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## ‘THE TIME OF THE LEAFLET’: PAMPHLETS AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN THE UPA (NORTHERN ANGOLA, AROUND 1961)

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# ‘THE TIME OF THE LEAFLET’: PAMPHLETS AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN THE UPA (NORTHERN ANGOLA, AROUND 1961)<sup>1</sup>

*Inge Brinkman*

This pamphlet must be distributed to every corner. All those who are with UPA, do not listen again to news coming from other directions. Your news can only come from your leaders of UPA and also letters that bring you news must always carry the stamp of UPA. Do not again be deceived by dishonest people. Follow the advice of the leaders. I say again that your leaders do not let you fall into a pit [...] Stay with love of your leader in the name of UPA.<sup>2</sup>

In 1959, the Governor-General of Angola argued that it was necessary to bring in the Portuguese air force so as to keep the peace in the country, by confronting ‘the threat of agitators and mischief-makers, inspired as they generally are by communism in its darkest guise ... We are living in the time of the leaflet ... The leaflet has appeared in Angola’ (Davidson 1972: 169). His fear was justified: in the course of the 1950s and 1960s, thousands of pamphlets were indeed spread over Angola.

At the time when the Governor-General spoke these words, two movements were being targeted especially by the Portuguese colonial regime: the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola) and the UPA (União das Populações de Angola). As the MPLA became Angola’s ruling party after independence, its history has been described in relative detail and some attention has also been paid to the MPLA’s long-term postcolonial opponent, UNITA (União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola), which started growing around the time of independence (Mabeko-Tali 2001; Moorman 2008; Heywood 2000; Rozès 2002). But the UPA, later called the FNLA (Frente

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<sup>2</sup>Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais, Torro do Tombo (IANTT), Lisbon, Portugal, PIDE, Delegação de Angola, Processo de Informação, file no. 11.12.A, 383: UPA pamphlet by Eduardo Pinnock, no place of publication (n.p.), no date of publication (n.d.) (1960). If not stated otherwise, all further references from IANTT are from the PIDE, Delegação de Angola, Processo de Informação files. Translations are by the author, if not stated otherwise.

Nacional de Libertação de Angola),<sup>3</sup> failed miserably in its quest to become influential in postcolonial Angola. Despite the fact that it was the largest military force at the eve of independence (Marcum 1978: 257), it shrank until it was a divided and pitiful party, receiving only 1.13 per cent of the votes in the 2012 elections.

Since the publication of John Marcum's two volumes in 1969 and 1978, hardly any reference has been made to the UPA/FNLA movement in the scholarly literature on Angola (but see the French works of Pélissier (1978) and Messiant (2006)). As is widely known, Angola's recent history can hardly be evaluated as a triumphant march from oppressive colonialism to a just and peaceful postcolonial society. Precisely because of this, we need to reinterpret the history of the nationalist movements and see history as being far more complex than a successful anti-colonial war. As Stephen Ellis (2000: 89) wrote: 'This indeed calls for a view which pays full attention to what may earlier have seemed the pools and eddies of history, movements and ideas which did not actually attain power, turning-points where history failed to turn.' Given the movement's influence at the time, the history of the UPA/FNLA deserves more attention than has hitherto been meted out. Reading this movement's pamphlets as an integral part of the history of internal political communication will help us move beyond an easy notion of 'popular support for a nationalist movement' and understand the dynamics of political communication between African nationalist leaders and their (potential) constituencies.

Why did the Governor-General of Angola fear pamphlets so much? Why did he mention pamphlets at all? The answers lie in the relative importance of pamphlets for the leadership of the Angolan nationalist movements. Most liberation movements in Africa operated within the boundaries of the country and so stood in direct contact with the local population. In contrast, the leaderships of the MPLA and the UPA had been forced into exile. Circumstances in Angola were especially constrained because of the omnipresent Portuguese secret police, the PIDE (Policia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado). In the initial phase of mobilization and rebellion, the leaderships of the movements resided abroad while the (potential) followers lived inside Angola. Especially in the case of the UPA, this situation led to a brief period of pamphlet culture, whereby the leadership communicated to its (potential) constituency. Given the lack of opportunity in the Portuguese colony and the need for long-distance lines of communication, pamphlets became the main way in which the UPA mobilized followers and support. Oral messages were also used as a means for political communication, but in most cases the messengers sent by the leadership abroad carried piles of pamphlets, which they handed over to members of the local elite who could read and write.

Many pamphlets ended up in the hands of the PIDE. They took the trouble of having these tracts translated into Portuguese and archived – another indication of the importance attributed to the pamphlets. For most pamphlets, only the PIDE Portuguese translation was encountered in the archives; for others, a copy of the original was also found, usually in Kikongo. A few pamphlets were written in Portuguese or in French, and in a few cases mention is made of a

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<sup>3</sup>The abbreviation 'UPA' is used when it clearly concerns the period before 1962; when related to the period after 1962, 'FNLA' is used. Referring to the movement in general terms, I use 'UPA/FNLA'.

Kimbundu original.<sup>4</sup> Often, only the date of translation and the name of the translator are given; no further details are provided.<sup>5</sup>

When I was engaged in research on nationalism in Northern Angola, I encountered over a hundred pamphlets in the PIDE archives, the great majority stemming from the UPA; a few were written by the smaller PDA (Partido Democrático de Angola, the party that joined with the UPA in 1962 to form the FNLA) or by ALIAZO (Alliance des Ressortissants de Zombo). My research was based for the most part on these documents encountered in the PIDE archives in Lisbon, but a number of interviews were carried out in Luanda and Mbanza Kongo in 2002, 2003 and 2009. The main interlocutors were former FNLA fighters to whom I was introduced in the FNLA bureaux and nationalist leaders from Baptist circles.

As researchers, we can study these pamphlets in various ways. A classic historical way would be to treat the pamphlets as source material for reconstructing history. This is an entirely legitimate enterprise; historians always have the indecency to put things to uses for which they were never meant. Legitimate as this approach may be, I will not use the pamphlets as a source here and I will not offer an interpretation of the anti-colonial war in Angola on the basis of their contents (Brinkman 2011). Instead, I aim to study this body of texts as a historical subject in itself. Instead of looking at history through pamphlets and focusing on the messages, I want to pay serious attention to the medium of the pamphlet itself. Pamphlets were part of the history of nationalism in the region. What was the role of pamphlets in this particular part of history and in this particular region?

This approach will lead us into an interpretation of the history of political communication. Political communication in Africa has hardly been studied, and nor has the role of pamphlets. Given the number of studies on African nationalism, this is an anomaly, especially if one considers the stress on mobilization in these studies. In much literature on African nationalism, it is stated that movements gained or lost popular support, reached or did not reach ‘the people’ (Ranger 1985; Kriger 1992; Berman and Lonsdale 1991; Schmidt 2005). Yet the ways in which such mobilization and support were garnered are hardly ever specified.<sup>6</sup>

To some extent pamphlets have been studied in relation to the Mau Mau war in Kenya, with Derek Peterson (2003: 76) focusing on writing and bureaucratic forms – an issue discussed to some degree in my earlier publication (Brinkman 2011) – and in Cristiana Pugliese’s (2003) analysis of pamphlet authorship. As

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<sup>4</sup>Kimbundu is the language widely spoken in Angola’s capital Luanda and its surroundings. It was an important language for the MPLA leadership, even though Portuguese was the lingua franca for many people in the movement. Kikongo is the language widely spoken in Northern Angola and Southern Congo.

<sup>5</sup>In the few instances where the PIDE refers to the process of translation, we learn that *cipaio*s (African soldiers in Portuguese service) and white settlers were involved and that the process could take a fortnight to accomplish: IANTT, 11.12.A, 120–1: letter translated by *cipaio* Manuel Chaves, 28 June 1960; *ibid.*, 11.17.A, 248–51: translation of a pamphlet was requested by the PIDE on 15 February 1961, ready by 28 February 1961; *ibid.*, 14.48.E/1, 69–71, translation of a letter by *cipaio*s of Béu and two Europeans who ‘master Kikongo perfectly’, but reportedly it concerned a different Kikongo dialect, so translation was still needed, 8 July 1964.

<sup>6</sup>But see Sturges *et al.* (2005). They, however, present ‘information’ as a given; there is no interpretation of the social relations involved, a very general conceptualization of ‘the people’ is used, and the analysis does not allow for change.

the writers of the UPA pamphlets are in most cases not known, it is difficult to analyse authorship in any detail, although it will form part of my interpretation.

Here, the aim will be to take a holistic view of pamphlets, seeing them as part of a broader field of political communication, while at the same time establishing their specific generic features in a circuit of writing, distribution and readership. Robert Darnton (1990; 2000) proposed a model of 'communication circuits' to interpret the relationships between communication, writing, culture and social stratification: 'By unearthing those circuits, historians can show that books do not merely recount history; they make it' (Darnton 1990: 125). The social history of books, Darnton holds, calls for an approach that is international in scale and interdisciplinary in method; this approach has been taken up in African studies by Isabel Hofmeyr in *The Portable Bunyan* (2004), in which she traces the transnational history of the missionary classic *The Pilgrim's Progress* in the processes of translation, circulation and reworking in various African contexts and in England.

On a much smaller scale, this article also seeks to establish the key players who influence both the textual production of pamphlets in practice and the nature of political communication in more general terms. In most cases, political pamphlets, manifestos and communiqués offer information about the ideology and ideals of political movements and can be interpreted as an external critique of existing political relations. In this specific case, however, the pamphlets address a local audience and are concerned with internal hierarchical relations and power struggles. Interpreting the social history of these pamphlets can help us to understand the dynamics of popular support and/or disillusion in this particular African nationalist movement. It may also contribute to the more recent debates on democratization and new media (Wasserman 2010; Nyamnjoh 2005; Hyden *et al.* 2003) that have hitherto hardly engaged with historical interpretations of the interaction between leaders and followers.

The article starts with an introduction to the events in Northern Angola around 1961, while the second section describes how pamphlets were part of a culture of popular literacy in Northern Angola. This is followed by an overview of the various forms used by the Angolan nationalist movements to communicate with their constituencies and a section on the pamphlets as a genre, while the text then goes on to discuss the pamphlets' production, dissemination and reception. The subsequent sections show how the UPA pamphlets engaged with 'the enemy' and how they formed an attempt by the leadership to make followers behave according to the movement's policies and orders. The final section discusses the diminishing importance of pamphlets for the UPA/FNLA movement.

#### FROM UPNA TO UPA TO FNLA

In 1955, a Northern Angolan organization called the UPNA (União das Populações do Norte de Angola) was founded with the aim of restoring the Kongo kingdom. The UPNA founders consisted of emigrants from Northern Angola resident in Belgian Congo,<sup>7</sup> but they could count on considerable

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<sup>7</sup>Belgian Congo became independent in 1960. In 1971 its president, Mobutu, changed the name of the country to Zaire.

support in Northern Angola. For many northerners, the international boundary did not mean a clear-cut division; in terms of language, identity, family ties, trade and culture, many links existed between the Lower Congo province and Northern Angola. The leadership of the newly founded UPNA consisted of widely respected Northern Angolan migrants, mostly of Baptist background (Marcum 1969: 56–64). Soon after its foundation, the UPNA's leadership realized that international support for its regional aim was difficult to garner, and in 1958 the organization's name was changed to the UPA (Union of the Peoples of Angola) to emphasize a nationwide approach with an independent Angola as its goal.

The UPA was not the only movement active in Angola: there was also the MPLA, a movement with a mostly Luandan, well-educated leadership and a leftist outlook. Relations between the UPA and the MPLA were never good and much mistrust existed between their respective leaderships. Contacts with another movement, led by a defector from the UPA, were not cordial either. Jonas Savimbi, a university student from Central Angola, joined the UPA in 1961 but left the movement (by then called the FNLA) and in 1966 founded his own organization, UNITA, a movement that remained of limited size during the colonial epoch. Especially in Congo, there was a wide range of smaller movements with followers in Northern Angola and among migrants resident in Congo.

The Portuguese have tried to present the events of March 1961 as a sudden disruption of the existing peace and quiet, but the facts belie this version. Protest in Northern Angola in connection with the Kongo king after 1955 had led to suppression and the imprisonment of a number of demonstrators. In the wider Angolan context, there had been severe violence in Malanje during the so-called Maria's War, when peasants had taken action against the system of enforced cotton growing. In February 1961, marches were held on prisons in Angola's capital Luanda to free political leaders. All this did much to increase the panicky and apprehensive atmosphere, including in the north of the country. The feared Portuguese secret police, the PIDE, became more active; many people suspected of sedition were arrested, forced removals took place, and land disputes were settled with state violence in favour of white settlers. Rumours about violent conflict circulated to such an extent that even the Portuguese authorities learned about them.

Over time, the UPA movement became more militant in its protest against Portuguese colonialism. Some moderate members left the party, but others stayed within the UPA in a tense relationship with the more militant wing led by Holden Roberto (Marcum 1969: 98). Many people expected that something would happen soon, although nobody knew exactly what it would be. Even so, the colonial authorities had not expected the massive and dramatic events of 15 March. When, on 13–14 March, people in Cuimba started hoarding matches, salt and petroleum, and conversations were heard about forthcoming UPA attacks, the Portuguese dismissed this as 'another rumour'.<sup>8</sup>

It is probably impossible to reconstruct exactly the details of all of the events of March 1961. On the morning of 15 March, groups of youngsters armed with

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 467–73: copy of 'Relatório dos factos ocorridos no Posto Administrativo do Cuimba, desde o dia 13 de Março de 1961 até 19 do mesmo mês', Maquela do Zombo, 20 March 1961.

outdated muzzleloaders, farm knives and sticks set out to the Portuguese farms and started their attacks. In the process, not only were many Portuguese settlers killed, but so were even more of their farm workers, while *mestiços* and *assimilados* were also at risk if they had no social relations.<sup>9</sup> In retaliation, the Portuguese launched a huge campaign, in which many Africans were killed, villages destroyed or relocated, and the region emptied of its inhabitants: in the course of the war, over half a million people fled into Congo. The revolt left some 500 white civilians dead, while estimates for the African mortality rate range from 30,000 to 50,000 for the year 1961 alone (Pélissier 1978: 657–8).

With their military machinery, the Portuguese attempted to win the war, but they managed only to contain it. Until the early 1970s, Northern Angola can be characterized as a military zone. The UPA forces tried to stick it out in the forests of the north, but this proved difficult and so most actions were undertaken from bases in Congo, later Zaire. There, the UPA leadership retained relative freedom and over time started to function as a state within a state. After the alliance with the PDA in 1962, the group's name changed to the FNLA and a provisional government in exile (GRAE) was formed, but internal tensions and accusations of Roberto's authoritarian rule caused much harm to the functioning of the movement.

Angola became independent in 1975 and many people who had stayed in Congo/Zaire since 1961 returned to the country. However, they were to end up in a war zone again when the MPLA and FNLA started fighting – the beginnings of a protracted postcolonial civil war.

### PAMPHLETS AS A REGIONAL PHENOMENON

As we saw, the Portuguese feared two movements in particular – the MPLA and the UPA/FNLA – which both managed to maintain influence in the border regions of Angola. The leaderships of these movements resided abroad: in Tanzania, Zambia, Congo-Kinshasa and Congo-Brazzaville. With such a spatial split between leadership and followers, communication networks stretched out over long distances. In fact, the UPA was founded by migrants living in Congo, and so establishing contact with UPA members in Angola was a priority from the start.

In the current interpretation of Angolan nationalist parties, the MPLA is portrayed as intellectual and bookish, in contrast to the more popular UPA/FNLA and UNITA. There were indeed more intellectuals and writers in the MPLA, and the educational background of its leadership was relatively high (Marcum 1969: 207–8, 263, 308–9; Marcum 1978: 7, 50; Monnier 1985: 107; Davezies 1965: 39).

Yet it is clear from the sources that writing and literacy also played an important role in the UPA/FNLA movement. Many followers of the UPA resided in Northern Angola, while the MPLA had only a limited following there; in this new scramble for Africa, MPLA followers were generally to be found further south, in the Dembos and beyond. The MPLA leadership also produced pamphlets (see Figure 1), but as the distance to the MPLA's (potential) constituency was

<sup>9</sup>A *mestiço* is a person of mixed descent, while an *assimilado* is someone considered 'Portugalized' enough to receive a special status in the colonial system.

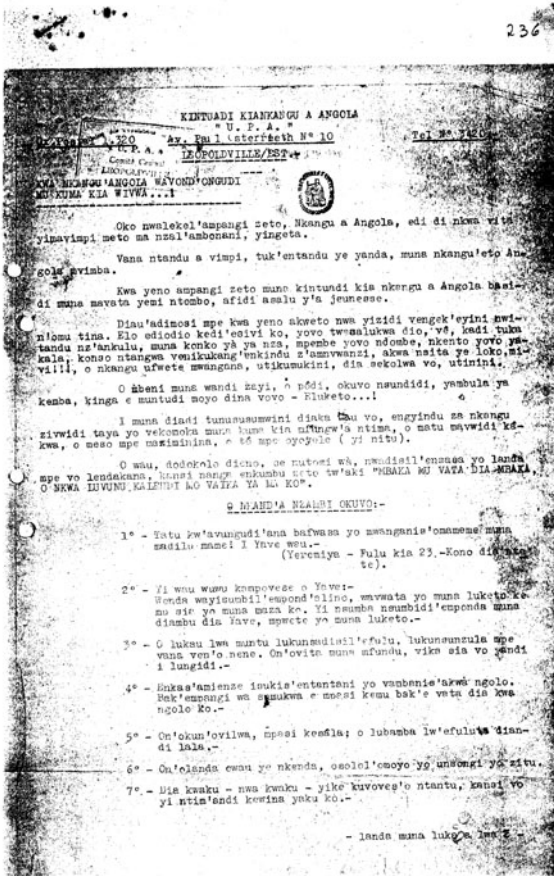


FIGURE 1 Fragment of a translation of a pamphlet. Source: See note 18.

even greater, spreading pamphlets was even more dangerous than it was for the UPA. The dissemination of MPLA pamphlets in Angola was therefore more limited than it was for the UPA. The purpose of the MPLA writings was to acquire international support for the MPLA's cause rather than to mobilize local followers of the movement. While the MPLA's serial journals and war communiqués offer much information about the movement's political ideologies and ideals, and about its international lobbying campaign, they do not tell us much about internal lines of communication, let alone the local hierarchies involved.<sup>10</sup>

Especially at a later stage, the most important means of political communication within the MPLA consisted of meetings, during which speeches, songs

<sup>10</sup>In this article I distinguish between journals (serial publications with a fixed name, such as *A voz da Nação Angolana/La Voix de la Nation Angolaise* or *Liberdade e Terra*) and pamphlets, normally produced as unique documents. In Portuguese, these were all called *pamfletos* (pamphlets) or *jornais* (journals).



and slogans were spread. The main reason for this was that the MPLA was forced out of Congo-Kinshasa and had to shift its attention to areas such as Cabinda and Eastern Angola, where literacy was much less pronounced than in Northern Angola. A wide gap emerged between a relatively well-educated MPLA leadership and a mostly illiterate following, particularly in Eastern Angola. Written documents were of limited use here, and political rallies were more suited to the context (Brinkman 2001). This also held true for UNITA, then a relatively small movement operating from its base in Eastern Angola.

Like the MPLA, the UPA movement produced formal serial journals with a polished tone that were meant for an external, international audience. Apart from these serial journals, local pamphlets were produced to reach the UPA's (potential) constituency. These pamphlets – directed to people in Angola – were full of proverbs and Bible quotes and fall to some extent within the category of what Karin Barber has called 'tin-trunk texts' (2006: 3). In Barber, the focus is on individual non-elite texts, while in this case we are discussing texts written by a local elite for a political movement. This obviously poses the question: whose elite? The producers of the UPA pamphlets did not belong to an elite according to any international standards, but were still regarded as 'elite' by their kinsmen. The UPA pamphlets were meant for a local audience and reflect the long-standing tradition of popular literacy in Northern Angola. As we will see, they lack the formal tone and standardized form of the international journals and are 'tin-trunk' in their hybridity, sociability and links with oral culture.

These texts were appreciated and 'treasured': this is another sense in which they fall within the definition of 'tin-trunk texts'. While in some African cultures people were suspicious of written texts (Hofmeyr 1993), this was not the case in the late colonial period in Northern Angola. Written texts were generally given much credibility, as they were associated with Christianity and government administration, a realm of 'modernity' and power to which many people aspired to belong.

These two elements, religious and political, strongly feature in the UPA pamphlets. The pamphlets show many connections with the Bible and Christianity as well as with administrative issues, such as passes, ranks, bureaucracy and record keeping (cf. Peterson 2003; Brinkman 2011). Literacy had been reintroduced by British Baptist missionaries and many local Protestant people had a keen interest in books and reading. Apart from the Protestant attempts to arrive at a 'literate church' (Grenfell 1995: 66–94), the regional stress on literacy was reinforced by youngsters' migration to Belgian Congo to seek further education. The UPA had many Roman Catholic followers, but the contact network consisted predominantly of Baptist people. Literacy was by no means universal in the region and education generally did not go beyond grammar school in the Portuguese colonies, but writing and books were widely regarded as important in the north. A widespread fascination with literary texts existed and many people had at least a Kikongo Bible in their household.

Hence the brief period of the UPA pamphlet culture fits into a history of regional popular Christian literacy, and an emphasis on reading and writing in Northern Angola. This is also evident in the fact that other regional movements, such as the PDA, Ntobako, Ngwizako and ALIAZO, produced and distributed pamphlets that resemble the UPA pamphlets in many respects. As it was by far the largest movement, the focus here is on the UPA/FNLA pamphlets, but it is important to view them as part of a regional phenomenon.

Writing pamphlets in a local language such as Kikongo may seem logical, but this in itself constituted sedition for the Portuguese authorities. Since Decree 77 of 1921 had been issued, publishing in languages other than Portuguese without offering a Portuguese translation was forbidden by law. Many Angolans were against these regulations and writing pamphlets in Kikongo was seen as a form of protest in itself. Furthermore, through the Kikongo language a wide regional readership could be reached; it heightened the degree of secrecy and prevented the Portuguese from knowing the contents of pamphlets.<sup>11</sup>

Writing in Kikongo, or in Portuguese for that matter, was not easy for the UPA leadership as many of those involved were more familiar with Lingala and French, the lingua francas spoken in Congo. Francisco Paka was reported as buying Portuguese–French dictionaries in order to translate French UPA pamphlets into Portuguese.<sup>12</sup> Literacy in itself could pose a risk. After rumours circulated that the Portuguese would kill all those with ‘*algumas habilitações literárias e seja do tipo “calcinhas”*’ (‘some high school education and of the “trousers” type’), many youngsters fled to Congo.<sup>13</sup>

### COMMUNICATION IN THE UPA

When the Angolan nationalist movements were founded in the 1950s, they had various means at their disposal to reach their potential constituencies. Oral messages were very important, as these could not easily be traced by the colonial authorities. Information was passed on quickly throughout the region: people desperately tried to establish the veracity of what they heard and to frame the various rumours within their contexts. People heard speak of ‘UPA’, ‘Lumumba’ and ‘Kansavubu’ [*sic*], but did not always know what to make of all this.<sup>14</sup> Slogans and songs were other oral genres used in the nationalist movements. They played a role in mobilization and moral support, but were hardly useful for the dissemination of information, news and orders.

During political meetings, nationalist activists would give speeches, slogans and songs were spread, and pamphlets were distributed and read out loud. In other words, the distribution of pamphlets formed part of a wider range of communication strategies used by the nationalist movements. The UPA/FNLA also used radio broadcasts for its purposes; in particular, the speeches of the leader Holden Roberto were broadcast in Congo/Zaire and many Angolan refugees listened to these messages. As the UPA leadership knew that radios were scarce in Northern Angola, the speeches were also transcribed and mimeographed to be spread into the region.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup>IANTT, 11.12.A, 680–1 (1 June 1960), 792–3 (25 January 1960); *ibid.*, 11.12.E, 233: letter of Madalena Destineza André to Ambrósio Manuel, Luanda to Toto, 2 June 1962.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.A, 578–80 (15 August 1960).

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, PIDE SC, PR 1641/60, 635 (18 April 1960).

<sup>14</sup>Interview with Francisco Tunga Alberto (born in Mbanza Vinda, 1953) in Luanda, 19 August 2002.

<sup>15</sup>See Felgas (1961: 6–7); Maciel (1963: 135); IANTT, PIDE SC, PR 1641/60: 182; *ibid.*, 11.32.H, 499; *ibid.*, 11.23.A, 311: GRAE radio message from Rosário Neto on Rádio Nacional Congoleza, 9 July 1963.

Another important means of spreading information, both nationally and especially internationally, were serial journals and war communiqués. As these were meant for a very wide audience, they usually contained little specific information and few cultural details, such as religion, local history or oral traditions. For the most part, they consisted of general statements about the aims and results of the movement. Journals and war communiqués had a much larger audience than pamphlets, were usually written in a European language, and were often produced under a specific serial name.

Like popular forms of communication in general, the various media were characterized by hybridity rather than by rigid genre distinctions and inflexible forms. People might be engaged in using different forms simultaneously, and the multiple ways of sending and receiving information might overlap to a great extent (Barber 1997: 1). This is not to say that information and communication came at random: rather, we can discern a chronological pattern in the various genres of political communication. Many people first heard rumours about the UPA, then saw pamphlets and/or mural writings, and later, after meetings with the nationalists, they might learn UPA songs and slogans. In their form and content, the various means of communication in the area were structured with specific styles and themes that related to both oral and written traditions and the political discourse of the time.

### PAMPHLETS AS A GENRE

The UPA pamphlets show a number of common characteristics in style and linguistic features. Even in the wide variety of themes addressed in the pamphlets, we can see a clear pattern. Before the war started, the pamphlets' aim was to garner support for the nationalist movement and explain the movement's purposes. After March 1961, the UPA leadership used pamphlets to give guidelines and to answer urgent questions from its constituency. When, in the course of 1962, the Portuguese military entered the forests, the UPA leadership called to people to persevere, and the pamphlets offered words of encouragement while at the same time admonishing those who faltered. Despite the variation in content and the fluidity vis-à-vis other genres, the pamphlets form a patterned whole with a chronological order. This chronology notwithstanding, some pamphlets were recycled and various versions existed of a single pamphlet. An example is a pamphlet entitled 'Angolans, the hour has come'; this was encountered twice in the archives, although in this case the PIDE translator had opted for a summary translation in one instance and a more elaborate one in the other.<sup>16</sup> It is certain that one of the most famous pamphlets – the '*feira*' pamphlet, which announced the uprising of March 1961 – was distributed in various forms.<sup>17</sup>

The structure of the pamphlets also follows a pattern. Nearly all pamphlets have a heading referring to the UPA offices in Léopoldville. This is followed by a formal

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 77–8: 'Gentes de Angola, é chegada a hora!', n.p., February 1962; *ibid.*, 11.12.I, 503–4: 'Angolanos, é chegada a hora do resgate', n.p., n.d. (PIDE translation: 29 January 1965).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.12.B, 410: 'Normas a seguir pela população de Angola nos dias de festa', Léopoldville, March 1961 (found in Moçamedes, in the South of Angola); Felgas (1962: 54); de Melo (1988: 109).

address, usually containing a reference to *nkangu* (union): for example, '*Kwa nkangu'Angola wavond'ongudi mu kuma kia wivwa ...!*' ('To the union of Angolans who let themselves be seduced even by a mess of pottage'), which addresses those Angolans who attempt to flee over the border.<sup>18</sup> The titles of the pamphlets could be elaborate: 'The road that leads to independence demands sacrifice, courage, abnegation, total surrender, patience and insight'.<sup>19</sup> While the MPLA came to be known as 'the party of the comrades', the FNLA was referred to as 'the union of brothers'. This difference is also apparent in the writings of the two movements. In most MPLA journals (and also in some of the more internationally oriented UPA/FNLA serials), the style resembles the stasis and sweep of socialist realism, while the pamphlets discussed here have a solemn, esoteric, Biblical character.

The Bible was an enormous source of inspiration for the UPA pamphlets: nearly all pamphlets contain one or more quotations from the Bible. In the above-mentioned pamphlet, for example, Jeremiah 23, verse 1 is quoted directly. God's help is nearly always invoked and the Kongo people are sometimes compared to the people of Israel: in the 'Holy books it is said that you will be compensated for your perseverance' and 'Salazar will die in the Red Sea'.<sup>20</sup> The pamphlets stress the moral character of the struggle: it is not just about politics; it is a fight between the good forces and evil in the world.

The Biblical quotes serve as guidance through difficult times, but in many cases the Bible is used in the same way as local proverbs:

UPA is the union of all blacks of Angola who cry for their INDEPENDENCE, so we know that, in the saying of our ancestors: 'together all the fingers beat the drum', or, in the saying of the whites: 'unity is strength' [...] We cannot cross our arms in this struggle that we are engaged in. Let us also remember the saying of our ancestors that went: 'Although the treasury of our ancestors is full, we as children also have to offer our contribution to this wealth.' In other words our ancestors also said: 'If our near ones go straight for an end, we also have to imitate this.' The whites also affirm that for all those who do not have any ambition, there is no place prepared for eternal joy.<sup>21</sup>

The Bible quotations and the proverbs do much to add to the atmosphere of seriousness, authority and density of language. The UPA leadership used the

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.D, 233–7: '*Kwa nkangu'Angola wavond'ongudi mu kuma kia wivwa ...*', Eduardo Pinnock, Léopoldville, n.d. (translation: 27 December 1961). The English translation is based on the Kikongo, with the kind advice of Nathalis Lembe, and on the Portuguese translation of the PIDE. The title literally means: 'To the union of Angolans who kill their mother because of mushrooms'; this metaphorically relates to ceding birthrights for a 'mess of pottage' – this being a Biblical reference to the story of Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25), when Esau sells his birthright to Jacob – and to the ultimate impartiality of a king (Van Roy 1963: 25, thanks to Koen Bostoen for the reference).

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.C, 277: Léopoldville, April 1961.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 276–8: 'Angolanos, está dada porfinda a época dos vossos sofrimentos na escravidão em que vinds vivendo. Vai dar lugar à época de satisfação e de paz', signed by Eduardo J. Pinnock, Léopoldville, 30 November 1960; *ibid.*, 344–9: UPA circular, Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 14 October 1961).

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.A, 659–60: UPA, 'Estimulo' to 'A todos os adeptos da associação da UPA, residentes em Angola, no Congo Belga e no Congo Francês', n.p., n.d. (PIDE translation: 6 June 1960).

pamphlets to offer advice to people in Angola and to instruct them about the course to follow. This is also evident in the frequent employment of the imperative in the pamphlets, demanding sacrifice and dedication to an extreme level:

Rise up! Defend yourself and also defend your country as God cannot come down from heaven to take your country from the hostile hands of the Portuguese [...] Do not fear death, we all must die.<sup>22</sup>

Apart from the proverbs, there are also stylistic features in the pamphlets that link them to oral culture. In some cases, repetitions are used:

*Nani i nkwa'eyaya-eyaya?* (Who says? My mother, mother mine!)  
*Nani i nkwa'ekwé-ékwe?* (Who says? Ai! Ai!)  
*Nani i nkwa ntantani?* (Who discusses and disputes?)  
*Nani i nkwa fundulula?* (Who murmurs and complains?)  
*Nani i nkwa ndwadi za nkatu?* (Who complains about nothing and everything?)<sup>23</sup>

The proverbs and links to oral culture strengthen the regional focus of the pamphlets; this is also underlined by the references to local history. There are frequent mentions of the figure of Álvaro Buta, who was in conflict with the Portuguese around 1914, and other historical people and events of the region: 'Who does not know what happened to Buta? [...] UPA did not invent fighting against the Portuguese, our ancestors did the same.'<sup>24</sup>

Nearly all the pamphlets end with the signature of one of the well-known UPA leaders, such as Holden Roberto or Eduardo Pinnock. With their solemn and authoritative style, invoking God and the ancestors, quoting the Bible and Kongo proverbs, signed by the leadership and carrying the UPA stamp, these pamphlets served to establish control over and offer guidance to a local following by a leadership in exile.

## PRODUCING PAMPHLETS

Pamphlets were prepared with care by the UPA leadership because they were, together with oral messages, the most important means of communicating with UPA members in Angola. The UPA leadership could directly address members and guerrillas in Congo, but visiting Angola was regarded as too risky. Therefore the link between the leadership and followers in Angola consisted of messengers with oral information and piles of pamphlets. As the contents of pamphlets could be controlled better than word of mouth, the UPA leadership was very keen on communicating in this way.

Despite the fact that pamphlets were generally written by the UPA leadership in Congo, it proved impossible for the UPA central leadership to completely control their production. Guerrilla leaders at the local level also wrote and distributed

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 77–8: 'Gentes de Angola, é chegada a hora!', n.p., February 1962.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.D, 233–7: also see note 16.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.I, 640: 'Advertência para as gentes de Angola', signed by Holden Roberto, Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 20 November 1964).

pamphlets. At times, this happened without any authorization from the central leadership and the central leadership had no say over form or content. The UPA leadership warned against such practices:

everything that you hear or read that is *against* UPA, that is to say bad things about UPA, inform or bring the journal to the UPA leaders [...] It is better to first show the leaders that which you want to write with respect to UPA ...<sup>25</sup>

Often, it is difficult to establish individual authorship of UPA propaganda material; only rarely is there a clear indication. Most pamphlets are signed by Eduardo Pinnock or Holden Roberto, but it cannot be assumed that they therefore always wrote them; their names may be used to indicate that the pamphlet was authorized by the central leadership. It is certain that people such as Eduardo Pinnock, his son Johnny and the journalist Anibal de Melo were involved in editing UPA journals (Marcum 1969: 87), but this does not automatically include pamphlet authorship. The PIDE's search to identify the authors of propaganda materials sometimes provides a clue: for example, an archival document holds the catechist Pedro Massala responsible for the writing of UPA propaganda, and in a conversation the PDA/FNLA leader André Massaki explained that he contributed to the writing of pamphlets.<sup>26</sup> On the whole, however, the authors of the pamphlets remain unknown. With such limited information on authorship, it is difficult to analyse the various styles of the authors or to relate the publications to earlier writings by the same person, as has been possible with Mau Mau texts (Pugliese 2003).

The pamphlets encountered in the PIDE archives form a complex and heterogeneous set of documents. As the archives contain copies and translations, it cannot always be determined whether the original was handwritten or typed. We may, however, assume that typed documents were stencilled or photocopied, as the evidence corroborates this. André Massaki stated as much and the money collected in Northern Angola was used for this purpose:

To all the members of UPA we wish to bring to your knowledge that a 'stencil' machine was already bought that will serve to bring you news about the services and activities of UPA. This circular is the first demonstration.<sup>27</sup>

The production of pamphlets was not always straightforward:

We wish to bring to your attention that, for reason of a machine part that got stuck in our press, this Journal was not printed last month.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.A, 242: 'Primeiras condições para aquele que quer entrar na comunidade da UPA', n.p., n.d. (possibly October 1960).

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 13.16.A/9, 27: Luanda, 28 September 1960; conversation with André Massaki in Luanda, August 2002.

<sup>27</sup>See Maciel (1963: 242–3); conversation with André Massaki in Luanda, August 2002; IANTT, SC-CI 2126, vol. 1, 1044–5: 'Notícias da UPA', signed by Mwanambi, n.p., 1 June 1960; also *ibid.*, 1007: 'Assunto: Manifestos Africanos', Luanda, 6 January 1960.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 74: 'Um Aviso', Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 28 September 1962).

Initially, the PIDE gathered these documents through its extensive intelligence networks; later, its major source was military patrols that encountered the documents during their actions and collected them. While the pamphlets in the PIDE archives are dated between 1959 and 1974, the overwhelming majority are from the years around 1961. After 1962, fewer pamphlets were archived; given the increased Portuguese military control, it is probable that fewer pamphlets were disseminated in Angola and the UPA movement increasingly undertook its actions from its bases in Congo/Zaire. Just as pamphlets were written and produced with care, the task of spreading them into Northern Angola was seen as a specific and difficult task that required courage, fitness, knowledge about routes and trustworthy people in the region.

### DISSEMINATING PAMPHLETS

Pamphlet distribution networks started to develop by the end of the 1950s. It is obvious that local catechists, mainly of Baptist denomination, were heavily involved in such networks. In this initial phase before the rebellion, the pamphlets called on people to join the UPA movement and to contribute with money, gifts and moral support.

Congo's independence in 1960 meant that there was considerably more manoeuvring space for the Angolan political movements that had their bases there, and the UPA started rallying for support more intensively, mainly by sending emissaries from Congo into Northern Angola. These UPA messengers, called *mekuiza-mekwenda* ('come and go'), travelled from Congo over secret routes through the huge forest areas in the north to reach the villagers. The emissaries came with oral messages, slogans and songs, but also with piles of pamphlets and UPA membership cards. An important task consisted of collecting money to finance the UPA's activities: 'The word of honour is that only money is our strong rifle.'<sup>29</sup>

The messengers would take the money they had collected in Angola back to the UPA coffers in Léopoldville and would report whatever news they had from Angola to the UPA leaders. Sometimes they would be asked to return to Angola; however, if it was known that the police already suspected them of political activity, others would be used as messengers.<sup>30</sup>

The emissaries would go from place to place, contacting the village leaders to organize meetings, during which pamphlets would be read out loud and distributed. Chiefs and headmen – even those appointed by the Portuguese administration – could be asked to convene a meeting with the trusted people of a village. The most important channel for reaching people, however, consisted of the local church elite. This might mean Catholic church leaders, but mainly Protestants were involved; in the north of Angola, the British BMS (Baptist Missionary Society) had a long-standing presence and was less associated with

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.A, 382: UPA pamphlet by Eduardo Pinnock, n.p., n.d. (1960).

<sup>30</sup>Interview (in Portuguese) with Eduardo Mauricio Nzuzi, Savula Frederico Deves (born in Mbanza Kongo, 1919) and Eduardo Manzevo Ovimpi (born in Madimba, 1935) in Mbanza Kongo (FNLA, Roberto's office), 24 November 2003. Interview with Antonio Neves (born in Posto Madimba, 1934) in Mbanza Kongo, 21 February 2009.

Portuguese rule than the Catholic church. Protestant catechists, teachers, evangelists, deacons and other people who played a role in church life could be contacted to spread UPA news and to organize political meetings, sometimes in the local church or, as this was usually too dangerous, in a cleared patch in the forest.

In other cases, pamphlets were stuck up on the doors and walls of public buildings during the night, to be discovered in the morning. Not all Angolan people were happy with this, as a letter by a young Catholic student written in October 1959 shows:

I inform you that we are sad here because of the prescriptions that are stuck up on the doors. I was astonished to hear that they entered the church of the Catholic Mission that is usually closed and they stuck up in the place where they keep the blessed water. They started their work in Nôqui, Luvo, S. Salvador, Cuimba, Maquela, Bembe, etc. and in small villages and each prescription has four languages: Portuguese, French, English and Kikongo. The soldiers are already here.

PIDE officials were sure that this related to circulars calling for independence that had been posted in public places by emissaries at the time.<sup>31</sup>

Shortly before the war started in March 1961, the distribution of pamphlets increased. At this stage, communication between the UPA leadership in Congo and militants in Angola was crucial. All available means were used to distribute UPA leaflets as widely as possible: messengers carried them over the secret forest paths and market women smuggled them under their goods. In the pamphlets, people were told to prepare themselves for the oncoming events and to keep themselves ready.<sup>32</sup>

Immediately after March 1961, many UPA followers on the ground sent messengers to the UPA leadership in Léopoldville and Matadi to report on actions, to ask for orders and to place requests for necessary items in the forests. The UPA leadership tried to control the number of messengers sent from Angola, partly because no facilities were available to cater for these people and also because their requests could not be met. All the same, these messengers returned to Angola with pamphlets written by the UPA leadership in which various questions were answered. People were urged to further spread the pamphlets: 'DO NOT COLLECT! READ AND LET CIRCULATE!'<sup>33</sup>

### READING PAMPHLETS

Their written form made pamphlets stand apart from oral communications. However, as literacy was not widespread and private reading only seldom occurred, pamphlets were often read aloud during meetings and in homes; in this sense, pamphlets remained linked to oral culture. Local followers had more faith in the trustworthiness of writing and, as the pamphlets were usually

<sup>31</sup>IANTT, 13.16.A/1, 81: António P. Meneses, pupil at the evangelical school in São Salvador, to his brother in Luanda, letter intercepted by PIDE; cf. IANTT, SC-CI 2126, vol. 1, 1197.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.B, 859.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.A, 299: mimeograph of UPA radio transcript, Léopoldville, 8 September 1960.



handed over to local church or school leaders, they had a higher level of prestige than word-of-mouth communication. Pamphlets differed from private letters in that their audience was wider, but in some cases letters were also addressed to an entire village and read aloud, rendering their difference from pamphlets comparatively slight.

Before the war had started, reading pamphlets or listening to their contents constituted a risk. Many Portuguese officials had no knowledge about what was going on in the villages or in the African quarters in the larger settlements. Yet there were many local informers: some were prepared to tell on their fellow countrymen simply for money; others were convinced that what they regarded as the legal authorities ought to know about secret political gatherings.

In the extensive border area between Congo and Angola, the distribution took on a somewhat more open character and UPA journals and pamphlets were sold without much subterfuge.<sup>34</sup> After the war had started, this changed more definitively; as the Portuguese held onto the towns, UPA followers in the bush could read or listen to pamphlets with relative freedom. Immediately after the events of March 1961, the main aim of the pamphlets was to create order and many of the directives were written as a reaction to questions and requests from Northern Angola. Groups of UPA followers tried to organize themselves and sent messengers to the UPA leadership in Léopoldville or to UPA leaders at a more local level. As militants on the ground were often at a loss about what to do next, these messengers asked for instructions and orders. Requests for supplies – food, drugs, arms, ammunition, blankets, paper, etc. – were often also made through messengers. For the UPA leadership, sending pamphlets with instructions was one way of answering the many questions and requests with which they were confronted. Some of the pamphlets make explicit reference to this phenomenon – one pamphlet started with: ‘Many thanks for sending messengers who delivered us letters of which we acknowledge receipt and we took careful note of all your requests and statements.’ In this case, requests for arms, ammunition and gunpowder were met, the people were advised to choose guards from among themselves, a stamp was refused (but instead paper with stamps was promised) and the request for a prophet was denied.<sup>35</sup>

Another telling example is the pamphlet entitled ‘Answer to various questions that were posed to us through letters and messages sent by UPA adepts’, dated April 1961. A first question the pamphlet deals with is: ‘1. What must we do, you say, with objects left behind by the whites?’ In the response, it is stated that all things can be taken: ‘Remember that all the things belonging to the whites who live in Angola are the possession of Angolans, because they acquired all this in Angola and at the cost of the sweat of Angolans who worked for free.’ The next question deals with the treatment of ‘enemies of the peace’; the advice is to capture and, if necessary, punish, but never kill such people. The third issue concerns the problem of leadership; people are advised to choose leaders without discriminating on the basis of religion. After words of encouragement, the text finishes with orders that people must not pay taxes and not send people

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 129–30: Luanda, 9 November 1960.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.B, 113–16: ‘Aos nossos irmãos residentes no povo Vombo, Região de Mafilu’, Léopoldville, 11 June 1961.

for contract labour or to work on the roads for free, and that they should take refuge in safe places, so as to save their lives.<sup>36</sup>

This example shows that pamphlets were one of the most direct means of communication between the UPA leadership in exile and UPA members in Northern Angola; the pamphlets included not only words of encouragement and motivation, but also clear orders and directives.

People were eager to receive news and messengers from the UPA leadership. This is mentioned in the pamphlets:

We know that you hate the lack of news and messengers as you are used to them. We also regret this delay as we consider the human heart very much. We, however, want to give you courage with this: Fill yourselves with courage, do not let the work be delayed and stick ever more to the preceding prescriptions of our redeeming doctrine [...] As we have already explained to you, you will not lack further news once the transit route from here to there and vice-versa is open ...<sup>37</sup>

As the Portuguese military stepped up their actions, however, more and more routes were closed and many UPA members were forced to withdraw over the border.

### PARTIES AND PAMPHLETS

After some time, the UPA movement became well known and its pamphlets eventually had the widest distribution in the region. However, especially in the early years of its existence, the UPA certainly had no monopoly on pamphlets: the Portuguese, Ngwizako, Ntobako, MPLA, ALIAZO, PDA and the religious movement of the Tokoists, among others, also spread pamphlets in the northern region. In the UPA pamphlets, we find frequent warnings against such 'falsities':

We want to bring to your attention that a certain intimate friend of the Portuguese Government is going around distributing pamphlets here and at various points in this area; writing to the newspapers, talking [on] the radio declaring that he will be on the road on February 17th, with the aim of crowning the King. We actually do not wish to dwell much on this: we have absolute certainty that, in line with your convictions, none of you could ever believe such a thing, but permit us just to give you this solemn advice, so that you shall not be led astray to evil paths.<sup>38</sup>

This is a first important line of internal conflict: fierce rivalry existed between the various Angolan nationalist movements and the pamphlets show an enormous desire on the part of the UPA movement to position itself in the chaotic field of politics around 1960. In the pamphlets, the UPA leadership explains the character and purposes of the movement.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.C, 256–9: 'Resposta a várias perguntas que nos são feitas por cartas e recados enviados por adeptos da UPA' to 'Todos os membros da UPA residentes em Angola', Léopoldville, April 1961.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 509: 'A nossos irmãos pela UPA que resides no povo Nsala', Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 18 September 1961).

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 36: 'Aviso único', n.p., n.d. (probably beginning 1961; PIDE translation: 13 October 1962).

Matters were further complicated by the fact that false pamphlets circulated: the Portuguese secret police was known to distribute pamphlets under the UPA's name. Both Marcum (1969: 131–2, 343–4) and Pélissier (1978: 480–1) provide examples of this. Also in the archives, we find examples of pamphlets full of references to communism and the devil – both equally horrific to most Angolans.<sup>39</sup> People receiving all this information in the northern region tried to establish the true nature of pamphlets by studying the letterheads, the authenticity of signatures and other marks that could help them tell a 'real' pamphlet from a forgery.

### UPA LEADERSHIP AND UPA MEMBERS

Most pamphlets were produced by the movement's leadership in Congo, and in this sense there is clear asymmetry in their production: through the pamphlets, the nationalist leadership tried to control and steer events in Northern Angola. The UPA leadership attempted to present the identity of the movement through the pamphlets while at the same time telling people what to do: these pamphlets are both about 'making the self' and 'making others' (Barber 2006).

It is impossible to measure the impact of the pamphlets on local followers, but their production was largely in the hands of the leadership in exile. At the same time, it is obvious that the pamphlets also formed a leadership response to events happening in Angola, thereby reflecting events in Northern Angola rather than steering them. They do this in various ways. For example, before March 1961 the pamphlets refer to a 'party' (*feita*) and other metaphors to indicate upcoming violent events. It is clear, however, that matters got out of hand in the eyes of the leadership in exile and the subsequent pamphlets warn against escalation and attempt to integrate people into a more organized structure. In the pamphlets, we find frequent calls for people to act upon the orders and advice given:

as we have established that many of our brothers receive pamphlets but do not read them or if they do take the trouble of reading them they do not put into practice that which is recommended as the doctrine to follow.<sup>40</sup>

Apart from such broader tendencies, as already indicated, the pamphlets often also rallied against campaigns from other movements:

You have heard [on] the radio and read in the newspapers about the tragic and bloody events that have occurred in Angola, in our beloved country, in particular in the northern regions. In order to prevent your being led astray and believing what is proclaimed by the Portuguese about these events, we will tell you some truths that were confirmed to us by our loyal adherents who fled from our country.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.12.A, 24: document in French (*strictement secret*), 'Chers compatriotes d'Angola', signed by Rosário Neto, Holden Roberto, Alexander Pedro Claver Tati, Avenue Mahenge Plateau [Tanzania], n.d.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.12.E, 120–3: 'Este panfleto destina especialmente aos jovens militantes e a quantos de nossos irmãos vivem ainda em Angola', signed by Eduardo Pinnock, Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 23 March 1962).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.12.C, 270: 'A todos os fiéis da UPA e aos Angolanos em geral', Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 18 September 1961).

The fact that the pamphlets directly addressed pleas, questions and requests from the bases in Angola is a further indication of the interaction between leadership and adherents. The leadership saw itself as separate yet connected to its constituency in Angola:

We, the authors of this pamphlet, are like spectators who from [afar] assist in a football match, but as to the destiny of your country, that is an issue entirely dependent on you.<sup>42</sup>

The exiled leadership kept itself informed about the situation in Angola through reports presented by its messengers and by asking for news about Angola from anybody travelling between Angola and Congo.<sup>43</sup> In this area, too, the UPA leaders attempted to control matters: they preferred sending messengers themselves, as requests and questions from incoming messengers might be all too overwhelming:

Once again we warn you not to send messengers to the Leadership because, as you must know well, we no longer have anything substantial to help those who travel up here.<sup>44</sup>

On the ground, people clearly experienced the distance between the leadership and followers, even leading to dissent. A pamphlet of September 1960 already discussed the nature of such dissent and tried to deal with the question that many UPA followers asked: 'What are the real contributions of the UPA president?'<sup>45</sup>

Through the pamphlets, the UPA leadership tried to explain the movement's identity, to control the actions of UPA followers, and to safeguard their loyalty. Particularly because they were in exile and people on the ground were therefore often forced to take decisions without first consulting them, the leaders were keen to establish their authority through the pamphlets.

## CHANGING COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND A GOVERNMENT IN EXILE

Before, during and immediately after the events of March 1961 in Northern Angola, pamphlets served the purpose of political communication. The height of the pamphlet culture occurred at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s. In 1962, the UPA joined forces with the PDA and changed its name to become the FNLA. Later during that year, the GRAE was formed by Holden Roberto and his entourage: an Angolan government in exile. At the same time, Portuguese forces entered the forests and wiped out most of the

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.15.A, 43: 'Caríssimos irmãos angolanos', n.p., n.d. (PIDE translation: 18 October 1962).

<sup>43</sup>Interview (in Portuguese) with Eduardo Mauricio Nzuzi (born in Mbanza Majini, 1922) at his home in Mbanza Kongo, 23 November 2003.

<sup>44</sup>IANTT, 11.12.E, 820: 'A todos os nossos irmãos muito queridos residentes nos povos: Banza Sungu, Kimbondo, Kivuva, Kinzambi, Kilonde, Kiluango, Pelo, Nsasa, Tema, Tele, Makoko, Mabaia, Gonde, Kisitikina, Nsundi, Nganzi, Kipungi, Kinsudi e Ngombe', signed by Holden Roberto, Léopoldville, n.d. (PIDE translation: 23 January 1962); also *ibid.*, 11.12.C, 351: UPA pamphlet by Eduardo Pinnock, n.p., n.d.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.D, 5: n.p., 12 September 1961.

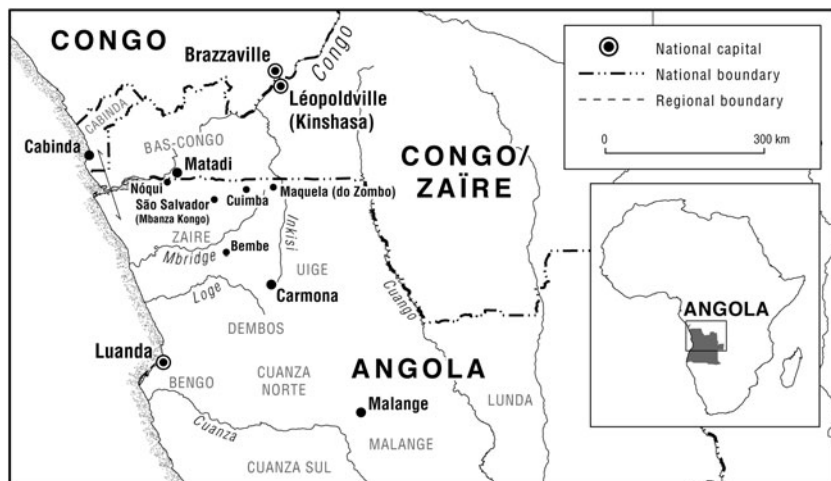


FIGURE 2 Map of Angola and neighbouring Congo/Zaire.

guerrilla camps, which initially led to enormous anxiety and disillusion in the forests. Many UPA pamphlets of 1962 and later reflect this: they admonish people not to give up the struggle.

Because of the Portuguese actions, the great majority of UPA followers left for Congo, and guerrilla activities were mostly organized from bases in Congo, later Zaire, from where the groups entered Northern Angola (see Figure 2). This rendered the need for spreading pamphlets less urgent: the movement's leadership could directly address its constituency. With these developments, the war entered a new phase. Although pamphlets continued to be produced, they had become less vital for the survival of the UPA/FNLA movement: the emphasis of internal political communication in the movement came to rest on other means, mainly the political meeting. The attempts to create a government-like structure in Angola itself were stalled and the GRAE started to form a state within a state in the Congo/Zairian context.

## CONCLUSION

While notions such as 'political mobilization of the people' and 'galvanizing popular support', or the failure to do so, abound in the literature on African nationalist movements, we hardly ever learn anything about the ways in which leadership and constituencies interacted. The changing nature and style of political communication in these movements is not treated as a historical subject in its own right. This article has sought to investigate the social history of UPA pamphlets in Northern Angola – not by looking at history through their contents, but by mapping their context, the patterns of writing, distribution and reading, and their linguistic and stylistic features as a genre.

The specific context of a nationalist leadership in exile and a tradition of popular literacy in Northern Angola led to a brief period of pamphlet culture

that constituted communication between UPA leaders and (potential) followers. The pamphlet as a medium of interaction between leadership and followers emerged rather suddenly and was related to the specific nature of the political context.

The UPA leadership paid much attention to the production and distribution of pamphlets, UPA messengers risked their lives in spreading them into Northern Angola, and UPA followers highly valued receiving and reading them. All these groups can be viewed as agents who influenced the textual production of pamphlets, but communication circuits are never neutral or free from power relations. UPA members tried to influence the leadership's behaviour by sending messengers with requests for materials and instructions, and the pamphlets were partly a response to that. But, on the whole, the UPA leadership attempted to use pamphlets as a means to persuade people to become members of the movement and to control the behaviour of its adherents. The pamphlets try to establish the identity of the UPA as the 'right' movement and to instruct followers to adopt the behaviour the UPA leaders expected of them. Their instructive character also shows in the language and style of the pamphlets: the ample use of the imperative, the solemn tone, the authority from God and the ancestors, proverbs and the Bible were all meant to underline the mandate of the UPA leadership.

The 'communication circuit' approach has enabled us to go beyond an interpretation of UPA pamphlets as a historical source to reconstruct what happened, and has established the pamphlets as a historical subject in their own right. The social history of the pamphlets shows the limits of a purely 'nationalist' interpretation: the texts clearly express the nationalist aspirations of colonial subjects and can be viewed as anti-colonial tracts. Yet the processes of creation, distribution and readership, as well as the genre characteristics of the pamphlets, demonstrate that their main concern was to establish the mandate of a leadership in exile over a constituency in Northern Angola. The pamphlets form part of a hierarchical internal political communication, in which the UPA leadership promised that the current ghastly nightmare in Angola and – after people had fled into Congo – the traumatic situation of exile would be transformed into a utopia:

Shortly you can sing victory, and rest in our country where milk and honey flow.<sup>46</sup>

The dream did not materialize, as shortly after Angolan independence war broke out again.

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Abako	Alliance des Bakongo
ALIAZO	Alliance des Ressortissants de Zombo
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
FNLA	Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola
GRAE	Gôverno Revolucionário de Angola no Exílio

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.12.I, 503–4: 'Angolanos, é chegada a hora do resgate', n.p., n.d. (PIDE translation: 29 January 1965); also see note 16.

MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola
Ngwizako	Ngwizani a Kongo (Kongo civilization)
Ntobako	Angolan branch of the Abako
PDA	Partido Democrático de Angola
PIDE	Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado
UNITA	União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola
UPA	União das Populações de Angola
UPNA	União das Populações do Norte de Angola

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## ABSTRACT

In March 1961, war broke out in Northern Angola. The Portuguese authorities attributed the violence to the UPA – a nationalist movement led by Northern Angolan immigrants resident in Congo. The movement's leadership tried to keep in contact with its (potential) followers in Northern Angola by various means, pamphlets being one of the most important. Written for a local audience, these pamphlets provide an insight into the inner lines of communication – and internal hierarchies – of the nationalist movement. By using Darnton's 'communication circuit' model, this article investigates the processes of writing, distributing and reading the pamphlets and analyses their generic characteristics, and their position in a tradition of regional popular literacy. In so doing, an interpretation is offered of the social history of the pamphlets: they are treated as a historical subject in their own right. While they can be read as anti-colonial tracts, it is shown that the pamphlets' main concern is to establish the mandate of a leadership in exile over a constituency in Northern Angola.

## RÉSUMÉ

En mars 1961, la guerre éclata dans le Nord de l'Angola. Les autorités portugaises attribuèrent les violences à l'UPA, un mouvement nationaliste dirigé par des immigrés du Nord de l'Angola résidant au Congo. Désireux de rester en contact avec leurs sympathisants (potentiels) dans le Nord de l'Angola, les dirigeants du mouvement utilisèrent divers moyens pour ce faire, le plus important étant le pamphlet. Rédigés à l'intention d'un public local, ces pamphlets apportent un éclairage sur les voies de communication (et les hiérarchies) existant à l'intérieur du mouvement nationaliste. En utilisant le modèle du « circuit de communication » de Darnton, cet article examine les processus de rédaction, de distribution et de lecture des pamphlets, et analyse leurs caractéristiques génériques et leur place dans une tradition de littérature populaire régionale. Ce faisant, il offre une interprétation de l'histoire sociale des pamphlets : ils sont traités comme un objet historique en eux-mêmes. On peut certes les lire comme des tracts anti-coloniaux, mais l'article montre que la principale préoccupation des pamphlets est d'établir le mandat de dirigeants en exil sur un groupe situé dans le Nord de l'Angola.