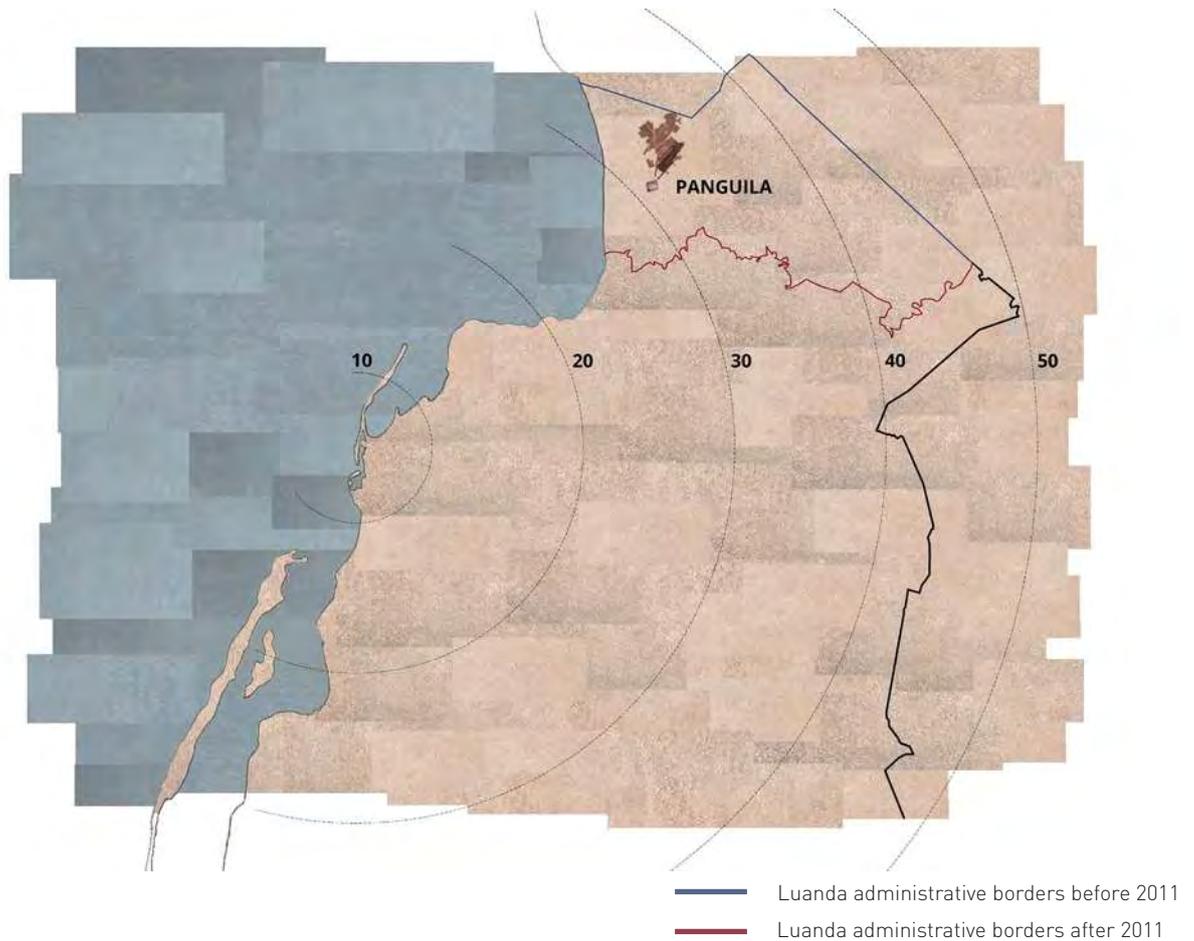


Fig. 247 – Plan of Panguila with change of jurisdiction. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

In 2011, the administrative division of the provinces of Luanda and neighbouring Bengo removed Panguila from the former Cacucaco municipality in Luanda, and reassigned it to the Dande municipality in Bengo. The exclusion of Panguila from the urban management of Luanda was made official by a legal instrument (Law no. 29/11, 1st September). This was not the case in other resettlement colonies such as Zango and Sapú. According to researcher Sílvia Viegas, government discourse does not clarify the reasons for this differential legal treatment between one residential area and another (Viegas, 2015: 342). This strategic move was also highly symbolic, reinforcing the idea that the inhabitants of this new neighbourhood were no longer citizens of Luanda. They were thus excluded from the state's project for regenerating the metropolitan area. During my various visits to Panguila, I sought to ascertain the population's own interpretation of this alteration. One of my informants in Panguila angrily said "We're no longer Luanda's problem, we are someone else's problem" (interview, 2012).

Another strategy to keep Panguila out of the public gaze was the neighbourhood's change in jurisdiction from Luanda to Bengo in 2011 (**Fig. 247**). This was not a mere administrative matter implying a simple change in postal address to another province. Instead, the administrative transfer gave rise to a number of issues, from the lack of social services and basic infrastructure, to the absence of a clear designation of responsibilities. The Bengo Provincial Government did not immediately assume responsibility for maintaining the colony, nor did the Ministry of Urbanism, charged with concluding the construction works, address the numerous problems which arose (Viegas, 2015: 364-5).

It seems clear that the withdrawal of Luandan citizenship from the *desalojados* of Panguila was an intentional strategy, which allowed for other manoeuvres such as the manipulation of Luanda's poverty index, improving the results by excluding Panguila residents from the count.

In Zango, information on official urban policy is also scarce and somewhat indecipherable. Sylvia Croese, a researcher whose doctoral thesis focuses on the case of Zango, writes that “housing allocation in Zango has not been grounded in any explicit policy or regulation due to the legal limbo in which the project has existed since its creation” (Croese, 2013: 100-1).

The *PDMV – Plano Director Municipal de Viana* (Viana Municipal Master Plan), a document from the Angolan government which focuses on urban development in Zango, considers the latter to be still “under consolidation, in the process of improvement”¹⁷ (PDMV, 2014: 201). It explicitly acknowledges the numerous shortcomings that continue to mark the project. It notes, for example, that “visible efforts have been made to provide facilities in this area, yet deficiencies remain in terms of basic infrastructure and collective facilities of various kinds (schools, clinics/health centres, sports grounds, police stations and other services)” (PDMV, 2014: 264). The document adds that the thousands of families residing in the area are “apparently well-housed”, or at least “better than they were previously, when they were living in precarious conditions in different parts of Luanda” (PDMV, 2014: 203). The *PDMV* also states that “to guarantee a better quality of life for residents, the government project envisages the construction of hospitals, trading areas, leisure and sporting facilities, schools, nurseries, markets, shopping centres, administrative services, banks, police stations, hotels, telecommunications systems, petrol stations” (PDMV, 2014: 203). However, the government study admits that “some of these facilities have yet to be constructed or completed”, and that “despite the good housing conditions, the population is obliged to travel long distances and face chaotic traffic every day in order to reach the city, which continues to represent the principal hub for the population resident in Viana” (PDMV, 2014: 203). It would appear that, despite the government’s best intentions, Zango is not yet an entirely pleasant place to live. Instead, it remains an exclusion zone.

Secrecy and lack of information about the resettlement process has a concrete negative impact on the residents of Chicala, who live in constant uncertainty about their future. Both established residents and newcomers were always resigned to the fact that Chicala 2 would eventually disappear (despite this, the neighbourhood continued to evolve just like any other part of the city). When questioned about this fact, Dar architect Mr. Rodrigo reminded me that the apparent lack of information is not only a problem for Chicala, but that “it is a national problem” (interview, 23/3/2015). This assertion seemed like an attempt by the architect to ‘pass the buck’ to avoid taking responsibility for the problem. In his opinion, resettlements should be a centralised matter, linked to “a new National Institute, of sorts, to solve all the relocation cases; each resettlement case cannot be thought of in isolation” (interview, 23/3/2015). He continued by saying that “otherwise, each one [company] is relocating by itself, like ‘we need 2,000 houses now, we need 500 houses now’, and so on” (interview, 23/3/2015). These assumptions by someone directly

¹⁷ *Plano Director Municipal de Viana - Volume 2 - Caracterização do Território*, document from May 2014, signed by the Angolan government, the Ministry of Urbanism and Housing and the Luanda Provincial Government.

involved in the Chicala evictions raise questions about the actual role of the *PPHS* (mentioned above) in the Province of Luanda. Mr. Rodrigo appears to suggest that, although his company was involved in the Chicala resettlement process, he does not consider them to bear any ethical or political responsibility for it.¹⁸

The reasons for the delays in providing news and information to residents should also be examined. In November and December 2012, a team of technicians presumably linked to the SODIMO project undertook an inventory of the entire neighbourhood. This came as little surprise to most of the residents, and it was not the first time that they had been 'counted'. However, following these actions, the information conveyed to residents about their own future was clearly insufficient. They were never even told who or what official entity was responsible for the surveys and questionnaires conducted. Residents could only assume that they were part of the SODIMO project, and that they were the initial components of an associated relocation process. Concrete information about the relocation process was scarce, residents were never told exactly when or where they would be transferred, and no alternative options were presented to them. They were subject to the will of whoever was in charge. It was only after the demolitions in February 2014 that negotiations with the population were made visible, when a *Gabinete de Negociação* (Negotiation Office) was created in the area where Chicala 3 was formerly located.¹⁹

Conflicts and Negative Perceptions

Public criticism of demolitions and evictions in Luanda is deeply-rooted in Angolan society. Despite being largely ignored by most media outlets, it is evident that this is a widespread issue which provokes unease among the population.

After the evictions in Chicala 2 in April 2015, some media sources echoed the discontent of the *desalojados*. A short article in *Voa Português* covered reactions to the evictions. In the article, entitled 'Residents transferred from Chicala say they were tricked', former residents are quoted as saying that "the houses in Zango are unsuitable" and that "the houses that were allocated to them are unfit for habitation" (*Voa Português*, 2/4/2015). The article presents testimonies from several *desalojados* who were outraged at the conditions they found in Zango 2. One of them claimed to have been tricked (*Voa Português*, 2/4/2015):

¹⁸ Dar constructs new houses in the resettlement colonies, as part of the deal to build in Chicala once it has been cleared.

¹⁹ The negotiation office consisted of two pre-fabricated containers where residents were allegedly informed about resettlement conditions, and where negotiations regarding the number of houses to be allocated in Zango took place. Often a *casa principal* (main house) was 'worth' 2 houses in Zango, whereas an *anexo* was 'worth' either a single house or a *Tchuna* house (more details later in this Chapter), depending on the original building and the negotiating ability of the family involved. Each case was unique. I visited the *Gabinete de Negociação* twice in March 2015, but found only a security guard there. The residents I spoke to in Chicala preferred not to negotiate with 'them'. A resident called it "brutal negotiation, as they intimidate the people, forcing them to accept what is imposed upon them." (on-site interview, 2015)

The houses here are awful, they aren't even covered, (...) they promised good houses in Zango, but we arrive here and the furniture doesn't fit in the house.

Other *desalojados* complained that “the rooms are small and the houses incomplete” (*Voa Português*, 2/4/2015). One man cited other problems which have increased his despair with his new accommodation, such as the distance to the city and the lack of basic services (*Voa Português*, 2/4/2015):

We haven't got any transport, we haven't got running water, we haven't got any hospitals, we haven't got any schools, the children have practically already missed a school year, the windows aren't well made and the resident has to call someone to put in windows and pay for it to be done.

The data gathered on residents' experiences, narratives and testimonies of the process of resettlement from Chicala show that the *desalojados*, real estate professionals and even government officials (via the *PDMV* document mentioned earlier) hold negative perceptions of the resettlement colonies. Further study would, perhaps, reveal exceptions among the *fiscais* or landlords who have begun to appropriate the housing allocation process for their own ends. However, as far as this investigation could uncover, negative perceptions are common to all parties. As Croese puts it (2013: 166-7):

A market has emerged which covers the full relocation chain from the sale and rental of shacks and plots of land in areas that are targeted for demolition to the houses in Zango itself.

The cases of Panguila and Zango, the two major resettlement colonies in Luanda, highlight the role of informality as an intrinsic feature in urban and architectural *modus operandi* in Luanda. Put differently, relocation processes may be labelled 'business as usual'. In the context of Luanda, such an interpretation is publicly accepted. Various strategies are employed to 'formalise' these informal practices, the most common of which are the involvement of residents' committees and the registration of housing transactions – “even if marked by a widespread sense of negotiability” (Croese, 2013: 166-67). These informal rules and working methods have given rise to a sense of predictability or certainty, for instance regarding the actions of the *fiscais* or the *oportunistas* in areas targeted for demolition. Stories of opaque and conflictive resettlement processes reach the public sphere and negative views on such issues spread through Angolan society. My brief fieldwork period in Panguila, Sapú and Zango demonstrated these negative perceptions, albeit partially due to my focus on recent resettlement cases.²⁰

Sylvia Croese studied the government's response to growing public criticism. She wrote that “the government has sought to counter the negative image of Zango by publishing stories in the daily state-owned newspaper *Jornal de Angola* that praise the project (...), but it has also sought to effectively improve certain aspects of the project, for instance by shifting the focus of housing from quantity and delivery to quality and sustainability” (Croese, 2013: 111). Croese's research depicts a positive version

²⁰ Nevertheless, I acknowledge that a more in-depth study might uncover some less negative perceptions.

of the facts. The author states that the Zango project belies the government's desire for regime legitimisation, derived predominantly from external sources during the civil war, which has emerged alongside predatory rentier ambitions. In her words, "the intention of the government with state-led development projects like Zango was to acquire domestic support" (Croese, 2013: 119). However, there is clear evidence of the widely disseminated negative perception of the 'business' linked to eviction processes in Luanda. This assumption is confirmed even by the State newspaper (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

There is a network of agents which, in bad faith, also works to torpedo actions by the state and damage its reputation among ordinary citizens. Its involvement in the commercialisation of spaces on land with infrastructure, at exorbitant prices, is a practice which exists and which must be fought at close quarters, just as with fraudulent acquisitions of apartments in the new towns, because this brings about the exclusion of less asset-rich individuals.

Criticism of the 'business' surrounding relocation processes in Luanda tends to be directed at two main targets, depending on who makes the criticism. On the one hand, negative perceptions among government representatives are commonly linked to *ocupações anárquicas* (*Jornal de Angola*, 1/3/2015):

Anarchic occupations of land which has already been allocated are not innocent, when it is discovered that there are people there who already have housing.

On the other hand, people affected by evictions often criticise the procedures of the registration teams. According to Mr. Artur, a resident of Chicala, the registration team is not doing a good job (interview, March 2015):

They show you a single piece of paper about the Zango project, but in reality you will see something else.

Mr. Artur viewed the *fiscais* as service providers hired by SODIMO. He complained that "they're disorganised and suspicious" (interview, March 2015). As an example, Mr. Artur explained that he had witnessed 'confusion' months earlier during the rehousing process in Chicala 3: according to him, some houses were sold by the *fiscais* and consequently there were cases of families that had no homes to go to.

The same perception was expressed by Mr. Joel, a *desalojado* in Panguila, the representative of the Chicala 2 and Favela *desalojados* who formerly lived in Sector da Fortaleza (**Fig.248 - 249**).²¹

21 The interview took place at the *Comissão de Moradores* (Residents' Committee) in Sector 10 in Panguila, which operates from a house identical to those where the *desalojados* live. Mr. Joel was accompanied by a representative of the *Comité do MPLA* (MPLA Committee) in Panguila and a police agent. Their presence was somewhat strange, particularly that of the policeman. During the conversation, I came to understand that the intention was to control Mr. Joel's testimonial, that is, to make sure he said nothing unexpected. This suspicion was confirmed when, halfway through the conversation, Mr. Joel looked to one side before answering and asked "Can I say this?". The situation recalled Keller Easterling's reference to the condition of 'prisonisation' (Easterling, 2007: 170).



Fig. 248 – Favela transformation process. Google Earth, 2006-2015

Favela was the name popularly given to a small informal settlement situated opposite the Agostinho Neto Mausoleum. The site, in the shape of a half-moon, began to form at the end of the 1990s, before being completely demolished in November 2010.

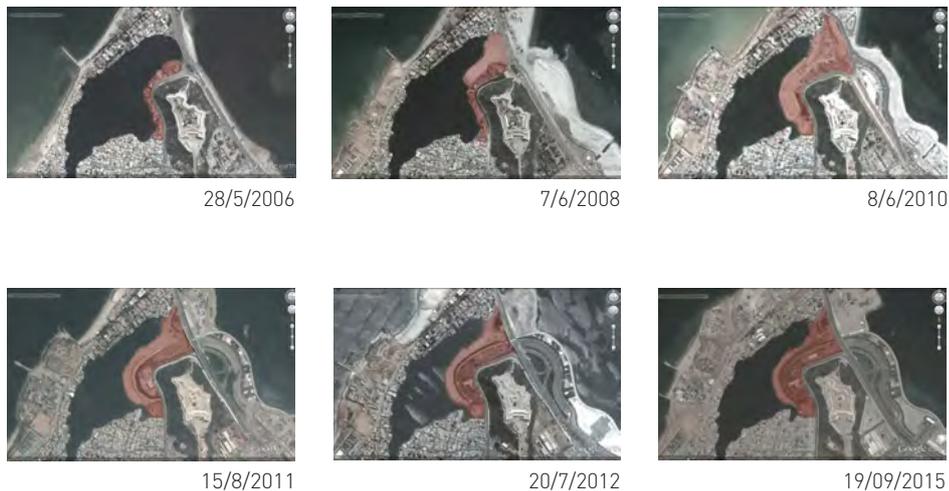


Fig. 249 – Sector da Fortaleza [Fortress Sector] transformation process. Google Earth, 2006-2015

The area is now a Sonangol petrol station, a lawn and an EDEL – *Empresa de Distribuição de Energia Eléctrica* (Public Electricity Provider).

His description of the arrival of the *desalojados* from Favela in Panguila corroborates the accusations made by Mr. Artur. According to Mr. Joel, the arrival in Panguila took place in an atmosphere of *confusão* (confusion). Upon arrival at the resettlement camp, the population encountered serious limitations: the houses in Sector 10 (also known as pink houses, or ‘Chicala’) and the houses in blocks 3-5 of Sector 9 (known as Modular Project, or ‘Favela’), were insufficient for the number of families to be rehoused (Fig. 250 - 254).²²

²² The popular use of the name of the former neighbourhood in place of the impersonal ‘Sector 9’ or ‘Sector 10’ recalls the baptism of the new Panguila Market as ‘Roque Santeiro’. It is a kind of euphemism.

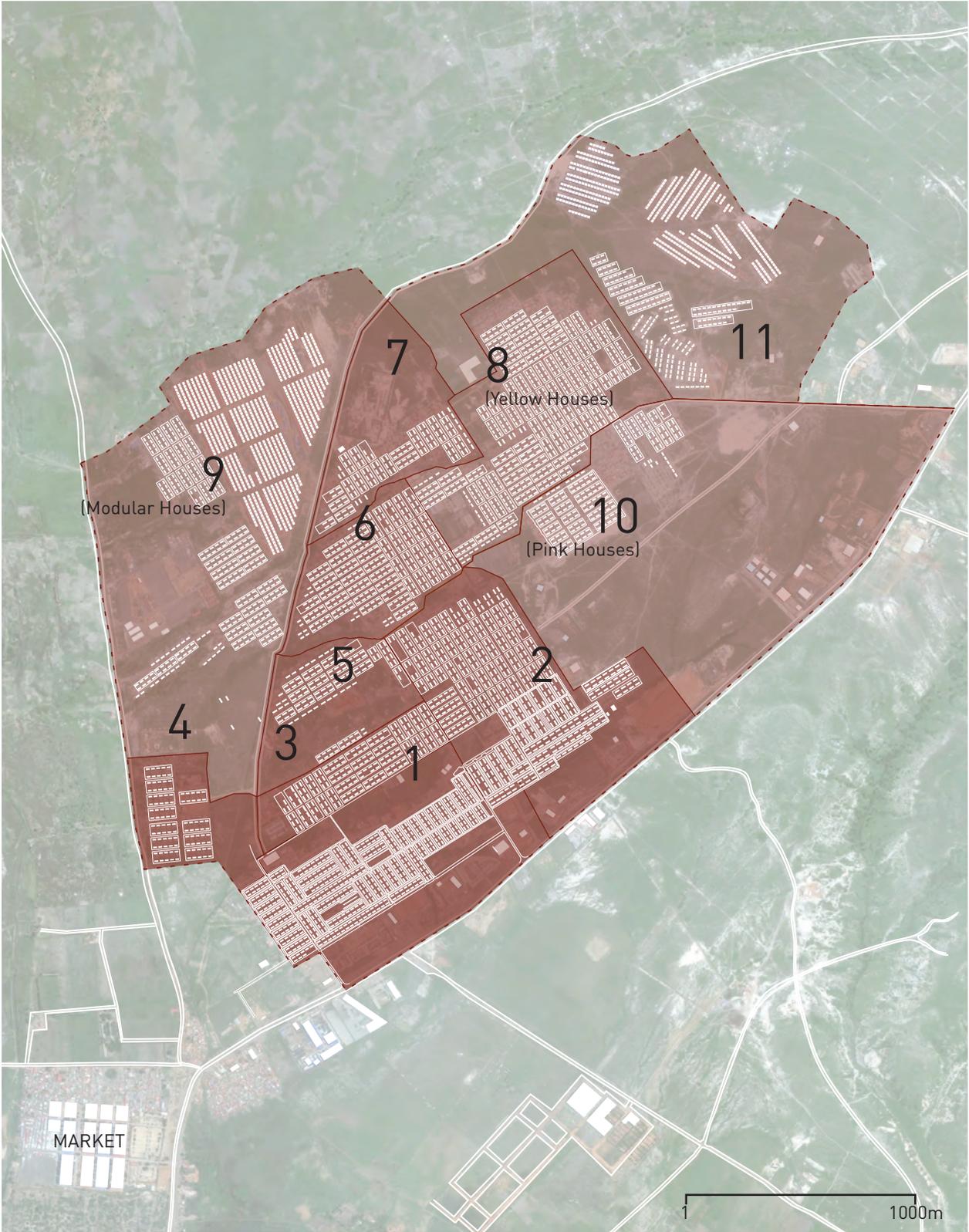


Fig. 250 – Plan of Panguila Resettlement Camp. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

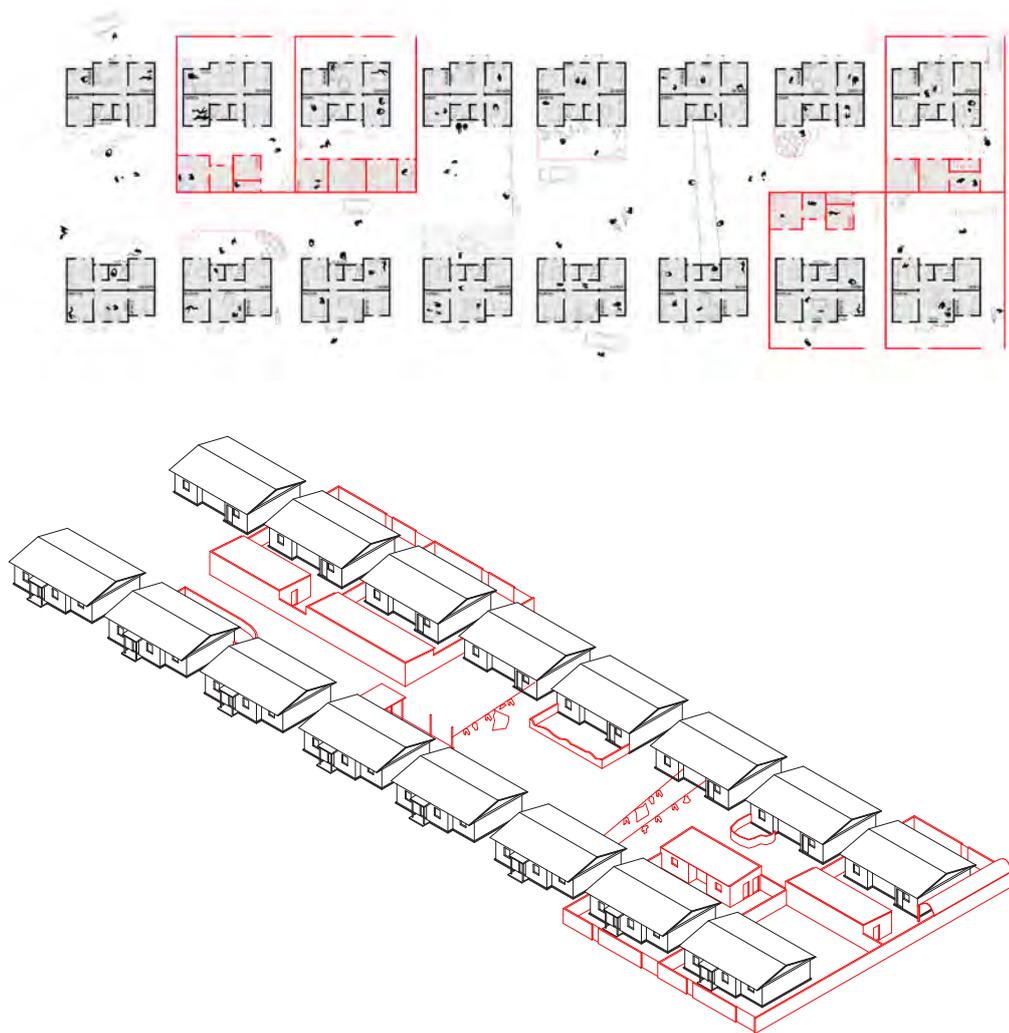


Fig. 251 - 252 – Panguila – Sector 9 (“Modular House”). © Paulo Moreira, 2015 - 30/5/2012

The houses in the modular project are constructed using foam boards, simply rendered both inside and out. One of the *desalojados* explained somewhat sarcastically that “these houses are too modern: pretty, plastic-coated, easily washed... but they catch fire quickly” (interview, 7/5/2012). To tackle the limitations of their housing, families begin to complete the construction process themselves. The most immediate self-interventions (in red in the drawing above) are linked to daily activities, such as putting up clothes lines or creating improvised open air kitchens behind the houses, or small stalls for selling goods in front of them. Over time, and depending on the financial situation of each family, more permanent alterations are made, such as building perimeter walls marking the edges of the plot of land. After several months – or years – it is common to construct annexes with extra bedrooms at the back of the *quintais*, as they can be built incrementally.

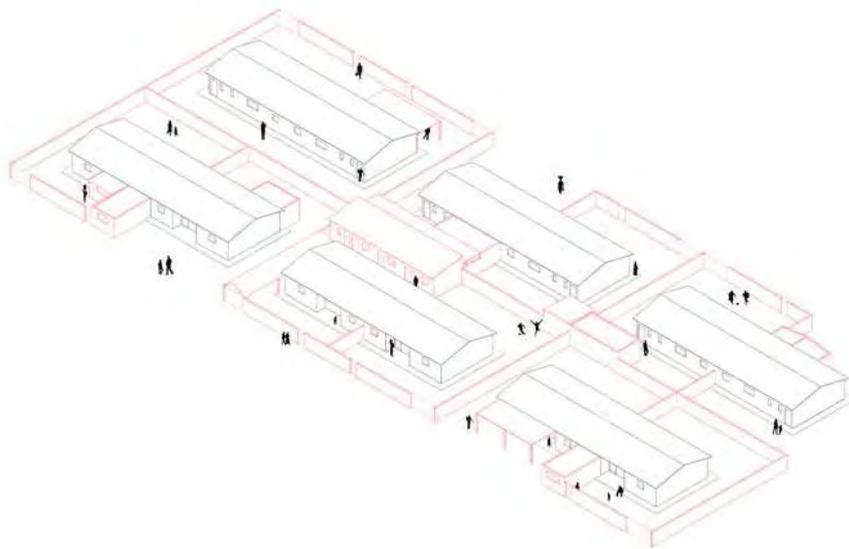
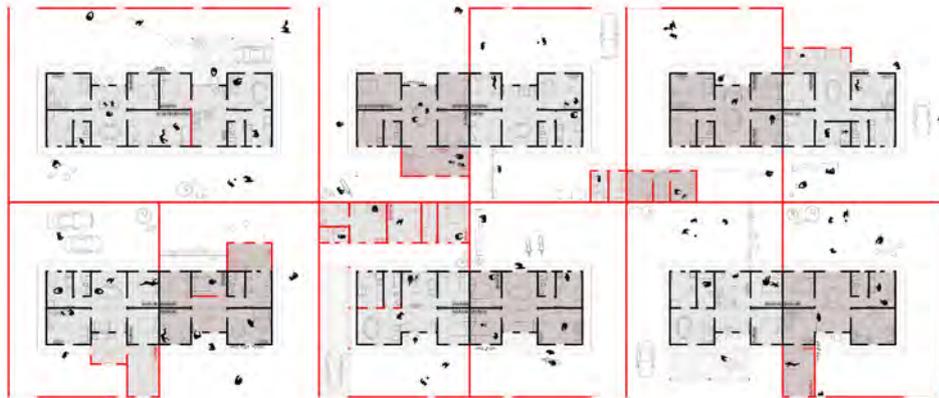


Fig. 253 - 254 - Panguila - Sector 10 ("Pink House"). © Paulo Moreira, 30/5/2012 - 2015

Two to three families were accommodated in each house, with a family in each bedroom. Mr. Joel explains (interview, 7/5/2012):

In the 2-bedroom houses, there were two families, in the 3-bedroom houses, three families... if there were 4-bedroom houses they would have four families too, 5-bedroom houses would have five families, and so on. The numbers of residents greatly exceeded expectations... you know how opportunism works, some people came trying to do business and they put some more families in. (...) When this situation became known, it was no longer possible to place one family in each residence. So, three families went in to one house.

This forced cohabitation created conflict among the different families. Often strangers to one another, the families were grouped arbitrarily and obliged to live together and share communal areas (living room, sanitary facilities and kitchen). According to Mr. Joel, the population has tried to adapt this distribution, swapping houses with other families in the same sector. In this way, the community has managed to limit the sharing of accommodation to relatives or friends. Mr. Joel's complaints illustrate that, more often than not, forced eviction causes the situation of the families affected to deteriorate.

In response to the complaints of the *desalojados* from Favela, the Luanda Provincial Government guaranteed that the resettlement to Panguila would be provisional ("Two weeks", according to Mr. Joel) and that the families would be referred to a system of managed self-construction (Viegas, 2015: 350-1). When asked whether he had received any more information on this matter in the meantime, Mr. Joel said that he had not, and that "he preferred not to" (interview, 7/5/2012):

I wouldn't like to know when [the families displaced from Favela] will leave [Panguila], because I'm human and sometimes I get emotional. I might slip up and say something [to the families] and create unrest. And then I'll be accused of fomenting unrest, [because] the Constitution makes mention of the crime of fomenting unrest, you can't agitate the population or you'll go to prison. [That's why] I'd rather not know.

It is clear that the situation, supposedly provisional but continuing indefinitely, has greatly exacerbated the problem. It has given rise to numerous conflicts within the shared accommodation, from petty theft to loss of privacy and increased sexual promiscuity. Despite all of this, Mr. Joel is resigned to the situation and remains hopeful that one day it will be resolved.

The problem of cohabitation between different families in a single house is just one of the levels of conflict present among the *desalojados* in Panguila and Zango. Other sources of tension also exist. In Panguila, the population has been deeply mistrustful from the very beginning of the construction methods used in the houses in the Modular Project and their durability. This discontentment has been exacerbated

by the spread of fires (accidental or as a result of arson).²³

Mr. Joel went on to complain about another issue in particular, explaining that the construction of a community water tank remained suspended following the change in administrative division of Panguila to Bengo. This highlights the significance of water scarcity among the most critical problems affecting the daily lives of Panguila's inhabitants. This simple, concrete example of an everyday situation reveals the ways in which segregation and social control operate.

The number of possible conflicts, tensions and negative perceptions is extensive. According to Mr. Joel, even the process of negotiation led to heated disputes. In the case of Favela, residents complain that negotiation was practically non-existent. The arbitrary approach adopted by the Luanda Provincial Government towards registration of residents and the subsequent demolition of housing caused a commotion among the population. The process was far from transparent and some families were not entitled to resettlement. Meanwhile, reports indicate that some non-residents of Favela received new housing (Viegas, 2015: 349-350).²⁴

Despite being a focus of tensions and negative perceptions, closer study of the resettlement colonies may have revealed more positive aspects, such as those observed by some of Croese's informants in Zango. One respondent says that "the aim of the upgrading (*requalificação*) is for Zango not to remain a precarious area, but to slowly increase the quality of life and the value of land in Zango. The stigma of Zango as a resettlement project needs to be reduced" (Croese, 2013: 112). The researcher herself states that "the project also no longer reflects the views of Zango that circulated widely in the earliest stages of the project as a *bairro indígena* of colonial times or a place in the periphery where poor people are moved to be out of sight of the elites, although this view still lingers on in the imaginary of those that inhabit other parts of the city" (Croese, 2013: 163).

During my visit to Kissama resettlement camp, I asked the *desalojados* whether there were any positive aspects of living there in comparison to Kilombo. "Yes", said a man who had been quiet for most of the time, laughing. "There is less criminality – there's nothing to steal" (interview, 21/3/2015).

²³ The history of Favela was characterised by regular tales of conflict and turbulence. For example, several fires occurred in the neighbourhood over the years, some as a result of neglect, others allegedly the product of arson motivated by disagreements between neighbours. There are reports of fires occurring in 2004 (destroying 177 houses) and 2007 (destroying 15 houses) (*Angop*, 26/5/2007). I witnessed what was probably the last fire in Favela in September 2010, during my first trip to Luanda. At that time, the media reported that the fire had broken out due to the negligence of an elderly man who had left a candle lit in the bedroom. The fact is that the fire spread and consumed almost fifty houses, either partially or completely. Two young sisters died (*Angop*, 28/9/2010). These fatalities are likely to have reinforced the government's intention to demolish Favela, on the basis of danger to life of the population (*Angop*, 27/9/2010). Indeed, the fire seems to have provided a good excuse to proceed with the total eviction of the neighbourhood, which occurred around 2 months after this incident. Mr. Joel confirmed that the residents of the 50 houses were urgently resettled in Panguila, more specifically in Sector 9 (modular project), block 2-A. It should be noted that rumours of the complete eviction of Favela and resettlement in Panguila, Zango and Sapú had been spreading since at least 2007 (*Angop*, 28/6/2007).

²⁴ It is well known that conditions for *desalojados* tend to be better when they adopt an obedient attitude. On the contrary, when the reaction is more violent, any possibility of negotiation with the state is usually lost. Nevertheless, some form of retaliation for the Favela residents' uprising was to be expected.

Survival Strategies

The transfer to resettlement colonies obliged residents to rethink their survival strategies. In 2013 and 2015, I visited Zango with the intention of meeting *desalojados* from Chicala (**Fig. 255 - 267**).²⁵ During the first visit, we met a group of three women sitting outside a house. They agreed to tell us about their experiences of leaving Chicala and settling in Zango. They complained about almost everything, but were particularly critical of the arbitrary nature of the relocation process (none of their former neighbours lived nearby, as they were resettled in different sectors in Zango) and the lack of basic infrastructure (water and electricity).

One of the women complained that she had to walk for 1-2 km to reach a source of clean water. Some metres away from the group of women, a man was rebuilding a wall outside a house. He said he used to be a teacher in the Ilha, making Chicala a very convenient place to live for him and his family. He had been unable to maintain his position as a teacher as a result of the resettlement as he could not afford to travel for 3-4 hours a day back and forth to the Ilha. Visibly upset, he said he had had to “start all over again”, and had started building and selling cement blocks. Complaints and criticism also related to the timing of the eviction - his siblings had lost a year at school. This story brings to mind that these bulldozings have an effect in destroying professional and educational networks.

The situation in Panguila is no better due to its almost entirely residential character. Here, the issue is not only distance from the city. Mr. Joel explains (interview, 7/5/2012):

From our [modular] project to the [main] street [where public transport passes] alone, it's almost 5 km. Normally when there's unemployment there's hunger, and when there's hunger there are many other things that follow, prostitution, delinquency and all the rest; that's the situation we're facing.

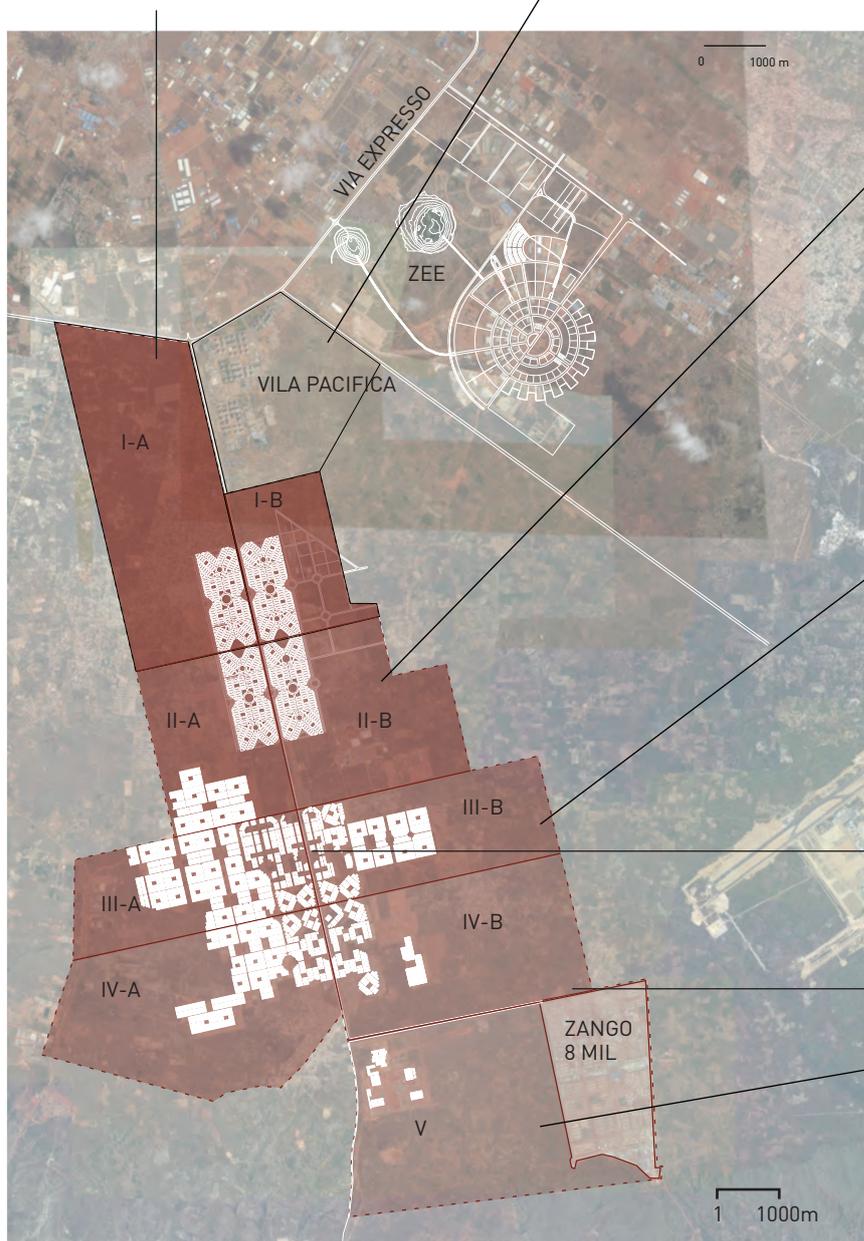
It is clear that these factors have contributed to the rise in poverty, prostitution and criminality observed in Panguila. The situation is bleak and projections are pessimistic. Transferring thousands of families to an unfinished area, lacking the necessary infrastructure, roads and sufficient public facilities to properly function, has created a serious social exclusion problem. The solution to this problem will require a complete rethink of urban regeneration strategy, although this option appears to have been ruled out.

Despite all of this, many *desalojados* in Panguila and Zango are gradually beginning to adapt and settle in. However, these families are clearly penalised by the existence of problems such as the distance to the urbanised centre, the smaller area of the houses, and the lack of infrastructure and opportunities to make a living. Everything seems to limit residents' room for manoeuvre in these colonies of exclusion.

²⁵ I sought support from a person or organisation familiar with the site. I spoke to SOS Habitat, with whom I had had some previous contact. SOS Habitat is the most visible entity resisting the Government's urban and housing policies in Luanda.

Zango 1-5 comprises the following housing and facilities: 30,000 social and evolutive residences; 8,000 guided self-built houses; 8 public schools (including a secondary school), 6 private schools and 4 charter schools; 6 private nurseries; 2 medical centres and 4 clinics; the Viana Cultural Centre; 1 sports ground; 1 juvenile court and 1 SIAC (Integrated Public Service Centre); 13 banks; several relevant commercial and support structures (2 fuel pumps and 5 large shops); growing numbers of houses and restaurants (PDMV, 2014: 263).

Vila Pacífica - as one drives along the Via Expresso (the ring road circling Luanda), it appears on the south side of the road, north of the Zango resettlement area. Vila Pacífica is a state housing estate aimed at the middle and upper classes. It envisages the construction of 315 buildings with 14 floors, numbering 35,280 apartments in total, for more than 200,000 inhabitants. In the first phase, 51 buildings were designed, of which around half had been built at the time of the visit in 2015. Despite the evident differences between the Zango and Vila Pacífica masterplans, the Plano Director Municipal de Viana inserts this *nova centralidade* (new town) into Zango 1. The document emphasises that the Zango 1-5 project is aimed at resettlement, while Vila Pacífica is intended for sale and rental on the property market (sales are processed in the Rent-to-Buy Regime, either with or without initial capital, over a period of 15 to 20 years).



In **Zango 2**, 1,700 families were rehoused in around 350 semi-detached houses, equivalent to 700 residences (PDMV, 2014: 205) – note that this statement makes it official that 1,700 families were rehoused in 700 homes, unless there is a typographical error in the document.

Zango 3 comprises 3,000 houses built primarily to resettle families being transferred from “rundown and dangerous areas of Luanda” (PDMV, 2014: 205). This sector also includes the “Zango 3 Self-Built Programme”, integrated in the PHS – *Plano de Habitação Social* (Social Housing Programme). In this area, the document explains, the PHS intervened on just 28 of the 40 hectares available and, following its conclusion, this land will be divided into 3,000 plots, which “will be allocated to claimants and people living in areas at risk” (PDMV, 2014: 205).

The **Zango/Calumbo road** cuts across the Zango 1-5 sectors, with a proliferation of trade and street vendors selling all kinds of merchandise.

According to the PDVM (2014), in 2014 there were 10,000 houses being built in **Zango 4** (without specifying the type of houses).

Zango 5 is a real estate project, where 13,636 apartments are being constructed to house 80,000 people. This housing project envisages the construction of four-storey buildings, semi-detached houses, and health and administrative centres.

Fig. 255 – Plan of Zango resettlement camp. © Paulo Moreira, 24/2/2013

Zango has expanded over the years to accommodate people from other areas of Luanda. From 2008 onwards, the site entered “a new phase as it officially changed from an emergency programme (aimed at relocating people living in ‘areas of risk’), to a project aimed at accommodating people living in (...) areas earmarked for urban development in the city centre” (Croese, 2013: 100-1). Zango comprises five phases, known as Zango 1-5. It is estimated that more than 200,000 people live in this resettlement camp, in an area of 90 km². Despite the apparent rationality of Zango’s division into sectors, the reality on the ground shows that there are multiple co-existing Zangos. Croese’s study describes “the Zango of the ‘periphery’ (*Zango da periferia*), inhabited by farmers who had lived in the area long before the state started building houses; the Zango ‘of the tents’ (*Zango das tendas*), an area largely inhabited by people who were relocated from the Ilha de Luanda back in 2009, still awaiting to be rehoused; and of the new Zangos that started to emerge through self- building, (...) often informally, as fortune seekers found their way to the area, hoping that the shacks they built would one day be replaced by a house by the government” (Croese, 2013: 49).

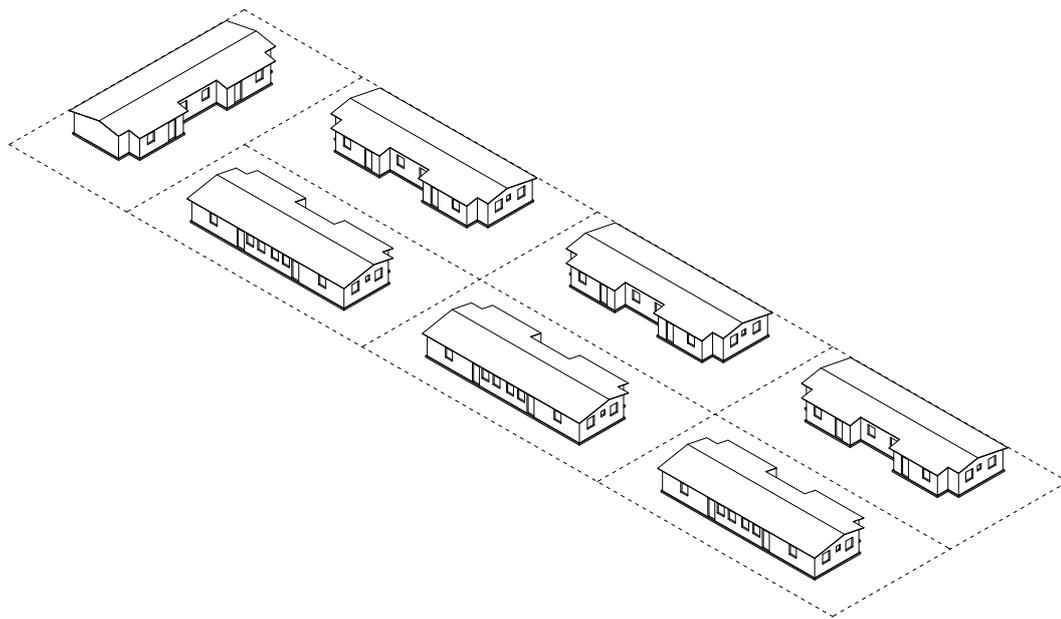
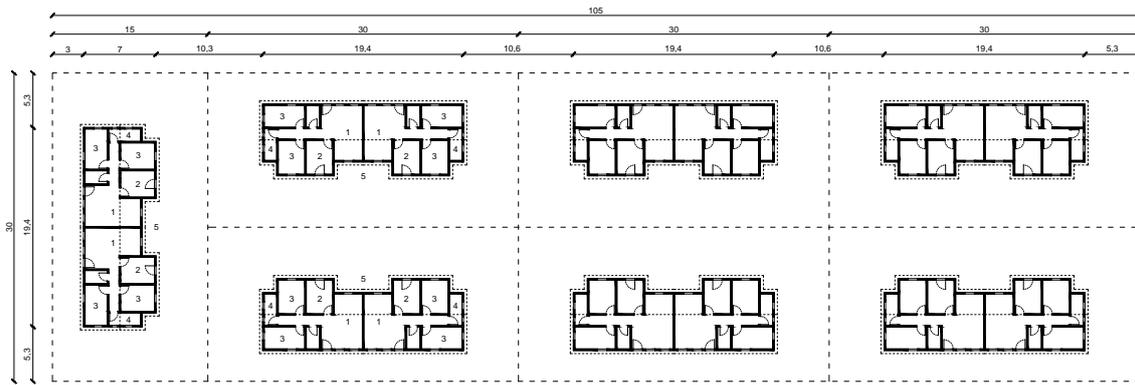


Fig. 256 - 257 - Zango homes. © Paulo Moreira, 2015
 The house typologies in Zango are similar to Panguila, but some are smaller in Zango. Some are literally built from foam board, an extremely poor construction material for a permanent home.

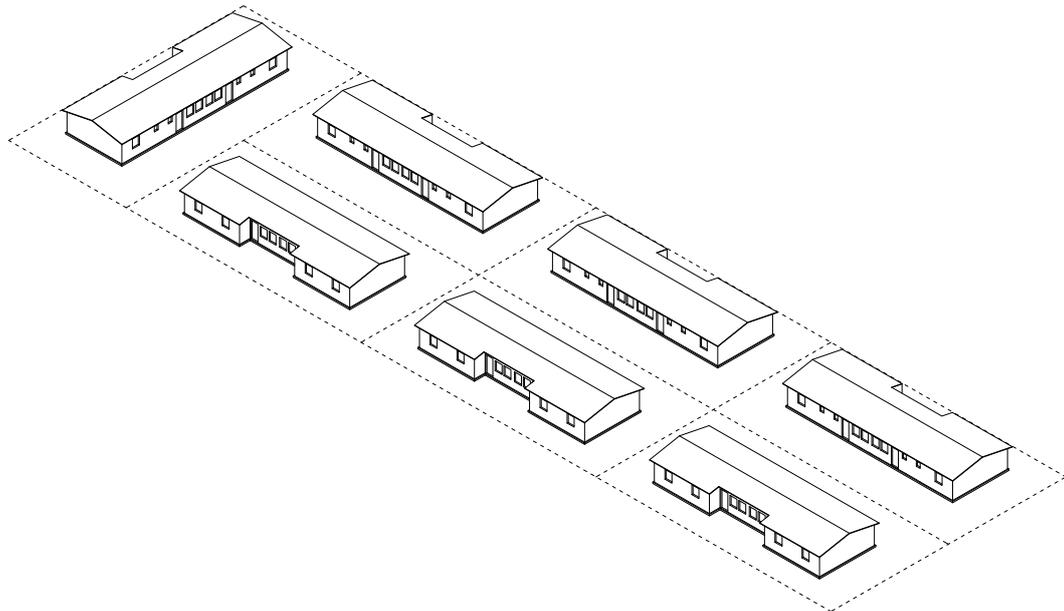
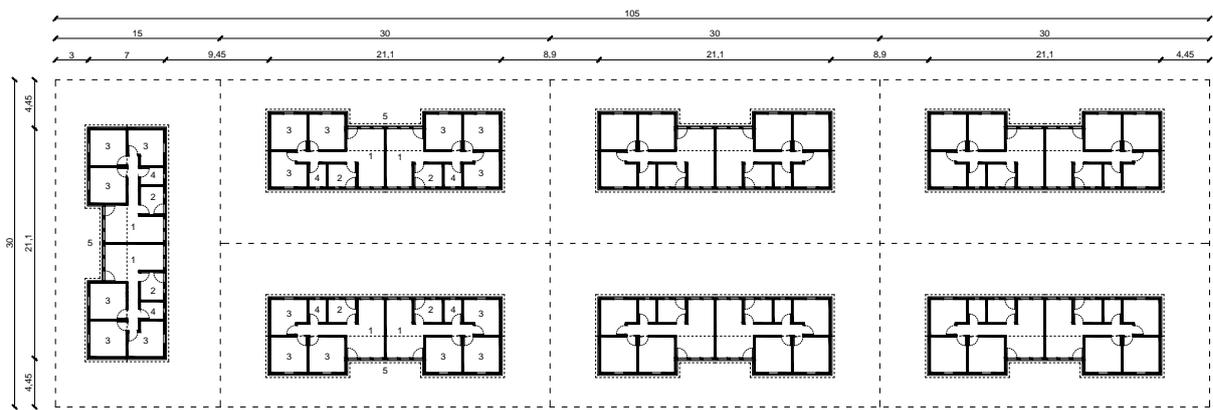


Fig. 258 - 259 – Zango homes. © Paulo Moreira, 25/5/2012

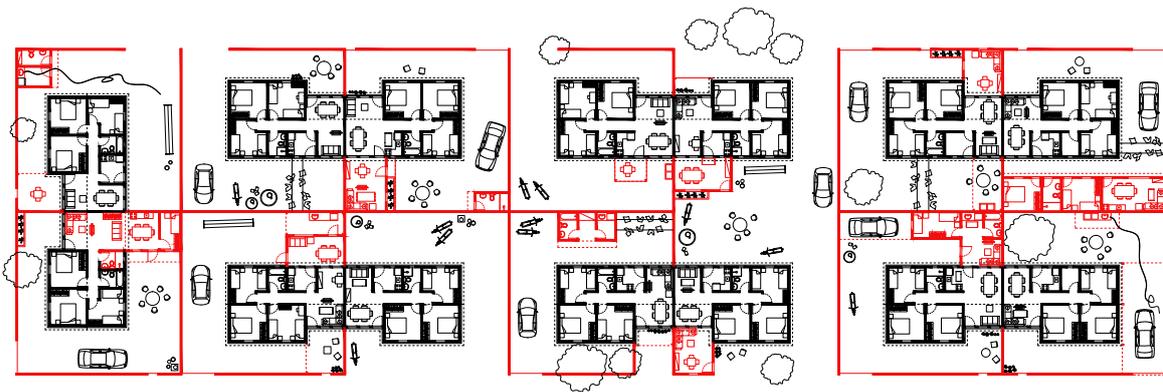


Fig. 260 - 261 – Casas Amarelas (yellow houses). © Paulo Moreira, 25/5/2012 - 26/3/2015

Most of the *desalojados* evicted from Chicala 3 in January and February 2014 were resettled in the *casas amarelas* (yellow houses) in Zango 2. As you drive along the main road connecting all sectors of Zango, you turn right and enter a muddy street in Zango 2. When it rains, as it did during the site visit in March 2015, driving becomes slow and quite difficult. After passing several rows of similar houses, you arrive at the *casas amarelas*. The scene can be quite desolate: most of the yellow houses in the area look empty and still incomplete (with no window frames, roofs, or walls defining the plots). During the site visit, all of a sudden, a girl struggling to protect herself from the heavy rain came into sight. She was a *desalojada* from Chicala, living with her family. We visited the girl's house and met her mother, Mrs. Josefa. A total of seven people lived in the 3-bedroom house.

Mrs. Josefa agreed to share her thoughts about the move from Chicala to Zango. Approaching *desalojados* in this way may appear straightforward, but attempts are regularly made to control potentially critical voices such as theirs. Croese explains that "local press reports portray Zango as a heavily politicised area in which the 'displaced' [*desalojados*] of Zango are forbidden to speak about the conditions of the camp or receive donations from opposition parties (CEDOC, 2001b; Agora, 2001; Agora, 2002)" (Croese, 2013: 133). Mrs. Josefa voiced her disappointment with the way in which the resettlement process was conducted, as well as with her experience of living in Zango. She began to describe the eviction process from Chicala 3, underlining the "opaque" manner in which it had taken place. Mrs. Josefa said that she had always been assured by the registration team that the new house would have water and electricity. Instead, water was absent and electricity was available only for a few hours per day. She went on to complain about the way their belongings were transported: the refrigerator was placed in a container with food stored inside, and was kept sealed for almost a week after their arrival in Zango. Eventually, the food rotted and the family were left with nothing to eat for several days. Mrs. Josefa added that the main problem there was the fact that there were no jobs in the area. The only family member who was employed was her daughter, who worked at a *salão de beleza* (beauty salon).

The conversation moved on to the topic of rent: in Chicala 3, the family used to pay \$300 USD per month, for a "large house with an *anexo* and a *quintal*". In Zango, their landlord had increased the rent to \$400 USD, worsening the situation. The reason for this increase, according to the landlord, was that "the house was better than the previous one", that "it was the price other owners were charging in that area" and that "it was the law of the market" (interview, March 2013). These arguments merit closer analysis. According to Croese, "all social houses remain property of the state, meaning that housing beneficiaries do not receive ownership of the houses which are given to them" (Croese, 2013: 104-5). Instead, "in Zango residents receive what is called a *guia de entrega*, a document that proves the delivery of the house by the state and its reception by the citizen" (Croese, 2013: 104-5). The document generally includes the beneficiary's name, registration number and the number of the house received. According to Croese, until 2007 it also included a note which stipulated that beneficiaries were not permitted to "sell, rent out, or abandon the conceded house without a justifiable motive and prior communication to the [authorities] or use them for any other end than that of residency, under penalty of losing it to the state" (Croese, 2013: 105). As of recently, this is no longer the case, and the houses in Zango have become available on the formal and informal real estate markets.



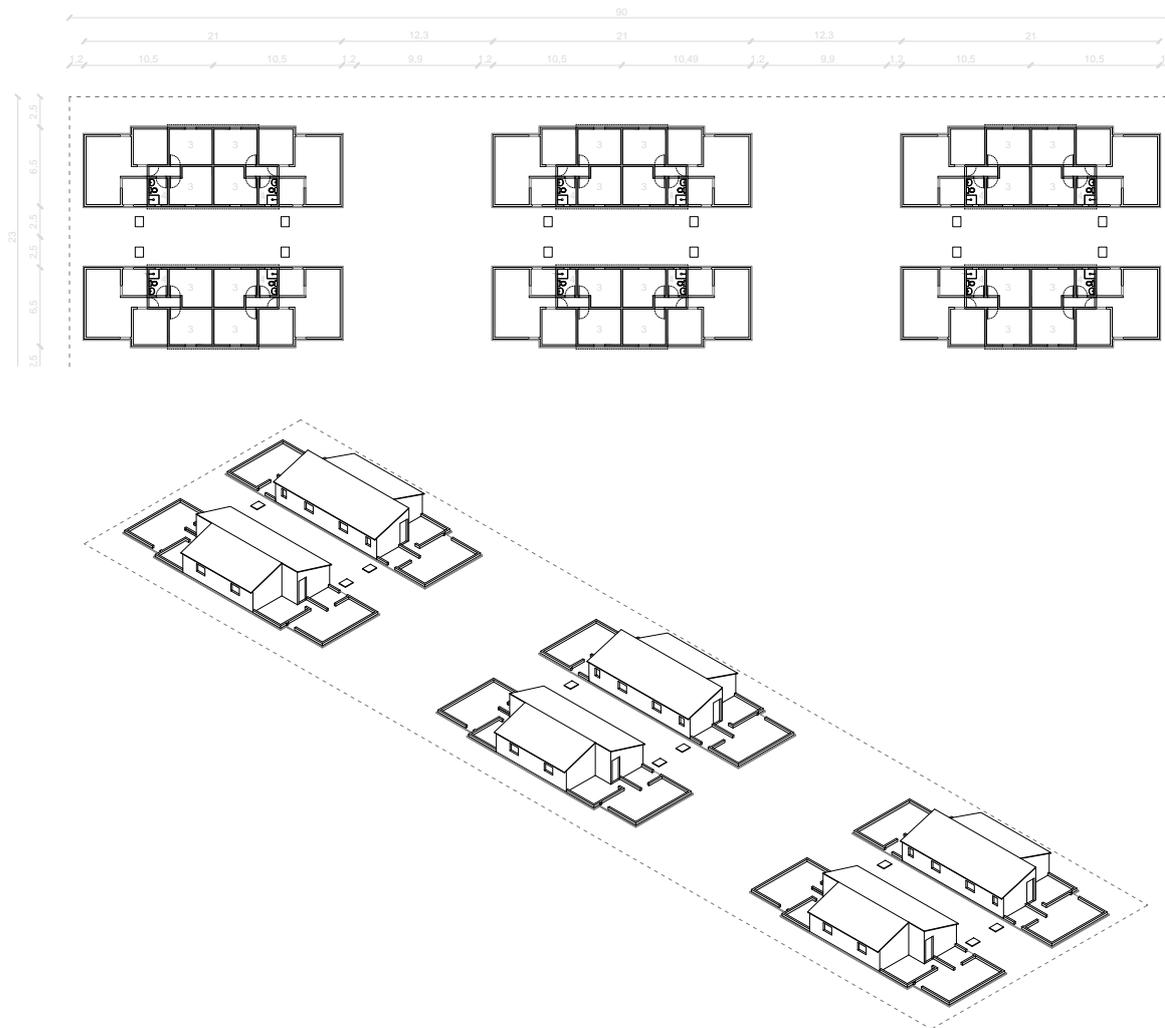


Fig. 262 - Tchuna house – evolutive house (original version). © Paulo Moreira, 2015



Fig. 263 – Tchuna Baby, women's shorts.

Unknown author. Source: Knicknackery website
Tchuna is the colloquial name for an incremental house type in Zango 4. The houses are so small that they are reminiscent of the *Tchuna Baby* shorts worn by Angolan girls. "The Tchuna houses are as small as the ladies' shorts!", an informant said. It is typical for Angolans to turn an otherwise negative situation into something funny, and to appropriate popular culture into ordinary life – architecture included [another example of this kind of appropriation is the former Roque Santeiro market, a name derived from a Brazilian TV soap opera].



Fig. 264 – Tchuna house – evolutive house (original version).

© Paulo Moreira, 26/3/2015

Official descriptions of the *Tchuna* house are not readily available. A single paragraph in the PDMV (2014) appears to refer to this incremental housing type, but situates it in Zango 2 [it was not possible to confirm whether there were *Tchuna* houses in Zango 2 as well]. The PDMV explains the evolutive nature of the houses in rather complicated language and exaggerating the extent of the infrastructure provision: "the houses have running water and light, and their location on the ground floor [they are situated on a 150m² plot], allows anyone who so wishes to expand the covered area, which is currently around 40m², divided between the kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom" (PDMV, 2014: 205).

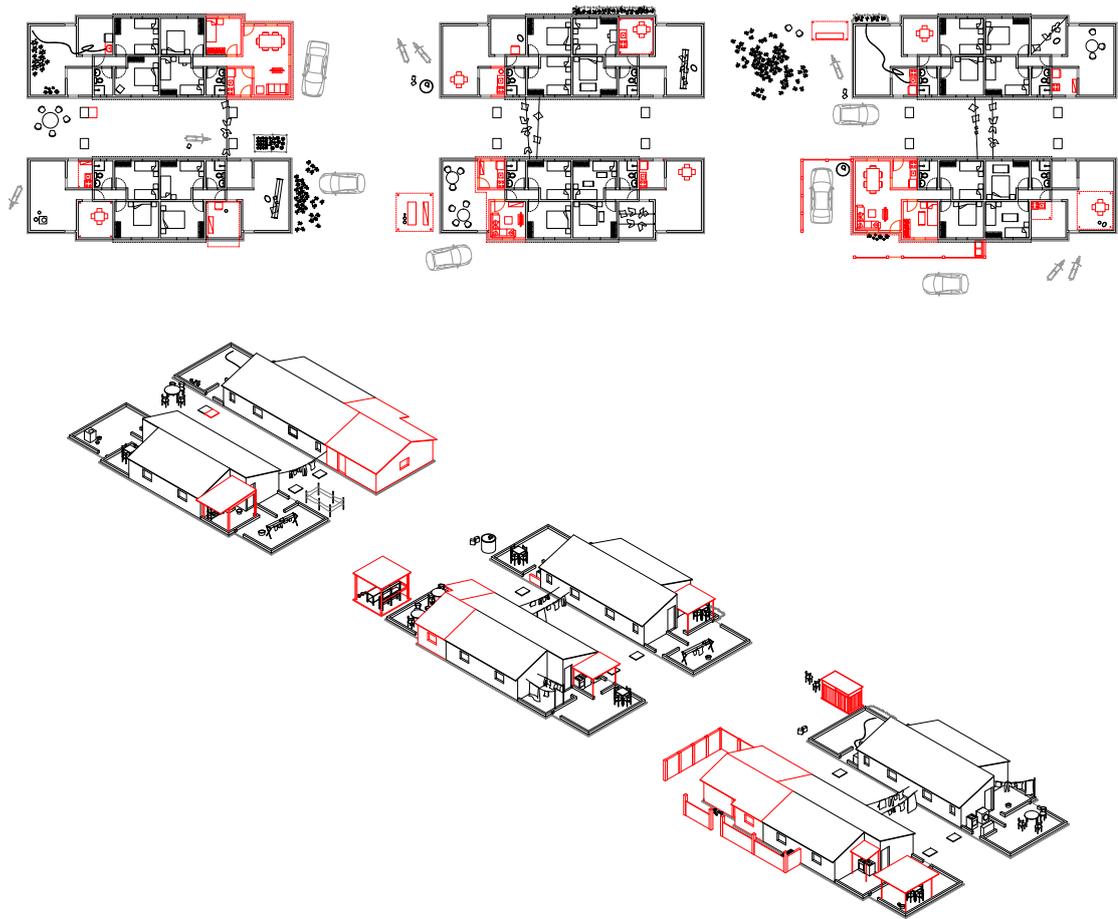


Fig. 265 – Tchuna house (inhabited version). © Paulo Moreira, 2015

Informants in Zango described two kinds of resettlement houses: *casas organizadas* (organised houses), and *casas desorganizadas* (disorganised houses). The latter are popularly known as the *casas Tchuna* (*Tchuna* houses). In the abstract, the Tchuna houses have the potential to be a good example of a participatory project, enabling people to self-build following a pre-defined structure. Unfortunately, in reality they are not. People are required to self-build, because the built part is clearly insufficient to accommodate an Angolan family. The Tchuna house appears to be a strategy enabling contractors to save on money and materials (*desalojados* are given no materials to self-build the remaining layers of brick and missing roofs). Contrary to the widely praised “half a good house” by Alejandro Aravena / Elemental, for example, the *Tchuna* house is unfortunately “half a bad house”.



Fig. 266 - 267 – Tchuna Baby, Half a Bad House. © Paulo Moreira, 26/3/2015

The *desalojados* living in this house were evicted from Chicala 3, where they used to live in an *anexo* – which is probably why they were resettled in a Tchuna house (if they had lived in a *casa principal*, it is likely that they would have been moved to a *casa amarela*). The tiny house had been extended. Opposite, the son’s Tchuna house remained empty – he was renting a room in Chicala as it was more convenient to stay there in proximity to his job in the city centre.

The Resettlement Market

Resettlement processes in Luanda often become a means by which to establish profitable businesses. Despite no formal land or property registry existing for Zango and Panguila, nor for the informal settlements (or Luanda in general), houses and land are 'in the market'.

It is often the case that houses in areas at risk of demolition are informally purchased by wealthier individuals prior to the evictions. This often leads to further tensions. In Favela, these practices led to acts of violence between *desalojados* and former owners of some residences. Viegas notes that "these people rented out the small, precarious houses to their former owners, on the condition that the latter commit to handing over state-subsidised housing in the event of future resettlement" (2015: 363). These owners used their tenants as a way of accessing more housing.²⁶ Meanwhile, some of the *desalojados* also attempted to profit from the situation, demanding their former landlords provide them with houses with an identical surface area and number of rooms to those they were to receive under resettlement, but in other areas of the city. According to Mr. Joel, some displaced families only handed over the houses they received in Panguila after receiving compensation from their former landlords.

The interview with Mr. Joel shows that the process of transferring from Sector da Fortaleza and Favela to Panguila was highly troubled. Despite being a public promotion project, the circumstances surrounding the transfer of families from one neighbourhood to another sounded uncomfortably vague, opaque and informal. This testimonial suggests that informality and arbitrariness were indeed present throughout the process of transferring the population. I asked Mr. Joel if an informal market for selling and/or letting the houses also existed. He replied that this seemed to be a common practice. There appears to have been a lack of control over these processes, exacerbated by the administrative transfer of the neighbourhood from Luanda province to Bengo province. Increased distance from the political attention focused on the capital has heightened the isolation and socio-territorial exclusion provoked by this operation. Mr. Joel's interpretation of Panguila's change in jurisdiction points in this direction (interview, 7/5/2012):

Social groups with fewer resources have no place in Luanda's urban development, we [the *desalojados*] have to take responsibility for everything: the water, the electricity, etc. (...) The considerable difficulties we're experiencing here are due to the fact that the project has yet to be handed over [to Bengo].

While unwilling to explain his opinion, Mr. Joel confirmed that houses which on his understanding were intended to rehouse impoverished families had been handed over to public employees and state companies. The houses which were transferred in this way differ in no visible way

²⁶ Considering themselves the legitimate beneficiaries, the owners of the houses in Favela claimed the houses allocated by the state in Panguila for themselves. According to information I heard over time, in Favela one of the criteria for accessing housing in the event of resettlement was to have no house of one's own. Many house owners thus asked their tenants to register, reminding them that it would be them (the owners) who would keep the houses allocated by the state.

from the others. It is therefore difficult to gauge the number of such cases. The informant, however, suggested one possible way of identifying the houses most likely to have been given to state employees: “they are those where there is no overcrowding, and for which complaints have not been received from residents” (interview, 7/5/2012).

The question of the use of houses granted to citizens other than the *desalojados* raises many questions. Were they sold on for a profit? Are there title deeds? According to Viegas, “the Basic Law for Housing Development in Angola (2007) makes little provision for the concession of land or the possibility of legal transfer of social housing entirely subsidised by the state” (2015: 339). That is, it is likely that many houses have been sold or sublet, but it has not been possible to ascertain the procedures adopted in these cases in Panguila.

Nevertheless, according to my informant’s testimonial, in the Modular Project (Sector 9) and the *casas cor-de-rosa* (pink houses, Sector 10), the displaced families do not possess any legal property deeds. This has not impeded the spread of the widely held belief that the allocation of plots and houses is guaranteed because the Panguila resettlement is a state initiative. Indeed, given that residents have no official documents, the risk of future evacuation by the government remains present.²⁷ When asked about this, Mr. Joel said that residents were told that the allocation of legal deeds would only take place once the project was fully completed. However, the delay in resolving the issue of forced cohabitation and the gaps existing in the provision of public spaces and services/infrastructure, not to mention the fact that this neighbourhood is a work in progress extending into the long term, suggests that any resolution is far from imminent.²⁸

Moreover, without legal property deeds, cases of arbitrary eviction have also occurred in Panguila. This has led to break-ins and occupations of empty houses. Mr. Joel told us that various low-income groups had broken into some new houses in Sector 10, emboldened by this context of irregularity. Once again, the administrative transfer of the neighbourhood from Luanda to Bengo has enabled the state to deny responsibility for these types of conflicts.

27 Viegas notes that Law 9/04 of 9th November – the Land Law – exacerbates the situation, stating that communities settled in less-developed, peripheral or rural areas cannot pass down their deeds as inheritance (2015: 340).

28 Viegas explains that during the resettlements of Sectors 9 and 10, the government did not distribute any property deeds, undermining the legitimacy of the occupation and transformation of the space by depriving resettled communities of legal protection. The Ministry of Social Welfare and Reintegration (MINARS) granted evacuation guides to some families displaced to Panguila. These documents still do not prove that the individuals were evicted from their original place of residence. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Urbanism and Housing issued delivery notes for the houses, certifying the transfer of some houses in Panguila to displaced people (2015: 339).

In Zango, it has always been the case that the 'law of the market' applies to both sale and rental: "the informal market in houses in Zango has been part of the reality of the project since its early days"²⁹ (Croese, 2013: 147). As an example, Croese states that "after the first houses started to be distributed in Zango in November 2002, the residents' committee complained that most of the beneficiaries were not residents from Boavista [a neighbourhood where evictions due to landslides took place] but family members of officials of the municipal administration of Sambizanga and the provincial delegation of MINARS, which had overseen the registration of Boavista residents, sparking unrest as many former residents of Boavista had been living in tents ever since they got to Zango, often shared with other families" (Croese, 2013: 133). Croese adds that "when social housing is used as compensation, generally the amount of houses received per beneficiary corresponds with the number of houses demolished, although the agencies involved in the allocation of houses also seem to have established their own rules in this regard" (Croese, 2013: 104).

All kinds of parties seem to be involved in these deals. Most of the imminent *desalojados*, to my surprise, do not seek to organise resistance movements to protest against eviction processes. Instead, many people invest their energy in the formulation of strategies to ensure that they are granted a house and/or profit from these houses financially. State officials in particular (the *fiscais*), as it is publically known, continue to undermine the housing allocation process through their involvement in the illegal sale or appropriation of houses.³⁰

It seems paradoxical that not only does house trading and the 'law of the market' represent a widespread practice in resettlement colonies, but that it encompasses all of the parties involved in the process, from eviction victims to registration teams. This fact was corroborated by Mr. Rodrigo, architect at Dar.³¹ When I asked if his company was aware of any clandestine activity during the registration process (prior to or following the evictions) or informal house trading, he gave me some surprising and relevant information. At first, Mr. Rodrigo responded with a short "Zango is sold out" ("*está tudo vendido*"). I asked him to elaborate and he explained that the company is experiencing difficulty building new houses to accommodate all of those requiring resettlement from Chicala. He attributed the delay in some relocation processes in part to this issue. The slowness and difficulty of building new houses

29 Research undertaken by the NGO Development Workshop (DW) on land markets confirms the role of informal mechanisms in regulating the property market in Luanda, including in resettlement areas (Croese, 2013: 161).

30 Croese states that "*fiscais* are easily corrupted. Whenever demolitions start and you have a shack in the area, which might even have been built quickly in the back of the area to be demolished, the only thing you need to do is approach a fiscal, give him 5,000 or 6,000 USD and he will pass you the *ficha* [a document] and the key and the house is yours." (Croese, 2013: 153). The authorities appear unconcerned with identifying irregularities in informal house trading in Zango. During her rigorous fieldwork, Croese found that those most involved in the informal trade are the *fiscais* themselves. In her thesis, she states that "some *fiscais* have as many as 5 houses in Zango, they will rent these out, or give them or have them occupied (*tomar conta*) by family members" (Croese, 2013: 153).

31 Interview at DAR headquarters in Luanda, 23rd March 2015.

in Zango is a consequence of the fact that “all the land in Zango is sold all the way down to the River Kwanza” (interview, 23/3/2015). Mr. Rodrigo appeared to state that the land in and around Zango had been purchased by several high officials and government representatives, so that the state or private companies would have to buy the land back from them in order to complete the Zango masterplan. I was all ears. Mr. Rodrigo hesitated for a moment and said: “Let me show you something”. He called his assistant and asked if she had looked at the daily newspaper yet. She nodded affirmatively. She showed us a *Jornal de Angola* page with classified ads for houses for sale in Zango (**Fig. 268**). There were houses for sale for 15,000 USD or 20,000 USD. “These houses”, the architect said, “cost us 7-8,000 to build, and these people got them for free” (interview, 23/3/2015). I said I imagined that they cost somewhat more to build:

Well, 30,000 USD if you count the infrastructure cost per house - roads, pavements, sewage, etc.³²

I asked Mr. Roberto if the company Dar was responsible for building public infrastructure as well as housing. The architect replied: “Well, it should be only the housing, shouldn’t it?” (interview, 23/3/2015). He went on to remark that “there have been fewer evictions lately because they can’t evict people until the school year is over”, and “because first we have to build schools” (interview, 23/3/2015).³³

The architect at Dar told me something else which took me by surprise. He looked back at the daily newspaper and said: “You know why we check these ads every day? We’re buying houses that we’ve built before. It is cheaper for us to buy the houses in Zango that we built already ourselves, than to build new houses on land we would have to buy at very high prices” (interview, 23/3/2015). This shows how nuanced the ‘resettlement market’ has become in Luanda.

Evictions and displacements are an issue relating to social class (in the colonial period they had more ethnical undertones). However, these processes are inextricably linked to the real estate market, both formal and informal. Not all of the *desalojados* have been victimised by insensitive urban policies; indeed, some have profited from such attempts at segregation. The complexity of these mechanisms of survival, profit and power is yet another layer in Luanda’s hybrid, nuanced postcolonial urban order.



Fig. 268 - *Jornal de Angola* 3/3/2015, 26/3/2015 - Classified advertisement of Zango houses for sale.

³² This seemed excessive, because public infrastructure is largely absent in the new areas in Zango. The PDMV (a government document mentioned previously), acknowledges that “naturally, [Zango] is a large area, where construction is being developed in a gap in a well-defined road network, respecting an urban planning operation, but where there is still no place for the implementation of urban infrastructure in any neighbourhood, that is, water supply and rainwater drainage networks” (PDMV, 2014: 227). The document even confirms something I had the chance to verify in person: “in the period of heavy rain, large floods may occur which impede circulation and cause material damage and personal injury every year” (PDMV, 2014: 227).

³³ This statement contradicts the complaints of at least one *desalojado* regarding the timing of evictions during the school year (see above).

Chapter 6

Practices of Resistance: Reactions to Urban Change in Chicala and Luanda

Myths are commonplace in Angola.¹ Kimbundu myths tell of a house built by the legendary Soba N'gola (traditional authority), during the period in which he still lived on the Ilha de Luanda. José Redinha, who studied Angolan vernacular architecture, observes that the house was “so strong that the [Portuguese] whites never managed to enter nor destroy it” (1964: 192). It remains unknown whether this house ever really existed. Redinha explains that Angolans believe in the myth of this ‘resistance’, but does not specify or explain the true nature of this belief (1964: 192).

The myth of Kianda should also be understood as part of a supernatural order, or a manifestation of magical powers.² Kianda lived on the rocks around the Morro de São Miguel, near the Praia do Bispo/Chicala. One day, Kianda was swimming alone when she saw a poor fisherman who seemed sad and hopeless. In a moment of kindness, she showed him a hidden treasure that only she knew of. The man became rich overnight, but he also became selfish and miserly. He began to use the money for his own gain without concern for anyone else. Kianda, who was following his actions from afar, did not like what she saw. She resolved to teach him a lesson and made the treasure disappear, leaving the fisherman even poorer than before. Disappointed, Kianda swore that never again would she help another man, and

1 Myths in Angola narrate supernatural, irrational events in which human characters often appear with divine powers (Redinha, 1964: 298).

2 Kianda has a notorious influence over the *Axiluanda* people. According to natives of the Ilha, Kianda is a person, and therefore the mermaid may not be the right image to portray her. Cardoso states that the Kianda myth forms part of the beliefs of the *Axiluanda* people, as well as of all the peoples of Angola (1972: 75-77). In the olden times, when there were no steam-powered ships, she would appear frequently on the beaches. Cardoso notes that “The [African] natives are very superstitious and believe that the Kianda has special powers. She watches over the health of newborn babies, over the safety of the *Axiluanda* when they work along the coast. In recompense, they buy various types of food and drink and place them in particular parts of the beach. The next day they return to find nothing left.” (Cardoso, 1972: 75-77). For further information about the myth of Kianda, see Pires (2014: 114).

in revenge, she would bewitch anyone who came near her waters with her song, trapping them at the bottom of the sea. Kianda (and by extension, the sea) assumes a chastising role to counter the actions of mankind in Luanda and Angola.

With Angola's transition from colonial rule to independence, the tensions between oppressor and oppressed were alleviated. It seemed likely that the use and meanings underpinning these African myths would also change, but the resistance myths persisted. The myth of Kianda is widely referenced in postcolonial literature in/on Angola. In the fictional narrative *O Desejo de Kianda* (Kianda's Desire), Pepetela (1995) presents a positive vision of the sea, as it allows total freedom. The tale unfolds in Luanda, a decadent city swamped by buildings, the backdrop for corrupt alliances seeking easy money and power. This is analysed by researcher Tânia Celestino de Macêdo (1999: 55-56):

In all of the [post-colonial] narratives until now, the Angolan capital has always been maintained as a space of hope, a kind of synthesis of the utopic country which was meant to be built. Now, the freedom of Kianda who prompts the collapse of buildings and the transformation of the city into a river flowing into the sea symbolises despair with the direction of the entire process, highlighting the need to start again. And, curiously, this new beginning was to be found in the paths to the sea. Evidently, this represents a completely new perspective in terms of the image of the sea in literature produced in Angola. It is no longer a case of pointing to the deaths caused by the colonisers' ships, but of seeking a new path that opens up to the outside world, exploring options for overcoming the impasse of a defunct project.

The two excerpts from Pepetela's book presented below explicitly demonstrate the way in which mankind contributes to the destruction of Luanda, highlighting the role of Chicala where the liberation of Kianda is finally achieved (1995: 108, 188):

It was Kianda's lament, as they had already foreseen, bemoaning that she had lived in perfect happiness for centuries in her lagoon, until the men resolved to fill in the lagoon and put concrete and earth and tar on top of it, they built the square and all the buildings around it. Kianda felt stifled, with all that weight on top of her, she could no longer swim, and finally she revolted. And she sang, she sang until the buildings all tumbled down, one by one, slowly, that was Kianda's desire.

(...)

They surpassed the Baleizão, with the waters forming a gigantic wave flooding the whole Avenida and crashing against the lower walls of the fortress, against the old bridge that the Portuguese had filled with rubbish and stones and concrete, rendering the Ilha no longer an island but a peninsula, linked to the continent by this isthmus (*restinga*) of stones and concrete against which the giant wave lost its force and on top of it fell ribbons of all colours, and they demolished the isthmus, and the waters from the lagoon mixed with the waters from the sea and the bright colours spread out towards the Corimba, now that the Ilha de Luanda had become an island again, and Kianda headed for the open sea, free at last.

The myths cited here provide a vehicle for understanding urban and territorial appropriation. In essence, these two stories may be considered forms of resistance, particularly anti-colonial resistance: a magical house immune to destruction by Portuguese settlers, and a curse against the rich and greedy (understood to be the colonisers). As unreal and speculative as they may be, these tales represent a means of articulating conflicts between people which have an urban manifestation on different levels.

Urban forms of resistance and protest are common and transversal in Luanda – from the most dominant social class to the weakest, everyone has something to say about the issues that directly affect their relationship with the city.

People's Power

The post-independence period in Angola was founded upon great national pride and profound ideological ambitions. During this time, the *Comissões Populares* (People's Committees) were reorganised and acquired crucial importance in the political, social and urban organisation of the city. A number of *Jornal de Angola* articles from the independence year (1975) suggest that the creation of a 'city for all' was a critical matter. Stopping evictions, for example, was assumed to be one of the government's goals. The subject made the front page of an issue of the newspaper: "Our attention now turns to the *desalojados* arriving from the occupied areas" (*Jornal de Angola*, 10/12/1975). The article suggests that the *Comissões Populares* were concerned with the situation of the *desalojados* and the population's living conditions. The article says that "only decentralisation could prompt improvements in the subhuman conditions in which the population of Luanda's *musseques* continues to live" (*Jornal de Angola*, 10/12/1975). **(Fig. 269)** However, the pursuit of a truly socially equal, democratic society soon became less pronounced. Croese acknowledges this issue (2013: 125):

It soon became clear that the views and ideas of the variety of actors that constituted *poder popular* clashed with what was becoming a hegemonic logic of the MPLA (Mabeko-Tali, 2001: 89). In accordance with this logic, *poder popular* needed to be reorganized in such a way that it in fact had no power at all: 'committees not as centres of decision, but centres of education' (Cédétim, 1977: 129).

By cutting to the recent political situation in Chicala, where evictions resumed in 2014 and 2015, we can confirm that the role of the residents' committees has indeed completely changed. Once the original embodiment of *poder popular*, many people in Chicala now complain that the sole purpose of the *Comissão de Moradores* is "to serve the personal interests of the President and other leading members".

This often results in complicity between the civil body of the residents' committee and the local political body, the MPLA Committee.³

From a political-administrative perspective, this variation and uncertainty appear to be a common feature across the various neighbourhoods in Luanda. Greater light may be shed on the role and actions of the *Comissão de Moradores* and their frequent complicity with the ruling powers by examining the findings of Sylvia Croese, who studied residents' committees in the Zango neighbourhood. In her thesis chapter 'Between the state and the people', she states (Croese, 2013: 120):

The findings from the first leg of my fieldwork were intriguing, as I found a full-fledged structure of residents' committees in place, maintaining close ties with local government and party structures. Moreover, these committees did not seem to work *against*, but *with* the state, to the point that they were fulfilling administrative functions on its behalf. Yet, this structure seemed to operate entirely informally, that is, without the formal or *de jure* recognition or regulation by the state.

Croese's analysis of the residents' committees in Zango "shows that at the local level, institutions may exist and exercise 'formal' public authority, but are not of the state, therefore operating in a 'twilight' zone (Lund, 2006) between the state and the people" (Croese, 2013: 120).⁴ The results of Croese's study on Zango appear to highlight other commonalities with the Chicala case, especially when it is stated that "consequently, this points to the existence of multiple sites, actors and practices through which power is exercised at the local level (Lindell, 2008), an aspect that is often overlooked in analyses of national reconstruction as a process that is entirely top-down" (Croese, 2013: 120). The author explains that the 'twilight zone' in which residents' committees operate has also put their respective presidents in a position in which "they are torn between loyalty to the state and party and between their own interests and that of their communities" (Croese, 2013, 141). This has given rise to a context in which there is little space for substantive citizen participation that is organically claimed or created from below.

3 The role of the *Comissão de Moradores* is indeed quite ambiguous – at times it seems that the committee's activities consist of blocking residents' objectives, if they are seen to be in any way critical of the ruling party. This was also true at times during my fieldwork. During my field trips, particularly the first three (2010, 2011, 2012) when I spent longer periods in Chicala, I always maintained cordial contact with the neighbourhood authorities and representatives. Every time I arrived there, I would contact and meet the *Primeiro Secretário* of the MPLA Committee and the President of the *Comissão dos Moradores*, the two bodies that govern the neighbourhood (the political and administrative bodies respectively). During our meetings, I would explain the fieldwork activities I was planning, often with groups of students (2011, 2012). These encounters, although hospitable in essence, were often marked by mild tension, or at least a slight 'passive-aggressive' feeling. It felt as if something was holding the representatives back from being entirely open and welcoming. This was particularly apparent with the President of the *Comissão de Moradores*. For instance, he would often cancel our meetings at the last minute or, if I stopped by his house without prior appointment (he attended people in his *quintal* once a week), he would tell me that "I should have called in advance", before arranging a meeting for the following week. Once, on the phone, he told me he was too busy, and that I had to understand he was a "celebrity" and therefore it would be very hard to find time to meet him - although I was encouraged to keep trying. Eventually, when I did manage to meet him, there were unwarranted delays or sudden commitments that would rush our conversation. The way he reacted to some of my questions was often defensive and evasive. For instance, I once praised his expertise and knowledge of the neighbourhood and asked if he could draw the border lines dividing Chicala 2's several administrative sectors. (**Fig. 270**) He answered that it was a "State secret", and that only "the President [of the Republic] could authorise sharing such information".

4 According to Croese, all presidents of the committees created in 2011 to represent the residents of Zango 1 to 4, when asked how they would define the role of the committees, responded along the lines of the committee being an "intermediary between the people and the state". In other words, their role was seen as that of informing the local administration of problems or concerns among the community, and being a "partner of the state" in helping it to resolve these problems (Croese, 2013, 141).



Fig. 270 – Plan showing the administrative division of Chicala. © Paulo Moreira, 2015

The “informal” core of Chicala 1 is divided into 5 blocks. However, administratively-speaking the neighbourhood is composed of another 5 blocks, extending into areas of the Ilha de Luanda considered “formal”, up to the Hotel Panorama. Chicala 2 is divided into 3 sectors (A, B, C), sub-divided into 12 blocks. Sector A consists of the first block (better known as the Sector Flamingo due to the presence of a catering outlet with the same name); and the second and fourth blocks. Sector B consists of the third, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth blocks. Sector C, popularly known as “Chicala 3”, consists of blocks 9 to 12. Chicala 2 and 3 are separated physically by a drainpipe coming from the *Cidade Alta* (upper city).

Any ambiguity surrounding the role of the *Comissão de Moradores* as a mediating body representing the people's interests had dissolved due to its dismantlement prior to the main evictions in Chicala in early 2015. By then, neither the *Comissão de Moradores* nor the MPLA Committee continued to operate in Chicala 2. Their respective presidents no longer lived in the neighbourhood. Some residents explained that this was achieved by awarding the representatives of the neighbourhood generous compensation and better rehousing conditions than the rest of the people still living there.⁵ One of the residents summarised the issue as follows (interview, March 2015):

Contrary to what a captain should do, that is to be the last one to abandon ship, here everyone just wants to improve their own individual situation.

As a result, the neighbourhood had been divested of its administrative and political bodies. This was a deliberate strategy to deny residents official representation during the evacuation of the neighbourhood.

The Negotiation Commission

Public opinion holds that the *Comissão de Moradores* did not stand for the residents' 'real struggles'. In response to the lack of concrete action to resist the eviction processes, a group of residents in Chicala began to organise and target their discontent at the outside forces that sought to destroy the neighbourhood without providing just compensation. This secretive, well-structured group, known as the *Comissão de Negociação* (Negotiation Commission), was formed with the aim of advocating for the rights of the entire neighbourhood.

5 Regarding Chicala's political body, in March 2015 the MPLA Committee headquarters (situated in Chicala 3) were demolished. When asked who was in charge in Chicala, the former *Primeiro Secretário* (First Secretary) said that his successor had also left the neighbourhood. He himself "had his own situation sorted" (interview, March 2015). When I asked the former *Primeiro Secretário* where he would go, he answered evasively: "Well, where everyone will go is most probably Zango... But I think my situation is fine" (interview, March 2015). Later I learned that even this man had a new house in the city centre. While hearing these stories of the way in which the neighbourhood's representatives had abandoned ship, I recalled several unusual episodes relating to both Head Secretaries of the MPLA in Chicala 2 (two different men governed the Committee in the 2010-15 period, one older man and one younger). In 2010, the older man was introduced to me as the *Primeiro Secretário*, but I later learned that he did not hold the title at that time (he had suspended his mandate for a period while finishing his studies at the University). At that time, I toured the site with the younger man, not knowing that in fact he was actually the incumbent *Primeiro Secretário*. This attitude of hiding who was in charge of the committee was strange, and all the more so given that this is a public role – the highest political role at the neighbourhood level. Three years later, while sitting outdoors with some *kambas* (friends) one evening in Rua da Pracinha, the younger *Primeiro Secretário* called my name and asked me if I was aware that "Chicala will no longer be demolished". I was surprised by this statement, but curious to hear more. He said that "the President, José Eduardo dos Santos, changed his mind after visiting the *bairro* once or twice". Dos Santos in Chicala? I was all ears, of course. "Yes, he came in through Rua da Pracinha in a common car, so that he wouldn't be recognised. He drove along this street and around the neighbourhood, to see for himself how the site had developed. He realised that the *bairro* should be preserved" (interview, 2013). For a moment, I did not understand his reason for telling me this story. I concluded that it was an attempt to convince me to present a different narrative in my study, perhaps praising the President and his sudden love for Chicala. On my following field trip to Angola in 2015, I learned that the young *Primeiro Secretário* was no longer living in the neighbourhood, having resolved his own relocation situation. It is easy to conclude that the regime attracts adherents because it offers access to the gravy train. This is one way of remaining in power; another is by doing just enough at election time to keep the majority on side, as occurred prior to the 2008 and 2012 elections with the installation of electricity networks.

One of the members of the *Comissão de Negociação*, Mr. Artur, explained that the group “was formed as early as April 2004, as a movement, not primarily against evictions in Chicala, but as an active voice which sought to participate in the negotiation process” (interview, December 2013). It was an independent initiative, formed by 30 residents, including a President, Vice-President, First-Secretary, Second-Secretary, etc. Initially, it stood with the *Comissão de Moradores* with the aim of contributing to the defence of residents’ interests. In official terms, the President of the *Comissão de Moradores* would act as the spokesperson, for example, signing documents or letters to be presented to external entities. In other words, the *Comissão de Negociação* was working silently under the umbrella of the *Comissão de Moradores*. However, according to my informant, as time passed, the latter was accused of not working hard enough to guarantee the best results for residents.

This emerged as the main reason why the ‘secret’ or at least ‘silent’ group began to act more independently. Mr. Artur complained that the *Comissão de Moradores* had become “part of the problem”. He said that if the link with the *Comissão de Moradores* had been maintained, the *Comissão de Negociação* ran the risk of “being undermined”. Therefore, this independent commission began to meet and work on negotiation strategies to be heard by the authorities.

The initial concrete actions of the *Comissão de Negociação* consisted of a series of letters delivered to the external entities involved in the resettlement process. All documents produced by the *Comissão de Negociação* are archived in a heavy folder labelled *Dossier de Negociações* (Negotiation Dossier): minutes of meetings, copies of letters sent, etc. **(Fig. 271)**.

None of the letters had received a response. The initial eviction process in Chicala 3 (2005) had apparently been suspended for several years. Meanwhile, more evictions took place in other areas of Chicala, including Sector da Fortaleza, in 2010. The first group of 22 families to leave the site said that the affected inhabitants tried to negotiate with the State by means of sporadic trips to Panguila, during which they assessed the progress of construction in Sector 9 where they would live.⁶ During these visits, they were able to postpone the resettlement date four times, albeit for short periods and with reduced gains.⁷ Mr. Joel, one of the *desalojados* from Sector da Fortaleza, explains the difference in conditions between Chicala and Panguila (interview, 7/5/2012):

Where we were, we had water, electricity, and we were close to hospitals and jobs. We wouldn’t have gone if they hadn’t guaranteed us those basic conditions: schools, safety, water and electricity. Now [in Panguila] we have energy from the generator from 8am to 6pm.⁸ Well... it’s something at least, and as they [the government and private companies] needed the [Chicala] area we couldn’t stay much longer... That’s why we had to accept the conditions and come here.

6 More specifically, blocks 1 and 2 of the Modular Project.

7 The negotiation began on 6th January 2010, and the authorities intended the transfer to take place on 22nd January. The date then changed to 16th February, then to 8th March, then to 17th April. The transfer was finally arranged for the first days of May 2010.

8 The generator seems to function precisely at a time when people require less energy, during the day. It would appear more logical to turn it on for a period when there is no natural light.

Fig. 271 – Documents from Chicala’s Negotiation Commission.

Summary of the readings and transcripts of documents from the Chicala Negotiation Commission. The reports contribute to a greater understanding of the way in which the group operates.

1 – Report of meeting with authorities and investor, 10th, 12th and 13th April 2004

The first letter in the dossier reports on a meeting with representatives of the Ingombota Municipal Administration, MINARS and SODIMO, following the registration of houses and residents preparing to transfer to Zango (the informant mentioned that the ‘discovery’ that the investor with an interest in the land was the company SODIMO was very difficult to obtain; apparently, nobody from the registration team was authorised to pass on any information to residents – some members of the registration team lied about the real investors interested in the land, as we will see further on). The letter explains the origins of the group. It says that following the meeting, “a commission was created to defend the population”, which did not form part of the *Comissão de Moradores*, but which was recognised by it. The report went on to ask about the programme and scheduling for the withdrawal from the neighbourhood, and whether facilities were already in place to accommodate residents. It explained that the response was that “they had prepared houses and they wanted to carry out the transfer in stages of 20 families”. The commission requested to see the houses. My informant said that “this was the first step forward, the first concrete result of the group”. He said that if they had not engaged in this reaction, “they would have killed off the neighbourhood” (interview, 2013). Indeed, the letter coincided with the suspension of the demolitions which had begun in Chicala 3, from south to north. The interviewee believed that, back then, the intention was to “start at one tip and finish at the other” (interview, 2013).

2 – Zango 1 observation report, April 2004

In the ‘Zango 1 observation report’, it is stated that the group of residents visited between 20 and 30 residences to be handed over, with the aim of determining the conditions found within them. The report indicates that there were 20 unfinished houses, noting the following (in the words of the original letter): Houses of 9.80 (length) x 6.0 (width); Sink 0.85 x 0.45 m; Toilet; Washbasin; 3 bedrooms; Living room; No plastering; Not cemented (floor); Not painted; Incomplete doors; Windows in poor condition; No electrical installations; No cesspit; *quintalzinho* (14 x 3 m); Height of walls: 2m; Covered with zinc sheets; Electrical energy (it was noted that they were going to install a “P.T.” – power station); No water; Only had 1 public fountain; School only to 3rd level (I, II, III) – there were 2,000 pupils outside education; There is a health centre without a doctor.

3 – Comissão de Negociação report, 16th Abril 2004

Following the second report, a letter was addressed to “Member of the Government”, “Municipal Administration”, “director of MINARS” and “SODIMO”. The letter noted that “various irregularities and poor conditions in Zango” had been observed, and that following assessment, the *Comissão* had decided that “the conditions were unsatisfactory”. The group demanded that the authorities “continue to work to resolve the problem”.

4 – Letter, April 2005

Given the lack of response, the same letter as no.3 was sent without reply.

5 – Letter, September 2005

The same letter as no. 3 and no. 4 was sent again, without reply.

6 – Letter to the President of the Republic, September 2005

In view of the lack of response throughout the preceding year and a half, and following another visit by representatives of the registration team, the *Comissão* resolved to send a letter to the President of the Republic, José Eduardo dos Santos. The letter was delivered to the Akwa Sambila headquarters in Sambizanga. This may be considered a strange procedure. Akwa Sambila is a local association for Sambizanga residents and friends (*Associação dos Naturais, Descendentes e Amigos do Sambizanga*). The five page letter is a summary of the action taken until that point, giving information about the case, and explaining the reasons behind the problem and for the dissatisfaction with the conditions observed in Zango. In light of the facts presented, the *Comissão* notes a “lack of transparency”. The group points out that “the only proposal [presented to them] is [going to] the Zango neighbourhood”, and that “they were threatened, saying that ‘it’s better to just accept it’”. The letter also explains that, faced with residents’ insistence, the members of the registration team announced that they had come “in the name of FESA – *Fundação Eduardo dos Santos* (President’s Foundation)”. Here, my informant explained that, as the team had encountered resistance from residents, they had resorted to using the name of the President. He said that this had outraged the members of the *Comissão*, giving rise to the letter in question. This is not the only time such behaviour has been observed. Apparently, this is a common strategy among the *fiscais*, as other reports note the same procedure: in an article in *Rede Angola*, a *desalojada* in Zango complains that “they [the *fiscais*] come here and put up stakes to mark out the area (...); once they said that the works were for the FESA” (*Rede Angola*, 25/3/2016). In Chicala, according to the informant’s statement, there were resignations following the letter to the President, at the level of the *Comissão Administrativa de Luanda* (city administrative commission), as “the President’s name was used falsely and without authorisation” (interview, 2013). It was not possible to confirm this fact. The letter continues, insisting on the presence of fair negotiations. It suggests that the “each-case-is-unique” formula should be followed, and expresses openness to discussion. The letter goes on to report on the various stages of the process. It is salient to note that the project to widen Avenida Agostinho Neto was not contested: “everyone is aware of the importance [of the widening], but the eviction of residents is problematic” (interview, 2013).

The reality is that the eviction was carried out despite the majority of the conditions demanded by residents remaining unmet. Mr. Joel illustrates this fact by reference to an episode in his family's lives (interview, 7/5/2012):

The houses weren't fit for habitation. They had to finish the houses quickly so that people could move here. (...) At the time of the negotiation, my baby daughter was born! And that place really wasn't suitable for newborn babies, there was a lot of dust...

Despite this, the process elapsed peacefully, as confirmed by this *desalojado*: "There was no pressure from the residents, nor did the police push anyone around. Doubts as to whether it would all take place so easily and peacefully hung in the air". Mr. Joel was clearly unwilling to reveal any resistance to the process due to the presence of his chaperones in that small room (as described in Chapter 5).

In 2012, following the general election in Angola, registration teams reappeared. The registration began at the northern edge of Chicala 2, next to the previously evicted area of Sector da Fortaleza. According to Mr. Artur, the teams barely informed people of what they were doing, and they introduced themselves with permits from the *GPL – Governo Provincial de Luanda* (Luanda Provincial Government) (interview, December 2013):

They didn't speak to the people, they didn't speak to the *Comissão de Moradores*. They did it all *in absentia*.

The *Comissão de Negociações* drafted a new letter and handed it to the registration team (which was to deliver it to the relevant organisations). It was requested that "they come and inform the people about what they're doing", but the only response obtained, through members of the registration team, was that "they were not authorised to come and give explanations to the people". This left the residents frustrated, Mr. Artur complained that "they evaded their responsibilities" (interview, December 2013).

The final letter referenced several decrees and laws.⁹ However, it was futile. Mr. Artur appeared resigned to the fact that "despite the Constitution defending us, we have no rights" (interview, December 2013). He confessed that the group had been greatly discouraged, saying that "nothing can be done when there are orders from above" (interview, December 2013).

In March 2015, during my final research trip, Mr. Artur confirmed that "the struggle continues". In the preceding months, the Negotiation Committee had visited the *Comissão Administrativa de Luanda* and the SODIMO headquarters, without success. They had also been to speak to the ombudsman's office, but "the ombudsman was at a meeting in Futungo [de Belas]" (interview, March 2015).¹⁰ He said that they had received a laconic reply almost a year later, "something like 'you are confusing politics with social issues'" (interview, March 2015). On that occasion, Mr. Artur shared the group's numerous queries

⁹ Right to Compliance with the Law, Art. 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Angola; Right to Information, Art. 29, n° 2 and Art. 40, n° 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Angola; Right to Communication and Information, Art. 30 and 34 of Decree Law 16-A/95.

¹⁰ One of the President's residences.

regarding the urban regeneration process in Chicala as a whole (interview, March 2013):

“We do not understand why the interests of a private company are being supported by the State. The *Comissão Administrativa de Luanda* carries out the demolitions, it ‘gets ahead’, when in fact a private individual or group of private individuals want to keep this portion of land.”

Places for Protest

In the context of imminent evictions in Chicala, any attempt to negotiate beyond what was officially imposed may easily be considered an act of protest. Protest, in fact, has become taboo in Angola.¹¹ Places for authorised public demonstrations are few and far between in postcolonial Luanda. Just a few months after the inception of the Arab Spring in 2011, the Luanda Provincial Government established by decree the eighteen places across the city where demonstrations were permitted.¹² An article published by *Angop* on 15th September 2011 stated that the objective of this measure was “to guarantee the conditions under which people may exercise the right to congregate and protest in public spaces”¹³ (*Angop*, 15/9/2011). The article quotes Graciano Domingos, Luanda’s interim governor at the time, who emphasised that “conducting public actions outside the places indicated is not permitted, and those infringing this decree will be committing a crime of disobedience” (*Angop*, 15/9/2011). Conflating protesters with criminals is a common strategy used by Luanda’s higher representatives. Here we may recall the words of Claudia Gastrow (2015: 264):

The framing of demands for democratic inclusion as a disturbance to peace was similar to the casting of *musseque* residents as ‘anarchic occupants’. The two discourses in fact often intersected. When demolition victims tried to claim compensation they were often accused of belonging to opposition parties.

The decision to establish specific sites where protests can be held raises questions such as: why were these places in particular chosen? Why are most of them football stadiums and not, for example, the *Praça da Independência* (a circular square with a giant statue of Agostinho Neto on a tall pedestal at its centre, where most attempted protests or demonstrations take place)? And, above all, why were any

11 It has been suggested that this may be a remnant of the controversial events of 27th May 1977 (or ‘*vinte e sete*’), when a coup d’état attempt took place in Angola. According to author Lara Pawson, who wrote a book about the case, “the long-term effect of the *vinte e sete de maio* was to stop people from participating in politics, from protesting, from voicing their opposition to the MPLA – what you refer to as ‘getting involved’” (Pawson, 2014: 53-54). Pawson’s book *In the Name of the People – Angola’s Forgotten Massacre* presents rare, first-hand testimonies about the episode, which offer a viable explanation for the “enduring fear” (Pawson, 2014: 151) among Angolans of criticising the government or the ruling MPLA party, and the lack of public participation in Angola. One of the testimonies says that “today (...) the Angolan people are completely tranquil and quiet. We watch, we see and we say nothing. This is purely because of what happened in 1977” (Pawson, 2014: 143).

12 Of the eighteen places where demonstrations were allowed, sixteen are football fields - CAOP PARK, Pan-guila, Cerâmica, Manguerinhas, Bairros Unidos (Cazenga - zone 18), Casa Azul (Tala Hady- zona 19), Camama, Vila Rios (Vila Estoril), Palanca, Felício (bairro Sagrada Esperança), Katinton, Camuxiba, Luanda Sul, Bairro da Regedoria, MINDEF (CAOP-B), and lastly, Chicala 1’s football pitch. Demonstrations were also allowed in Largo do Ponto Final (northern tip of the Ilha) and in the “triangle” of Bairro Uíge (in Ngola Kiluanje).

13 The article’s original title is ‘*Governo de Luanda indica espaços para manifestações*’ (*Angop*, 15/9/2011).

places chosen at all, when the Constitution of the Republic of Angola enshrines the freedom to meet and demonstrate?¹⁴ The beatings and arrests which have taken place during civic demonstrations against José Eduardo dos Santos since 2011, when he completed 32 years in power, must be taken into consideration in this discussion.

This authoritarian position regarding public protest diverges greatly from that held by the ruling party in the early post-independence period. It is hard to believe that the same MPLA that once launched a pamphlet encouraging the construction of a Protest Square for 280,000 people in front of Neto's Mausoleum would go on, in 2015, to arrest a book club of 15 youths gathered in a bookshop in Luanda as a threat to national security. It is evident that something has changed in the MPLA's politics of repression since the 1980s.

While not condoning the horrific massacres and attacks on citizens' freedoms during the intense civil war, the Mausoleum design process did at least appear to be somewhat open to society, in comparison with the hermetic way in which the project was later redeveloped (as described in chapter 4).¹⁵ Indeed, to describe such a symbolic landmark as a place for 'protest' is quite unimaginable today.

Another example of the more open attitude towards public participation is the design competition launched in 1983 to complete the Mausoleum with sculptures and stained glass interventions. The competition brief requested the creation of five stained glass windows which would be integrated into the facades of the monument, and five bas-relief sculptures which would also be displayed on the facades **(Fig. 272)**.

The results of the competition are unknown, but are of little relevance to this study. What is important to note about this public initiative is the open call format for interventions for a monument of such national importance as the Dr Agostinho Neto Mausoleum. However, it is possible that this competition could merely have been 'decoration', displaying a purported openness towards society and the artistic community – at the end of the day, the competition 'only' included the sculptures and stained glass windows, rather than the monument in its entirety. Furthermore, as Hodges points out, it is likely that this endeavour was rather poorly managed. Hodges notes that Angola's external debt "increased rapidly between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s", and that the primary factors causing this sudden increase were "large loans negotiated with the ex-USSR in the 1980s to buy military equipment and investments in poorly designed large projects", such as the Mausoleum (Hodges, 2002 [2001]: 214).

14 Article 47 of the Constitution of the Republic of Angola (Freedom to meet and demonstrate) states that:
1. Freedom of assembly and peaceful, unarmed demonstration shall be guaranteed to all citizens, without the need for any authorisation and under the terms of the law.
2. The appropriate authorities must be given advance notification of meetings and demonstrations held in public places, under the terms of and for the purposes established in law.

15 Nevertheless, the Mausoleum has held a programme of public events since it was officially inaugurated.

Prorrogado prazo do concurso para esculturas e vitrais

De acordo com uma nota da Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, foi prorrogado para o dia 20 de Fevereiro de 1984 a data limite para entrega das maquetes relativas ao concurso de obras de arte destinadas ao Mausoléu do saudoso Camarada Presidente António Agostinho Neto, cujo prazo inicial era 31 de Outubro de 1983.

Recorde-se este concurso foi aberto em 28 de Abril do ano em curso, pela Comissão Técnica do empreendimento, através da Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, sendo extensivo a todos os artistas angolanos residentes na República Popular de Angola ou, sob convite, a outros de nacionalidade estrangeira que tenham estado ligados à Luta de Libertação Nacional ou à vida e obra do saudoso Camarada António Agostinho Neto.

O concurso envolve a criação de cinco vitrais que serão integrados nas fachadas do monumento, e cinco esculturas em baixo relevo que serão colocadas nas mesmas.

OS TEMAS DO CONCURSO

Segundo estabelece o regulamento, os temas para os vitrais serão baseados na vida e obra do Saudoso Presidente Neto, devendo focar cinco factores da sua forte personalidade e que granjearam um nome conhecido e respeitado em todos os continentes: o Humanista, o Poeta, o Guerrilheiro, o Político e o Estadista.

As esculturas, baseadas na Luta de Libertação Nacional do Povo angolano, na qual o Saudoso Presidente Agostinho

Neto teve o papel de Guia Imortal por todos nós reconhecido, deverão obedecer aos seguintes temas: a Luta Clandestina, as Guerras de Libertação, a Independência Nacional, a Formação do Partido e a Reconstrução Nacional Rumo ao Socialismo.

A importância deste concurso artístico é enorme, pois trata-se de promover uma inesquecível homenagem dos artistas e intelectuais angolanos ao homem que ao longo de várias décadas de anos de luta política e intelectual se transformou no fundador da Pátria angolana e no Guia Imortal do Povo Angolano.

A ENTREGA DE MAQUETES

O regulamento do concurso, numa das suas diversas cláusulas, estabelece que os artistas poderão participar no mesmo, de forma individual ou por equipas formadas livremente entre si. Neste caso, deverá o conjunto de maquetes apresentar unidade de estilo, cor e outras características.

Os vitrais, que serão integrados nas fachadas do monumento com uma face virada para a sala da exposição permanente sobre a vida e obra do Camarada Presidente Agostinho Neto (de forma pentagonal e que circunda a sala de luto), terão a forma de trapézios regulares com 7,75 metros de altura. As esculturas em baixo relevo, de forma quadrada com 5 metros de lado, serão igualmente colocadas nas fachadas do monumento, viradas para o exterior.

As maquetes destas obras de arte, no caso dos vitrais, serão executadas à escala de 1,10, pintadas sobre papel, cartolina, cartão, contraplacado ou outro material à escolha do artista.

O regulamento estabelece ainda que os artistas concorrentes deverão documentar-se o melhor possível sobre a técnica do vitral, de forma a apresentarem maquetes de fácil transposição à obra final, especialmente no que respeita à luminosidade e definição do desenho por traço bem vincado.

No que se refere às esculturas, uma recomendação especial é feita: a necessidade de tomar em consideração vários aspectos importantes como sejam a distância de que as esculturas serão vistas pelo observador, a vantagem da utilização de símbolos, a estilização e o material a empregar no trabalho final (granito), devido ao seu elevado grau de dureza.

DOCUMENTAÇÃO DOS CONCORRENTES

As entidades patrocinadoras deste concurso de Arte destinado ao Mausoléu do Saudoso Presidente Agostinho Neto, em colaboração da UNAP (União Nacional dos Artistas Plásticos) promoverão num dos salões desta associação uma exposição documental, a fim de dar oportunidade aos interessados de um melhor esclarecimento sobre os condicionamentos do concurso e permitir uma tomada de conhecimento das características do projecto.

Os vencedores, individuais ou por equipas, acompanhados e reconversão das suas maquetes à escala natural e a sua passagem ao material definitivo, sendo os vitrais executados no estrangeiro em ateliês da especialidade e com o concurso de artistas e operários deste ramo da arte. As esculturas serão ampliadas e cinzeladas em Luanda, também com a contribuição de especialistas.

As inscrições deverão ser feitas em carta dirigida à Direcção Nacional de Arte, sita na Rua Major Kanyangula, n.º 49, 1.º andar, telefone

30598, em Luanda, contendo a identificação completa dos concorrentes e respectivas biografias artísticas.

Os concorrentes deverão, contudo, manter o anonimato, assinando os seus trabalhos com um pseudónimo e fazendo-se acompanhar, no acto da entrega das maquetes, da sua identificação completa em envelope fechado e lacrado, com a inserção do respectivo pseudónimo.

O JURI E PREMÍOS

As entidades promotoras

deste certame de homenagem ao Líder Imortal da Revolução Angolana, nomearão um júri de 7 elementos para classificação final dos trabalhos. Esses elementos serão escolhidos entre personalidades de reconhecida idoneidade, mas que não sejam concorrentes ao concurso.

Serão atribuídos aos cinco primeiros classificados, tanto para os vitrais como para as esculturas, prémios monetários que vão dos 50 aos 500 mil Kwanzas, além de viagens quer a países socialistas, quer no interior do território nacional.

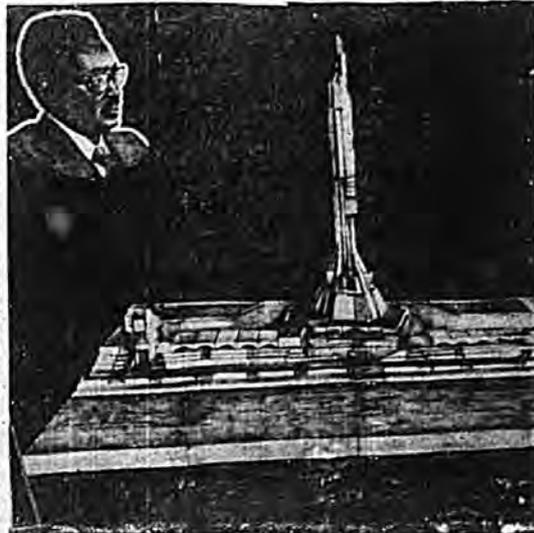


Fig. 272 – Mausoleum sculpture competition (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/11/1983). Source: The British Library

The competition was launched on 28th April 1983 by the Technical Committee for the Mausoleum project, through the Secretary of State for Culture. The article in *Jornal de Angola*, entitled 'Concurso Esculturas do Mausoléu: Prorrogado Prazo do Concurso para Esculturas e Vitrais' ('Mausoleum Sculpture Competition: Deadline for Sculpture and Stained Glass Window Competition Extended'), adds that the entrants had to remain anonymous, signing their work with a pseudonym and making their full identity known when handing in their models via a closed, sealed envelope, with the insertion of the relevant pseudonym (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/11/1983). The *Jornal de Angola* article explains that the competition was open to all Angolan artists residing in Angola or, by invitation, to foreign citizens "who were linked to the Fight for National Independence or the life and work of the late comrade António Agostinho Neto" (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/11/1983). The article explains the competition brief:

"The themes for the stained glass windows will be based on the life and work of the late President Neto, and must focus on five elements of his strong personality which led him to be recognised and respected around the world: the Humanist, the Poet, the Warrior, the Politician and the Statesman. The sculptures, based on the Fight for National Independence of the Angolan people, in which the late President Agostinho Neto played the role of Immortal Guide for which we are all grateful, must respect the following themes: the Clandestine Struggle, the Independence Wars, National Independence, the Formation of the Party, and the National Reconstruction towards Socialism" (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/11/1983).

The importance of this artistic competition is recognised, as it attempts to "promote an unforgettable homage by Angolan artists and intellectuals to the man who, throughout several decades of political and intellectual struggle, became the founder of the Angolan homeland and the Immortal Guide of the Angolan people" (*Jornal de Angola*, 28/4/1983). The competition had an international component, explained in the article:

"The winners, whether individuals or teams, will follow the conversion of their models to full-scale pieces made from permanent materials, with the stained glass windows to be made abroad in workshops with the expertise and support of the artist and operators from this field of the arts. The sculptures will be enlarged and carved in Luanda, also with the contribution of experts." (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/11/1983)

The international dimension was completed by the prizes to be awarded to the five top-ranked artists (both for the stained glass windows and the sculptures): the prize money (between 50,000 and 500,000 Kwanzas) was supplemented by trips "either to socialist countries or within the national territory" (*Jornal de Angola*, 28/4/1983). Regarding the jury of the competition, the article reports that "the organisations promoting this competition (...) will name 7 elements for the final classification of the pieces, which will be chosen by public figures of renowned reputation, who may not participate in the competition" (*Jornal de Angola*, 30/11/1983).

Although the competition represented 'only' a tiny amount of the total investment, it was carried out in an open, pluralistic manner, something unusual in the current political and cultural context of Angola. The contemporary political situation in the country has brought about a distancing of society (not to mention the artistic community) from large public plans and projects. Secrecy and the system of patronage seem to have taken hold of procurements by government bodies from private organisations (Hodges, 2002 [2001]: 21, 262). Under these circumstances, repression merely operates as a last resort: before that, there is "a whole arsenal of subtle techniques used to manipulate the democratic processes established in 1991" (Hodges, 2002 [2001]: 262).

Subversive Strategies of Resistance



Fig. 273 – Visual, subversive contestation. © Paulo Moreira, 23/3/2015
Some residents let the registration team into their houses, others did not (as a result, the latter cases were not registered). In some cases, the registration numbers were erased by the residents. In one case, an artist living in Chicala 2 contested the registration in a subversive manner. He told the registration team to "paint small numbers", because he wouldn't like the facade of his house to "be uglified". He then created a mural with stencils and artwork around the numbers. This can be regarded as a case of visual contestation.

In contemporary postcolonial Angola, evictions and resettlement processes rarely provoke a strong defensive reaction from civil society (**Fig. 273**).¹⁶ There are various possible reasons for this subdued response. It may simply be a question of fear (evictions are accompanied by a strong police presence, including undercover agents); in some cases, it may be that resettlement processes are now expected and regarded as normal; or, it may be the case that forced evictions actually provide business opportunities for those involved on both sides. As explained in the previous Chapter, "demolitions have become a source of business rather than a source of contestation" (Croese, 2013: 166-67). Whatever

¹⁶ Recognition is due to some activist organisations such as SOS Habitat in Luanda, ACC in Lubango and Omunga in Lobito/Benguela. However, these organisations usually act after resettlements have taken place, often when contacted by victims of forced evictions.

the reason or combination of reasons may be, the fact is that public forms of protest against eviction and resettlement processes are clearly not common in Luanda. Yet, it is important to note that protest movements do exist.

Strategies of resistance are commonly prepared in private, without public visibility: the Negotiation Committee in Chicala always acted in a discreet, diplomatic manner. A rare protest action against evictions and resettlement took place in Chicala in 2015. On the night of 26th February, an anonymous group hung protest banners at various points facing the Avenida Agostinho Neto, suspended from the street corners. The banners depicted short sentences in black, blue or red, written on several plain white bedsheets (**Fig. 274 - 275**).

There were two protest banners at the entrance to Rua da Pracinha, suspended from both corners of the street. One of the banners depicted an illegible first sentence in red, and the following statement:

O povo quer um projecto único e evolutivo para a Chicala 2 ["The people want a unique, evolutive project for Chicala 2"]

Obs. Escolas para todos, [illegible] Hospitais, Igrejas, Postos [illegible. Médicos?] [Note. Schools for all, [illegible] Hospitals, Churches, [Medical] centres"]

This group of residents were clearly demanding a more inclusive project which would allow for the right to remain. The banner did not specifically appeal for the self-built neighbourhood to be maintained in its current state, which is often used as one of the arguments to dismiss it. Instead, it points to a new, incremental solution for the neighbourhood. Further on, at the entrance to one of Chicala's secondary streets, three banners had been hung in sequence (**Fig. 276**):

A presença de armas é violência ["The presence of arms is violence"]

This statement refers to the daily raids carried out by the Presidential guard on the streets of Chicala due to its proximity to the political-administrative centre. This practice had implications for my fieldwork. For instance, if a camera is turned towards a government building, even if it is far away in the background, policemen may request explanations of intent. With this statement, the residents were also protesting against excessive military control in their neighbourhood.¹⁷

Queremos ver as nossas casotas antes de partirem as nossas casas ["We want to see our huts before we leave our houses"]

This second statement is clear and self-explanatory. Ironically, the banner uses the pejorative term *casotas* (huts) to contrast with the houses in Chicala. The term is commonly used by some media sources to criticise self-built houses such as those in Chicala, but the protest banner instead employs the word to criticise the houses in the resettlement colonies. This criticism refers to the fact that the houses in Zango or Panguila are considered too small, and are at times left incomplete. Besides, many people

¹⁷ Military control is even tougher during eviction processes, as described earlier.



Fig. 274 - 275 – Protest banners in Chicala. © Paulo Moreira, 3/2015

The banners hung anonymously in Chicala in March 2015 are rare examples of public criticism of the eviction process. Due to strong policies of repression, public protest is not a common form of resistance to evictions in Chicala or in Luanda more generally.



Fig. 276 – Protest banners in Chicala. © Paulo Moreira, 3/2015

Shortly after these banners were photographed from the back seat of a taxi with tinted windows, they were removed. Demolitions were imminent, and eventually took place during the first few days of April 2015. The online news platform *Voa Português* posted that “the eviction order was given by the *Comissão Administrativa de Luanda* (Luanda Administrative Commission) by means of a notice published in the *Jornal de Angola* last week, affecting more than 200 residents who will have to abandon their homes” (*Voa Português*, 2/4/2015).

have expressed their despair with these new settlements, because of their distance from the city and lack of basic services.

Pedimos à Sodimo e à Comissão Administrativa da Cidade de Luanda para que respeitem o artigo 37º da constituição. [“We ask SODIMO and the City of Luanda Administrative Commission to respect Article 37 of the constitution.”]

This statement displays the group’s knowledge of the political contours and economic interests inherent to the case. It also reveals a rather enlightened position on the rights and responsibilities established by Angolan law. The residents appear well informed, contradicting their portrayal in the official media which dismisses and depoliticises such discourses, often claiming residents to be ill-informed about important matters (the failure to understand the process, if any, can be traced back partly to the poor information or misinformation that they received from the press and media agencies). It is worth examining Article 37 of the Constitution of Angola cited by the group. According to the residents responsible for this protest, the following article is not being respected:

1. The right to private property and its transfer is guaranteed for all, in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

2. The state respects and protects property and other effective rights of individuals, collectives or local communities, and only temporary civil requisition and expropriation for public use are permitted, against fair and prompt compensation, in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

3. The payment of compensation referred to in the previous section is a condition of the validity of expropriation.

The forms of protest presented here, both diplomatic and subversive, have yielded almost no practical results. These actions do not seem to be sufficiently politically coordinated as a consistent strategy of resistance. The banners, an unusual form of protest in the context of Chicala and Luanda, were quickly removed by anonymous individuals and did not dissuade the city authorities from proceeding with their plans: days later, a 40 metre strip of the neighbourhood was demolished, and at least 150 families were transferred to Zango 2. The potential of the protests to prompt change may therefore be considered limited.¹⁸ Nonetheless, these actions demonstrate that dissenting voices do operate in Chicala, resisting and protesting against the way in which the resettlement process is dictated from above.

¹⁸ Indeed, despite being in the area, I would have known nothing of the protest banners had I not been notified by an informant.

Bay of Luanda – Critical Reactions

Critical reactions and protests are not exclusive to the urban poor facing imminent eviction. The higher classes in civil society also organise to defend their rights when affected in some way by regeneration projects in Luanda.¹⁹ There are lessons to be learned from some of the strategies of resistance used by higher classes and media outlets, and the political reach that their reactions have. This can add another level to the reciprocity between formal/richer and informal/poorer Luanda.

The impacts of the Bay of Luanda renewal were the subject of questions by some media outlets and by the population. Critics see it as proof of the city's increasing 'Dubaification' (Elsheshtawy, 2013), in which megaprojects and the construction of high-rise skyscrapers are favoured over, for instance, basic infrastructure (or upgrading of informal settlements). *Economia & Mercado* magazine published a cover issue considering the 'Pros & Cons' of the new *Baía de Luanda* (Fig. 277).²⁰



Fig. 277 – *Economia & Mercado*, cover issue on the Bay of Luanda (issue 101, February 2013).

The magazine's editorial questions the advantages of a project of this scale. It states that it is legitimate for the country to aim high with this type of project, while warning of the speculative effect that the real estate industry is likely to provoke upon termination of the works. Later on in the editorial, doubts are raised regarding the new forms of use and occupation of the land in the area, and it is advised that "it is necessary to consider what will be built, at what cost, with what funds and for whom" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 1). The article states that "it is obvious that this is a privileged urban space where,

19 The higher classes may not necessarily be facing eviction, but the prominent urban transformations seen in Luanda affect all levels of society.

20 *Economia & Mercado*, issue no. 101, February 2013. Other newspapers and magazines dedicated extensive articles to the Baía de Luanda redevelopment, for instance *Rumo* magazine (Issue 1, 2011).

naturally, the market will act to maximise its economic potential, but it is important to remember that property prices do not continually rise in the long term, as many international and also national examples demonstrate" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 1). In other words, at the beginning of 2013, it was already feared that "building almost exclusively for classes with high purchasing power may be a further risk to add to so many others which currently influence the country's economy" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 1). The conclusion of the editorial is clear regarding the concerns relating to the project: "In Angola, and in the face of the current outlook, the general feeling remains that of great uncertainty" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 1).

In the main body of the magazine, the theme is developed further in a long article entitled 'Baía de Luanda: Waiting for an Emergent Class' (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 48-55). The article begins by recognising that the ongoing works in the new bay "are changing the face of the bay" and "are a treat to see for anyone walking past". However, this does not stop the construction from being "disliked" for only considering "the most privileged section of the country" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 48). It is clear that the Baía de Luanda project, namely the creation of bigger and better public spaces, was little more than a necessary vehicle to propel more private real estate deals, in this case using landfill reclaimed from the sea (as seen in Chapter 3). Observing that only 5% of the Angolan population belongs to the middle/upper class, the article questions the cost and viability of the real estate projects attached to the Baía de Luanda. The CEO of the Sociedade Baía de Luanda, Miguel Carneiro, is quoted stating that despite the project's increasing costs per square metre, it remains "viable". This exemplifies the optimism typical of the direction taken by some of Africa's largest cities (Croese, 2016).

Further on, the *Economia & Mercado* issue dedicated to the Baía de Luanda presents a critical article, entitled 'The modernisation of Luanda begins at its foot' (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 56-59). The article is largely based on the account of Dr Isabel Martins, head of the Department of Architecture at Agostinho Neto University (while emphasising that her account is not representative of any institution).²¹ Her perspective, as an architect and resident of the Marginal, is somewhat critical regarding the modernisation process in the city, in particular this project which "should never have begun in the Marginal, which is the point of lowest elevation [of the city]". Martins argues that the entire city requires modernisation, "not only the Marginal" (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 57).

According to the architect and academic, in order to be successful, the Baía de Luanda project "should have begun by improving the access points (...), to avoid the entrances and exits becoming bottlenecks for road traffic", something which is "increasing the frustration" of drivers in the city (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 58). Martins emphasises that the access points "continue to be as chaotic or even worse than before, as they were not designed for the increase in traffic volume they received

²¹ Architect and Professor of Architecture, as well as partner in the Chicala Observatory, Isabel Martins is a well-known voice in society who often speaks out about urban issues in Luanda and Angola.

following the renovation of the Avenida 4 de Fevereiro” (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 58). The architect adds that the poor access points are mitigating the benefits anticipated from the Baía de Luanda intervention. “To exacerbate the situation”, the article adds, “the access points are marked by numerous large craters”, causing systematic and permanent congestion. According to Isabel Martins, the blame for the craters making the roads almost impassable may be placed on the civil construction companies that are undertaking works in the area (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 59).

The reasons for her disenchantment with the project accumulate as the article goes on. “[The Marginal] is far from being a spectacular construction”, says the architect. She expresses indignation at an apparently unexpected feature: the Marginal’s green and pleasant lawns. Not because they are unpleasant – far from it –, “but who knows how much that lawn and the litres of water it’s taking from the taps of Luandans cost?”. Part of the response may be found on another page of the magazine which presents the facts and figures of the intervention: US\$15 million is the annual maintenance cost of the Baía de Luanda.²² The architect expresses her astonishment at the construction of “many huge buildings, at a time when occupation rates are much lower than reasonable” (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 58). She gives the four Escom towers as an example, questioning the fact that the first tower does not have “even a third of its capacity occupied”, despite which three more towers are being constructed next to it (these have since been completed).



Fig. 278 – View of the new Bay with water pouring into the car park. © Paulo Moreira, 18/2/2013

As Martins reminds us, as well as the poor state of the access roads to the Marginal, another reason why the Avenida 4 de Fevereiro should only be reformed later on is the fact that it constitutes the last line of defence against rainwater and sewage in the city. The architect warns that “as the works did not take that aspect into account, the Marginal will continue to be a deposit for floodwaters, rubbish and soil when it rains” (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 58). It was not possible to confirm this statement, but this situation could be witnessed from the window of my room on the Marginal – when it rained heavily, water would ‘erupt’ from the manhole covers. It is relevant to note that even during the civil war years (1975-2002), the waters of the bay were becoming polluted as sewerage and drainage systems stopped working as a result of a virtual standstill of public investment in urban infrastructure. By the end of the war, raw sewage continued to flow into the bay, roads and buildings were frequently flooded, and a substantial volume of contaminated sludge had built up in the bay along most of the waterfront (Croese, 2016).

²² The article adds that this figure may increase “if accidents and acts of vandalism occur” (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 50).

The torrent of indignation does not stop there. Martins recognises that urban modernisation is important and pertinent, but she argues that it must “respect the rights acquired by citizens and be subject to public debate”, something which did not occur in this case. After condemning the insensitivity of the Baía de Luanda promoters, the architect laments that Angolan citizens are not consulted regarding large projects in the city, which are invariably commissioned to “foreign companies”.²³ Foreign or not, it is clear that the area is extremely appetising to all involved.

Further criticism points to the private concession of car parks in the Marginal. Martins observes that the positive features emphasised when mentioning the ‘new bay’ were predominantly its green leisure areas. However, without her or any of her neighbours realising, the modernisation of the Baía was leaving them without their usual car parking areas. As she explains, the new road layout transforms the space parallel to the main boulevard, on the built side of the Marginal, making it into private car parks. According to the architect and resident, “they withdrew access to that public space from the community without any compensation”. What the authorities are really doing, she goes on, “is to take from residents the right to enjoy the public space opposite their houses” (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 59). Here, she presents an alternative (*Economia & Mercado*, 2013: 59):

It is one thing for the Provincial Government to install parking meters and offer services to citizens, such as repairing pavements, with the money collected, which would be understandable. It is quite another for a private company, unclear whether it is Angolan or foreign, to make profit from a space that belongs to all of us.

Indeed, once the works were finished, the promoters placed a barrier on each parking bay preventing residents from parking. In response to this situation, the residents wrote a letter of complaint and after several months the car parks were reopened to the public for an undisclosed period.

23 This observation, however, does not appear to be correct, as all indications point to the fact that the promoters and many of the investors in the project are Angolan, and/or have links to the government. The article ends with a consideration worth mentioning. It gives several examples of this lack of public dialogue, including the demolitions of the Palácio Dona Ana Joaquina (named after an influential slave trader, demolished in 2007) and the Mercado do Kinaxixe (demolished in 2008). These are the most paradigmatic and mediatised examples of the policy of demolishing emblematic buildings in the city centre. Not many *sobrados* remain: among those that do are the Museu de Antropologia, the Baleizão and Dona Ana Joaquina’s palace (replica). The latter was demolished in 2007, which led to strong criticism from Angolan intellectuals. In response to this criticism, a formal replica was built in its place. José Eduardo Agualusa summarised the episode: “I saw the Dona Ana Joaquina palace being demolished, substituted by a replica in bad concrete, and I thought it was a metaphor of current times – the old colonial system being substituted by a ridiculous replica in nefarious slang from the *musseques*.” (Agualusa: 2009, 92-93).

The Kinaxixe market, on the other hand, was a Corbusian masterpiece designed by Vasco Vieira da Costa (1950-52). It was considered one of the most relevant testimonies to the achievements of modernism in Africa. The building followed the “five points for a new architecture”: pilotis elevating the mass off the ground, free plan achieved through the separation of the load-bearing columns from the walls subdividing the space, free facade as the corollary of the free plan in the vertical plane, long horizontal sliding windows and a roof garden. Like many Corbusian buildings, it was demolished with no regard for its architectural and cultural value, indeed, it was deemed to represent a colonial past (however, it may be said that the building represented innovation and detachment from the traditional *Estado Novo* architecture). The Kinaxixe Market is being replaced by a 10,000 m² shopping centre, still under construction.

Similar popular action had already been lodged by residents in relation to the first offsetting project (the 'two islands' project).²⁴ A group of citizens wrote a letter and drafted a petition against the initial plans for the redevelopment of the bay (Fig. 279). The movement led to the cancellation of the plans to create two artificial islands. The group founded the *Associação Kalu* in April 2004 – curiously, the same month and year of the foundation of the *Comissão de Negociação* in Chicala.²⁵

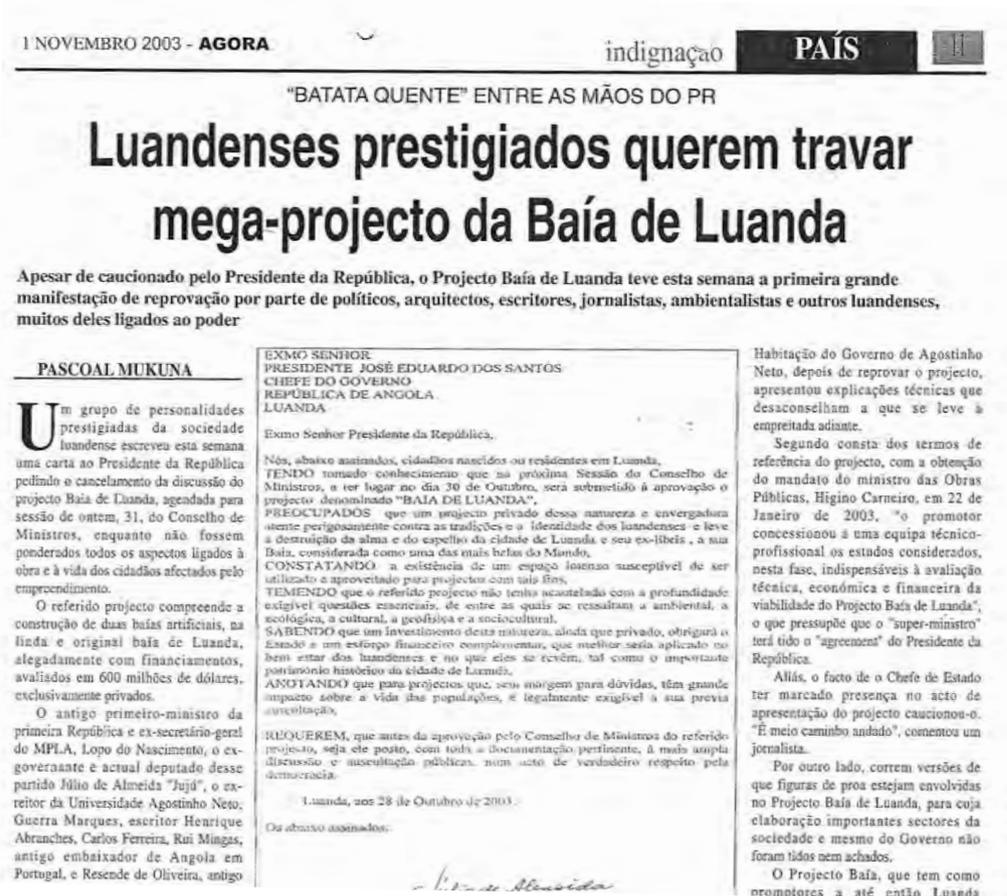


Fig.279 - Luandan public figures attempt to halt Baía de Luanda mega-project (*Agora*, 1/11/2003).

Courtesy: Sylvia Croese

CONCERNED that a private project of this nature and scale will endanger the traditions and identity of the Luandan population and cause the destruction of the heart and soul of the city of Luanda and its symbolic feature, the Bay, considered to be one of the most beautiful in the world,
OBSERVING the existence of an immense space susceptible to being used and exploited for projects with similar aims,
FEARING that the aforementioned project has not taken sufficient care to safeguard against vital matters, including environmental, ecological, cultural, geophysical and sociocultural issues,
KNOWING that an investment of this nature, albeit private, will require an extra financial contribution from the State, which would be better spent on the wellbeing and pleasure of Luandan residents, such as the important historical heritage of the city of Luanda,
NOTING that for projects which will undoubtedly have a significant impact on the lives of the population, previous consultation is a legal requirement,
DEMAND that before the aforementioned project is approved by the Council of Ministers, it should be subject to the broadest possible public discussion and consultation, with all relevant documentation presented, in an act of true respect for democracy.

24 See Fig. 95 in Chapter 3 (page 130).

25 *Associação Kalu* was named after the name given to residents of Luanda: *Kaluandas*. The association has been involved in organising activities and events such as presentations and guided tours to raise awareness of the need to preserve the city's building heritage. In recent years, the group's struggle has centred also around the imminent threat of demolition to the Elinga theatre in downtown Luanda, as well as the lack of debate on the elaboration of the new masterplan for Luanda (Luanda Masterplan 2015-2030, mentioned in the Introduction).

A number of differences are apparent in the methods used and results obtained by resistance groups in Chicala and the Bay. We may observe the difference in treatment given to the 'people's voice' from the higher echelons of society, compared to the way in which events unfolded in Chicala, where the negotiation committee's letters received no response. In this respect, there are lessons to be learnt from *Associação Kalu*, in particular regarding the use of the media to give visibility to the group's struggle (the same applies to Martins' article), as opposed to remaining a secretive group and relying on diplomacy alone. It may be noted too that resistance from well-to-do elites was concerned not with socio-economic considerations, but mainly with colonial buildings and cultural heritage.

There is a poignant silence with regard to informal settlements, evictions and large-scale displacements – it is worth mentioning that the group did not launch any petition in regards to the preservation of Chicala or other informal areas. Perhaps a next step in this direction would be to raise awareness among the elites of the cultural significance of the informal *bairros* in the history of Luanda.

The preservation of the character of Luanda is not irreconcilable with the fact that the city has continuously mutated over the years, both formally and informally. However, postcolonial transformations are not unanimously accepted; they take place in a context of more or less visible, more or less structured, strategies of resistance.

The heroic and almost invisible achievements of groups of residents that have fought to preserve their neighbourhoods, or at least to obtain rightful compensation when forced to leave them, is in itself a story worth documenting. By preserving these stories, we preserve Chicala's capacity to resist.

The full body of Luanda's urban order emerges only if we seek to understand these 'slow' and 'small' practices of resistance. They help to complexify the discourse on the city, bringing the dwellers of informal neighbourhoods closer to the rest of the population – everyone is aware of the ongoing changes planned for their environments, however secret they may be, and everyone reacts to change. Actions of protest are in themselves an expression of citizenship, an affirmation of participation in the destiny of the city. Civic awareness gives rise to a positive vision of Luanda's possibilities for an alternative history.

Conclusion

Quem me dera ser onda [I wish I were a wave] tells the story of two children, Beto and Ruca, who live in Luanda during the turbulent post-independence period.¹ Against a backdrop of irreversible change in Luandan societal values, the children convey a message of hope. With the ingenuity unique to their young age, they take various risks to save their pet piglet from slaughter to line the adults' stomachs, even receiving a beating from their father. Finally, having been unable to prevent the animal's death, the children take refuge on the Luandan coast. The book concludes as follows (Rui, 1982: 80, 88):

- "*I wish I were a wave, up there above the water you don't even need to know how to swim*" – said Beto. (...) Down there, the children trusted in the power of hope. (...) And Ruca, full of that beautiful fury that the waves of Chicala always paint onto the calm sea, repeated Beto's words: "*I wish I were a wave!*"

This final wish, used moreover as the title of the book, is striking. Despite being naïve (as if not feeling, or not thinking, were possible), the children's wish is inspiring. They believed until the very end that they could save something which was condemned to disappear. This tale is a metaphor for the very real issues affecting Angolan society which play on the author's mind.

In some ways, the story is not so far-removed from the aim of this thesis: to understand and 'preserve' a neighbourhood in the face of the unstoppable forces tearing it down. This convergence between fiction and reality is characteristic of Angolan literature. After all, it was through the vehicle of fiction that certain characteristics of Luanda began to gain recognition, for example, the role of the *musseques* in forming the city and shaping Angolan identity (Moorman, 2008: 40):

¹ *Quem me dera ser onda* (Manuel Rui, 1982) has not been translated in English. I wish I were a Wave is a translation by the thesis' author, not an official translation.

Fiction writers give us a different sense of the social reality of the *musseques* (...). In [Angolan] literature (...), the *musseques* are not so much the location of pathology as they are the site of cultural richness.

Of course, this thesis does not deal with fiction. Nonetheless, in Angola one senses that the line between reality and fiction is thin. There is something truly Angolan about telling a fictional truth. In practice, this creates nuances and myths around reality. It is no coincidence that the book *Intonations* by Marissa Moorman begins with this quote from political historian Christine Messiant (2008: 1):

In Angola, even the past is unpredictable.

If there is one thing that this thesis has attempted to do, it has been to unravel this unpredictability. It has sought to uncover the 'cityness' inherent to the particular settlement of Chicala, a neighbourhood forged from thick and seemingly hidden or inaccessible layers of history and (still largely unrecognised) collective effort. The thesis has gathered and compiled previously scattered historical records and, through the process of uncovering these stories, has raised further points of reflection on the contemporary city. Issues prominent throughout history have been signposted in order to build the argument. Here, the architect/researcher acts as a kind of documentarian and eyewitness, seeking evidence both in conventional archives and on the ground.

The vivid and hopefully efficient portrait of Chicala/Luanda which I have presented connects architectural, cultural, economic and social processes. An attempt was made to find a fair balance between the various dimensions of the thesis. While the written part may be somewhat more moral/political in emphasis, significant efforts were made to illustrate it using methods employed in architecture and urbanism. In other words, the amount of time devoted to actually surveying and drawing up the neighbourhood and its connections to the city was at least equivalent to the reading and writing up phases (and probably longer, if we include the Appendices).

The initial understanding of the topic of informal architectural order soon developed into a broader exploration of the city, including the consolidated city centre, recent resettlement colonies and projected large-scale coastal fantasies. The milieu of promises, deceptions and corruption witnessed in Luanda, addressed throughout the thesis, became as important to understanding the research topic as the exchanges between 'informal' and 'formal' practices typical of the "Africities" (Simone, 2001), which are addressed primarily in Chapter 4. The combination of stories, drawings and images (including the use of long captions) creates a dense body of research and allows for the emergence of a sense of '*plus ça change*'. I will now reflect in greater depth upon the findings of this thesis.

Contributions to Architecture, Urbanism and Postcolonial Studies

The purpose of this research is multifaceted. The thesis contributes to the study of African postcolonial cities and to the fields of architecture and urbanism more generally. It raises questions regarding the role of architectural research in contemporary society, in particular in complex urban situations. The actualities of the case addressed in this thesis, in the context of Luanda and Angola, required a distinct approach. Analysis of the urban order of Chicala and its relationship with Luanda casts light upon the impacts of harsh conflicts between oil capitalism and people who are forcefully expropriated and displaced to make way for further urban expansion. The archival and empirical evidence presented throughout the various chapters suggests that informal neighbourhoods such as Chicala actually work and connect with the wider city in fruitful ways. The research demonstrates a decisive element of urban reciprocity: that the informal city is capable of empowering and incorporating people, rather than excluding them.²

Between the start and end of this research, the political and economic situation in Angola changed considerably. As I write, the country is suffering from an unprecedented economic crisis due to the impact of the global oil price crash. Angolan officials have finally begun to recognise the importance of diversifying the economy. In such a context, studies like this can be valuable for the decision-makers and private urban practitioners who fomented Luanda's construction boom over the last 10-15 years.

It is hoped that the insights into official-informal urban reciprocity presented here could point to viable solutions for the coming years in Luanda. Perhaps a more free market economy rather than one which is tightly controlled by the political regime, including control of the land, would be beneficial for the people of the *musseques* and allow Luanda to diversify (both in terms of imports/exports and of the identity of those producing/selling). This would certainly be more sustainable in the long term, but of course it implies a different, more integrated vision of the topography of Luanda, with greater flows of capital. These scenarios are purely speculative – Chicala's fate is already sealed. However, the findings of this research could promote the self-development of other neighbourhoods.

Nonetheless, it is worth questioning whether the present collaborative spirit characterising Chicala (and the *musseques* generally) could evaporate as people move up the class ladder, seek to distance themselves from their poorer roots, and develop the introversion and privacy characteristic of the upper classes. This, however, was not the main focus of this thesis.³

2 In its own way, Chicala is part of an official order, with the involvement of the ruling Party appearing to be both positive and negative, as if its aim were to keep the peace until such a time as the land may be cleared. This topic merits lengthier discussion of the complicity between the authorities and planning agents in creating 'soft targets' for surgical removal, preferred to the wholesale destruction seen in other areas of Luanda. This subject was addressed in Chapter 5.

3 A more in-depth theoretical analysis of class affairs in the postcolonial city can be found in Colin McFarlane's *Learning the City* (2011) and Arjun Appadurai's *Deep Democracy* (2001).

The theoretical and political positions underpinning this research are voiced throughout the thesis. These grew out of dissatisfaction with the total clearance of places like Chicala without fair negotiation with inhabitants, credible cost-benefit studies of the resulting economic and social impacts, or any discussion of plausible alternatives. It seemed urgent to document this part of the city before it disappeared. In order to do so, collaborations with residents, community associations and institutions from both within and outside the neighbourhood were set in motion. This collective endeavour was crucial to attaining the results presented in this thesis, allowing a large amount of primary data to be collected and structured. The strategies of engagement, however, were less 'a means to an end' than a research goal in themselves, and they are arguably one of the main contributions of the thesis.

The methodological approach, transversal across the thesis and summarised in seven parts in the Introduction, was in itself a hybrid and nuanced endeavour. The complexity of the kind of social and urban situations encountered in Chicala, as well as the formality of the Luandan professional and academic context, required this adaptive, multi-layered approach.⁴ This thesis represents the culmination of this challenging and protracted collaborative process. It is a by-product of the collaboration, not its ultimate goal. Naturally, it incorporates various modes of argumentation and representation - the thesis is punctuated by a wealth of material (graphs, maps, footnotes, appendices) which also express the intricacy of the themes at hand.

It is highly plausible that parts of this thesis may be disassembled and reformatted to suit a wider range of functions, including future publications or exhibitions and further research. While I draw upon postcolonial urban theories to offer a cogent history of Luanda (which is in itself a contribution), my methods and outcomes are hopefully a relevant example of contemporary architectural research.

The bridges and collaborations that the project was able to build point to a more inclusive way of thinking the city, one that accepts and integrates informal settlements. I hope that this can show other architects, urbanists, policy makers and development agents that "there must be something wrong with a law or code if it is broken daily by so many people as they go about their daily lives" (Hardoy & Satterthwaite, 1989: 31).

One of the preferred manners of questioning these negative perceptions coming 'from above' is by revising dismissive attitudes to the *musseques* and their claim upon the city. It is clear that despite all of the large-scale, specialised masterplans put in practice, informality will persist. It is a perpetual characteristic of cities like Luanda, as it always has been. Informality is experienced across Luanda (not only in the *musseques*) and at all levels of society (in the upper, middle and lower classes).⁵

4 The seven research methods are: Primary Experience, Archival Research, Collaborative Fieldwork, Institution Building: the Chicala Observatory, Interpretative Modes of Representation, Public Celebration and Dissident Practice.

5 Examples of informal appropriation of both older and more recent 'formal' housing estates in Luanda reinforce the idea that what occurs in Chicala is in many ways in line with the city's standards. Exploring the level of informality in recent top-tier construction in Luanda could be a relevant topic for future research.

This thesis has closely followed the simultaneous building and dismantlement of Chicala from 2010 to 2016 (paradoxically, the eviction period represented one of the most rampant construction phases, because many residents built more houses or annexes with a view to ensuring better resettlement conditions). This says as much about people's shrewdness as about the failed resettlement policy. At the time of writing, the neighbourhood still partially exists and the date of the full eviction remains unknown.

Since this is an ongoing, unresolved urban situation, it is difficult to comprehend the full extent of the thesis' contributions in terms of reflecting on Chicala/Luanda. Despite this degree of uncertainty, it is undeniable that the research mobilised considerable scholarly and professional discussion.

The number of interventions developed during the research process, including collaborative survey exercises in Chicala, participation in academic conferences and exhibitions (mostly in Angola and Portugal), as well as the founding of the Chicala Observatory (consisting of producing an archive, a book, an exhibition and a website), is more substantial than a conventional PhD project.⁶

Coverage of the project in the public sphere appears to have encountered greater resistance within Angola than abroad. At the Observatory launch, one Tuesday morning (26/11/2013), few people turned up to the auditorium at the Department of Architecture of the Universidade Agostinho Neto (**Fig. 280**). The event was scheduled during the exam period, meaning that many students were unable to attend. Lecturers showed limited interest, and some confessed that they did not attend because "they hadn't been invited" (an excuse belying a hint of academic envy).⁷ One of the professors who did attend asked a number of questions in a defiant tone at the end of my presentation.⁸ Meanwhile, the sending of invitations to the university's mailing list was late or inexistent (due to "internal logistics", as I was informed). During the following trip in March 2015, with the Observatory publication printed and ready to be presented, my 30-day visit to Luanda proved insufficient to hold the official launch.⁹ The book remained stored in boxes for several months, until the launch was finally held on 10th September 2015 in my absence.¹⁰

6 Given the number and magnitude of these interventions, records were collated in an Appendix (Appendix 1 - Research Methods Portfolio). It was considered that, due to the word limit and the need to adhere to the main argument, this was a better way to handle the methodological procedures. As mentioned earlier, a longer presentation and discussion of the methodological approach is provided in the Introduction.

7 It is true that no individual invitations to teaching staff in the Department were sent, but posters publicising the programme were displayed in several places in the building, and there was visible activity around the entrance path and foyer for at least a week, with people setting up the exhibition).

8 Curiously, her attitude regarding the presentation of the Beyond Entropy Africa project two days later (also praising the qualities of the *musseques* in its own way), was far more condescending.

9 Once again, due to a certain failure in "internal logistics" within the University.

10 On that occasion, I was asked for a biographical text, which was read aloud by Dr Isabel Martins. There has yet to be any distribution of the book beyond the walls of the university, and it remains in storage in a room in the Department of Architecture (just like the physical archive, which has received travel propositions which have yet to come to fruition).

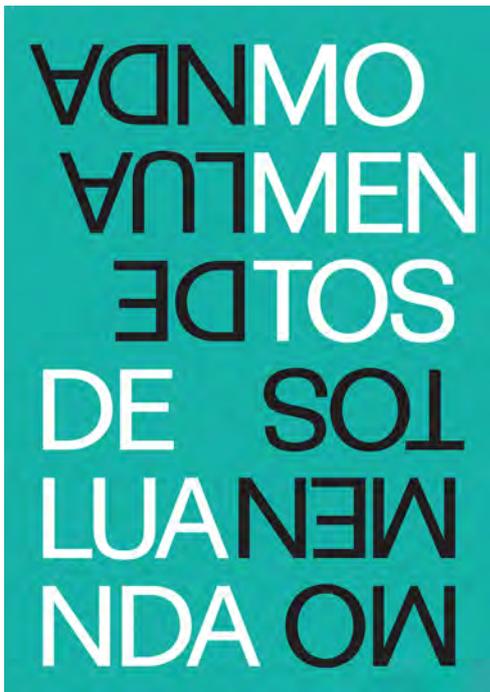


Fig. 280 - Poster and programme of *Momentos de Luanda*.
 Poster designed by Tank Boys/Beyond Entropy, 2015
 The conference took place at the Department of Architecture, Agostinho Neto University, 25-30/11/2015.

Despite some mishaps in the trajectory of the Chicala Observatory, it may legitimately be affirmed that the project had a positive impact in its native land. Focusing on a controversial subject which continues to be surrounded by silence, it was not expected to be an easy task. It is important to highlight the fact that the project was successful in engendering public discussion, even if the latter was less extensive than hoped. Of the almost 150 students who actively participated, several dozen showed genuine interest, prompting admiration among the teaching body. Dr Isabel Martins made the following comment regarding the extent to which the students engaged with the fieldwork (Martins, 2011: 75):

“The small scale interventions carried out in this Workshop brought out a fantastic sensitivity in several of our students, an unexpected receptivity which truly moved us. A desire to create and put into practice!”

While students in Angola reacted warmly to the project, it could be said that the impact was equally gratifying internationally. This was primarily the result of several exhibitions, presentations and media reports, as well as the online archive which made the rich product of our collaborative fieldwork available to anyone.¹¹ The dissemination of the findings of the research allowed a body of architectural

11 The online archive can be found at www.chicala.org.

knowledge to be constructed, with relevance both for the disciplinary field and for the creation of new forums. Numerous contacts were established and an international audience began to form. The Chicala Observatory was established as an international platform in its own right.¹²

The decision to share knowledge and material as the research unfolded was a conscious one. It proved to offer instructive feedback and to propel collaborations that led in some cases to finding further relevant sources. However, it was only to be expected that eventually some of the beneficiaries would not credit the Chicala Observatory, or even would not share their own studies once they were completed. Hence, a complete and systematic interpretation of the impact of this project is hard to achieve. On one occasion at the end of my field trip in 2012, I became aware that a tutor had developed the ideas raised during the workshops on Chicala 1 to try to convince the authorities to commission her a project. This seems to be common practice for finding architectural jobs in Angola, and in this case working on Chicala was perceived as an opportunity to obtain work.¹³ On another occasion in early 2014, I was contacted by a student at the New School of Architecture and Design (San Diego, USA) who was keen to develop her Masters project in Chicala.¹⁴ Following several enthusiastic emails and sharing of material, the student ceased to reply and did not share the outcome of her work. Another example demonstrating the global reach of this research was a plagiarism case in an Indian journal by a Portuguese author living in Macao (China).¹⁵

The experiences and projects emanating directly and indirectly from this research could become objects of further study and interpretation. While it seems plausible to include these examples as contributions made by the thesis, a proper discussion of their particular findings could only be accommodated in future research projects.

12 At the time of submission for examination (September 2016), the project was being displayed in three reputable cultural institutions in Venice (exhibition "Time-Space-Existence", organised by GAA Foundation in the context of the 15th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, 28/5 – 27/11/16), Tel Aviv (exhibition "South of the Sahara: Accelerated Urbanism in Africa", at the Museum of Art, 17/3 – 27/8/2016) and had just been exhibited in Barcelona (as part of "Making Africa: A Continent of Contemporary Design", at the Centre for Contemporary Architecture in Barcelona, 23/3 – 28/8/2016). The exhibition then started touring in the U.S., at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta (14/10/17 - 7/1/18), Albuquerque Museum in Albuquerque (3/2/18 – 6/5/18) and the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin (14/10/18 – 13/1/19). A side project entitled Isle of Pleasures (in collaboration with Pétur Waldorff), based on the Chicala study and its relationship with the Ilha's 'expatriate' resorts, was displayed at the Oslo Architecture Triennale (After Belonging: On Residence exhibition, at the Norwegian Centre for Design and Architecture DOGA, 8/9 – 27/11/2016).

13 As far as I am aware, this attempt was unsuccessful.

14 The student said she became aware of Chicala after watching my lecture at the CCA - Canadian Centre for Architecture online (1/11/2012).

15 The journal tried to deny the plagiarism claim, but the author did write an apology. Peter Carl jokingly considered this "a praise of a kind" (email, 5/4/2016).

Research Outcomes

This research has given rise to tangible outcomes both in Angola and abroad. Acknowledging that demolition of Chicala was a *fait accompli*, my approach to this situation of urban conflict opened up further professional opportunities. As I critically began to decipher the urban order of Chicala and to examine the consequences of its dismantling and displacement to the settlement camps, I started to connect with various organisations and groups promoting social change operating in hostile conditions.

Some of the practices of resistance which this thesis brings to the foreground are related to the corruption and injustice inherent to the resettlement system operating in Luanda. Understanding of the segregationist policies behind the dispersal of Chicala was made possible first and foremost by engaging with the local human rights organisation S.O.S. Habitat. The reaction to the ongoing clearance process was also made visible by a group called the Negotiation Commission (composed of residents, acting mostly through diplomacy), as well as by more critical, subversive actions such as hanging protest banners at the entrance to Chicala. By lending visibility to these practices of dissent, I was able to understand in greater depth the complexities of urban change and the ways in which it is perceived across the city, thus contributing to envisaging a more socially inclusive Luanda. The lessons on reciprocity and conflict learnt from Chicala provided a productive pattern for further projects developed as direct consequences of this study.

Whilst in Luanda for my first fieldwork trip in 2010, I met Alain Cain, the director of DW - Development Workshop, a well-established NGO in Angola.¹⁶ As we discussed the initial aims and objectives of my research, Cain mentioned that in the days preceding our meeting, he had been copied into an email thread relating to housing problems and resettlement programmes in Lubango (in the southern province of Huíla, 900 kilometres from Luanda). The email called for volunteers with architectural expertise to work with a community of *desalojados* [resettled people] who had recently been resettled in Tchavola, a vast, arid area between ten and twenty kilometres from Lubango (**Fig. 281**).

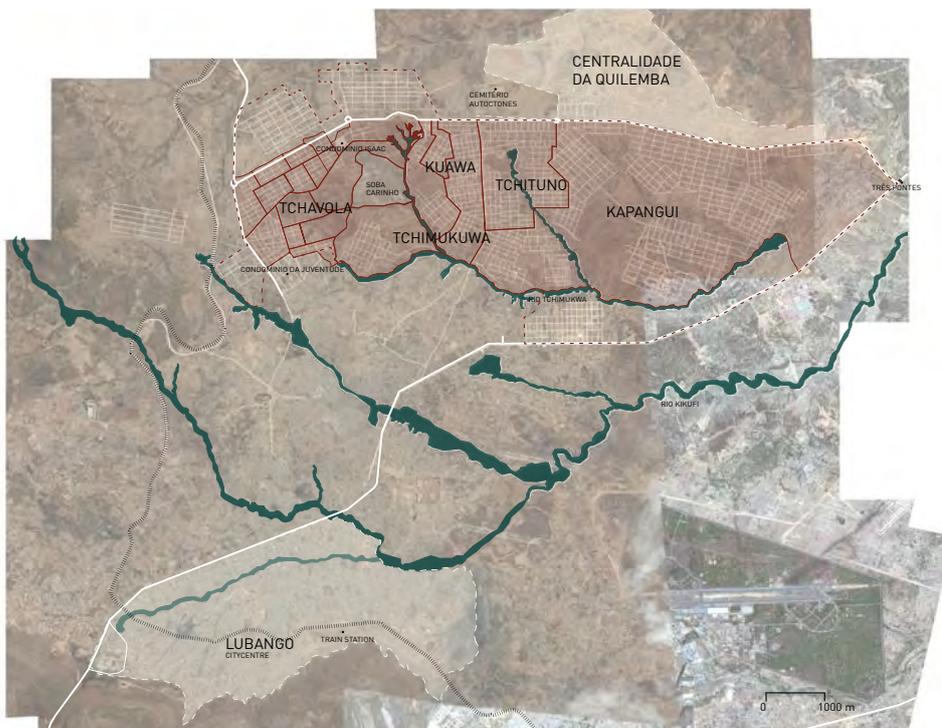


Fig. 281 - Map of Lubango and Tchavola © Paulo Moreira, 2015

16 We were put in contact by Prof. Maurice Mitchell, advisor to this thesis.

The message was sent to a network of NGOs by ACC - *Associação Construindo Comunidades* (Building Communities Association), a local human rights group which was working actively with the *desalojados* from Tchavola. It requested urgent assistance to improve the state of their new homes as a result of the extreme conditions in which they had been relocated.¹⁷

Thanks to the support of DW and ACC, I was able to engage with the complex case of the resettlement process in Tchavola. More specifically, I went to Tchavola to undertake a participatory workshop with the community of *desalojados*, focused on creating a more suitable incremental housing model than the strict, unsuitable scheme imposed by the local authorities (**Fig. 282**). Despite the fact that this was only a short participatory design experience, it resulted in a practical solution, which was – and still is – replicated in subsequent years.

The experience in Tchavola provided for further insights into the severity of eviction processes in Angola. It offered greater understanding of the implications and impacts of ongoing neoliberal urban regeneration policies at the national level, which are giving rise to dramatic social and spatial segregation.

In 2015, I had the opportunity to return to Tchavola. I realised that, despite the tensions which had dogged the enterprise, the housing scheme we planned in 2010 had eventually been accepted by the higher-level decision-makers, becoming the official plan followed by a number of families. It is true that



Fig. 282 - Participatory workshop in Tchavola © Paulo Moreira, 27/9/2010

The workshop we held was a genuinely participatory experience – most people knew how to read plans and were keen to discuss construction techniques, materials and costs. My contribution was to integrate these common practices into an effective design, adaptable over time and to suit different needs. The immediate and urgent aim of the *desalojados* was to start building *anexos*, and to construct the *casa principal* [main house] at a later date. We began to discuss how to develop the unsuitable housing type which was being imposed by the authorities, into a more habitable housing model. Our intention was not to dismiss the existing scheme completely but to work with it, attempting to propose an incremental model which would reflect the needs and customs of the residents in a much more considered manner. We then began to discuss the *casa principal*, to be situated at the front of each plot. While this was not the main priority or focus – as everyone would initially build annexes – we also developed an ‘upgrade’ of the original design for the main house. Our aim was to consider the long-term development of each plot.

¹⁷ On 21st August 2010, roughly a month before my arrival, members of the Tchavola residents’ committee had signed a petition entitled ‘Petition for Building Materials and Institutional Support’. The letter was presented to the authorities, complaining about the lack of adequate housing conditions offered in the area to which they had been relocated less than half a year earlier. The claim had a legal basis: on September 3rd 2009, the government approved and adopted Resolution 37/09 stipulating that “Demolitions, whether in Luanda or in any other city, town or village in the country, when needed, should be accompanied by the creation of basic and acceptable conditions to rehouse the affected citizens and by the creation of dialogue and involvement of citizens in rehousing solutions”.

the promise to build suitable houses was only partially met, following a rather opaque process. Yet there are reasons to consider the outcome of this experience a positive one. Despite the extreme conditions which we experienced when we began, the *desalojados* of Tchavola managed to find ways and means to replicate and upscale the project. This experience exemplifies the way in which architects can engage with activists and segregated communities, and contribute to influencing the higher spheres of official planning bodies and policymakers.

Another practical outcome directly linked to the findings of this research was the construction of a school in Kapalanga, an informal neighbourhood on the outskirts of Luanda. Days after being awarded the Távora Prize in Portugal, perhaps encouraged by the media attention the research suddenly attracted, the Agência Piaget para o Desenvolvimento (APDES, the NGO which had commissioned a school project in Angola four years earlier) revived our contact. They were interested in finally proceeding with the project which had been put on hold for some years.¹⁸

Soon after, during my 2012 study trip, we met in Luanda to survey an existing school in Kapalanga. We then developed a design proposal with the participation of the children, their parents and the local residents' committee. We then submitted a funding application and finally built the first phase of the school (**Fig. 283**).¹⁹ The building was made using local materials and manual labour. Building techniques were simple and cheap, inspired by deep-rooted knowledge of informal neighbourhoods and conversations in Kapalanga.²⁰

The school is now running successfully, accommodating over 500 children, and at the time of writing the project is being studied by architecture students at the Politecnico di Milano, as an architectural case study of sustainable construction. Furthermore, in 2015 the project was the recipient of the Global Energy Award, for Angola (awarded by the Global Energy Foundation), and was selected for *Habitar Portugal 12-14*, a biannual exhibition organised by the *Ordem dos Arquitectos* showing a shortlist of buildings designed by Portuguese architects.

Another direct outcome of the subject chosen and methods employed in this research was the invitation to participate in the Portuguese pavilion at the 14th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia. The curator, Pedro Campos Costa, challenged me to identify an informal urban context in Portugal and to develop a proposal for it. The area chosen was in Monte Xisto, a derelict neighbourhood in Matosinhos on the outskirts of Porto. The fact that most of the houses there were illegal, poor and considered ugly was perhaps the reason why I was attracted to it. The possibility of presenting the project in Venice was sufficiently motivating, but the main aim was to start a live project where some of the methodological tools and arguments underpinning my research could be tested. The project has now been commissioned and submitted to the Council of Matosinhos, and is a long-term commitment involving both residents and authorities (**Fig. 284**).

The various projects mentioned here all had legal and political repercussions on communities facing evictions and other injustices. They are all embedded within environments marked by diverse forms of social exclusion and violence. These are examples of concrete outcomes which have already emerged from this thesis.

18 The school project was developed during the MA in 2008/9, as mentioned in the Introduction.

19 The project was designed in partnership with Parq – Arquitectos, a collaboration set up to respond to the schedules and technical demands of a project of this kind. A second phase is now awaiting funding.

20 Building techniques consisted of concrete frame structures and cement blocks for the walls, and steel structures and corrugated metal sheets for the roofs. The solutions proved to be suitable for local climate conditions, as well as economic constraints and cultural values. For instance, the walls were finished with a type of plaster made from cement mixed with reddish earth from the ground. Its materiality created a strong link between the various buildings, the ground and the surrounding area.



Fig. 283 - Kapalanga School © Jaime Mesquita, 2015

The primary school is located in Kapalanga, an informal neighbourhood on the outskirts of Luanda, the capital of Angola. The project involved rehabilitating an existing school and building new classrooms, toilets and a perimeter fence. The existing building is located in the middle of the plot, and comprises a front porch, two small offices and three classrooms. The proposal consists of renovating these rooms and replacing one of the dividing walls with a movable wall, allowing two classrooms to be transformed into a single assembly hall, intended for student gatherings and community meetings. The new classrooms are arranged along the south side of the site. Each one is an independent building, facing the site's prevailing winds, allowing them to flow through and around the classrooms. Natural light and ventilation are optimised, and the temperature is significantly lower inside the classrooms. This design allowed the new complex to blend into the existing built context. Outdoor courtyards directly linked to each classroom were also created.



Fig. 284 - Monte Xisto regeneration project. © Paulo Moreira / Prompt Collective, 2017

Monte Xisto is one of eight hills that form the parish of Guifões, on the margins of the river Leça, in Matosinhos (Portugal). The site was originally a granite quarry, providing stone to the city's bourgeois buildings. Gradually, attracted by the late industrialization and the construction of the city's port, a few kilometres away, many people, arriving mainly from the countryside, started to settle there. For years, the Municipality was reluctant to invest money into this uncontrolled situation. Whilst the promise of a large-scale urban regeneration was in the air, many houses continued to be emptied and quickly boarded up, some of them knocked down. The arguments put forward for this slow, ongoing clearance were: illegality, lack of habitable conditions and risk of collapse that affected some houses. Many families had been relocated to council flats on the outskirts of the city. This participatory project proposes a more socially just strategy to regenerate Monte Xisto.

Closing Reflection

The Chicala collaborative research, as well as the various side projects directly emanating from it, points to an expansion of the role of architects and researchers as negotiators and facilitators of local knowledge. The research set out to understand the nature of 'city' through the lens of a particular kind of urban settlement and its interconnections with the wider context. The accomplishments of this research are related to the ability to strengthen linkages between architectural and urban fragments often seen as fractured or unrelated. This is perhaps the main finding of this study: above all, working within a complex urban situation implies becoming familiar with the territory and the people involved (both residents and officials).

Throughout these processes, I positioned myself in the 'middle', moving constantly up and down between the higher spheres of power and the 'dirty' ground of reality. I argue that between these two extremes there is a 'grey zone' which it is crucial to explore: only then can we work with official compliance and as an act of resistance. The discipline is in a privileged position to pursue this intention, as architects can speak the specialist language of 'decision-makers' while simultaneously engaging with the struggle of the disenfranchised. This is why collaboration is important: it is a fundamental tool for enabling dialogue and engagement. Ultimately, learning about and understanding the reciprocities of any complex urban situation is most likely to result in a credible praxis.

As a final reflection on the discoveries brought to light by this thesis, I could say that the collaborative research methods employed here gave rise to a viable practice of 'blurring' - blurring borders between formal-institutional-official orders and informal-subversive-dissident tactics. Blurring became a form of continuously questioning the conventional relationship between architectural research and practice, and between academic and socio-political structures. Blurring became a way of *being* in the city of Luanda. Drawing connections between the multiple causalities of a form of urban conflict (from natural conditions to colonial or neo-colonial interventions) captured by a spatial storytelling of the red dust covering the buildings which loom over what remains of Chicala. The Luandan littoral is constantly shifting.

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