

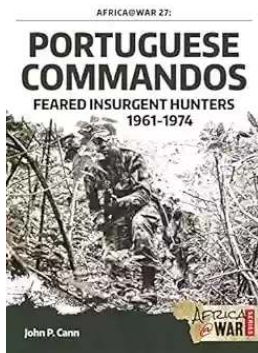
# Portuguese Commandos: Feared Insurgent Hunters from 1961 to 1974 in Africa War

In the history of warfare, there have been various elite military units that have gained a reputation for their exceptional skills, bravery, and effectiveness on the battlefield. Among them, Portuguese Commandos have stood out as one of the most renowned units during the Africa War from 1961 to 1974. These fearless warriors hunted insurgents across the vast African landscape, leaving a legacy that still fascinates military enthusiasts to this day.

## Understanding the Africa War

The Africa War was a bloody conflict that Portugal became involved in as it aimed to maintain its colonial territories in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. Faced with the rise of guerrilla movements, mainly supported by neighboring countries, Portugal deployed its Commandos to combat these insurgents and preserve its colonial rule.

The Portuguese Commandos were part of the country's special forces and were renowned for their extensive training and rigorous selection process. These soldiers were selected based on their physical and mental capabilities, ensuring that only the best of the best could wear the coveted Commando badge.



## Portuguese Commandos: Feared Insurgent Hunters, 1961-1974 (Africa@War Book 27)

by John P. Cann (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 7303 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled  
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## **The Birth of the Portuguese Commandos**

The creation of the Portuguese Commandos dates back to the early 1960s when the Africa War started to escalate. Recognizing the need for highly skilled troops to counter the growing insurgent forces, Portugal established the first Commando units in 1961. These units were initially deployed to Angola, where they quickly proved their worth through successful operations against the enemy.

The Portuguese Commandos' success in Angola led to their expansion into other territories affected by the Africa War. Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau soon witnessed the arrival of these elite warriors, who would play a crucial role in the ongoing conflict.

## **The Exceptional Training of Portuguese Commandos**

Portuguese Commandos underwent extensive and arduous training to prepare them for the challenging conditions they would face in the African theater. Their training included combat tactics, survival skills, demolitions, advanced weaponry, and unconventional warfare techniques.

The Commandos were trained to operate in small groups, utilizing their superior mobility and flexibility to strike swiftly against the insurgency. They became experts in jungle warfare, mastering the art of camouflage and adapting to the harsh African environment.

## **The Commandos' Hunting Tactics**

The Portuguese Commandos were feared by the insurgents due to their relentless pursuit and effective hunting tactics. These highly trained soldiers employed a combination of intelligence gathering, tracking techniques, and surprise attacks to dismantle the guerrilla networks.

By gathering intelligence through locals and other means, the Commandos were able to identify the insurgent hideouts, supply lines, and leadership structures. Their exceptional tracking skills allowed them to navigate through challenging terrains, following the footprints and traces left behind by their enemies.

Once a target was located, the Commandos would strike swiftly and without mercy, overwhelming the insurgents with their superior training and firepower. Their ability to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances on the battlefield gave them a significant advantage, leaving the enemy bewildered and demoralized.

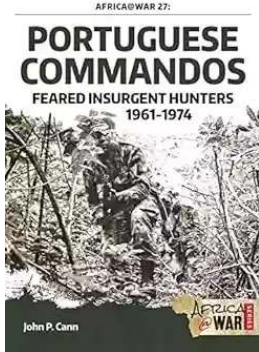
## **The Legacy of Portuguese Commandos**

The Portugal Commandos' involvement in the Africa War came to an end in 1974 with the overthrowing of the Portuguese regime. However, their legacy remains intact as a symbol of courage, dedication, and military excellence.

Their contributions during the Africa War were not only significant in the context of Portuguese colonialism but also influenced modern military tactics and strategies. The lessons learned from the Commandos' operations in Africa have helped shape the approach to counterinsurgency warfare worldwide.

The Portuguese Commandos were indeed feared insurgent hunters during the Africa War from 1961 to 1974. Their exceptional training, tactical prowess, and unwavering commitment to their mission set them apart as one of the most feared and respected military units of their time.

Today, the legacy of Portuguese Commandos lives on, inspiring future generations of soldiers to strive for excellence and to always stand at the forefront of defending their nations.



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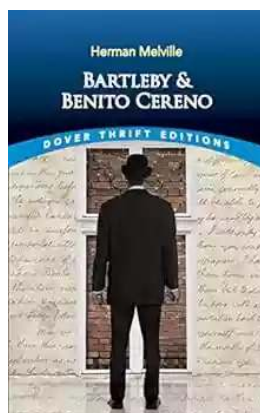
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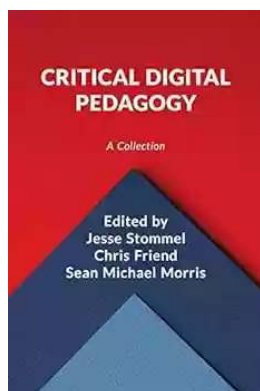
During the 13-year insurgency (1961–74) in Portuguese Africa, more than 800,000 men and women served in the Portuguese armed forces. Of this number, about 9,000 served as commandos (or about 1 percent). Yet their combat losses — 357 dead, 28 missing in action and 771 wounded — represented 11.5 percent of the total casualties (a percentage 10 times that of normal troops). It is well established that these warriors were responsible for the elimination of more insurgents and capturing more of their weapons than any other force during the war. Great pains were taken to stay abreast of the latest enemy operational methods and maintain the 'warrior edge' in the force. This edge, in essence, was an approach to fighting that pushed the commandos always to think of themselves as the hunter rather than the hunted. Officers returning from contact with the enemy were rigorously debriefed, and commando instructors regularly participated in operations to learn of the latest enemy developments. This

information was integrated with intelligence from other sources gathered by the military and national intelligence services, and from this current knowledge, training was constantly revised to remain attuned to the enemy and his behavior. The commandos became a breed apart - and their reputation was such that when insurgents discovered a unit deployed into their area, they would generally withdraw until the killers left. This commando training - and its sympathy with the fighting environment - made the commandos the most effective ground force in the Portuguese Army. The commandos were expert practitioners in the art of counterinsurgency, and their practice of destroying the enemy in great numbers quickly and quietly served as inspiration not only to South Africa and Rhodesia, but to the enemy himself. This is the story of the Portuguese commandos: their beginnings, their unique operations and their legacy and influence in subsequent sister units such as the Buffalo Battalion of South Africa.



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