

## THE CABINDA CONNECTION: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

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THE CABINDA ENCLAVE includes an area of some 2,800 square miles; that is, a region almost three times the size of Luxemburg, eight times the size of São Tomé and Príncipe, or about three-quarters the size of Gambia. Lying some thirty miles north of the Zaire river, and surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the Congo Republic and Zaire, Cabinda was ruled as part of Angola during the Portuguese colonial period. In the Alvor Agreement of January 1975, and again in the Nakuru Declaration of June 1975, the three nationalist parties of Angola, MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), declared that Cabinda was an integral part of Angola, and on 11 November 1975, the enclave became independent with the rest of Angola. However, a large question mark hangs over the future of the enclave. Not only have the inhabitants witnessed armed confrontation between the three nationalist movements for control of the area, as elsewhere in Angola; the Cabinda issue is further complicated by the aspirations of the secessionist movement FLEC (Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda) which seeks a Cabinda breakaway from the rest of Angola. This article attempts to elucidate some of the problems inherent in the situation by placing them in historical perspective. Of particular relevance is the nature of the contacts which the inhabitants of the enclave have had with their neighbours in Congo-Brazzaville, Zaire and in the rest of Angola.

Cabinda's population are all Kikongo-speakers, part of the larger Kongo ethnic group that inhabits the region from the Dande river just north of Luanda to southern Gabon, and as far inland as Brazzaville and Kinshasa. Six main subgroups live in Cabinda—the Vili, Kakongo and Woyo on the coast; the Linge, Sundi and Yombe in the interior. All of these spill over Cabinda's frontiers into Zaire and Congo-Brazzaville. Up until the last two or three decades, there was a marked dichotomy between the urbane, educated Luso-phone coastal families and the less educated, rural communities of the Mayombe interior. The latter is the area north-east of Dingo, with rain-forests, mountains and difficult communications, river transport being the principal means of

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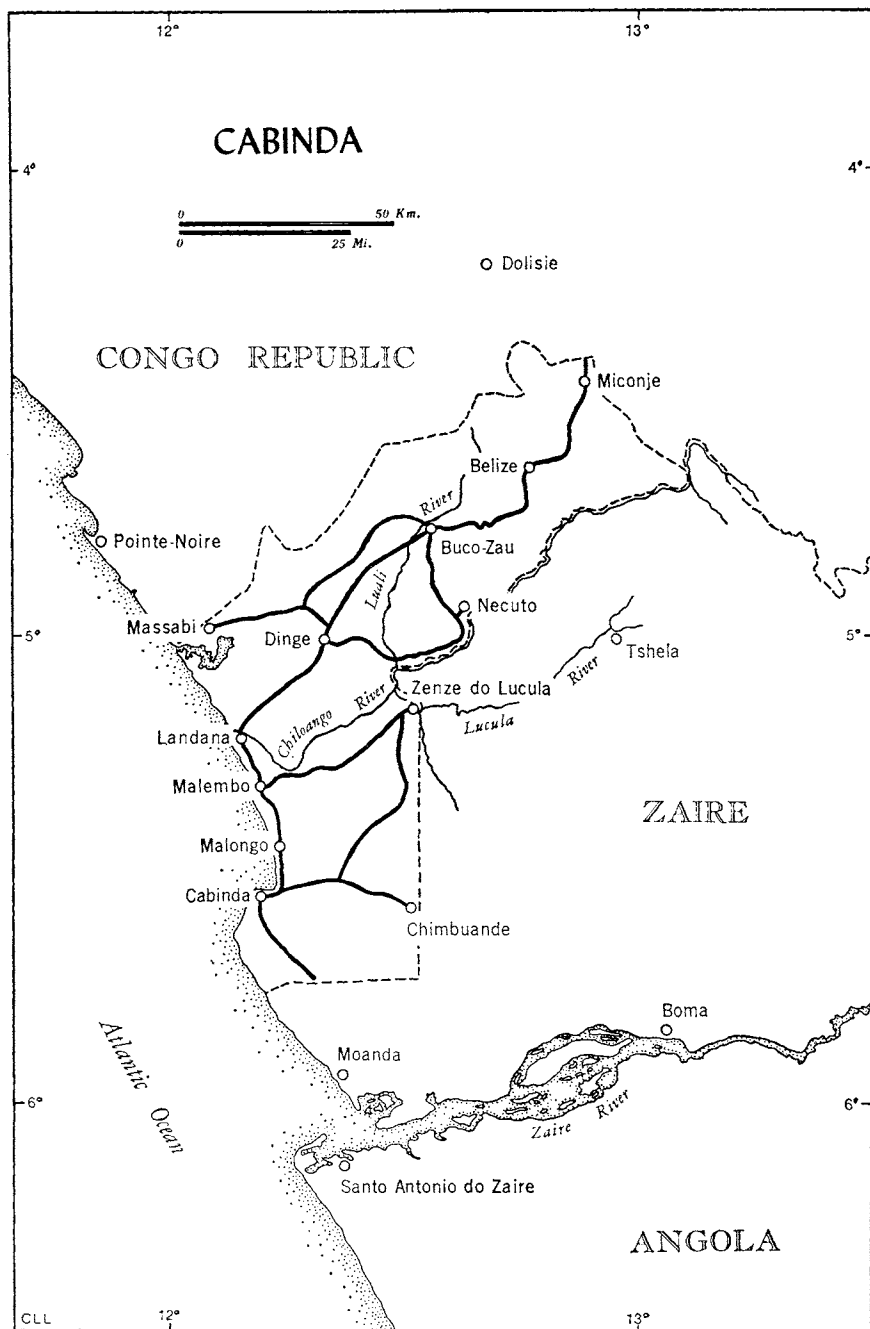
travel until the 1930s when the first dirt road was built. The position of the coastal families derived mainly from their rise to power as middlemen in the slave trade, and was consolidated in the late nineteenth century with the arrival of French missionaries and Portuguese administrators whose main African contacts were among this same group. On the other hand, western education has become widespread among the Mayombe population only since the 1940s.

The enclave of Cabinda, created during the Partition of Africa in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, included segments of three African kingdoms—the southern part of Loango, the central area of Kakongo and the northern section of Ngoyo. Little work has been done on the early history of these kingdoms, but oral traditions suggest that these were breakaway states from the greater Kongo kingdom with its capital at São Salvador, in the Zaire province of modern Angola. The independence of Loango had already been achieved by the sixteenth century, and the power of the Manikongo over Kakongo and Ngoyo was largely nominal, although he continued to proclaim his sovereignty over the area by means of his titles as late as the mid-seventeenth century. The history of these three northern Kongo kingdoms was closely interwoven through common social traditions and through shared political and economic interests. Of the three, Loango with its capital near the site of modern Pointe-Noire replaced the southern Kongo state as the dominating influence by the sixteenth century, a position that it maintained until the eighteenth century when the effects of the slave trade caused the fragmentation of Loango's authority, and a general weakening of traditional systems of government in all three kingdoms. Power shifted from the traditional elite to middlemen families who lived at the trading entrepôts of Malembo and Cabinda Bay,<sup>2</sup> both ports situated within the modern enclave.<sup>3</sup> Thus, although the Kikongo-speakers north of the Zaire river acknowledge their cultural affinities with the Kongo in Angola south of the Zaire river, they had not had close political relations with them for several centuries before the colonial period. The Cabindans are much more aware of traditional ties with their immediate neighbours in Congo-Brazzaville and Zaire, and of a shared historical experience associated with the states of Loango, Kakongo and Ngoyo.

Important linkages between Cabindans and their neighbours both north and south of the Zaire river derive from the tradition of a *diaspora*, that is, a movement from the homeland to find work abroad. Nineteenth-century sources testify that among coastal Cabindans it was difficult to find a man over the age of twenty who had not been abroad and this is still true today. As early as the seventeenth century and probably before, the inhabitants of the Loango Coast

2. Malembo is also referred to as Molembo or Malemba in European accounts; the modern spelling is preferred here. The term Cabinda is used both for the enclave and its principal city; in order to avoid confusion, Cabinda Bay or Cabinda city will be used here to denote the latter.

3. Further details on the history of Loango, Kakongo and Ngoyo may be found in Phyllis M. Martin, *The External Trade of the Loango Coast, 1576–1870: the Effects of Changing Commercial Relations on the Vili Kingdom of Loango*, Oxford, 1972.



enjoyed a wide reputation as peripatetic traders and caravaneers throughout West Central Africa, from Gabon to Luanda and from the Pool Malebo to the Atlantic Ocean. Some of these established settlements abroad from where they could direct their trading interests.

The diaspora tradition continued and intensified in the nineteenth century with the arrival of Europeans in greater numbers. Coastal Cabindans, like the Kru of Liberia, travelled far from home as porters, dockers, household servants, artisans and in other occupations.<sup>4</sup> The tendency to move out from the homeland was also encouraged after 1873 when the *Pères du Saint-Esprit* settled at Landana and later at Cabinda town and established schools. Coastal Cabindans were among the first people in West Central Africa to receive a western education in the early colonial period. They migrated in search of employment which was not available for them in the enclave, at least of the type for which they were qualified. Many left for Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville where large Cabindan communities still live at the present time. Some worked for Portuguese merchants who dominated the trade of Moyen Congo; but they were also employed by the French as teachers, clerks, railway workers and army officers.<sup>5</sup>

Cabindans also settled in other parts of Angola where they became an element in the *assimilado* population, Luanda being especially popular on account of the wide range of service to be found in the employment of Europeans. In a report of 1882, the Governor-General of Angola, Ferreira do Amaral described the Cabindan population of the capital who came to his palace to pay their respects and who numbered almost a thousand people.<sup>6</sup> This seems a high figure for the city whose African population for 1881 has been estimated at 9,729.<sup>7</sup> A 1973 survey of the Luanda *musseques* showed that 4.7 per cent of the population were Cabindans.<sup>8</sup> Many of these emigrants actively retained their ties with families in the enclave, returning for vacations, sending back money and often retiring to the homeland. By the second decade of the twentieth century, the exodus of labour from Cabinda was to some extent complemented by a flow of labour into the area from French Congo, Belgian Congo and to a lesser degree from northern Angola. These workers were largely contract labourers hired to work on plantations in the Mayombe region and the process continues at the present time.<sup>9</sup>

4. Martin, *External Trade*, 70, 118, 130-132, 144; João de Mattos e Silva, *Contribuição para o Estudo da Região de Cabinda*, Lisbon, 1904, 156, 158-160.

5. John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: Volume I: The Anatomy of an Explosion (1950-1962)*, Cambridge, 1969, 172; Douglas L. Wheeler and René Pélissier, *Angola*, New York, 1971, 94.

6. Mário António Fernandes de Oliveira, *Angolana (Documentação Sobre Angola)*, I, (1783-1883), Luanda, 1968, 723.

7. Ramiro Ladeiro Monteiro, 'From Extended to Residual Family: Aspects of Social Change in the Musseques of Luanda', in Franz-Wilhelm Heimer (ed.), *Social Change in Angola*, Munich, 1973, 213.

8. Ramiro Ladeiro Monteiro, *A Família no Musseques de Luanda*, Luanda, 1973, 100-101.

9. Some statistics on migrant labour in Cabinda can be found in the *Arquivo Histórico de Angola*, Avulsos, Caongo, 13-1-5. Information on the present-day situation is from personal interviews with the Director and employees of the Companhia de Cabinda in June 1975.

In the 1971 census, Cabinda's population was reckoned at almost 81,000. It is, of course, impossible to make an accurate assessment of Cabindans now living abroad. To my knowledge, in 1975 estimates ranged from 30,000 by a leading member of the Portuguese administration,<sup>10</sup> to the claim of 150,000–200,000 by an officer of FLEC.<sup>11</sup> The extent of this emigrant and exiled population has an important potential influence on modern Cabinda politics. In the early 1960s when the first armed conflicts broke out between African nationalist guerillas and the Portuguese army, thousands of Cabindans left the enclave to take refuge with their relations in the independent states of Congo-Brazzaville and Congo-Leopoldville; most of these had returned by 1967.<sup>12</sup> The same phenomenon recurred after November 1974 when conflicts between MPLA and FLEC on the one hand, and between MPLA, FNLA and UNITA on the other, caused considerable apprehension about further escalations of violence. This continuing inflow and outflow of persons as workers, refugees or for other reasons, provided avenues for the advance of nationalist ideas in the colonial period. At the present time, the emigrant population which includes many members of the professional class, can provide a solid foreign base for the operations of FLEC in Congo-Brazzaville, Zaire, Gabon, and in Europe as well.

A review of the connections between Cabinda and the rest of Angola must include a survey of Cabinda–Portuguese relations. Contacts date from the end of the fifteenth century when Portuguese ships first appeared off the Loango Coast, yet it was not until the last quarter of the sixteenth century and the founding of Luanda that the Portuguese established regular trade with the area. The long-standing presence of the Portuguese north of the Zaire river was reflected in the use of Portuguese as the lingua franca between Africans and Europeans, and was the basis for repeated Portuguese claims that the *costa do norte* was their sphere of influence.

Before the nineteenth century, however, the Portuguese presence remained a nominal one. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Portuguese traders were largely beaten out by Dutch, French and English competitors who brought a more varied selection of trade goods, of better quality and at cheaper prices. And since the Portuguese administration at Luanda was already over-extended in the hinterland of the colony, their repeated claims to the Cabinda area remained, for the most part, ineffective. Two military expeditions were sent to Cabinda in the course of the eighteenth century to counter English and French influence, but their success was short-lived.<sup>13</sup>

10. Personal interview with the Acting Intendente of Cabinda, A. M. Tavares, 8 July 1975.

11. The estimate of Jean de Costa, Commander of the Armed Forces of FLEC, *Expresso*, 31 May 1975.

12. Jesus Quadros, *Cabinda: A Terra e as Gentes*, Cabinda 1972, 13; Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, I, 173.

13. For European rivalry at Cabinda Bay and other points on the Loango Coast in the eighteenth century, see Martin, *External Trade*, chapter 4.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the growth of Lusophone influence was promoted by increasing interaction between the coastal elite and Brazil. In the first place Brazilian slave-trading increased at Cabinda. This was especially true after 1822 when the independent Brazilian government put import duties on slaves, a burden to merchants who were then faced with paying taxes twice, once at Luanda or Benguela, the most favoured Angolan ports, and then again on entry into Brazil. One answer was to shift their trade to the northern ports of Ambriz and Cabinda which were free from official Portuguese control and where duties were not paid. In 1824 the Luanda administration complained, as it had done so often in the eighteenth century, that the trade from the interior of Angola was being syphoned off by the northern ports, and reiterated the need to occupy Ambriz and Cabinda.<sup>14</sup> The trans-Atlantic trade was aided by Brazilian companies who opened up factories in Cabinda on a more permanent basis than had previously been the practice with European traders. From these they conducted an illicit slave trade although their business was constantly threatened by British naval patrols of the Congo coast.<sup>15</sup>

At the same time, contacts between individual Cabindans and Brazil increased. A delegation of Cabindan leaders is known to have visited the Court in Brazil sometime during the period 1810–20 (the exact date is not known), probably to discuss the state of the slave trade in the light of British abolition policy.<sup>16</sup> Of the individuals who crossed the Atlantic in the early nineteenth century, two are particularly worth noting because of the influence that their families later had in cementing the Cabinda-Portuguese connection. Francisco Franque, son of a Cabinda *mafouk*,<sup>17</sup> was sent for education in Brazil towards the end of the eighteenth century and stayed there some fifteen years. He was an active business man on his return to Cabinda, promoting trade with Brazil. Later he was made an honorary colonel in the Portuguese Overseas Army and died in 1875 just before the Portuguese occupation of Cabinda. Even more important was Manuel José Puna (1812–1904), who was also educated in Brazil. Like Franque, Puna later received the rank of honorary colonel in the Portuguese Overseas Army. About 1871, he travelled to Portugal and was introduced to the king, Luiz I, who befriended him and acted as godfather at Puna's baptism. Puna's loyalty was rewarded by the Portuguese ruler with the title, Baron of Cabinda. Both these men gave their sons a Portuguese education and members of their families worked for the Portuguese as minor officials in the colonial administration.<sup>18</sup>

However, in spite of such growing contacts between Cabinda and the Lusophone world, and in spite of repeated exhortations from Luanda that Cabinda

14. Manuel de Silva Rebelo, *Relações entre Angola e Brasil, 1808–1830*, Lisbon, 1970, 264–265, 294, 297.

15. Martin, *External Trade*, 144.

16. Manuel da Silva Rebelo, 'Cabinda de há um Século', *Revista Ocidente*, vol. 81, 1971, no. 403, 305–306.

17. An official responsible for the organization of trade between Africans and Europeans.

18. For note 18, see next page.

must be occupied, it was not until the early 1880s and the period of the Partition that Portugal finally acted to make good her claims by sending treaty-making expeditions to negotiate with coastal leaders between Pointe-Noire and the Zaire estuary. European diplomatic manoeuvring resulted in Portugal losing most of the area that she claimed, and she was left with the coastal area of the present-day Cabinda enclave, separated from the rest of Angola by the Zaire river and a wedge of Free State territory on the right bank. Treaties with France and Leopold II delineated the boundaries with French Congo and the Free State by the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>19</sup>

African reactions to Portuguese occupation of their land were much more diverse and complex than most Portuguese accounts suggest. A standard version reads as follows:

... The enclave of Cabinda was occupied with ease soon after the publication of the Convention of the Berlin Conference of 1885. The natives of the region are docile and have always recognised our authority. The occupation was completed without military action, having been previously worked out through native politics . . .<sup>20</sup>

While it is not necessary here to discuss these Cabindan responses to the advent of colonial rule in detail,<sup>21</sup> a few words are relevant concerning the Treaty of Simulambuco, which is frequently quoted and misquoted by the opponents and proponents of Cabindan Independence.<sup>22</sup> This treaty, signed between representatives of Portugal and African chiefs of Cabinda in 1885, is similar in general terms to other treaties concluded in other parts of the continent during the Partition period in which African leaders agreed to recognize the sovereignty of a European nation in return for 'protection' and trading guarantees. As FLEC claim at the present time, the treaty was made specifically with Portugal and the Cabindans who gathered at Simulambuco never agreed to become part of a greater Angola. However, in the context of the Partition period such a treaty was the norm; few agreements cited the new African colony into which a specific territory might be integrated. What is not clear from the way that the treaty is cited in present day discussions, is that it was concluded by representatives of only a small section of the population of the Cabinda

18. There are various versions of the lives of Franque and Puna which differ on details; see for example, Mattos e Silva, *Contribuição*, 8; D. José Franque, *Nós Os Cabindas: História, Leis, Usos e Costumes dos Povos de N'Goio*, Lisbon, 1940, 10–11, 49–52; P. Joaquim Martins, *Cabindas: História, Crença, Usos e Costumes*, Cabinda, 1972, 42–43, 45.

19. The European diplomatic controversies over Cabinda and neighbouring territories have been dealt with in several works including, Roger Anstey, *Britain and the Congo in the Nineteenth Century*, Oxford, 1962; and Françoise da Veiga Pinto, *Le Portugal et le Congo au dix-neuvième Siècle*, Paris, 1972.

20. Hélio Esteves Felgas, *História do Congo Português*, Carmona, 1958, 142.

21. I am at present working on an article which discusses African responses to the Portuguese occupation of Cabinda.

22. The text of the Treaty of Simulambuco has been published in several books, including Mattos e Silva, *Contribuição*, 146–150; Franque, *Nós Os Cabindas*, 72–79; José Martins Vaz, *No Mundo dos Cabindas*, Lisbon, 1970, II, 195–198.

enclave, principally those who lived in the vicinity of modern Cabinda city. Furthermore, the petition from African leaders asking for Portuguese protection that is frequently cited to reveal the 'special' nature of Portuguese-Cabinda relations, also proves on closer investigation to need qualification. The report of Brito Capelo, the naval officer who directed negotiations, shows that the petition and treaty were obtained only after prolonged and hard bargaining with Cabinda leaders; and that the arrangement was finally sealed only after the Portuguese agreed to pay substantial monthly pensions to the principal signatories of the treaty, including their protege, Manuel José Puna.<sup>23</sup> Whilst treaties of a similar nature were concluded with coastal chiefs between Cabinda city and Massabi, the greater part of the enclave including the Mayombe area was occupied by the Portuguese without formal treaty-making, and at times in the face of resistance by Africans who opposed the alienation of their land.

The Treaty of Simulambuco clearly became a part of colonial mythology, elevated to a significant status by the Portuguese and by the African elite in Cabinda city which benefited from the 'uniqueness' of the Cabinda-Portuguese connection. A monument was erected in 1954 on a hill overlooking Cabinda Bay during a visit by the Portuguese President. This commemorated the treaty 'which integrated the territory of Cabinda into the Portuguese nation'.<sup>24</sup> Each year the anniversary of the treaty was marked as a public holiday and *colonos, mestiços*, Africans and Portuguese administrators alike would trek to the monument and to the tombs of the Puna family to celebrate the occasion. Thus, consciously or unconsciously, the ties with Portugal were underlined rather than those with Angola.

From the outset of the colonial period, Portuguese administrators were well aware of the potential problems inherent in the geographical separateness of Cabinda from the rest of Angola. One measure that might help insure the integration of the enclave with the rest of the colony was to locate the capital of the new Congo District of Angola in Cabinda. There was some debate on the matter. One point of view emphasized the usefulness of such an arrangement in minimizing Cabinda's isolation and ensuring its economic development in the Angola context. Others particularly concerned with transport problems and the importance of the administration keeping a close watch on São Salvador, the Kongo capital, wanted the capital on the left bank of the Zaire river or on the Ambriz coast.<sup>25</sup> The former view triumphed and in 1887 the issue was temporarily resolved when Cabinda city was made the capital of the new Congo district which included the enclave and the area from the left bank

23. The report of Brito Capelo on the events preceding signing of the treaty and copies of the treaty, itself, are in the *Arquivo Histórico de Angola*, Avulsos, Cabinda, 11-36-1.

24. The inspection on the monument reads thus. See also, Evaristo de Campos, 'Monografia de Cabinda', *Portugal em Africa*, n.s., XVII, 1960, 33-34.

25. Vicente Pinheiro, *Discussão da Criação do Distrito do Congo: Administração Colonial*, Lisbon, 1885, 6; J. P. de Sampaio Forjaz de Serpa Pimentel, 'O Congo Português', *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 7A Serie no. 4, 1887, 305; F. A. Pinto, *Angola e Congo*, Lisbon, 1888, 291-292, 304-306; J. E. Santos e Silva, *Esbôço Histórico do Congo e Loango*, Lisbon, 1888, 61-63.

of the Zaire river to the Loge river which marked the northern boundary of the District of Luanda.<sup>26</sup> Difficulties of communication through this large area, and especially between the Governor-General in Luanda, the District Governor in Cabinda and his subordinates south of the Zaire river, brought the arrangement under renewed criticism. Eventually in 1917, the capital of the Congo District was moved south to Maquela do Zombo.<sup>27</sup> The problems associated with governing Cabinda within the framework of Angola were reflected in various administrative measures that changed the status of the enclave seven times between 1917 and 1946. Thus, at times Cabinda was part of the Congo District, a separate District with its own Governor, or incorporated into the District of Luanda. In 1946, the enclave became a separate District with the Governor directly dependent on the Governor-General of Angola.<sup>28</sup>

Difference of opinion also existed in the late nineteenth century regarding Cabinda's economic potential and its importance to the Angolan and Portuguese economy. Perhaps the most gloomy prognostication came from Santos e Silva, a Portuguese officer who participated in treaty-making operations in the area, but who judged the retention of a truncated Cabinda after the Berlin Conference an act of folly. He forecast that 'the enclave of Cabinda will be a tomb in which we will bury our resources; this will bear no fruit, yet we will be obliged to invest more'; and he continued, 'in the future Cabinda will be one more record of our colonial ineptitude'. Santos e Silva noted several points in support of his views. The fame of Malembo and Cabinda Bay derived from the slave trade period when they were terminals on routes from the interior and important embarkation points for the trans-Atlantic trade. But that era had passed. Caravans no longer arrived there; the shallow waters of Cabinda Bay made it difficult to develop as a major port and ships had to anchor several miles offshore; agriculture was poor; and the general poverty of the area was reflected in the emigrants who left to find work elsewhere.<sup>29</sup>

A more optimistic view emphasized the wealth of Cabinda, especially the rich timber resources and agriculture potential of the Mayombe region. Although Cabinda Bay was not ideal, it was as good a harbour as could be found on the coast of the Congo District.<sup>30</sup> The main economic activity of the enclave and the main source for optimism was the trade of the Chiloango river. Navigable for some 60 miles by vessels of 500 tons, the river carried trade from factories along its banks in the Mayombe and from neighbouring regions in the Free State and French Congo to the coast. Palm oil and kernels were the chief products brought to English, Dutch, French and Portuguese

26. *Boletim Oficial*, Angola, 14 July 1887.

27. *Boletim Oficial*, Angola, 15 September 1917.

28. Some details on the changing structure of the administration as it affected Cabinda can be found in, Joaquim Martins, *Cabindas*, 36-37.

29. Santos e Silva, *Esbôço Histórico*, 61-62.

30. Pimentel, 'O Congo Português', 304, 307-308; Report of Pimentel to the Governor-General, Luanda, 25.5.1885, in Oliveira, *Angolana*, II, 675, 680-682, 687-689.

factories at Chiloango and Landana, situated north and south of the Chiloango mouth. These settlements with Banana, Boma and Ambriz were the chief trading points between Pointe-Noire and Luanda in the 1880s.<sup>31</sup>

However, as colonial administration and frontiers became a reality, the trade of the Chiloango was increasingly threatened by competition with the Congo Free State, and the problems of the enclave came into focus. Portuguese reports of the 1890s speak of the harassment of caravans beyond Cabinda's frontiers and attempts by Free State officials to divert trade away from the coastal routes to their ports on the right bank of the Zaire river, and especially to Boma. A tariff war with the Free State, which resulted in factories on the Cabinda coast having to pay duties twice over, caused several of them to move their main scene of operations across the frontier into the Free state. In the twentieth century, a plan to counteract the slow Chiloango river transport by building a railway from Cabinda town or Malembo to Miconje came to nothing; whilst Belgium and France completed railways that linked the interior of their colonies to Boma and Pointe-Noire, respectively.<sup>32</sup>

Of the various companies which were granted concessions in Cabinda by the Portuguese government, by far the most important was the Companhia de Cabinda founded in 1903. By 1929 this company had a concession that included more than half of the Mayombe, an area one-and-a-half times the size of São Tomé and virtually 'an enclave within an enclave'.<sup>33</sup> Holding most of the best land in the Mayombe, the Companhia de Cabinda produced high-quality cocoa, coffee and palm products, and extracted timber on some eleven plantations where it employed contract labour from French Congo, Belgium Congo and northern Angola as well as local workers. However, after 1929 when the Company ran into financial difficulties and political pressures in Portugal, production sagged and it did little to exploit its potentially rich holdings while forbidding Africans who lived in Company owned land to produce cash crops themselves.<sup>34</sup> Thus, in spite of the recognized wealth of Cabinda, not only in timber and agricultural products, but also in minerals such as phosphates and potassium, its exports in 1962 comprised only 1.27 per cent of Angola's total.<sup>35</sup>

A decade later, by the first half of 1972, the figure had risen sharply to 24 per cent, the increase largely due to the exploitation of offshore oil by the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company.<sup>36</sup> This company found the first major indication

31. Santos e Silva, *Esbôço Histórico*, 58–60; Pimentel, 'O Congo Português', 305–306; Pinto, *Angola e Congo*, 359–363.

32. Mattos e Silva, *Contribuição*, 58, 66; Santo e Silva, *Esbôço Histórico*, 60–61; Henrique de Barros Gomes, 'O Comercio de Angola', *Portugal em Africa*, 1894, I, 117; Pimentel, 'Um Anno no Congo', *Portugal em Africa*, 1899, VI, 69, 291–292; José d'Almeida Mattos, *O Congo Português e As Suas Riquezas*, Lisbon, 1924, 113.

33. Almeida Mattos, *O Congo Português*, 16; Martins, *Cabindas*, 337.

34. Almeida Mattos, *O Congo Português*, 15–37.

35. Filipe Themudo Barata, 'Cabinda: Grande Realidade de Angola Moderna', *Ultra-mar*, n.s., 1973, II, no. 5–6, 177–190.

36. Barata, 'Cabinda', 178.

of oil off the Cabinda coast in 1959. A base was established at Malongo, about fifteen miles from Cabinda city and production was underway by 1967. In 1974, for the first time, crude oil was Angola's major source of foreign exchange most of it coming from Cabinda. The taxes and royalties that Gulf Oil paid to the Luanda government in that year made up some 40 per cent of the Angolan budget.<sup>37</sup> Through the summer of 1975, as civil war escalated, the Cabinda oil industry remained the only major Angolan industry to continue in production relatively unaffected by the conflict. At the time of independence Cabinda's continuing association with Angola was a pressing and overriding necessity for the Luanda government.

With this historical perspective, the activities of African nationalists in Cabinda in the period 1961–75 may be briefly reviewed. The first guerilla operations against the Portuguese were launched by Holden Roberto's UPA (Popular Union of Angola) into the Mayombe interior from the Tshela district of Congo-Leopoldville. These efforts met with little success, partly due to the reaction of the Portuguese army, but also due to a lack of support from the local inhabitants. While Roberto's Kikongo-speaking party was preferred to MPLA or FLEC by the rural Mayombe population, they had little desire to take up arms on behalf of nationalist forces and many preferred to flee to either of the Congos. Some 20,000 had left as refugees by 1965. After 1963, the efforts of the UPA in Cabinda waned while it concentrated its main war efforts in northern Angola.<sup>38</sup>

The most successful guerilla effort was that of MPLA. Looking for a foreign base from which to launch attacks, MPLA opened an office in Brazzaville in 1963. This became possible after the overthrow of the conservative Fulbert Youlou by the more radical government of Massamba-Debat, who was succeeded in 1968 by the Marxist-oriented regime of Marien Ngouabi. Since the enclave was the only part of Angola contiguous to Congo-Brazzaville it was the initial field for MPLA military efforts which started in Cabinda in 1964.

MPLA's most successful operations were launched from their training camp near Dolisie only a short distance from the Miconje frontier, and in this area the Portuguese were involved in some of the fiercest fighting of the Angolan wars. Yet MPLA's success in Cabinda in the 1960s was limited not only by the efforts of the Portuguese who completed a paved highway from Landana to Miconje and sent several thousand troops into the Mayombe region; even more than the UPA, they failed to elicit local support. Here the rural populations largely viewed the MPLA as 'foreigners' and fled from the fighting. Their main potential support was among the politicized, educated *mestiço* and African populations of the coast, but with these MPLA failed to establish a direct contact. Thus, what Basil Davidson has termed the 'growth value' of Cabinda

37. *The Economist*, 22 November 1975. Cabinda's production was about 7.6 million tons, while that of northern Angola was 1.2 million tons.

38. Jesus Quadros, *Cabinda*, 13; Wheeler and Pélissier, *Angola*, 183, 190, 207; Marcum, *Angola Revolution*, I, 173–174; also, John Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: Volume II: Exile Politics and Guerilla War*, forthcoming, ms. 91, 418. I am grateful to Professor Marcum for allowing me to consult his manuscript concerning Cabinda.

was exhausted by the late 1960s and the main emphasis of MPLA's operations switched to a new front in eastern Angola. For MPLA, Cabinda was something of a training ground in guerilla warfare and most of the leaders who opened up the eastern Angolan front after 1965 were veterans of active service there.<sup>39</sup>

After the Portuguese coup in April 1974, the active presence of MPLA in the Mayombe interior allowed them to seize the initiative and to advance further into the enclave, opening an office in Cabinda city itself. After the Alvor Agreement, FNLA and UNITA also opened up offices in Cabinda but were driven out in June 1975, leaving MPLA in control of Cabinda, as it was of Luanda and its hinterland, at the time of Angolan Independence.

Although several groups of Cabinda *émigrés* in Congo-Brazzaville had organized for cultural and mutual-aid purposes in the 1950s, the first political association advocating Cabindan Independence, MLEC (Movement for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda), emerged in Congo-Brazzaville in 1960. Its leader, Ranque Franque was a businessman who had lived most of his life outside of Cabinda. The MLEC petitioned the United Nations for Cabindan Independence making the familiar claim that Cabinda had agreed only to Portuguese protection in the Treaty of Simulambuco but not to integration with the rest of Angola. Later in the year a split in the leadership emerged with Nzita Tiago founding his own party, CAUNC (Action Committee for the National Union of Cabinda). With Franque based in Brazzaville and supported by Youlou, CAUNC turned to Leopoldville and advocated a union of Cabinda with Congo-Leopoldville. Youlou, however, concerned about the Cabinda problem and the interests of his own country in the evolving situation convened a Cabinda unity conference at Pointe-Noire in 1963 where three Cabinda groups, MLEC, CAUNC and ALLIAMA (another separatist group called the Mayombe Alliance) merged to form a new party, FLEC.<sup>40</sup>

From its base at Pointe-Noire, FLEC through the 1960s and 1970s petitioned the OAU, UNO and the Lisbon government for Cabindan Independence, but it never conducted military operations in the enclave. Many Cabindan militants preferred to join the other Angolan Liberation movements and were active in opposition to the Portuguese. Relations between FLEC and MPLA were never good. MPLA charged the independence party with tribalism and regionalism, and characterized its leaders as opportunists. However, with no military base for its organization, FLEC remained largely 'nuisance competition' for MPLA through the 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>41</sup>

For a few months following the Portuguese coup of April 1974, FLEC was able to open an office in Cabinda city. An abortive raid on a Portuguese

39. Basil Davidson, *In the Eye of the Storm*, New York, 1973, 223, 236–238, 242, 260; Wheeler and Pélissier, *Angola*, 211, 214–215, 221; Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, I, 173; II, ms. 88, 419–420.

40. Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, I, 172–174, 295; II, ms. 288–292; Wheeler and Pélissier, *Angola*, 168, 221.

41. Marcum, *Angolan Revolution*, II, ms. 292, 417.

military post by armed FLEC supporters from Congo-Brazzaville was the occasion for FLEC again being outlawed from the enclave. As important, however, was pressure on the Portuguese command from MPLA and their sympathizers among the officers in the Portuguese garrison. During 1975, while MPLA consolidated its position in Cabinda, FLEC was torn apart by dissension and old rivalries reappeared. In July 1975 in Paris, Nzita Tiago, the Vice-President, announced the creation of a Provisional Revolutionary Government of Cabinda with himself as Prime Minister; and in August 1975 in Kinshasa, Ranque Franque the President of FLEC, denounced Tiago's actions and named a rival Cabinda government in exile with himself as President. A third faction operates in Congo-Brazzaville and is led by Augusto Tchoufou. Thus, at the time of Angolan Independence, although FLEC had considerable popular support in Cabinda, its efforts were hopelessly weakened by internal division, while MPLA and its forces controlled the enclave.

The future of the Cabinda enclave seems now to rest to a large extent with forces beyond its frontiers. The factors that may prove decisive include the strength of MPLA in Angola and how important Cabinda is in their government's overall strategy. Given the potential wealth of the rest of Angola, in the long-term Cabinda may not seem as crucial to the Angolan economy as it is at the present time. The organizational and military strengths of FLEC in exile are little-known factors. The potentially decisive influence may be foreign intervention; not only from Cabinda's African neighbours, but from forces outside the African continent as well.