Waves rolled toward a wide beach where a group of fishermen hauled in a net, keeping pace with the crash and flow of the foam-white surf. Their calloused hands clutched at the worn rope, steadied against the ocean’s tugging withdrawal. And then, poised for its return, the fishermen turned their backs to the sea, dug their toes into the sinking sand and heaved forward. Once they had dragged the net onto the beach, the men appraised its meager contents, negotiating with a fish trader. She rinsed handfuls of the silvery, long-whiskered fish in seawater and dropped them in her blue plastic tub. The water receded and advanced again, swirling around and between the wide, steady feet of the youngest fisherman of the group. “There are no longer fish here,” he declared.

These waves washed ashore in Fútila, a community neighboring the Chevron oil base in Cabinda. Although the territory is considered part of Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo’s run to the sea separates Cabinda from the mainland. Chevron operates two oil concessions offshore of Cabinda, pumping out one-third of Angola’s production of nearly 2 million barrels of crude oil per day.

Stained swathes of sand hint at the way oil has destroyed lives and livelihoods in Fútila; however, oil’s distorting and degrading effects spread far beyond the extractive zones of northwestern Angola. Rather than contribute to peace and development, Angola’s oil wealth has fueled petro-violence—conflicts bankrolled by oil revenues and struggles waged for control of oil reserves. A brutal war wracked the country from 1975 to 2002. Political deception and economic exclusion reinforced a movement for Cabindan independence from Angola. The government responded with militant repression. As oil spills degraded the marine environment, oil revenues corrupted the political environment. Officials used corporate compensation and patron-
age schemes to hush protests. Petro-capitalism—the paradoxical coupling of vast resource wealth and desperate poverty in countries dependent on oil revenues—deepened the conflicts as Angola’s elevated military and security budgets eclipsed social spending.

This book examines how petro-capitalism and petro-violence shape the lives of people in Angola’s northwestern extractive zones. Communities overlapping or adjacent to oil concessions bear the unequal burden of pollution and violence associated with extractive activities but receive little of the wealth generated. Dissident voices are silenced through threats or acts of violence, patronage networks, and corporate compensation. Moreover, the Angolan government and transnational oil corporations perpetuate the inequitable distribution of oil wealth through complementary, and sometimes collaborative, strategies to gain and maintain access to oil.3 Their resource control strategies include concession contracts, terrorizing military campaigns, corporate compensation, and oil-backed development schemes. Each of these strategies emerged from particular convergences of violence, exclusion, and degradation. Together they provide the repressive means to preserve Angola’s exclusionary system of governance.

Angola is the second-largest oil producer in Sub-Saharan Africa and ranks 17th in crude oil production globally (EIA 2008). Angola’s oil-fueled violence and capitalist dynamics received scant attention until Human Rights Watch and Global Witness began investigating the diversion of oil revenues for arms and personal enrichment in the mid-1990s.4 Influential works by Tony Hodges showed how the country’s leaders used resource revenues to bolster their power, undermine their enemies, and disempower the masses.5 A Catholic Relief Services report authored by Ian Gary and Terry Karl entitled Bottom of the Barrel: Africa’s Oil Boom and the Poor clearly outlined the destructive implications of Angola’s oil production on the poor. In his own subsequent work, a contributing writer to the CRS report, Ricardo Soares de Oliveira (2007), presented powerful critiques of the national oil company, Sonangol, and the manner in which its competence enabled Angola’s survival as a “successful failed state.” James Ferguson (2006) distinguished the ordered oil sector from the dysfunctional remainder of the Angolan economy and theorized the “Angolan model” of detached sectoral self-sufficiency facilitating extraction in the midst of disorder and violence.

These works present powerful accounts of petro-capitalism and petro-violence at Angola’s highest levels, yet community-level studies of the destructive dynamics associated with oil extraction in the country are virtually non-existent. Some scholars downplay the significance of localized
struggles around oil in the extractive zones of northern Angola. Hodges dismisses the “risk of disputes” between oil corporations and communities living near sites of extraction in Cabinda and Zaire provinces due to their small populations and the largely offshore location of extractive activities (2003:151). He also distrusts the motives of Cabindans seeking independence from Angola, arguing that the prospect of undivided oil wealth spurs their protests more than any common ethnic identity or sense of economic injustice (159). Rather than reject the claims expressed by inhabitants of Angola’s extractive zones on the basis of their perceived motivations or structural improbabilities, this book seeks to present the lived reality of extraction through their narratives and experiences.

**KEY THEMES**

Oil production is a capital-intensive, location-specific activity capable of generating exorbitant profits. Angola’s oil sector is often referred to as an “enclave,” denoting the lack of linkages to the rest of the economy. Noting this model of production, Ferguson (2006) cites Angola as a model in the globalized economy in which capital, rather than flowing evenly across terrain, “hops” to “usable” spaces secured by private security contractors. He contends that geographic and economic enclaves of extraction have helped Angola’s oil sector withstand decades of violence. His model aptly portrays the spatial mechanisms that facilitate the exclusion of the populace from sharing the resource wealth. Nonetheless, barbed-wire fences and offshore buffer zones around extractive sites have not diminished disputes over the costs and benefits of extraction. Whereas Ferguson’s model emphasizes how extractive enclaves function in spite of surrounding chaos, I stress the role of the enclave at the center of disputes, inextricably bound up in local conflicts. Extractive enclaves are the loci of conflicts about exclusion (e.g., resentment over mismanagement of oil monies) and degradation (e.g., oil spills or gas leaks). Moreover, revenues generated within the enclave finance the tools of violence and repression.

The concept of the enclave also extends to the political and economic particularities of oil-dependent states. The relationship between the Angolan government and transnational oil corporations forms the basis of the enclave economy and the distorted patterns of governance associated with petro-capitalism. In contrast with ordinary capitalist systems, petro-capitalism is founded on the premise of “wealth without work” (Collier and Hoefffler 2002). The enclave sector allows a select few government officials to collect resource rents by virtue of their position rather than their labor.
Accordingly, petro-capitalism involves a circular logic whereby government officials distribute oil revenues to a select, powerful few through patronage systems to maintain their access to those same revenues. The strength of a patronage network is not only measured by who it includes but also how many it excludes: the more revenues government leaders pump into patronage, the fewer funds remain to invest in the wider populace. The diversion of oil revenues from social services and other regular state functions to patronage systems undermines state capacity and legitimacy, but the enclave sector facilitates the government’s hold on power despite state collapse (Soares de Oliveira 2008).

Internal contests and external interventions do arise to challenge the government’s absolute stake in the oil sector. These disputes, as well as the government’s repressive reaction to them, are forms of petro-violence, a term that encompasses all violent struggles over access and control of oil revenues. As Ferguson rightly notes, the enclaved nature of the oil sector enables both the government and transnational oil corporations to withstand petro-violence. Oil bases, defended by armed guards and razor-wire fences, are the physical enclaves constructed to protect corporations operating in volatile environments. Likewise, a centralized government backed by military force represents an institutional enclave designed to insulate rulers from overthrow. So long as they maintain nominal control over the institutional remains of the collapsed state, Angola’s leaders retain access to oil revenues.

This book argues that the enclave does not simply endure petro-capitalism and petro-violence; it contributes to these distorting dynamics. While oil appears to generate wealth out of thin air for rulers in the capital city of Luanda, inhabitants of Angola’s extractive zones live amid poverty and pollution. The erosion of state functions associated with petro-capitalism undermines the government’s regulatory capacity and its will to check the externalities of oil extraction. “As the ‘natural’ relation between wealth and hard work became more obscure, the pollution of the land and waterways became more apparent” (Apter 2005:153).

To limit protest, Angola’s ruling party uses oil revenues to co-opt or violently subdue adversaries. Transnational oil corporations collaborate with the government to implement carrot-and-stick governance strategies, especially in the zones of extraction where communities struggle to cope with the externalities of the oil industry. These strategies respond to local discontent with a variety of complementary tactics including corporate compensation, oil-backed development, and violent repression.
Petro-capitalism and petro-violence link the detached enclave to the lived experience of extraction in Angola’s oil-rich northwest. This book investigates petro-capitalism and petro-violence in the Angolan context and explores the role of the enclave economy in perpetuating them as twin forces. This relationship might best be described with the metaphor of a cyclone. The enclave harboring the joint interests of the Angolan state and transnational oil corporations rests safely in the eye of the storm while the whirling forces of petro-capitalism and petro-violence wreak havoc on their surroundings. The intensity of these forces is measured in terms of the gradient between the conditions in the eye and the eyewall. In meteorological terms, the eyewall marks the interface between the eye and the surrounding storms; it is the most dangerous and destructive location in a cyclone. In metaphorical terms, the eyewall represents Angola’s extractive zones, where artisanal fishing and subsistence farming communities struggle to maintain their livelihoods in direct geographic proximity to oil extraction. Much as a cyclone generates powerful winds and waves across vast distances, the enclave economy unleashes waves of violence, exclusion, and degradation that ravage communities in the extractive zones and produce a harmful ripple effect in the rest of the country.

Violence, exclusion, and degradation are the three fluid themes that flow through this book and characterize resource struggles in Angola. Although these themes and their associated arguments are presented here as separate entities for heuristic purposes, they are not discrete. They appear in associated or related ways, surfacing like the wave action on Fútila’s shores. What washes ashore in one wave is a configuration of nearly the same elements that swept in with the last wave, albeit in a slightly altered arrangement. As one wave recedes, tugging back and churning up old sediments, another builds anew from the same constitutive forces and spills back on the sand. With each ebb and flow, narratives of exclusion and violence merge, muddle, and melt, emerging again in union with evidence of degradation, before dissolving, only to reemerge fused in a renewed tale of exclusion to disperse once more. The process is not linear but cyclical, wherein elements conjoin not in jagged angles but in smooth, seamless flows.

Waves of exclusion, degradation, and violence wash over Angola’s extractive zones. Some waves slip ashore, others crash with ferocity. Shifting tides govern the influence of the waters; the difference between high tide and low changes entire horizons. With each wave, the ocean steals away with part of the native shore and brings in foreign objects from its far-reaching currents. The inhabitants of the extractive zones wrestle with these waves,
like the fishermen of Fútila in their tug-of-war with the ocean. They make claims for greater resource control with each heave of their net against the powerful swell of corporate and government forces.

Exclusion

Corruption is rampant in Angola. A significant portion of the fantastic rents, signing bonuses, and royalties from Angola’s offshore oil flow are diverted into offshore bank accounts; over four billion dollars in oil revenues bypassed state coffers between 1998 and 2002 (Pearce 2002b; HRW 2004c). Without dismissing the problem of corruption, this book employs the term exclusion to emphasize the other side of the coin: the benefits of oil lost (e.g., social services) with the diversion of public funds into private accounts. Roughly 70 percent of Angola’s estimated population of 16 million lives in poverty (CIA 2007). All subterranean mineral wealth belongs to the state rather than the landholders, making oil a national resource. Citizens expect to be included in the distribution of oil’s benefits, but the exclusionary force of petro-capitalism keeps them on the periphery.

Sustained by opaque accounting practices and corrupt networks, Angolan petro-capitalism has entrenched and enriched an elite circle, with President José Eduardo dos Santos at its center. The exclusionary distributive patterns of Angola’s oil wealth follow a divisive model wherein “the elites are showered with every economic, social and political benefit, while others are abandoned and deprived of sustenance to survive” (Ong 1999:65). Nowhere is this more blatant than in the extractive zones, where those excluded from the benefits of local oil extraction also suffer the costs. The chasm between the oil-rich and the dirt-poor is more pronounced due to the close proximity of communities to extractive operations and the relative disparity in wealth. Even the high walls surrounding oil compounds cannot hide the electric glow of streetlamps from poor neighbors navigating the dark of night with lanterns.

Degradation

Concession boundaries and fences encircling oil bases may restrict entrance or the practice of certain activities within their limits, but they cannot stop environmental externalities from bleeding beyond the confines of their compounds. Extraction-related pollution has contributed to the degradation of local ecosystems. Degradation, according to Blaikie and Brookfield, is a “perceptual term” which implies a degree of deterioration from an original condition or use criteria, taking into consideration the sensitivity or resilience of the environment in question (1987:4). This book employs
the term degradation to describe the deterioration of lands and waters near the site of extraction, recognizing local claims that oil spills and gas flares respectively diminished plankton abundance offshore and decreased soil fertility onshore.

Ecological resilience varies within the extractive zone. Although the sandy soils in farm plots along the coastline are not very resilient, the Congo River’s flush of nutrients and the thick mangrove stands along its wandering banks render fishing grounds near the river mouth a bit more resilient than Cabinda’s offshore areas. Since Angola’s artisanal fisheries are largely an open resource for citizens and authorized parties with no catch limits, degradation begets further degradation in less resilient areas. As the pollution associated with oil extraction undermines their production, fishermen become more desperate and may actually deepen the crisis by selling whatever they can catch—including juvenile fish—on the informal market. The degradation of socioeconomic and cultural systems tied to the traditional fishing economy accompanies environmental degradation. Oil spills threaten not only fishers’ sustenance and economic livelihoods but also their long-standing traditions and way of life. Ultimately, pollution undermines the very dignity and empowerment of local communities (Wiwa 2005).

Violence

Violent struggles over oil-rich territory and resource revenues began once transnational corporations began extracting Angola’s crude. Scholars anticipate violence as an outcome of oil dependency (Collier and Hoeffler 1998, 2004). Distinctions must be drawn among the various forms of violence associated with extraction and each analyzed in its sociohistorical context. Repression, internationalized civil war, and secession are all common to Angola, but violence is not merely a function of oil’s presence. Rather, violence represents a method for maintaining the existing social relations of access—or a means to dispute the unequal distribution of oil extraction’s costs and benefits.

Violence can take both pre-emptive and enduring forms. In Cabinda, government troops terrorize the populace and hunt down dissidents in pre-emptive attempts to eliminate threats to resource access while securing control of onshore oilfields for future extraction. South of the Congo River, residents of the oil-producing municipality of Soyo endure painful memories of wartime occupation and continuing repression. Unwilling to support the political party that once brutalized them and acutely aware of the government’s capacity for violence, inhabitants of Soyo begrudging-
ingly acquiesce. The climate of fear and resignation impedes their ability to claim a larger share of Angola’s resource wealth. Ultimately, Cabindans may confront a similar future if they succumb to the government’s violent agenda to extinguish their desire for independence.

METHODS

This book marks an attempt to understand how oil shapes people’s lives in Angola’s oil-producing zones. Their experiences demonstrate how extraction compromises livelihoods in fishing and farming communities, the government fails to invest oil revenues in health and education, territorial struggles over oil-rich regions expose citizens to violence, and repressive policing mutes voices of protest. Given the objective of producing a community-level study, this book highlights the perspective of Angolans most vulnerable to the ills of petro-capitalism and petro-violence—specifically subsistence farmers, artisanal fishers, and fish traders. These persons may be collectively referred to as resource-dependent people, in recognition of their reliance on local ecosystems for subsistence needs and livelihoods. They are the most likely to suffer displacement or contamination when transnational oil corporations exploit oilfields in or near traditional lands and fishing grounds.

Case Study Context

To document the lived experiences of oil extraction, this book examines cases from two sites in northwest Angola. The first is the municipality of Soyo in Zaire province—the setting for a case depicting the legacy of petro-violence and the compound effects of onshore and offshore extraction. Cabinda provides the geographical backdrop for three further case studies on environmental degradation, state-sponsored violence and local resistance, and corporate territorialization through oil-backed development projects. The cases feature narratives on local resource access and control to provide insight into the lived reality of extraction. Each case confronts seemingly contradictory issues, such as petro-violence far from the site of extraction, or community health posts sponsored by the same corporations releasing toxic wastes into the local environment.

The majority of Angola’s oil is produced offshore, and so the initial case studies center on the experience of fishing communities in the northwestern provinces of Cabinda and Zaire. Angola’s coastline runs 1,650 kilometers along the Atlantic Ocean. The marine environment is characterized by the intersection of two powerful currents: the cold Benguela current...
running northward and the tropical Angola current pushing southward. The junction of these two currents, known as the Angola-Benguela front, shifts seasonally between 15 and 19 degrees latitude and influences the local distribution of fish (Sardinha 2000). Offshore of Cabinda and Zaire provinces, where the Angola current predominates, the Congo River marks the greatest influence on the marine environment. The great river releases nearly 50 million metric tons of sediment annually, creating a submarine
fan stretching over 300,000 square kilometers in a watery world characterized by landslides and shifting currents (Morash 2003). This underwater realm has yielded not only discoveries of gigantic oil fields but also troves of previously unknown organisms. A survey conducted in Angola’s offshore as part of the ongoing Census of Marine Life revealed that “eighty percent of the species sampled were new to science” (Randerson 2003).

Angolan fisheries are divided into two categories: industrial and artisanal. During Angola’s long war, violence and starvation drove many impoverished Angolans to the sea, where they sought sustenance and peace (FAO 2004). Artisanal fishers mainly target bottom-dwelling demersal species such as grouper, croaker, snapper, sea bream, shark, catfish, and spiny lobster for sale in local markets, while industrial operators—with boats capable of sailing in high seas and sophisticated capturing devices—pursue pelagic species from the open ocean like horse mackerel, sardines, and tuna as well as shrimp and deep sea red crab for international seafood markets. Industrial fishing activities are centered in the southern provinces of Benguela and Namibe, whereas most of Angola’s 102 artisanal fishing communities are in the northern region, often overlapping with offshore oil production (Agostinho et al. 2005).

Three classes of artisanal fishermen ply the waters offshore of Cabinda and Soyo: armadores, pescadores de profissão, and simple pescadores. Armadores are the owners of the fishing nets and boats. They contract pescadores de profissão—salaried professionals with experience and competence in repairing nets—and ordinary pescadores who earn wages proportional with the daily or weekly catch. Many of the latter, especially those with pirogas or other nonmotorized boats, work independently of armadores and fish mainly for subsistence but market a portion of their catch to earn income. Only 20 percent of the boats employed in Angola’s artisanal fishing sector are motorized and fishers usually venture no farther than three nautical miles (roughly 5.5 kilometers) from shore (FAO 2004). Artisanal fishing outfits in northern Angola range from sleek fiberglass crafts to rough-hewn dugout canoes and vary in production levels from small-market sales to simple subsistence. Fishermen use gillnets and seine nets in deeper water, but in the littoral zone they sometimes employ a fishing technique called banda banda in which fine-mesh beach seine nets are launched from canoes in shallow water and pulled into shore.12

Nearly 35,000 artisanal fishers rely on the bounty of Angolan waters and another 50,000 people participate in the artisanal fisheries sector, from fish traders to net menders (FAO 2004). Within the artisanal sector, the division of labor is split along gender lines; fishermen typically sell their
catch to female fish traders who process and resell the fish on the beach, at local markets, or by walking through the streets. Fish traders, locally referred to as peixeiras, are usually marginalized women of lower economic or social status. Locally caught fish makes up 10 percent of total protein supply in Angola, and coastal communities especially rely on fish for their protein (WRI 2003). Fish traders in northwest Angola sell the catch fresh, dried, or smoked. Local men praise the power of caldo de peixe, a fish broth, to cure a hangover. Women use dried or fresh fish to prepare sacafolha and calulu, regional specialties in Soyo and Cabinda, respectively featuring manioc leaves and a rich palm oil sauce.

In both Soyo and Cabinda, degradation on land and at sea exacerbates pressure on already-stressed communities where women work up to fifteen hours each day, taking care of domestic duties like cooking meals, finding firewood, and drawing water for daily use, as well as cultivating, harvesting, and marketing food crops (IFAD 2002a). Local men spend more time searching for fish in the polluted seas. Women unable to coax crops out of degraded coastal soils walk several kilometers to farm plots farther from the extractive zones. The people of Soyo and Cabinda both relate the same characteristics of pollution associated with oil extraction in their narratives about environmental degradation.

Despite the similar way in which the inhabitants of Cabinda and Soyo mobilize spatialized identities, their narratives are founded on radically different worldviews. The people of Soyo consider themselves Angolans, requesting a fraction of the revenues extracted locally; whereas most inhabitants of Cabinda regard themselves as not Angolans but Cabindans, demand their independence from Angola, and seek full control over local oil extraction as well as the associated resource rents.

**Ethnographic Perspective**

As James Scott has shown (1985), even the weak and oppressed possess weapons of protest, including the use of narratives. In repressive environments, narratives are powerful tools for coping with violence and empowering subjects to articulate and come to terms with painful experiences (Jackson 2002). When embraced collectively, narratives present a powerful force for social change (Polletta 2006). Often revealing profound ethnographic insight, a narrative “achieves an amplitude that information lacks” when it is “passed on from mouth to mouth” (Benjamin 1968). Ethnographers commonly use narrative analysis to interpret metaphors, incorporate perceptions, or examine the role of memory and emotion in articulated experiences (Labov 1997). Additionally, an ethnographer must heed the context of narrative expres-
sion. The reason a story is told, the form of expression, and the setting in which it is relayed all contribute to its meaning (Polletta 2006).

An ethnographer must also position herself in the context of the research. This book focuses on interpreting the perceptions of my research subjects, but recognizing my own role as an ethnographer was not easy. In fact, it took a power outage. In a small village on the periphery of Cabinda, bats circled in the darkness of the living room beyond the faint spherical glow of a kerosene lamp. My interviewee took on a spectral tone in the pulsating lamplight. I alternated glances between him and my notebook, jotting down sentence fragments. Occasionally, I caught a glimpse of a wing in the darkened abyss or felt a slight rush of air from overhead. Mostly I could sense the bats but not make them out. An apt metaphor for fieldwork—while I collected material from the area illuminated before me, I felt as if I could not clearly discern what lay in the surrounding darkness. There were always limits to what I could perceive, experience, and understand. Gratefully, I have relied on the support of friends and colleagues to shed light on the cases discussed in this book, but I recognize my limited perspective and take full responsibility for the claims and conclusions herein.

The research presented in this book was drawn from three research trips. The first, a preliminary study, was from May to July 2003. The second was from May to August 2004, and the third from October 2004 to March 2005. With the exception of a weeklong visit to Gabela during November 2004 and a week’s vacation in São Tomé over the holidays, I split my time between Luanda and Angola’s two largest oil-producing areas—Soyo and Cabinda. While in Luanda, I interviewed officials at the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment, and the Ministry of Petroleum, as well as representatives of Total, Chevron, and other oil corporations operating in the country. Some corporate and government officials greeted me with suspicion, a few with openness, and many refused to grant me interviews. Some officials even seemed to be avoiding me. For instance, Total’s representative for Corporate Social Responsibility was “away on duty” all six times I stopped by to make an appointment.

Most similar troubles led to insights. For example, the Ministry of Petroleum refused to share information on environmental standards with the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment, so I tried working with officials in the latter ministry’s National Department of Environmental Quality to create a bilingual request for information on corporate environmental practices in Angola. After submitting the request to BPAmoco, Chevron,
Total, and ExxonMobil, the department received only a partial data set from ExxonMobil. The other corporations refused the appeal, citing policies of collaborating solely with the Ministry of Petroleum. The whole process took several months. Nevertheless, it revealed the highly centralized nature of the oil sector and the powerlessness of the Ministry of Urbanism and Environment.

Nor was the Ministry of Petroleum the only one to refuse my requests. The Ministry of Fisheries and the Ministry of Transport accepted my pleas for information with assurances that they would furnish data, kindly telling me to return week after week until I understood that the delays simply amounted to a refusal. Eventually a uniquely forthright government official told me that all statistics are considered politically charged. He divulged the government’s fear that information on topics ranging from environmental emissions to basic population statistics by province could be used to criticize the ruling party.

In Soyo and Cabinda, I devised a survey to get a broader picture of extractive dynamics in resource-dependent communities. I also conducted in-depth interviews with fishermen, fish traders, local government officials, and traditional authorities. The traditional governance structure in Soyo complicated the process of setting up interviews and focus groups. I had to both pay homage to the proper authority before I could begin work in a village and politely stop in for a visit each time I passed through the neighborhood. The visits were enjoyable but time-consuming. And with Soyo’s villagers, establishing trust also took time; initially they were shy and suspicious but revealed warm and welcoming personalities after a few visits. Before long, acquaintances called out greetings of “Kolele!” and teasingly inquired how my manioc crop was coming along. Geographic and language barriers also presented difficulties in Soyo. I am grateful to friends in Soyo who brokered my first contacts and provided a Kisolongo translator for interviews with locals who did not speak Portuguese, particularly elders. They also provided transportation support, facilitating journeys to the hard-to-reach villages across the Congo River like Tulombo and Bocolo.

I found two worlds in Cabinda. Travel was easy within the capital city and between the towns hugging the seashore. I walked around the city center almost daily and I could catch a taxi from the praça to almost anywhere along the Cabindan coast. Trips to the interior, however, were far more difficult. I regularly saw small groups of soldiers stationed in Cabinda’s coastal towns, but the interior region swarmed with troops and many seemed eager to test their authority. I traveled only by private car and with a local companion for guidance and security. As in Soyo, I accessed Cabindan
communities through trusted figures, such as Agostinho Chicaia—first during his tenure with the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Environment and later as the leader of the civil society organization Mpalabanda.

Local authorities called *regedores* in Cabinda proved less reliable representatives of community interests than any *rei do povo* in Soyo, probably because the government had manipulated the structure and installed leaders less critical of the regime.\(^\text{18}\) I quickly realized that Cabindan villagers and authority figures (or anyone with ties to the government) had vastly different outlooks on the political, economic, and military situation in the province. After completing a twenty-minute informal interview with the leader of a village in the Cabindan interior, a group of villagers led me around a corner. One of them looked about fearfully and discounted the leader’s statements, saying, “He is lying because of his position.” Another concurred, “He lives like a king.” I adjusted my survey and interviews to deliberately seek opinions from leaders and villagers. I also used some local students in the survey process to test whether my appearance might influence respondents’ answers—it did not seem to matter.\(^\text{19}\) Interviews in coastal areas concentrated on experiences of degradation, while those in the interior region focused more on experiences of violence.\(^\text{20}\) Cognizant of greater repression in the interior, I consciously omit the names of these villages in the text.

Simple experiences revealed the most about daily life in Cabinda. I spent Sunday mornings at the *Praia dos Pescadores* (Fishermen’s Beach) on the edge of Cabinda city, enjoying the pleasures of ethnographic research. It was dirty and hot, but I relished the opportunity of sitting with the fish traders. At first, I found them to be wary and suspicious, but I learned after spending time with them that they were deeply caring women with a wonderfully raucous sense of humor. I discovered the value of rumors during these days. Even if they were exaggerated, rumors about the guerrilla forces fighting for Cabindan independence, the government planting poisonous manioc, and separatist sympathizers working for Chevron revealed the hopes, fears, and misgivings of the people. Kirsch (2002) recognizes how rumors can play a role in the expression and experience of state-sponsored terror. And Milton (2005) analyzes rumors as narratives meant to explain unclear situations or even create a pretext for action.

The most fundamental lesson I learned from my informants in Soyo and Cabinda was the value of suspicion and the indispensability of friendship. Given the sensitive nature of this research and the vulnerability of those who contributed to it, I have taken great care to protect the identi-
ties of my interviewees. While in the field, I transcribed coded notes of interviews into my computer, shredded the loose-leaf originals into tiny pieces and mixed the scraps into the fly-swarmed household wastebasket containing the daily fruit peels and fish guts. A dedicated friend helped me douse my survey sheets in kerosene and burn them until their charred remains floated off as ash in the wind. Naturally, I have also taken precautions to protect the identity of my informants in this book. Some of the characters described here are composites and none of the names are real—I have deliberately used common Angolan names. The only names I have preserved as real, where appropriate, are those of corporate and public officials as quoted in newspaper and magazine articles.

The next two chapters review the literature on resource extraction, examine the historical background of extraction in Angola, and present the theoretical underpinnings of my analysis by exploring debates on the resource curse theory through the lens of political ecology. Chapter 2 outlines the exclusionary structure of petro-capitalism in Angola and the ways in which the state oil company Sonangol creates incentives to encourage investment in costly offshore extraction. Chapter 3 investigates Angola’s history of petro-violence, emphasizing the role of oil in various forms of violence—including environmental degradation. These two chapters provide a framework for understanding the linkage between the enclave and lived experience of extraction by analyzing the twin forces of petro-capitalism and petro-violence in the Angolan context.

The four case study chapters that follow examine how the forces of petro-capitalism and petro-violence affect the lives of people in Angola’s extractive zones. In each of these chapters, the themes of violence, degradation, and exclusion interact in distinctive ways. Chapter 4 turns to Soyo, a degraded municipality at the mouth of the Congo River, to examine how past violence and continuing repression constrain local protest and limit compensation measures and development programs. Chapter 5 jumps over the Congo River to the coastal villages of Cabinda to demonstrate how pollution associated with extraction disproportionately hurts the poorest fishermen, while Chevron’s compensation efforts mostly offset the losses of the richest and most powerful. Chapters 4 and 5 also reveal how people in Soyo and Cabinda make claims to a portion of the revenues from local oil extraction by emphasizing their belonging to an oil-rich territory. Whereas claimants in Soyo express their entitlements as Angolans, Cabindans make claims based upon their separateness, reflecting their long struggle for independence. In fact, Cabindan narratives grounded in a seemingly viable
political alternative—indeed from Angola—served as useful tools for garnering corporate compensation and development until the government quashed the independence movement.

Chapters 6 and 7 explore the carrot-and-stick approach to territorializing Cabinda, a joint effort of the government and Chevron. Chapter 6 begins by examining the Angolan Armed Forces’ military campaign to destroy the local movement for Cabindan independence and to gain physical control over the oil-rich territory. Interestingly, widespread human rights abuses perpetrated by the occupying forces provoked increased demands for Cabindan independence and the government pursued other tactics. In Chapter 7, the story continues with an examination of how the government, eager to win over Cabindans but facing budgetary constraints, used Chevron’s interest in oil-backed development efforts to territorialize the unstable region—a classic counterinsurgency approach with a neoliberal twist. Corporate development schemes complemented the militant territorialization campaigns by luring the terrorized masses into government-controlled areas with promises of health care and education. Finally, the book closes with a prospective view of petro-capitalism and petro-violence as Angola nears peak oil production and a wider perspective on oil dependency.