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Abstract: This thesis analyzes the foreign policy of Angola under its first President, Agostinho Neto. Part one examines the evolution of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola's (MPLA) relations with Angola's neighbor to the north Zaire from the movement's inception in 1956, through the liberation struggle, post-independent conflicts in Zaire's Shaba Province and rapprochement. The author traces the effect of changes in Zairian policy on the MPLA's perceptions of and response to its regional and international environment before and after independence. Part two outlines the evolution of MPLA policies toward the problems in southern Angola growing out of the complex forces generated by the interplay between ethnic and political conflicts in the region and Namibia involving the MPLA, The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the South West People's Organization (SWAPO), and South Africa. A central focus of this thesis is the impact of factional divisions within the MPLA on Angolan foreign policy.

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