

Higher Education Capitalism and the Corrosion of the right to education in Angola ☐

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Introduction

The political-economic changes that have occurred in Angola since the decade of 2000 allow us to question to what extent the economic policy tailored to the market needs has enabled, not only the increase of private Institutions of Higher Education (IES, acronym in Portuguese), but essentially, the understanding of the motivations behind their construction and operation – to satisfy the labour market needs (companies) through qualified higher training and to make the profit they envisioned in the sector. Despite the absence of political and strategic guidelines from the State in the sector, the context attracted both the domestic and foreign capital. The private higher education appears, thus, to respond to the needs of qualified personnel in the country, to a “market” still unexplored and to an elevated number of “customers” who until then had not been able to enter the higher education due to the insufficiency of IES.

The advent, in the formal adoption of the capitalism in Angola, is based on the understanding that its political elite had about the advantages it could obtain in the economy (the power consolidation within the business sector and in favouring the policy of «primitive accumulation of capital») and in the politics (maintenance of its dominant class condition). Therefore, one can comprehend that the rise of private institutions in higher education derives from the process of emergence of the new bourgeoisie up the “wild capitalism” (Nkrumah, K, 1967) which benefits from the absence of «State» as a unifying entity of all the interests of a nation to prioritise the interests of the elite class which is simultaneously military-political and economic. The research question that underpins this study is to explore to what extent the «agents» that promote the privatisation of higher education do so under a strategic State project aimed at building a developmental culture for Angola.

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Angola – the emergence of capitalism and the constructed scenario

On the democracy's sake, it has been recurrent to debate about the freedom of speech, the right to a dignified life, the right to education and health, the respect for cultural differences and to question the dimensions specificity that constitute democracy: the public domain and the private one. The questioning makes sense, currently, because along with the political democracy is the "capitalist democracy", which is expressed, in its best way, as the free market competition. The free competition speech is unfocused on the great Angolan problem: inequality and social exclusion, corruption, greed for power, but on the positivist image of success of the accumulation of capital provides to a modicum number of those well positioned in the Angolan "political regime". Since the market policy has begun dictating the rules for the social policies elaboration, it became easier for the Angolan regime to adopt a competitive speech among the people. Currently, it is through the processes of reorganisation of new work relations and social integration that the condition and process of capital accumulation is explained and justified. The integration of individuals has begun being reoriented through consumption, while simultaneously the exclusion through non-consumption was accentuated (Santos, 1999a: 9)²³.

The relationship between the public and the private sectors can be found in the Constitution (2010) of the country the protection and guarantee of the rights of the parties' inviolability. Just as the public cannot, through legislation, annul all important aspects of the private life and its relationship with society, similarly the private cannot constitute a developmental domain of endless powers, that is, excessive powers that endanger the public domain (Fioravanti, 2013: 7). The challenge, for Angola, lies in the depth and rigor that the Constitution provides to the treatment of public and private issues with the guarantee of the limits and constituted rights.

What happened during the last fifteen years has shown that, from the disputes among private economic interests, interferences in the public domain have arisen.

²³ What differs social inequality prior to 2000 from the current one are the increasingly sinuous mechanisms used to legitimise the regime at the same time that inequality and exclusion are produced and reproduced. Santos (1999) asserts that «inequality and exclusion are two hierarchical systems»: In "inequality, belonging comes about through subordinate integration, while in the system of exclusion belonging comes about through exclusion. Inequality implies a hierarchical system of social integration. Those who are below are inside and their presence is indispensable. On the other hand, exclusion is based on an equally hierarchical system, but dominated by the principle of exclusion: one belongs by the way one is excluded. Whoever is down is out" (Santos, 1999a:2). Stated in this way, the two systems represent an ideal type, although, actually, both cohabit all the time.

This came to be thought of considering the private, not the opposite. The example is the opening of the Angolan economy to foreign market: the economic policy strategies have been constantly redefined in order to meet the national, international²⁴, and the private interests. Although the Constitution exists, it has always been insufficient to stop political behaviours that trigger processes of institutional deviations.

Different from the socialist system, in the capitalism, one of the main roles of the State would be to organise the “dominant classes as «blocs-in- power», conferring coherence and bringing together the different interests between specific fractions” (Estanque, 2013:232). This goal occurs with coherence and specification of the roles between the interests of the State and those of the particular groups that seek profits through their companies. This implies the existence of freedom and relative autonomy for the State to be able to “ensure the cohesion of the socio-economic order [...] and establish itself «above» each fraction and whenever necessary act for the benefit [...] of the working classes, for example, legislating against the (immediate) interests of the privileged groups” (Estanque, 2013:232). In Angola, the existing power relations, since the period of the One Party only, are intertwined in such way that the State interests are confused with the private ones. This happens because the officers who represent the government they also represent private interests (as owners of private companies/institutions), or even because those who are responsible for legislating on the sector are, simultaneously, entrepreneurs. There is a risk, therefore, of legislating for one’s own benefit.

The need for domains cohabitation, public and private, based on the idea that human life takes place from a biological viewpoint, in a private domain and, from a social point of view, in a public and political domain. Hannah Arendt (2010) talks about two lives – living life (private) and living in the world (public). The defence according to which the public should predominate over the private frames its arguments in the need for the *Rés-Pública*²⁵ (public thing). This way, the political action would be the expression of the common interest, that is, the common good. Since political action is in position to guarantee security and balance between private parties, it de-

²⁴ Globalisation influences countries to redefine their economic policies in medium and long term. It is an economy characterised by the rapid change in the portfolios of different systems of international capital with political interventions that meet various interests of the capital. The “risk profile of the countries participating in the world system changes, as “rich” or “poor”, “advanced” or “backward” countries lose or gain, depending on whether their economies are strengthened or weakened by the short-term international financial decisions” (Menezes, 2000:381).

²⁵ cf. Cícero, 2011.

depends on it, through the norms, to ensure cohabitation through the Constitution. The fundamental issue is related to political ethics, that is, to what extent it would be able to ensure common interests without overriding the private ones.

The predominance of private interests over the public ones easily originates institutional deviations²⁶. When government officers assume simultaneously prominent positions in private business, the State's interests are effortlessly adjusted to the private ones (the State is placed at the service of the private sector). The most common ways through which institutional deviations manifest themselves have been: «nepotism», in which political and economic favouritism falls to relatives; «clientelism», a way for individuals to seek economic benefits by joining networks of influential politicians or groups close to the existing power system to see their interests accomplished; institutional deviation can also contribute to the existence of «corruption», which results, largely, from non-compliance with the formally constituted duty in exchange for economic, political, social advantages, etc.; another way of institutional deviation, hidden from the public, is «patronage». This results from exchanges of favours among politicians who are in the government. It is a type of deviation that, when done in secrecy, is rarely noticeable in the public.

The specification of public and private domains, in terms of economic interests, certainly requires complying with the principles that guide the values and obligations in human activities. It is on the basis of ethical precepts and judgements that one can guide and discipline the individuals' actions and behaviour expecting that, in the long term, harmony and excellence (individual and social) can be achieved. The concern with ethics is justified by the need to have “civilising processes and not the pretension of certain groups, classes or social segments whose interests and political and economic goals do not possess a universalising feature” (Salmon & Cattani, 2011:180). Although it is asserted that “liberal” thinking tends to predominate in Angola, when a dispute for economic goods is placed in a “save-who-can” approach, it is fundamental to observe ethics (civilising features) for the interests balance.

The capital accumulation policy had an impact on the Angolan society: it allowed the redirection of political and economic options with the predominance of private

²⁶ For further details, one can search for the results of the study entitled «Fraud in upper positions: the corrupt debt contract from Angola to Russia», conducted by Associação Mãos Livres & Corruption Watch UK, 2013. The evidences presented indicate that those involved in major scale of corruption act this way facilitated by their positions in the government. They are simultaneously public and private managers.

interests over the public ones based on the “fiction of Homo economicus” (Salmon & Cattani, 2011:180). An attempt was made to copy what in other contexts is understood as free market competition and self-regulated market.

Since the mechanisms used in the competition were favourable to a restricted number of citizens, the political measure adopted today allows us to understand the consequences of the economy that was established in the “particular conception of human action, hedonistic, self-sufficient and selfish, being nothing more than beliefs and speeches that reflect interests” (Salmon & Cattani, 2011:180); to realise that for a long time it was legitimised, not the reasons for a rule of law, but the reasons for economic power that denies the violence that results from its way of operating (as a productive and capital accumulative system); it is a policy of domination that hides the consequences of its action, that is, it covers up social inequalities and contradictions through the media propaganda that shows the success of a few as if it were all; finally, it allows us to comprehend that it is a regime that “continuously creates and recreates inequalities, penalising and marginalising the most vulnerable” (Salmon & Cattani, 2011:181) to the extent that the free competition principle is accentuated in the society.

The end of the war in Angola (2002) meant both the birth of new political and social operations and the consolidation of the ways power is exerted from where the new ruling class of the MPLA government would emerge later – an Angolan Style oligarchy²⁷. It is understandable why the change of personnel, under the regime, was more operated in inner circle rather than outside, and this cannot be confused with exceptional cases, in which certain individuals, from different social spheres, were integrated because they were identified as potential people to strengthen the regime as these are individuals at the service of the government and certainly not the regime (hard core).

The opening obeyed two distinct approaches: through family lineage and through “merit”, which in fact these translated more as adulation (defenders of the regime) rather than professional personal merit. Because the party bureaucracy constituted a major obstacle to rapid social ascension, the art of flattery²⁸ overcame the basic rules

²⁷ In an oligarchy, it is difficult for the competencies control to be in an individual's hands. Even if one has a titular figure of power, they always exercise it in the relationship with their group in order to establish a certain balance, reciprocal control of the ways of power and, therefore, creating barriers (self-protection of the group) to a possible tyranny.

²⁸ The problem with flattery lies in the fact that the most outstanding ones may not be those with the best conditions (knowledge, techniques and experience).

of the party militancy and became the main way of growing and maintaining a certain social status.

Since the late 2017, the regime has sought to implement a different strategy than usual. It seems to be more open in making people believe that the “chairs switching” is not based on heredity, as well as the access to positions of prominence does not happen through flattery. We seem to be facing new practices (sacrifices) that aim not only to end the possibilities of the regime to lock itself into caste, but also to adhere to political practices²⁹ favourable to economic progress and, thus, to regain the trust of the masses and the international community.

It is in this context of regaining the masses’ trust that the current policy of expanding private higher education (technical and polytechnic institutes) is inscribed as a key sector in the preparation of a workforce corresponding to the challenges of the labour market, while it consolidates the position of those who invest in this sector.

Education as a right in the Angolan context

In a formal approach, education as a right has been declared since the foundation of the Republic of Angola³⁰, alongside with the universal declaration of the human rights. Within the frameworks of this declaration, it should be ensured that children and young people’s benefits of the right to education process are safeguarded. It is recognisable that education is a right that enables people’s cognitive development, their integration as useful members of their communities, as well as the one that mediates the enjoyment of other rights and freedoms.

In its implementation challenges, the governments in the Republic of Angola sought to build an education system that should respect the principles of the right to education, namely, the access, availability, and the adaptability. As an underpinning question of this paper, we highlight the mandatory and free education issue, as well

²⁹ One of the criteria that can prevent hereditary consolidation in the State affairs is impartial selection, objectivity, professional qualification, and performance evaluation (results). Public job applications “become tough competition” (Zippelius, 1997:224). They are ways that can prevent the consolidation of elites by heredity, favouritism or political opportunism. However, it is known that the differentiated criteria can also be applied as a way of preserving certain positions in the government to avoid the regime collapsing itself.

³⁰ Between 1975 – 1991, Angola was governed by a one-party only system, with the MPLA being the ruling party during this period. After 1991 up to the present date, Angola has adopted a multi-party system, with the MPLA winning the elections and forming a government led by President José Eduardo dos Santos (1992, 2008, 2012) and by President João Lourenço (2017 and 2022).

as the guarantee of a “meaningful and lifelong” quality education (UNESCO). In the light of the current Angolan Education Act (Act n.º 32/20), specifically in the general principles of the education and teaching system, the obligation translates into the “duty of the State, society, families and the companies to ensure and promote the access and attendance to the education and teaching system for all school aged individuals, including Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, and Junior High Education.

The gratuity (Article 11) is understood in the principles of the system as the exemption from any payment for registration, class attendance, school supplies and social support for all children who attend Primary Education in public educational institutions. Regarding secondary education and higher education, the enrolment fees, class attendance, school supplies and other charges are of the responsibility of the parents, guardians, or the students themselves, when they are over age.

The issue related to non-extension of the gratuity principle into secondary and higher educations has always been approached cautiously due to social pressure and the social conditions of the different groups that attend the school. For years, despite not being stated in the Education Act, secondary education students were exempt from paying enrolment fees and other fees for the provided services, leaving them only with the burden of guaranteeing the school materials and other costs to support the students’ condition in these subsystems. In higher education, daytime students were exempt from paying tuition fees for attending classes. However, they assumed charges such as enrolment fees and other services provided by universities, including the guarantee of all material and other conditions for attending the college programmes. Night shift students, called post-labour, were charged a monthly fee for classes attendance, and payment for other services provided by the university, as well as a fee payment equivalent to one academic year to fund the process of capstone defence papers, after the effective conclusion of a bachelor’s programme. Graduate programmes are entirely funded by the students.

The rationality for these charging approaches, subtly called “co-payments” to oppose the law, at that time, which did not contemplate the payment of tuition fees, was due to the fact that these programmes were created to meet the demand for more vacancies in the public colleges, at a time of scarcity even of private higher education institutions. With the resources shortage from public funds to meet the running costs of these programmes, particularly with the demand from the lectures staff that demanded the overtime pay, the solution was to charge these contributions from the students to cover the operating costs of these programmes. Over time, these

contributions have become secondary sources of revenue for the higher education public institutions.

However, in 2020, overcoming the bureaucrats' free will on this issue, the Government of Angola approved the "Regulation on tuition fees and fees in the higher education public institutions". The rationality of this document by its principles (Article 5) is based on the following purposes:

1. The principle of the student's financial responsibility translates into the assumption, by the student, of the costs related to the higher education access and training, through fees payment.
2. The principle of the costs sharing of the public education service, understood as the participation of the students from higher education public institutions, in the costs related to their bachelor and graduate training, which must correspond to a percentage of their training costs, defined by the State.
3. The principle of the services quality, in the fees collection, is reflected in the students' involvement in the accountability by the higher education public institutions in the application of pecuniary charges raised from the access and attendance to a higher education institution training to observe the quality standards of the services it provides (Article 5).

Comforted by this legal paper, the constant reasoning of the principles, the fees were set at 1,900 KZs (3.7 USD³¹) for the regular daytime shift, and at 15,000 KZs (29.79 USD) for the night shift. In addition to these charges, there are others related to enrolment in entrance exams, annual and midterm enrolments, provided services, and papers issuance. We envision here the position that suits the on-going processes of higher education privatisation.

Aiming at dealing and mitigating the students' burden with the costs derived from classes attendance and other higher education related costs, the Angolan government has instituted a scholarship programme in its public policy measures.

³¹ These figures are, in their own, a matter of debate about their own contribution to the financial capacity of the IES. As they are established in KZ and without being updated due to currency devaluation and inflation, they become insignificant for the IES financing purposes.

National scholarship grantees

IES Nature	Gender		Total
	M	F	
Publics	11 366	6 498	17 864
Privates	3 998	4 989	8 987
Total	15 364	11 487	26 851

Source: Higher Education statistical yearbook 2019

These figures of students benefiting from the respective institutions are distributed among 31 public IES and 53 private ones. If we analyse these figures by the nature of the IES, we comprehend that the students in private IES that have a higher cost structure, starting with the tuition fee whose values range between 30 –140 thousand KZ, represent 2.9% of the beneficiaries. In the ideal of the scholarships as state programmes to safeguard the citizens' right to education, we believe that the numbers are still negligible.

Enrolled students by IES, Nature and Gender

IES Nature	Gender		Total	%
	M	F		
Publics	78 087	46 669	124 756	40
Privates	89 262	94 291	183 553	60
Total	167 349	140 960	308 309	100

Source: Higher Education statistical yearbook 2019

The free access to education issue, regardless of the levels of discussion, specifically of the Higher Education, is crucial in contexts such as Angola given its poverty indicators. According to the National Institute of Statistics (INE, acronym in Portuguese), the poverty incidence rate is estimated at 54.0%, which means that close to 5 out of 10 people in the country are multidimensionally poor, which correspond to 14 million people in the country, during 2015–2016 period if we consider the population projection for the year 2020 and assuming that the incidence rate would be the same, this would correspond to 16 million multidimensionally deprived people across the country.

Another piece of data provided by INE to consider is precisely the unemployment issue, given that it is through employment that people are able to deal with the burdens inherent in the education costs, when free education is denied. According to data from this institution, “from March 2018 to February 2019, the unemployed population aged 15 or over was estimated at 3,583,143, of which 1,557,394 were men and 2,005,749 were women. The country’s unemployment rate in the referred period was 28.8% (information for the Sustainable Development Goal, SDG, 8.5.2), being 26.6% for men and 30.9% for women. The unemployment rate in the urban area (36.5%) is 2.2 times higher than in the rural area with 16.2%” (INE, 2019).

We understand that in the Angolan context, the discussion about education as a right embodies two distinct realities, namely the formal one that strives to comply with the supranational norms that involve the States in the recognition of citizens’ rights and freedoms, and the development of internal control, particularly the legal ones, for the recognition of the latter. There is also the rights effectiveness issue of these normative documents. This effectiveness always makes the governments create conditions through public policies conducive to the enjoyment of these rights. Thus, in the Angolan reality, the right to education is conditioned by the poverty and unemployment dimensions if we consider the fact that the total population enrolled in higher education remained at 308 309 in private universities and only 40% of them in public ones.

The economic elite as interest groups

The greatest revenue of the Angolan economy derives from the oil sector and it is there where the dispute occurs among the “great-men”, holders of political and economic power in Angola. A possible bankruptcy of the Angolan oil company would be fatal for the dominant group, but also for the population that lives on the «crumbs» of that resource exploitation. The drop in oil prices on the international market was alarming (2014-2017), more for the masses than for the business politicians who saw the crisis as an opportunity to accumulate capital inside the country and abroad, as they had easy access to international currencies.

From the social point of view, while the United Nations estimates (2010) stated that, in Angola, more than 19 million citizens lived in conditions of poverty, from the economic point of view, the data of that year showed that the country obtained from oil a thousand million US dollars. The report of the United Nations Programme for Human Development (UNDP) also placed, in that year, Angola in the “146th position in the world (out of 169 countries), although the per capita income of the country

(purchasing power parity) was ranked 117th globally (out of 229 countries)” by the Central Intelligence Agency *World Factbook* (Global Witness; OSISA, 2011:18). Despite numerous data indicating a less dignified social situation, Angola has shown itself to be a country of opportunities for large oil and diamond companies and for service providers linked to those sectors.

Since the government is the main promoter and manager of the oil revenues and considering that the national business community is fundamentally constituted by politicians connected to the regime, the operation of the business sector is hostage to the party ideology, as it conditions the access to businesses in the national market. Such situation triggers influence peddling relationships in dealing with labour situations and business investment, generating, therefore, a favourable environment to corruption.

In mid-2009, the Angolan government informed, through the Ministry of Oils «Activities Report of the Oil Sector, 2009», that Angola was producing 1.8 million oil barrels per day, which allowed it to be in the second position of oil producer, after Nigeria, in Africa. Data from the Ministry of Finance also ranked the oil sector as the largest contributor to revenue and national GDP. Data from the Angolan Central Bank (BNA, 2013) «Angola: evolution of the main economic and financial indicators between 2008 and 2012 and future perspectives» showed that, in addition to the oil sector, the diamond extraction sector contributed considerably to the national economy besides other sectors.

The years 2008-2012 were of greater Angolan economic growth and capital concentration by the political elite of that country’s regime; in contrast to these data, there is the information from international organisations (IMF and WB) that placed Angola in a position of a country with severe corruption problems, lower human development index and high spending on the civil service.

In the similar period (2007-2012) BNA data indicated that Angola had considerable internal reserves for the national currency stability and for the economy, and moving at that pace, the country could have a positive evolution in its international reserves, and gain financial solidity. The positive evolution critical point of the economy presented by the BNA was the problem of corruption and the unleashing of individual interests which, through the group that controlled the regime, subjugated the interests of the State.

Any economic policy measure for Angola’s present and future will depend, firstly, on how the government will use the oil revenues. Angola has the reputation of being a country with a high rate of corruption and its political and economic elite results from

this practice that contributes to opaque management, without transparency. A way of management that makes it difficult for the citizens and analysts, inside the country and abroad, to perceive the activities conducted and the type of management applied.

In 2005, the IMF warned the Angolan government for the need to implement humanitarian development policies since the economic growth projections provided by the increase in oil exploration, placed Angola in the line of countries with favourable economic potential in the medium and long terms. However, this institution also recommended that the government should establish policies to reduce civil service expenditures, establish subsidy cuts and encourage the development of the private sector (IMF, 2005:42).

Twelve years later, other recommendations, which resulted from the consultation of the board of directors of the IMF in Angola (2017), were presented. The IMF once again reiterated the need for the Angolan government to make efforts to increase non-oil revenues, implement cost containment policies, “avoid the wage bill growth, improve the quality of public investment, continue to rationalise subsidies by expanding, simultaneously, well-targeted social assistance for the poor” (IMF, 2017:2). The press release highlights the need for the Angolan government to strictly preserve the efficient operation of the banking sector and supervise activities through external assessment and audits, conduct quality studies on the banking financial assets and recapitalise those that prove to be weaker. Measures should also be strengthened with anti-corruption and private sector³² investment measures.

The recommendations that derived from meetings and consultations with international organisations were not taken very seriously by the regime’s elite. The more they could serve to highlight that country’s interest in continuing to dialog with international institutions and, thus, guarantee the needed trust for foreign businessmen, with their interests, to invest in Angola. However, the regime’s political elite remained firm in its policy and understood that the formal rules were aimed more at foreign businessmen than, properly, at the core of the national business community that controlled the regime.

Until the year 2002, the looting methods in the State accounts were easily justified by the war condition. This can be comprehended, for example, by observing the two reports by Global Witness, dated of December 1999 and March 2002, when the ques-

³² The IMF’s concern also expresses the organisation desire to see secured the positions of the institutions that serve its interests. Therefore, more than a pure concern with the Angolan national development, the IMF seeks to ensure that its capital invested in Angola have a return with the desired profits.

tion was repeatedly raised that the Angolan elite was pillaging oil revenues under the civil war cover that was occurring in Angola. After the termination of the war, another report, dated of March 2004, by Global Witness stated that “it was impossible to count more than one billion dollars a year in oil revenues in Angola’s public accounts” (Global Witness; OSISA – Fundação Open Society-Angola, 2011:7).

The Open Society Foundation, which has been operating in Angola since 1998 in the education sector and in capacity building for the society aiming at promoting transparency in the public assets management, has conducted analyses of the general state budgets (OGE, acronym in Portuguese) and disseminated results of its studies as a way of contributing to a better comprehension of the public revenues utilisation. The great difficulty this organisation encounters is the shortage of accurate data that derive from the Angolan government. There have been disparities in the data released between Sonangol³³ and the Ministry of Finance. For example, in 2008, the «taxes on oil income» released by the Ministry of Finance were 976.247 billion kwanzas, whereas the Ministry of Oils announced a lower figure, 883.328 billion kwanzas (Global Witness; OSISA – Fundação Open Society-Angola, 2011:33). According to the Act n.º 13/04, on the «Oil sector taxation activities», Article 68, the tax data are confidential matters. In 2008, there were also differences in the «Oil transaction fees received by Angola», while the Ministry of Oils spoke about 247 billion kwanzas, the Ministry of Finance announced 211 billion kwanzas.

“The reason for these discrepancies is not obvious and it is unclear whether it could be explicated by the distinction between the expected amounts for the tax and those finalised by the end of the year. These differences need to be explained and exacerbate the need for much clearer statements on oil income tax revenues by the Angolan government agencies” (Global Witness & OSISA –Fundação Open Society-Angola, 2011:34).

Differences found in the tax revenue data³⁴ released by the Ministry of Finance and the Oils may be related to: a) the fact that the same accounts are not audited by ex-

³³ According to the Act n.º 10/004, Sonangol E.P. – is a national concessionaire responsible for the management and monitoring of the oil sector related contracts. It encompasses the management of data from Public Companies acquired in oil concessions owned by the Angolan State (cf. <http://webgis.sonangol.co.ao/landingpage/>).

³⁴ Based on the Article 18 of the Act n.º 13/04, on Oil Activities Taxation, and on the data from the Ministry of Finance, 2008, it is understood that the labour income tax (IRT, acronym in Portuguese) is charged according to the companies’ income, in the oil related activities. It includes exploitation, production, storage, transport and export. It is the main revenue source after the concessionaire’s revenues (Global Witness; OSISA– Fundação Open Society-Angola, 2011:32).

ternal entities and evaluated transparently; b) the fact that this practice contributes to the misappropriation of the State public revenues. The report by Global Witness and OSISA – Fundação Open Society-Angola (2011) explains that it is difficult to verify whether the disclosed tax revenue amounts actually correspond to the amounts that should be paid since the data management policy applied lacks transparency. There is a lack of concrete data on the fiscal reference prices used in the oil taxation. If “the revenue data can be published, but the data on the factors that determine the scale of the oil revenues are confidential” (Global Witness e OSISA – Fundação Open Society-Angola, 2011:33), it is difficult to know the revenue accurate amount that should be presented by the Angolan State. Overall, the conclusions of the Global Witness and OSISA report of February 2011 highlight the following:

- ❑ Unlike Sonangol, the data presented by the Angolan government Agencies are not verified and audited by international institutions and there is difficulty in verifying the real oil production figures in detail. The data are still problematic because by not detailing the produce figures such as the condensed and natural gas, which can worth million dollars, it becomes difficult to understand the data presented by the ministries directly connected to the oil sector;
- ❑ The disclosed export figures present discrepancies between the two ministries (finance and oil) which reduces the credibility of the reports;
- ❑ Because the Ministry of Finance and the Oils are the main sources of the revenue for the Angolan State, it is worrying when the data presented in the reports of these institutions are contradictory –between the nominal value and the sales volume.

One of the examples referring to these contradictions can be found in the data related to the bonuses and dividends payment:

According to media reports, oil companies pledged signature bonus of over US\$ 3 billion in 2006, but a government revenue register through the finance the Ministry of Finance stated only US\$ 998 million in «oil bonuses and rewards. Sonangol asserts it paid US\$436 million in dividends to the state in 2007/8, but neither the Ministry of Oils nor the Ministry of Finance report dividend income on anything of that amount” (Global Witness e OSISA – Fundação Open Society-Angola, 2011:42)

The question to be posed is what was the destination of the mentioned amounts, if they were actually paid by the oil exploitation companies. Various documents

published by Global Witness³⁵ (1998, 2001 e 2002) show that the development and consolidation of data concealment systems relies on the collaboration of a plethora of institutions, which, in its turn, consolidates corrupt practices as they expand bribery and glove methods as a penetration and maintenance strategy in the domains of economic and political prominence, supported by parallel budgets of private business.

The serenity through which certain Western countries observe the situation, to safeguard their interests, leads to treating Angola, according to a comment in «*Le Monde*» (2000)³⁶, as a judicial no man's land that, on mutual political interests behalf, should continue to eternity as a land of unpunished crimes" while the "presidents' men have been cleaning their pockets in Angola – a third of the state budget for 2001 seems to have disappeared, and can perhaps be found in offshore laundries" (Global Witness, 2002:59). Among the oil companies operating in Angola, only BP adopted a transparent position, while the others, namely Shell, Norsk Hydro and Statoil simply demonstrated willingness and disposition but without actually acting, whereas Chevron-Texaco, TotalFinaElf and ExxonMobil deny providing data (Global Witness, 2002:59).

Any company operating in Angola can collaborate in the looting when it refuses to divulge its operation results, creating favourable conditions for the concealment of non-transparent practices while the population remains ignorant of the real data on the revenues collected by the Angolan government. However, it is also understood that any position taken by the companies (public and private, national or foreign) depends on the economic policy and management that the Angolan State implements and every State management policy is related to the game of interests. Therefore, the Angolan State is what it is because of what its public managers make of it.

What room for Education in the political-economic disputes scenario?

The scenario of higher education in Angola is close to the one described by Geiger (1987) regarding to mass private sector encouraged by the rapid expansion of social demand for higher education. In Angola, these social demands follow the increase of post-secondary graduates, but mainly the local labour laws, particularly those

³⁵ "A brutal Business – the role of companies and Governments in the Angolan Conflict" (1998), "Does control work? A review of the diamond control system" (2001), "The presidents' men – the devastating history of the oil and banking industries in Angola's privatized war" (2002).

³⁶ Commented by the editorial in *Le Monde*, on December 22nd, 2000 – quoted by Reuters, on December 23rd, 2000.

addressed to career mobility and the privileges pertaining to it. The “Licenciatura” (Bachelor) degree was the key to the top of the career as well as other sort of promotions a professional could fight for within the public administration, which is the larger employer and offers better career stability.

Due to this demand, the reality uncovers public institution unable to cover this demand; therefore, it has been permitted to overflow into private institutions. The following table shows the growth of students both in public and private institutions.

Students: public and private institutions

Year	Public Institutions	Private Institutions
1999	8 536	349
2000	8 499	521
2001	12 000	1 296
2002	16 000	2 917
2003	26 660	5 082
2004	34 520	9 692
2005	56 595	14 544
2006	58 132	17 397
2007	60 127	20 941
2008	70 759	35 331
2009	36 886	42 245
2010	31 173	146 368
2012	32 893	160 340

Source: Adelina de Kandingi, 2016

The idea revealed here is the growth of the number of students in private institutions as the move away from the centralized economy logic. Throughout the years, the increase of the investors in private sector of education, mainly by the building of new infrastructure, results in the increase of the number of students in this sector, overcoming the public institutions offer. After 2005, there is a growth within the public sector itself which is due to the establishment of new public institutions as a government programme to increase the offer of higher education. One can understand this increase of numbers sustained by the following factor: the emergence of new public

institutions, the legal scenario favourable to the private investment, and the entry of the business elite backed by current or former state officials into the business of higher education.

As per the development of the sector, we do still bring Geiger (1987) to add that, like the described realities, Angola has also witnessed the following pattern in the development of the mass private sector:

Rapid growth of number of secondary school graduates

The rapid growth of graduate and the labour laws are the key triggering factors behind the rapid growth of mass demand for higher education, considering also the younger age of these graduated. The past experience showed a considerable amount of adult workers graduating from secondary schools without enormous ambitions to pursue university degree for market reasons.

Applicant students to Higher Education

IES Nature	Registered Applicants		Total
	Admitted	Non-Admitted	
Publics	20 512	135 189	155 701
Privates	86 237	12 816	99 053
Total	106 749	148 005	254 754

Source: Higher Education statistical yearbook 2019

The above table shows the relationship between the secondary graduate seeking for enrolment at public and private higher education institutions and the offers available at them. One can understand the public institutions, due less in numbers than the private, receives more applicants due to its lower costs, the academic tradition and believed guarantee of quality education. From the total 155 701 applicants in public institutions, after the entrance exam, only 13% of them are admitted. The remaining population, have two ways, either they join the number of the applicants in private institutions, or they wait for the next year. As the difference in the number of non-admitted at public and the applicants to the private universities shows, it can be inferred that a considerable number of them do not enter university in a specific year. It is expected in a reality in which most families cannot afford the costs demanded at

the private institutions, and due to the scarce percentage of the subsidies through the scholarships from the government which are the unique formal students aid program available in the market. However, some of them, as soon as they get a source of income, decide to enter private universities whenever they fail the opportunity at public ones.

The freedom to offer higher education

In the case of Angola, as we mentioned in a previous paper (Scaff et al, 2018), the enthusiasm for privatization had its inception in the late 1980s when the country adhered to democratisation movements, overcoming the monopoly state and planned economy. Remembering that in this scenario, by law, education was determined as an exclusive reserve and monopoly of the State. Specific laws were then passed to meet this purpose, as well as the creation of conditions for the privatisation of a set of companies pertaining to the State, and at least formally, the elimination of barriers to access to the various sectors of the economy. Privatisation was presented as “the sale of industries and state assets and the encouragement of individual responsibility and private initiative (Duczmal, 2006).

It is in the 1990s that the licensing of private operators in education occurs, whose institutions were (and still are) financed with the resources from the provided services, that is, the sense of private in this inception stage of the private sector massification in education is summarised by the creation of Higher Education Institutions entirely supported by the students’ contributions. It is in this scenario that privatisation incept and creates conditions for its expansion, combined with factors already described with the demand and the inability of public IES to respond to it. This Angolan-style mass privatisation entails from the outset “the distinctive feature of mass private sectors that is the accommodation of a large portion of students in low-cost, low-selective, and usually low-quality institutions” (Duczmal, 2006, p.37).

Conclusions

The private higher education expansion in Angola expresses the will of an elite excited to delimit the domains and fields to explore as a consequence of the gaps the State itself presents – education policy fragility, strategic plans paucity for the integral development of the sector aggravated by the situation that the private actors are simultaneously public managers. Therefore, the commercialisation agents’ agenda,

far from designing education as a fundamental task of the State, as expressed in the «constitution» and the theoretical ideals of education, will be an agenda that meets the professional training market.

In this context, we can conclude that the Angolan State, as such, is complex, requiring analysis from multiple dimensions (power, economy, politics, etc.) so that its nature and specificity can be understood, since it goes beyond the established nomenclature of the political systems. The Angolan political regime has tendencies that are different from the simple comprehension of democracy or socialism. Merely stating that in Angola there is a transition from war to peace, from centralised socialist economy to a “liberal” market economy, and from a Marxist State, of the Leninist type, to a multi-party system, would leave aside what is the Angolan political regime that uses traditional nomenclatures to relate to its peers in the international arena.

The transition process has been managed to ensure the maintenance of the regime in power (political and economic) in the new context of “democracy”. As it is understood that the victory of the war pertains exclusively to the regime and, therefore, to the military, the satisfaction of the interests of the political-military elite involves the benefit and access to greater economic and political possibilities, the “appropriation of public assets, exploration licenses of diamond zones, maintenance of political positions in the party-state-governmental structure” (Andrade, 2009:44) while alluding to its right to impunity for its actions. Thus, the political action strategy translates into a mechanism for maintaining the spaces and positions that the elite and its collaborators, connected to the regime, occupy in the new context of “democracy” and the market economy, perhaps being unable to leave the commanding power positions.

The current State is the consequence of great political manoeuvres that generated social inequalities, permitted the existence of an extremely wealthy minority and a tremendously deprived majority, a regime that fed itself for many years on “harsh schemes, camouflaged and disguised, of repression and of dis-respect for human rights” (Andrade, 2009:44). Specifically, we have in Angola an elite and a regime that managed to move to a new context that is called democratic and free competition without internalising the need for change. Due to pressure, more external than internal, of the current global political and economic situation, we moved overnight from one political regime to another with the same political culture and actors, “who fell asleep as Marxists one day and woke up as Democrats next day, leading and controlling the entire transition process, its rhythm and contours for their own benefit in order to maintain their privileges” (Andrade, 2009:45). From this idea,

it can be concluded that corruption and influence peddling were strategies used by the regime to: maintain and conserve the political and economic power of the elite; nullify or reduce the power of its opponents through direct or indirect co-optation; combat social demonstrations that are unfavourable to the regime – Civil Society Organisations (OSC, acronym in Portuguese) «unfriendly to the government» (Macedo, 2009:66); promote individuals and OSC pertaining to the regime and convey the idea that there is no alternative for social and economic success or a career outside the regime.

Legitimacy is constantly sought in clientelism to the detriment of democracy in a deliberate and planned way. In February 2018, «Novo Jornal» published an article in which referred to «The Economist» magazine survey in which Angola appears with an average of 3.62 when in 2016 it appeared with 3.40 in a classification from 0 to 10. In the ranking «Index of Democracy 2017», which involves 167 countries, Angola is in the 125th position. Despite holding elections and talking about democracy, the study asserts that the authoritarian regime predominates in Angola.

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