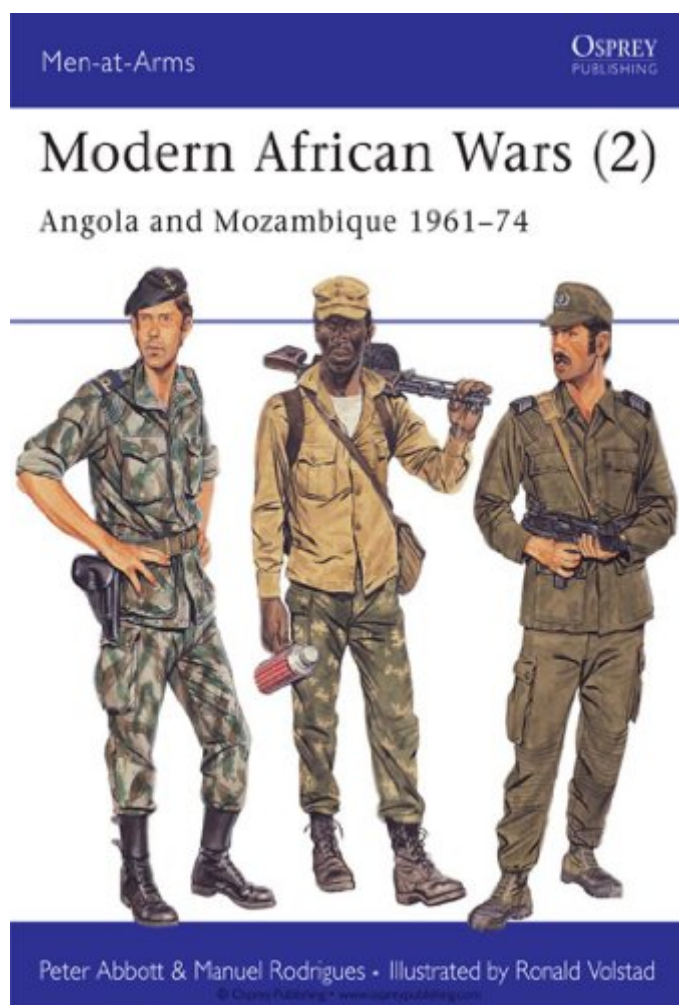


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# Modern African Wars (2): Angola And Mozambique 1961-74: Angola And Mozambique, 1961-74 (Men-at-Arms)



## Synopsis

ALSO AVAILABLE TO BUY AS AN E-BOOK. Portugal was both the first and the last of the great European colonial powers. For 500 years Portugal had colonies in Africa. In 1960, as liberation movements swept across colonial Africa, the Portuguese flag still flew over vast expanses of territory across the continent. The spread of decolonization and the establishment of independent states whose governments were sympathetic to the cause of African nationalism led, in the early 1960s, to a series of wars in Angola, Guinea and Mozambique. This book details each of these liberation movements, focusing on the equipment, uniforms and organization of the Portuguese forces.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Osprey's *Modern African Wars: Angola and Mozambique 1961-74* is a short, but rather concise and thorough overview of Portugal's three colonial wars post-World War II. The book has a ton of great information regarding these conflicts that were fought from 1961-1974, and provides great insight into why colonial wars are often the hardest for nations to wage and win. This book was the first book I ever bought that covered Portugal's colonial wars; it has since driven my appetite of interest for all things African colonial war related. As most

readers undoubtedly know Osprey books do not cover all the intricacies of the conflict, instead, the book brings the reader up to speed so that you can effectively start researching more in depth works on the topic. The greatest treat to me, and many others I'm sure, is the immense amount of hard-to-find photos of the conflict and the color plates that help to recreate the military uniforms and equipment of both sides. The book also has some maps and other interesting drawings to add some kick, but the photos are the real reason to buy the book in my opinion. If you, like me, have any interest in post-World War II colonial conflicts in Africa or elsewhere, this book is an almost must-have for your collection. I enjoyed it thoroughly and am sure you would as well.

In the second volume of *Modern African Wars*, Peter Abbott teamed up with Manuel Rodrigues and delivered the most balanced of the original three MAAs of the series. The Portuguese rule was less oriented towards ethnic differences than the British one, and the text gives a good explanation to the Anglo-Saxon reader that may blow the minds of most readers unacquainted with the Portuguese more tolerant way of life. Both sides are covered in an even-handed approach, with a good amount of information about the "Liberation Forces". The Portuguese did manage to adapt itself well to continuing warfare in three fronts, and only in Guinea did they suffer more serious setbacks because of the geography: with broken terrain surrounded by nations sympathetic to their nationalist cause. The liberation movements were lavishly supported by the Communist bloc to the point that Portugal decided to attack Guinea-Conakry, who served as directorate to the PAIGC, with training camps and even providing artillery barrages to cover PAIGC incursions. Portugal conducted a major amphibious operation against Guinea-Conakry named Operation Green Sea; to avoid another such amphibious incursion, the Soviets moved a powerful naval force to patrol Guinea-Conakry's shores. In Angola the Portuguese were way more successful, and the three liberation movements (MPLA, FNLA and UNITA) ended the war in a bad shape, with Portugal leaving the country without a ruler, with a civil war starting immediately afterwards. In Mozambique, the Portuguese worked together with Rhodesian forces on the north, and the FRELIMO was largely contained until the coup of 1974. Overall, Portugal had to fight an attrition war with dwindling resources and international support, and still managed to score a respectable toll on its enemies. The pictures are excellent in this volume, although the photographs are in Black&White only because the book was published in 1988. The photographs are, understandably, from the Portuguese forces. The plates are the most well-balanced in the first three volumes, with both combat uniforms and walking out dress on display, and with the best coverage of the guerrilla units. There is a box showing Portuguese military badges in Black&White, but the authors could have added colored insets on the plates. The

"Caçador" in plate B3 is the perfect example of the appearance of the Portuguese soldier in the bush, heavily influenced by the French; this plate is even more enriched by the usage of the rare AR-10 in 7.92mm. The "Caçadores" acted as rapid reaction heliborne forces in accordance to French doctrine of "guerre aéroportée", as exemplified by the picture in page 33, showing "Caçadores" disembarking from an "Alouette" helicopter into action. Page 9 shows the typical difference between "elite" units and regular units, with the "Lanceiros" (Military Police) in a very martial posture, while the "Caçadores" have a more non-chalant appearance. The other "elite" units are also depicted: "Fuzileiros" (D1), Commandos (E1) and Paratroopers (E3). Those intervention units were preceded by specialized trackers ("Pisteiros") and pseudo-operatives ("Flechas", who were instrumental in the formation of the Selous Scouts in Rhodesia), who spotted guerrillas and directed the reaction forces. Unfortunately, there was little information available about the Flechas at the time of writing. Plate C1 depicts a female nurse, who cared for the wounded even under fire; not mentioned in the text was that they were also parachute-trained. The high mark of the plates was the different types of French-inspired camouflaged used by the Portuguese. Plate F2 shows an African commando of the GEs in yellow beret and black uniform (in their strange "parade rest"). A Dragoon is depicted brandishing a Walther P-1 pistol (and sideburns, just like the Marine in D1). My only complaint is the absence of the peculiar Portuguese-made 37mm bazooka. Plates G and H show the guerrillas smartly equipped with Communist bloc weapons and equipment. The PAIGC guerrilla even has an East German steel helmet. Well balanced, well written, unbiased, with only minor typos - "militaires" (French) instead of "militares" (Portuguese), "bateria" instead of "bateria" and "fogute" instead of "foguete" - and with a good coverage of the guerrilla forces in the text and the plates, this book is a solid 5 - with flying colours.

This Osprey volume looks at Portugal's colonial wars in Angola and Mozambique. Unlike France and Britain, Portugal managed to hold on to its African colonies through the 1970s. Part of this had to do with the single-minded nationalism of the Portuguese political leadership, as well as the unusual relationship that the home country had with the African people it ruled. Unlike the experience other countries had, Portugal provided for equal legal status of blacks and whites and Europeans and Africans served together in many of the Army units. Portugal, which was not a large or rich country, does enjoy a rich military history and it took advantage of it. As a NATO member Portugal had access to modern arms and it configured its small but professional forces to fight the Marxist guerrillas attempting to take over the various colonies and turn them into "worker's paradises"... which of course is not how things worked out. The Portuguese even reorganized

Cavalry and Artillery units as counterinsurgency units, a practice that the United States would also take advantage of in Iraq against the islamofascists. Includes some information on FRELIMO, UNITA, FPLA, etc. The discussion of the campaign in Africa is well done and well illustrated. Definitely worth checking out.

I love it!

Excellent review for the independence wars of Portuguese african colonies of the 60's and 70's decades. Covers the conflict deeply and describes all forces involved with accuracy. I expected to see something about Cubans in Angola, even in the third book of this series (MAA-242), but there is nothing about them, but in general it's a great book.

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