Beyond institutional blueprints: hybrid security provision and democratic practice in Mali

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Beyond Institutional Blueprints

Hybrid security provision and democratic practice in Mali

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democratic practice in Mali

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I would like to thank my parents and parents-in-law who regularly hosted our kids, which provided me with several valuable writing retreats over the weekend. At some point, my oldest daughter candidly asked whether I was going to live in the attic forever to work on this book. While I sincerely enjoyed and learned a great deal from this extended academic journey, I am happy to have actually descended from the attic again.

My deepest gratitude goes out to my wife Liesbeth. While a scientific publication surely does not constitute the most romantic expression of love, I nonetheless dedicate this book to her. Finalising this thesis amidst the Covid-pandemic would have simply been impossible without her unwavering support and persistent optimism.

The reason I initially started and eventually finalised this thesis was plain curiosity. I had worked with Malian political elites for quite some years and spent a considerable amount of time studying the implementation of Mali's ambitious decentralisation process at the local level. As a result, I became interested in gaining a better understanding of the functioning of Malian democracy beyond the normative labels and institutional blueprints that prevailed at the time.

Nonetheless, this thesis certainly does not provide a comprehensive analysis of these complex set of dynamics and focuses on a limited number of key aspects only. Particularly in light of the deteriorating situation in Mali and the limited success of international efforts geared towards stabilisation and state building, it is more important than ever to continue investing in research initiatives and knowledge-building in this part of the world.

The purpose of anthropology is to make the world safe for human differences.

Ruth Benedict (1887 – 1948)

For Liesbeth

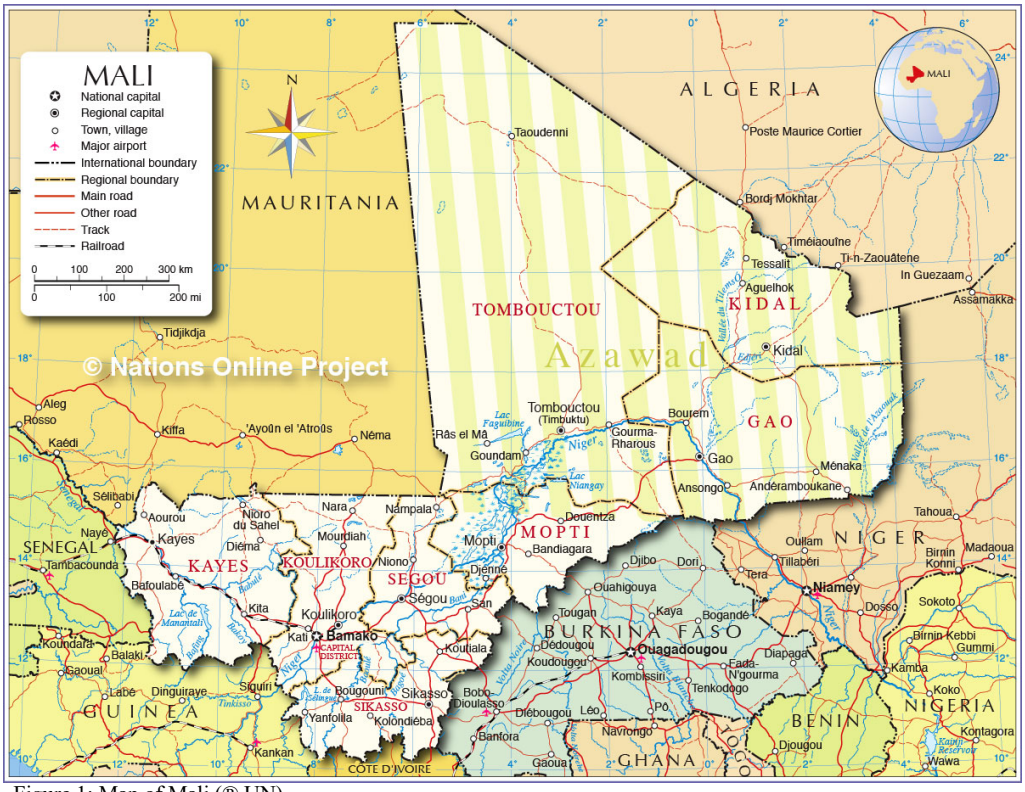

Figure 1: Map of Mali (® UN)

Chapter 1

Introduction

Theoretical and operational framework. Research design and methods.

From an historical perspective there is nothing particular about 'state weakness' in Africa. The state is not the only, not the historical and not the most likely form for the exercise of power.
Ulf Engel and Andreas Mehler (2005)
Governance in Africa's New Violent Social Spaces

In all too many cases, democratisation has been a matter of replacing a self-appointed dictator with an elected one.
Claude Aké (2000)
The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa

During 2012, Malian citizens encountered the logic of Murphy's Law in a most dramatic way as an unprecedented series of tragic events unfolded. A secessionist rebellion revived in northern Mali, disgruntled soldiers ousted President Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) while an opaque alliance of drug smugglers, radical Islamists and armed groups took control over almost two thirds of the national territory. The Malian state has struggled to regain a foothold ever since. By 2018, Malian state expenditure reached a mere 20 per cent of the national territory.[1] In the northern and central regions, state authority remained largely confined to isolated urban pockets. A wide variety of other power poles, including traditional and religious leaders, local militias, armed groups, international military actors, terrorist groups and wealthy smugglers exerted their authority across parts of the vast rural areas.

The 2012 military coup equally exposed widespread popular frustration with the political elites and displayed major challenges related to the democratic regime. In the early 1990s, citizens took to the streets to protest against one-party rule despite violent responses and fierce repression by state forces. This time around, there was no such popular outcry. In 2012, Malian citizens refrained from defending their democratically elected President. On the contrary, a survey conducted in the capital city, Bamako, showed that a majority of residents actually supported the military coup that ousted President Touré.[2] Moreover, less than a third of the electorate was satisfied with the way democracy functioned in 2012.[3] Although most citizens

[1] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018) 'A Potemkin State in the Sahel? The Empirical and the Fictional in Malian State Reconstruction' *African Security* (11)1: 1-31, p.14.
[2] Whitehouse, B. (2012) 'Bamako's Lone Pollster Strikes Again', 1 June 2012.
[3] Afrobarometer 'Mali Country Data', available at: www.afrobarometer.org.

still preferred democracy to authoritarian regime-types, this share dropped by ten percentage points between 2008 and 2012. Just over half of the population rejected military rule.[4]

The dramatic collapse of both state authority and democracy sharply contrasted with Mali's international reputation as a relatively stable anchor in a troubled region and a beacon of democracy on the African continent. That same year, US Secretary of State Clinton contended:

> By most indicators, Mali was on the right path until a cadre of soldiers seized power a little more than a month before national elections were scheduled to be held.[5]

During an official state visit to the Netherlands months before the crisis erupted, President Touré emphasised that Malian democracy provided a vanguard for stability and strong checks and balances. In 2007, Mali hosted the prestigious Community of Democracies, a worldwide network of more than 100 democratic countries. Mali's reputation as a posterchild for democracy was rooted in the exemplary transition that the country witnessed in the early 1990s. Then Lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré earned his nickname as a "soldier of democracy" by guiding the country to multi-party democracy after leading a military coup that ended almost 25 years of authoritarian rule. The political space opened up and associational life truly blossomed. The number of civil society organisations, media outlets, political parties and religious associations rapidly increased while Mali's democratic leaders respected both civic and political rights. During previous decades of authoritarian and predatory rule, the state merely served narrow elitist interests. The transition generated a sense of optimism that democracy would enhance state performance in the public interest.

This positive outlook reflected a much broader trend at the time. Strong popular demand for democratisation pushed and shaped many democratic transitions around the world.[6] This third wave of democratisation, as Huntington famously characterised it, spread-out over Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere.[7] A wind of change blew away one authoritarian regime after the other. Some scholars even celebrated the victory of liberal democracy as the final form of government of all nations, marking "the end of history."[8] Thus, when Malian state

[4] Dulani, B. (2014) 'Malian Democracy Recovering: Military Rule Still Admired', Afrobarometer (Policy Paper, No.12).
[5] Clinton, H.R. (2012), 'Remarks on Building Sustainable Partnerships in Africa', 1 August 2012, University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal.
[6] Bratton, M. and Van de Walle, N. (1997) *Democratic Experiments in Africa. Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[7] Young, C. (1999) 'The Third Wave of Democratisation in Africa: Ambiguities and Contradictions', in: Joseph, R. *State, Conflict, and Democracy in Africa*, Boulder, Co and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
[8] Fukuyama, F. (1992) *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books.

authority and democracy collapsed barely twenty years down the line, scholars and policymakers alike tried to understand what had gone wrong. A rapidly expanding body of literature offered detailed accounts of actual events on the ground[9] and focused, amongst others: on the revived rebellion and the anchoring of terrorist organisations in northern Mali;[10] the high-value smuggling economy;[11] the downfall of Colonel Gadhafi in Libya[12] and wider regional dynamics;[13] the limited potential of centralised statehood in a vast geographical but poor economic context;[14] major governance challenges;[15] or the support provided by international donors to domestically contested state institutions and elites.[16]

Several scholars compellingly demonstrated that the developments in Mali reflected nothing less than a fundamental departure from the postcolonial order in which the state constituted the hierarchically dominant power pole in society.[17] In the Malian context, non-state institutions increasingly operated as "horizontal contemporaries of the organs of the state."[18] In the absence of a clear hegemonic force, a much more heterogeneous "heterarchical political order" emerged and prevailed.[19] Indeed, the classical notion of a state that obtained a monopoly on the legitimate use of force seemed ever further away as armed groups, communal militias, international military actors, wealthy traffickers, vigilant youth groups, bandits, terrorist groups firmly instituted their authority across Malian territory.

However, the functioning of Malian democracy and its impact on state formation (and deformation) in that period between the heydays of democracy in the early 1990s and

[9] Lecocq, B. and Mann, G. (eds.) (2013) 'The Blind and the Hippopotamus: A Multivocal Analysis of the Current Political Crisis in the Divided Republic of Mali', *Review of African Political Economy* (40)137: 343-357; Whitehouse, B. (2012) 'What Went Wrong in Mali?', *London Review of Books,* (34)16: 17-18;
[10] Siegel, P.C. (2013) 'AQIM's Playbook in Mali', *CTC Sentinel,* (6)3: 9-11; Daniel, S. (2012) '*AQMI al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique, l'industrie de l'enlèvement*', Fayard: France; Boeke, S. (2016) 'Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb: Terrorism, Insurgency, or Organized Crime?', *Small Wars & Insurgencies,* 27(5) 914-936.
[11] Lacher, W. (2012) *Organised Crime and Conflict in the Sahel-Sahara Region.* Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Carnegie Paper); Sidibe, K. (2012) 'Criminal Networks and Conflict-resolution Mechanisms in Northern Mali', *IDS Bulletin* (43)4: 74-88.
[12] March, B. (2017) 'Brothers Came Back with Weapons: The Effects of Arms Proliferation from Libya', *PRISM,* 6(4): 79-96.
[13] Whitehouse, B. and Strazarri, F. (2015) 'Introduction: Rethinking Challenges to State Sovereignty in Mali and Northwest Africa', *African Security* (8)4: 213-226.
[14] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018).
[15] ICG (2014) 'Mali: Reform or Relapse', 10 January 2014 (Africa report No. 210).
[16] Bergamaschi, I. (2014) 'The Fall of a Donor Darling: The Role of Aid in Mali's Crisis', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 52(3), 347-378; Van de Walle, N. (2012) 'Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy', United Nations University (Working Paper No. 2012/61).
[17] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015) 'Political Orders in the Making: Emerging Forms of Political Organization from Libya to Northern Mali', *African Security,* (8)4: 320-337; Whitehouse, B. and Strazarri, F. (2015) .
[18] Ferguson, J. (2004) 'Power Topographies', in: D. Nugent and J. Vincent (eds.) *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*, pp. 283-399, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing; Ferguson, J. and Gupta, A. (2002) 'Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality', *American Ethnologist*, 29(4): 981-1002.
[19] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p.324.

democracy's decay in 2012, received less attention in the literature. This thesis contributes to filling that void by analysing how prominent democratic institutions affected state legitimacy in the context of Mali's emerging heterarchical political order. It thereby focuses on three key pillars that underpin democracy's central proposition of legitimising state institutions: political participation, representation and accountability. The analysis provided in this thesis is limited to the performance of political parties (and the party system), the Malian legislature and local democratic institutions in shaping these patterns of political participation, representation and accountability. This choice stems from the fact that this thesis is developed based on a set of – considerably extended and reworked – individual academic publications focused on these specific democratic institutions. Hence, this thesis most certainly does not offer a comprehensive analysis of Malian democracy in the run-up to the 2012 crisis and its impact on state legitimacy. It rather provides an in-depth analysis of a limited number of influential components thereof.

The thesis consists of three main sections: (1) the first part provides an historical analysis of the gradual emergence of Mali's heterarchical political order well before the 2012 crisis; (2) the second and core section examines the performance of several key democratic institutions and their impact upon state legitimacy in the years preceding the 2012 coup; while (3) the third and final part examines the anchoring of Mali's heterarchical order in the aftermath of the crisis.

Section 1.2. below presents the overarching research question and ensuing sub-questions that guided this thesis in more detail. It also clarifies the conceptual and operational framework. First, however, the next section introduces the theoretical outline of this thesis. It clarifies the analytical shift away from a state-centred hierarchical political order towards the more diffused conceptualisation of a heterarchical order. Moreover, it introduces the theoretical foundations and context in which democratisation was expected to boost state legitimacy.

1.1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1.1. From a hierarchical to a heterarchical political order

State-centred institutional perspectives

Many European states managed to expand their influence over other power poles in society and gradually emerged as the principal and superior institutional locus of authority. This centrality and supremacy of the state was closely linked to the idea of political sovereignty.[20] In 1648, the treaty of Westphalia formally established the principle of territorial delimitation of state authority. While the scope of religious authorities diminished, the internal sovereignty of states increased as they obtained the right to rule in an exclusive manner over specific territories.[21] In this prevailing understanding of the concept, sovereignty referred,

> [n]ot to just any political authority but to the authority of states and not just any form of state authority, but superior or exclusive, though not necessarily unrestricted, authority.[22]

Sovereignty thereby avoided an infinite regress or a deadlock between competing authorities. It constituted the distinguishing characteristic of the state in this classical – and still prevailing – analytical stance.[23] Throughout the eighteenth century, numerous European states further extended their influence in society and affected the lives of ordinary citizens in a very direct manner. The sharp rise of per capita tax revenues during the seventeenth and especially eighteenth centuries attested hereto.[24] The state managed to expand its dominance over society through a body of administrative, legal, extractive and coercive organisations.[25] It underpinned its supreme authority, as Weber and his academic followers noted, with a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence and the ability to extract revenues and govern expenditures through a professional "rational-legal" bureaucracy.

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[20] The term sovereignty is derived from the Latin word *superanus*, meaning supreme.
[21] See the *Max Planck Encyclopedia of International Law* for an elaborate historical overview, available at: https://opil.ouplaw.com/view/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1472.
[22] Krehof, B. (2008) 'Legitimate Political Authority and Sovereignty: Why States Cannot be the Whole Story', *Res Publica,* 14: 283-297.
[23] Mampilly, Z. (2003) 'Parcellized Sovereignty: The State, Non-State Actors, and the Politics of Conflict in Africa', *Ufahamu,* (30)1: 15-53.
[24] Karaman, K., and Pamuk, S. (2013) 'Different Paths to the Modern State in Europe: The Interaction Between Warfare, Economic Structure, and Political Regime', *American Political Science Review*, 107(3): 603-626.
[25] Evans, P.B., Rueschemeyer, D. and Skocpol, T. (eds.) (1985) *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Migdal, J.S. (2001) *State in Society: Studying how States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Giddens defined the modern state in terms of a:

> [p]olitical apparatus – governmental institutions, such as a court, parliament, or congress, plus civil service officials – ruling over a given territory, whose authority is backed by a legal system and the capacity to use force to implement its policies.[26]

These formal rules and regulations of the state applied to all citizens, including state representatives.[27] The hierarchically superior state thus obtained a considerable level of autonomy from society and functioned based on impersonal and technocratic lines. State-society and public-private spheres were functionally distinct.

The "Westphalian" state thus obtained a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence in a well-defined territorial area and emerged as one of the central conceptual building blocks of classical political science, international relations and law. The state was separated from society in an analytical sense and placed in a hierarchical position "above" society.

These ideal-type notions equally emerged as a normative framework to assess the performance of states around the world. They set the norm against which many states were labelled as "weak" or "fragile" and some received support through internationally sponsored state-building initiatives in order to modernise into well-functioning states.

Mamdani (1997) fiercely criticised these labels as they sought to "understand the state in Africa through an analogy rather than through its own history."[28] Indeed, influential historians such as Cooper (2002) and Ellis (2011) contended that this practice reflected a widespread pattern of portraying developments on the African continent in terms of "a lack of", "a failure to" or "a distortion of." [29] In other words, defining developments in terms of deficiencies prompted an analysis of what *was not* happening rather than focusing on what *was* actually occurring across the African continent. The normative stance also implicitly assumed that all states eventually emerged into the prototype Westphalian state. Gupta (1995) challenged this modernisation discourse and the applicability of the Westphalian conceptual toolkit and state-centred analytical perspectives for grasping statehood practices beyond the OECD world.[30]

[26] Quotation from Barnett, M. (2006) 'Building a Republican Peace: Stabilizing States after War', *International Security,* 30(4): 87-112, p.91.
[27] Schlichte, K. (ed.) (2005) *The Dynamics of States: The Formation and Crises of State Dominance*, London and New York: Routledge.
[28] Mampilly, Z. (2003), p.22.
[29] Ellis, S. (2011) *Season of Rains: Africa in the World*, London: C. Hurst & Co.; Cooper, F. 2002. *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[30] Gupta, A. (1995) 'Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State', *American Ethnologist,* (22)2: 375-402, pp. 376-378.

These authors argued that processes of state formation (and deformation) were open-ended processes that varied across space and time. Polities did not progress along some single road towards modernity. Studying the historical trajectories of statehood was therefore critical.

Historical trajectories of statehood

This Malian case study contributes to a growing body of literature that challenges the universal validity of a state-centred perspective that constituted "the bedrock of the study of comparative politics since at least the beginning of the twentieth century."[31] Chapter 2 provides an historical overview of the gradual emergence of a heterarchical political order in Mali. This model sharply contrasts with ideal notions of the hierarchically supreme Westphalian state presented here above. This section provides a number of general observations about historical state formation processes across the African continent – in all its diversity – that emerge from the literature. The next chapter assesses the specificities of the Malian case in more detail.

First, geographical, economic, environmental and sociocultural factors all significantly affected the historical trajectory of state formation and deformation across the African continent. The challenging physical environment often made it very costly to extend authority into the rural hinterland. Herbst (2000) noted that the abundance of land combined with low population density prompted a form of statehood that prioritised control over people instead of land.[32] State authority was concentrated in populated centres but decreased towards the peripheries. High levels of mobility of both goods and people further constrained the rise of centralised polities.[33] The Sahel-Sahara region constituted a geographical zone where it proved to be particularly challenging to sustain clear-cut boundaries or centralised sovereign entities.[34]

Decentralised forms of authority thus prevailed across the African continent. Although vast empires emerged across Northwest Africa, such as the Ghana (originating in the fourth or fifth century), Mali (thirteenth century), Songhai (fifteenth century), Asante (seventeenth-–late nineteenth century) and Maacina empires (nineteenth century), local power holders maintained a large degree of autonomy under these structures. Warner (1999) contended that the Asante

[31] Migdal, J.S. (2001) *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[32] Herbst, J. (2000) '*States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*', Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
[33] Mbembe, A. (2000) 'At the Edge of the World: Boundaries, Territoriality, and Sovereignty in Africa', *Public Culture*, 12 (1): 259-284; Garcia, R. V. and Spitz, P. (1986) *The Roots of Catastrophe: The 1972 Case History*, vol. 3, London: Pergamon Press; Boesen, E. Marfaing, L. and De Bruijn, M. (2014) 'Nomadism and Mobility in the Sahara-Sahel: Introduction', *Canadian Journal of African Studies,* 48(1): 1-12.
[34] Raineri, L. and Strazzari, F. (2015) 'State, Secession, and Jihad: The Micropolitical Economy of Conflict in Northern Mali', *African Security*, (8)4: 249-271.

regime developed bureaucratic structures similar to those encountered on the European continent. Yet, Hopkins (2000) nuanced this view based on an extensive review of the (historical) literature.[35] He emphasised the autonomy of the federal Asante states and the personalised, rather than bureaucratised, form of rule. The degree of local autonomy under the Maacina Empire was somewhat limited but the Mali Empire, encompassing over 400 cities, was bound together in a very loose manner.[36] Similarly, in reference to the Tuareg hegemony over northern Mali in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Olivier de Sardan (2012) observed

> […] a very particular kind of hegemony. It was neither centralised nor uniform, and was devoid of a common political ambition, of the state or imperial type. No administration, even indirect, of the regions and population subject to this hegemony was implemented.[37]

The role of the colonial period in African history is a topic widely studied and vigorously debated. It is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis to provide a comprehensive overview of this vast academic field of interest and the perspectives advanced. Nevertheless, a number of observations regarding colonialism and state formation are critical by way of introduction.

The demarcation of state boundaries by colonial powers, regardless of existing socio-political and cultural ties, continued to affect state formation processes after independence. This certainly proved to be the case in Mali, where several communities in the northern regions opposed their inclusion into the colonial state boundaries in the run-up to independence, as illustrated in the next chapter. State building efforts instigated by European powers in the colonial territories fundamentally differed from the state formation trajectories in their home countries. Not only because of the very different objectives that guided the efforts undertaken by colonial forces across the African continent, but also as a result of the limited means they made available to this end. The colonial project was not about state building per se. Colonialism was a process of political competition between European powers who strived for power in Europe and elsewhere. Moreover, colonial institutions aimed to extract resources and maximise profits at minimum costs.

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[35] Warner, J. (1999) 'The Political Economy of "Quasi-Statehood" and the Demise of 19th-Century African Politics', *Review of International Studies,* 25(2): 233-255; Hopkins, A.G. (2000), 'Quasi-States, Weak States and the Partition of Africa.', *Review of International Studies,* 26(2): 311-320.

[36] Jansen, J. (1995) *De Draaiende Put. Een Studie naar de Relatie tussen het Sunjata-epos en de Samenleving in de Haut-Niger (Mali)*, Leiden: Onderzoeksschool CNWS.

[37] Olivier de Sardan, J.-P. (2013) 'The Tuareg Question in Mali Today', *Cahiers du Mapinduzi,* 3(1) 25-39, p. 30.

The colonial administration therefore concentrated its presence in areas of economic interest. The state bureaucracy did not reach far out or deep into the hinterlands of the African continent.[38] An important legacy of the colonial period, Mandani (1996) noted, was the "bifurcated nature" of the state that ensued from the very different types of rule between urban and rural areas:

> Debated as alternative models of controlling natives in the early colonial period, direct and indirect rule actually evolved into complementary ways of native control. Direct rule was the form of urban civil power. It was about the exclusion of natives from civil freedoms guaranteed to citizens in civil society. Indirect rule, however, signified a rural tribal authority. It was about incorporating natives into a state enforced customary order.[39]

Indeed, colonial states relied heavily on informal non-state authorities to administer the rural areas and to control vast territories at minimal costs. The degree of autonomy of these local leaders vis-à-vis the colonial forces differed from one place to the other. Yet, the impact of this system of indirect rule was felt almost everywhere. The position of local customary chiefs altered into that of an intermediary role between people at the local level and a superior colonial authority. Local chiefs expanded their regional authority as a result of their connections to the state administration. Colonial authorities collaborated with specific local chiefs and factional leaders to the detriment of others, thereby evoking tensions and altering local power balances.

The colonial state administration and francophone education sector further enhanced the 'bifurcated' character of statehood. Those small and predominantly urban sections in society educated in French and obtaining positions in the colonial administration would come to play a leading role in the postcolonial state after independence. The urban-rural divide developed into one of the principal cleavages in political, economic and socio-cultural terms.

As the decolonisation process unfolded, new African states emerged that rapidly obtained international recognition. In this context, Herbst (1996) contended:

> [The] United Nations grant of sovereignty by administrative fiat, simply because a country had achieved independence, was a revolutionary departure from traditional

[38] Frankema, E. and Van Waijenburg, M. (2013) 'Endogenous Colonial Institutions: Lessons from Fiscal Capacity Building in British and French Africa, 1880-1940', Lund: Lund University, Department of Economic History (African Economic History Working Papers, No.11).
[39] Mamdani, M. (1996) *Citizen and Subject*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, p.18.

> practices whereby sovereignty had to be earned. […] The notion that Africa was ever composed of sovereign states classically defined as having a monopoly on force in the territory across their boundaries is false.[40]

The position that sovereignty was not necessarily "earned" in the case of many African countries did not do justice to the courageous independence struggle and the sacrifices many people made. Moreover, Brown (2013) aptly nuanced strong propositions about African state sovereignty by distinguishing sovereignty "rights" and "authority".[41] The first related to the *claims* of a state to rule over a given country and the latter to its *ability* to act and to control particular outcomes across its territory. He underlined that sovereignty rights of African states mattered. International donors, for example, could not simply bypass the African state and their governments. Nevertheless, state authority and the ability to implement policies was indeed highly restricted. At independence, many African states obtained "legal sovereignty", referring to their right to external non-interference and their official position as principal internal authority. Yet, their "political sovereignty", in terms of their ability to actually satisfy such claims was limited. Indeed, the external recognition of statehood at independence had "little or nothing to do with how effective, strong or legitimate a particular type of local statehood" was.[42] Many non-state actors continued to play a major – and sometimes leading role – in shaping statehood practices in interaction with or besides the state. In the context of such hybrid political orders, conceptual boundaries between state and society, formal and informal institutions and the public and private sphere remained highly blurred, as the next section further illustrates.

Hybrid political orders

Independence gave birth to African states who, in many cases, depended on non-state actors to enforce authority and implement policies. The state "had to share authority, legitimacy and capacity with other structures."[43] Gupta (1995) contended that the "conventional distinction between state and society, on which such a large portion of the scholarship on the state is based," needed to be re-examined as boundaries between the categories were fundamentally blurred.[44]

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[40] Herbst, J. (1996) 'Responding to State Failure in Africa', *International Security*, 21(3), 120-144, p. 121.
[41] Brown, W. (2012) 'Sovereignty Matters: Africa, Donors, and the Aid Relationship', *African Affairs,* 112(447): 262-282, p. 268.
[42] Doornbos, M. (2010) 'Researching African Statehood Dynamics: Negotiability and Its Limits', *Development and Change* 41(4): 747-769, p. 758.
[43] Boege, V., Brown, A., Clements, K. and Nolan, A. (2008) *On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: State Formation in the Context of 'Fragility'*, Berlin: Berghoff Foundation, p. 10.
[44] Gupta, A. (1995), p. 376.

Institutions of public authority operated in the "twilight between the state and society."[45] In their edited volume, Bellagamba and Klute (2008) demonstrated that no single institution exercised domination across the African continent and illustrated that "hybrid governance practices" prevailed. "The state within society only materialises through constant confrontations with other power poles."[46] Likewise, Hagmann and Péclard (2010) emphasised the impact of multiple power poles "that exist within, at the interface, and outside of the bureaucratic apparatus" upon actual governance practices.[47] Statehood was thus "negotiated" in constant interactions between state and non-state institutions, constructively reinforcing one another, in some cases, or being in outright competition in others.[48] Public authority was thereby (re)conceptualised as a relational force that was not restricted to the confines of the state.[49]

In other words, the focus on *state authority* – long taken as a normative reference for processes of statehood formation in very different contexts – evolved into *public authority* that involved both state and non-state actors. The supremacy of the state should therefore not be *a priori* assumed as "the exercise of authority is both multidimensional and multi-attributive."[50] Moving away from a state monopoly on the use of violence, Whitehouse and Strazzari (2015) stipulated that public security provision across vast parts of the Sahel and the wider northwest African region involved several state and non-state actors.[51]

Beyond these *physical* and material aspects of statehood, which focused on the state as a set of institutions and practices, the *idea* of the state – how it was represented in society and how the nation was constructed – constituted important dimensions of statehood. Ruigrok (2011) underlined that the inscription of a shared history and the use of public rituals provided states with historical aura and local meaning.[52] States constantly defined and redefined customs, symbols and rituals as national characteristics in order to underpin their national sovereignty.

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[45] Lund, C. (2006), 'Twilight Institutions: Public Authority and Local Politics in Africa', *Development and Change*, 37(4): 685-705, p. 686.
[46] Bellagamba, A. and Klute, G. (eds.), (2008) *Beside the State: Emergent Powers in Contemporary Africa*, Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag, p. 11.
[47] Hagmann, T. and Péclard, D. (2010) 'Negotiating Statehood: Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa', *Development and Change*, 41: 539-562, p. 543. For an empirical illustration, see: Bierschenk, T. and Olivier de Sardan, J.P. (1997) 'Local Powers and a Distant State in Rural Central African Republic', *The Journal of Modern African Studies,* 35(3): 441-468.
[48] Hagmann, T. and Péclard, D. (2010); Menkhaus, K. (2008) 'The Rise of a Mediated State in Northern Kenya: The Wajir Story and Its Implications for State-Building', *Afrika Focus*, 21(2): 23-38.
[49] De Vries, L.A. (2012) '*Facing Frontiers: Everyday Practice of State-Building in South Sudan*', PhD thesis, University of Wageningen, pp. 14-22.
[50] Krehoff, B. (2008), 'Legitimate Political Authority and Sovereignty: Why States Cannot be the Whole Story', *Res Publica* 14: 283-297, p.283.
[51] Whitehouse, B. and Strazarri, F. (2015), p.222.
[52] Ruigrok, I. (2011), 'Negotiating Governance: Politics, Culture and the State in Post-war Angola', PhD thesis, VU University, Amsterdam, p.55.

It was in this latter "realm of symbolic production," as Bourdieu contended, "that the grip of the state is felt most powerfully."[53] However, Doornbos (2010) underlined that "ingredients for common national myths at the level of the post-colonial African state [were] limited."[54] Linkages in terms of shared commonalities and relevant symbols were indeed often poorly developed at the time of independence. Boege et al. (2008) noted:

> In many of the newly independent states there was no history of pre-colonial unitary rule and people did not have a tradition of national identification; only few of these states shared one common language and one common culture.[55]

In the case of Mali, Lecocq (2010) revealed a strong tendency of state authorities to tap into historical narratives and symbols of specific southern communities in representations of the postcolonial state and the construction of a national identity.[56] Moreover, he illustrated that Tuareg leaders constructed an alternative nation in contrast to the one promulgated by state representatives. Two, if not more, nations were thus being constructed in opposition to one another. This is not to suggest a static interpretation of nationhood or identity, which are always multi-layered and subject to processes of constant deconstruction and reconstruction. People are related to a wide variety of (imagined) communities, in the religious realm, as members of nations, local communities, factions and status groups within these communities and tied together through many other perceived bonds of affiliation. These different layers overlap or conflict with one another and their interaction changes over time.

Nonetheless, in the context of a hybrid political order, the analytical perspective moves away from *state* legitimacy towards *public* legitimacy by focusing on the interplay, in either a mutually reinforcing or undermining manner, "between actors having more or less access to more or less powerful public resources of legitimation."[57] Multiple actors co-exist that may be competing over legitimacy from differentiated sources of power. Sears (2007) referred to Mali's "triple heritage" of indigenous, religious and Western-democratic aspects of struggles for

[53] Bourdieu, P. (1994) 'Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field', *Sociological Theory,* 12(1): 1-18, p. 2; De Vries, L.A. (2012); Hagmann, T. and Péclard, D. (2010).
[54] Doornbos, M. (2010), p. 752.
[55] Boege, V. *et al*. (2008), p.5.
[56] Lecocq, B. (2010) *Disputed Desert: Decolonization, Competing Nationalisms, and Tuareg Rebellions in Northern Mali*, Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 27-86.
[57] Andersen, M.S. (2012), 'Legitimacy in State-Building: A Review of the IR Literature', *International Political Sociology,* 6: 205-219, p.216.

legitimacy.[58] Likewise, Raineri and Strazzari (2015) demonstrated that non-state actors projected increasingly powerful alternative "geopolitical imaginaries" beyond the socio-political construct of the nation.[59] These actors advanced secessionist, jihadist or highly localised ethnic idioms and symbols in an attempt to legitimise their authority in specific territories across the northern and central regions.

Clearly, overlapping or competing webs of narratives and the construction of sociopolitical communities either in line or at odds with the nation thus characterised Mali's hybrid political order. Scholars proposed many different ways to conceptualise the plurality of power poles engaged in instituting and legitimising their authority in the context of a hybrid political order. Mampilly (2003) referred to "parcellised sovereignty" to depict a situation in which non-state actors in areas de-linked from the power of the state (often as a result of conflict) claimed a form of sovereignty.[60] Such representation is problematic because, as noted in the above, the legal dimension of sovereignty is not parcellised or shared between state and non-state actors.

This thesis follows Hüsken and Klute (2015) and their conceptualisation of a "heterarchical" hybrid order because it aptly grasps the absence of a hierarchical power relation between state and non-state actors encountered in the Malian context. A key feature of the Westphalian state constituted its hierarchically superior position vis-à-vis other power poles in society. The state was on top, and so it should be. The hegemony of the state provided a certain stability to the political order. The alternative to such hierarchical political order was anarchy. Hüsken and Klute (2015) situated heterarchy somewhere in the middle of that scale between hierarchy and anarchy. It reflected a political order in which none of the actors, state or non-state, obtained the position of an overarching hegemonic force.

A heterarchical order, they noted, was characterised by:

> The mutable as well as unstable intertwining of state and non-state orders and the plurality of competing power groups.[61]

[58] Sears, J.M. (2007), 'Deepening Democracy and Cultural Context in the Republic of Mali, 1992-2002', PhD Dissertation, Queens University, Canada, p.39.
[59] Raineri and Strazzari (2015), p.250.
[60] Mampilly, Z. (2003), p.21.
[61] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p.321.

Likewise, Ferguson (2004) emphasised that non-state institutions increasingly operated as "horizontal contemporaries of the organs of the state."[62] The notion of heterarchy thereby provides a suitable analytical lens to depict the equitable power balance between state and non-state actors that prevailed in Mali by the end of 2018. Section 1.2. below operationalises the term in more detail by way of introduction to Chapter 2, which traces the historical roots of Mali's heterarchical political order.

In conclusion, the post-colonial African state often remained a far cry from the ideal notions that underpinned the Westphalian state. In practice, hybrid political orders emerged and the state shared key statehood functions with non-state actors across society, including religious leaders, local militias or traditional chiefs. In some cases, state and non-state power poles even developed into "horizontal contemporaries" as an inherently unstable hetarchical political order emerged over time. However, several scholars also criticised the classification of political orders as "hybrid". Two points of critique stand out in particular. The conceptualisation of political orders as "hybrid" emerged in response to the labelling of statehood dynamics as "fragile" or "weak" based on normative (Western) statehood practices. Certainly in its initial phases, the hybrid analytical perspective favoured a "more positive outlook" by emphasising the "strength" and "resilience" of non-state governance rather than the "weakness" of the state.[63] While Meagher (2012) acknowledged the increased role of non-state actors in hybrid security arrangements across Africa, she also questioned the (at times implicit) assumption that non-state actors were necessarily more legitimate or effective compared to state institutions.[64] She rightfully argued that popular perceptions about any attempt, either by state or non-state actors, to institute authority should be empirically assessed rather than *a priori* assumed.

A second point of critique concerned the risk of portraying dynamic statehood processes as too static simply by depicting them as "hybrid". Defining the interplay between formal and informal institutions should be the starting point for further empirical analysis rather than a final analytical verdict. Otherwise, the term hybrid evolves into a catch-all concept with little analytical value. Examining how interactions between state and non-state actors or institutions evolve over time is therefore crucial. This thesis has adopted such a longer-term perspective focused on historical patterns of both change and continuity, as section 1.2. reveals.

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[62] Ferguson, J. (2004) 'Power Topographies', in: D. Nugent and J. Vincent (eds.) '*A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*', Oxford: Blackwell Publishing: pp. 383-399; Ferguson, J. and Gupta, A. (2002).
[63] Clemens, K.P. *et al*. (2007) 'State Building Reconsidered: the Role of Hybridity in the Formation of Political Order', *Political Science,* 59(1): 45-56.
[64] Meagher, K. (2012) 'The Strength of Weak States? Non-State Security Forces and Hybrid Governance in Africa.', *Development and Change,* 43(5): 1073-1101.

This thesis follows Doornbos (2010), who noted that the hybrid model of negotiated statehood:

> [o]ffers a much-needed corrective to prevailing Weberian state notions and black and white dichotomies like state and non-state, or many discussions in terms of state failure.[65]

Yet, empirical research must take into account popular perceptions about hybrid practices and allow for a dynamic approach that assesses changes in the interaction between state and non-state actors over time. The following and final part of this section briefly highlights the profound impact of transnational networks upon hybrid governance practices.

Transnationalism fuelling heterarchy

Long-distance networks historically secured the economic, social and political survival of Saharan towns. In this part of the world, Scheele (2012) noted, places exist as the result of permanent movement.[66] Human mobility and commodity circulation have always been critical elements of local survival strategies.[67] The "local" cannot be conceived without considering long-distance interconnections and interdependencies.

Several transnational networks have increasingly influenced Mali's political order in recent decades. These networks ranged from international aid, high-value smuggling networks, a lucrative kidnapping industry, terrorist networks or international military operations. Both state and non-state actors tapped into and relied significantly on these and other transnational networks to extract resources that enabled them to underpin and expand their authority. Bøås and Strazzari (2020) noted that a "plurality of rent-seeking opportunities" became available for local politicians and entrepreneurs beyond the state.[68] Non-state actors thereby managed to reinforce their authority in the context of Mali's heterarchical political order because their dependence on state-provided resources decreased. Transnational ties thus considerably affected the power balance between state and non-state actors.

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[65] Doornbos, M. (2010), p. 766.

[66] Scheele, J. (2012) 'Garage or Caravanserail: Saharan Connectivity in Al-Khalil, Northern Mali', in: McDougall, J. and Scheele, J. (eds.) *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, pp. 222-237.

[67] Mobility indeed remains critical to survival. Nonetheless, a great number of pastoralists actually settled down. Their survival strategy thus combines both elements of settling down and remaining mobile. Cf. Gremont, C. (2014) 'Mobility in Pastoral Societies of Northern Mali: Perspectives on Social and Political Rationales', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 48(1): 29-40.

[68] Bøås, M. and Strazzari, F. (2020) 'Governance, Fragility and Insurgency in the Sahel: A Hybrid Political Order in the Making', *The International Spectator*, 55(4):1-17, p. 5.

Local kingpins in the high-value smuggling economy emerged as influential powerbrokers as they boosted their resource basis and established well-armed militias to protect their interests. The relationship between power, conflict, accumulation and criminality thereby strongly influenced the trajectory of political order in this part of the world. A phenomenon already noted by the authors of the seminal publication "The Criminalization of the State in Africa" decades ago.[69] These transnational networks clearly challenged prevailing state-centred conceptions of sovereignty, territoriality and citizenship while reinforcing the diffused and heterarchical patterns of statehood. Bøås (2015) aptly depicted Mali's northern regions as a geographical area characterised by overlapping and competing networks that were "neither entirely state nor non-state, local or global, but somewhere in between."[70]

In sum, this concise theoretical outline revealed an analytical move away from *state* authority and legitimacy in a *hierarchical* political order towards more hybrid forms of *public* authority and legitimacy in a *heterarchical* order. It is in such a context that democracy was expected to reinforce state legitimacy. The next section first clarifies the conceptual foundations of democracy's contribution to state legitimacy and subsequently introduces key aspects of the institutional, political, societal and international context in which democratisation transpired across the African continent.

1.1.2. Democratisation in the context of a heterarchical order

Democratisation influences processes of state formation in multiple and complex ways. This thesis focuses on key elements of one of the most central propositions of democracy, i.e. that it constitutes a political system based on popular consent rather than coercion.

State legitimacy, following Weber, entailed the acceptance of power and voluntary compliance of citizens with state domination. A normative, procedural and state-centred analytical perspective long underpinned prevailing notions of legitimacy. The only state that is legitimate, Fukuyama contended, is a democratic one.[71] This analytical stance chimes with the prevailing conceptualisations of state authority as presented in the previous section. According to these state-centred views, Andersen (2012) noted:

[69] Bayart, J.F., Ellis, S., and Hibou, B. (1999) *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*, Oxford: James Currey.
[70] Bøås, M. (2015), 'Crime, Coping, and Resistance in the Mali-Sahel Periphery', *African Security* 8(4): 299-319, p.299.
[71] Andersen, M.S. (2012), p. 208.

> Legitimacy can be objectively assessed by looking at the presence of certain defining features or properties at the institutional state level.[72]

The literature links this "legitimising impact" of democracy upon state institutions to three key concepts: (1) participation; (2) representation; and (3) accountability (see Figure 2 below).

As a political system that requires a government *by* the people and *of* the people, both *participation* and *representation* constitute two central components of democracy's contribution to state legitimacy.[73] Mobilising citizens and representing their interests, in a direct or indirect manner, are indeed critical building blocks of a political system that aims to connect people's preferences with actual policy choices. Ensuring inclusiveness is crucial if that system is to adequately reflect the popular will. Persistently low levels of popular participation, in general or amongst specific groups in society, thus hollows out state legitimacy.

Accountability constitutes a third key pillar of democracy's contribution to state legitimacy. In any representative democracy, people are only periodically mobilised and decision-making powers are transferred from ordinary citizens to a governing body. Precisely for that reason, mechanisms must be in place that compel rulers to inform, explain and justify their actions (answerability), while empowering citizens to impose sanctions (enforceability), ultimately by removing those in power. [74] These two core dimensions of accountability ties are shaped: (1) along vertical lines between those who govern and ordinary citizens; and (2) along horizontal lines amongst the different branches of government. Olsen (2013) underlined this relation between representation and accountability:

> Those acting *on behalf of* the community and on authority and resources embedded in public office are accountable to citizens. […] Office-holders are assumed to be more likely to act in the public interest when they are accountable to the governed – that is, when they have to explain and justify their behaviour and performance in public and face sanctions for misbehaviour and power abuse.[75]

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[72] Ibid., p. 210.

[73] Schmidt, V. (2010) 'Democracy and Legitimacy in the European Union Revisited: Output, Input and Throughput', November 2010, Kolleg-Forschergruppe Freie Universität Berlin (Working Paper Series, No. 21).

[74] Lindberg, S. (2013) 'Mapping Accountability: Core Concept and Subtypes', *International Review of Administrative Sciences',* 79(2): 202-226.

[75] Olsen, J.P. (2013) 'The Institutional Basis of Democratic Accountability', *West European Politics,* 36(3): 447-473, p. 454.

Likewise, Scharpf (2007) noted that analytical perspectives on state legitimacy in modern, Western polities tend to:

> [f]ocus on institutional arrangements ensuring democratic participation, the accountability of governors, and safeguards against the abuses of governing powers.[76]

This thesis primarily assesses patterns of citizens' mobilisation, interest representation and accountability ties provided through: (1) the party system; (2) the legislature; and (3) democratic institutions at the local level. Both political party representatives and parliamentarians mobilise people into the democratic process. They equally play a unique, dual role in shaping accountability. They are individually held accountable by citizens along vertical lines but, in turn, collectively hold the executive to account at the horizontal level. The analysis provided in the core part of this thesis thus explores the contribution of these democratic institutions to enhancing Malian state legitimacy. This analytical scope is, however, restricted in two important ways.

Firstly, the assessment of these democratic institutions paints only part of the overall state legitimacy picture. State legitimacy certainly does not solely depend on the democratic processes that connect citizens to the state, based on which decisions are made or leaders are elected ("input legitimacy").[77] It hinges in no small part on the actual performance of state institutions and representatives ("output legitimacy"). The assessment of the different democratic institutions provided in this thesis therefore does not allow us to draw conclusions about the overall level of Malian state legitimacy but merely on democracy's contribution to state legitimacy.

Secondly, the thesis is centred on prominent but relatively few political mechanisms that shape political participation, representation and accountability ties. Other broader – societal, judicial, bureaucratic, financial – forms are touched upon in the individual chapters but certainly not assessed in a structured manner. Therefore, the analysis presented in this thesis merely provides an in-depth study of the performance of a limited number of democratic institutions and their impact on state legitimacy rather than a comprehensive assessment.

[76] Scharpf, F.W. (2007) 'Reflections on Multilevel Legitimacy', Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, Cologne, July 2007 (MPIfG Working Paper 07/3).
[77] Scharpf, F. W. (1999) *Governing in Europe: Effective and democratic?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; idem (1997) 'Economic Integration, Democracy and the Welfare State', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 4:18-36.

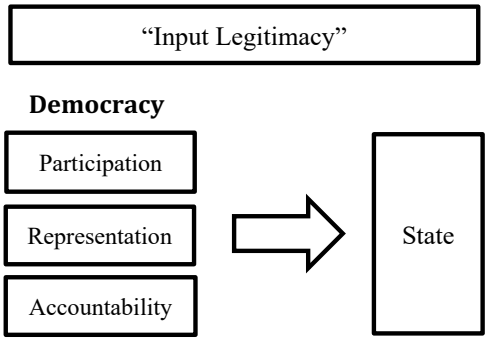

Figure 2: Key components of democracy's impact upon state legitimacy

Without pretending to offer a comprehensive overview, the following section introduces key factors that shaped the context in which patterns of political participation, representation and accountability transpired on the African continent subsequent to the third wave of democratisation. This thesis thereby complements well-known institutional factors with socio-cultural dimensions of democratisation that prevail in the literature.

Institutional and political context

Initially, studies on democratisation strongly or solely focused on elections. This approach was rooted in Schumpeter's procedural definition of democracy as a decision-making process through elections. Huntington (1991) even considered two peaceful transfers of power in successive elections, the so-called two-turnover test, as an indicator of satisfactory democratic consolidation.[78] The Mali case clearly revealed the limitations of such minimal procedural definition. The country was only months away from a second democratic turnover in the run-up to the 2012 elections when democracy completely collapsed instead of consolidating.

More generally, an Afrobarometer survey revealed that citizens across the African continent continued to display high levels of dissatisfaction with the quality of elections as mechanisms of representation and accountability.[79] As ruling elites appeared to orchestrate elections to their advantage, scholars broadened the scope of research by focusing on the "enabling environment" of electoral competition. They assessed, amongst others, whether the electoral process provided equal access to citizens, a level playing field for the competitors and the extent to which authorities respected political and civic rights.

[78] Huntington, S. P. (1992) *The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

[79] Etannibi, A. (2007) 'Quality of Elections, Satisfaction with Democracy, and Political Trust in Africa', Afrobarometer (Working Paper No. 84).

Yet, political trends across the African continent continued to reveal the limitations of too great an emphasis on elections (e.g. the "electoral fallacy") as the principal driver of democratisation. Scholars noted an:

> Unprecedented growth in the number of political regimes that were neither clearly democratic nor conventionally authoritarian.[80]

A whole set of sub-categories of regime types emerged in the literature that ranged from liberal democracies, electoral democracies, ambiguous semi-democracies and competitive or hegemonic autocracies. Both "electoral democracies" and "competitive authoritarian regimes" prevailed in Africa.[81] These regime sub-types both tolerated minimal democratic standards (to varying degrees) but concentrated political power strongly in the hands of executive presidents. Significant areas of decision-making remained beyond the control of other elected officials.

It was in this context that Carothers (2002) proclaimed the end of the "democratic transition paradigm" by the turn of the millennium. He contested the – often implicit – assumption that countries moved through similar stages after a democratic transition towards a predestined end goal of democratic consolidation.[82] In reality, many democracies seemed lost in transition and authoritarian patterns displayed a high level of continuity throughout the democratic era.

Several studies exposed severe institutional obstacles to effective accountability mechanisms vis-à-vis the executive branch of government in many of the "third wave democracies." A comparative study conducted by Van Cranenburgh (2008) revealed particularly high levels of institutionally anchored presidential powers in 30 African countries, compared to electoral democracies in other parts of the world.[83] Kapstein and Converse (2009) showed that constraining executive power increased the probability of democratic survival. Their comparative research suggested that democracy did not easily take root in those places where political and economic power became too concentrated in the hands of the executive.[84]

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[80] Diamond, L.J. (2012) 'Thinking about Hybrid Regimes', *Journal of Democracy*, 30(2): 21-35.
[81] Haggard, S. and Kaufman, R.R. (2016) 'Democratisation During the Third Wave', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19: 125-144; Bratton, M. (2004).
[82] Carothers, T. (2002) 'The End of the Transition Paradigm', *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1); 5-21.
[83] Van Cranenburgh, O. (2008) 'Big Men's Rule: Presidential Power, Regime Type and Democracy in 30 African Countries', *Democratisation*, 15(5): 952-973.
[84] Kapstein, E. and Converse, N. (2009) 'Why Democracies Fail', *Journal of Democracy',* 19: 57-68.

These views all echoed Aké's (1996, 2000) earlier well-known posture:

> Even in the era of democratisation, African constitutions give far too much power to the presidency, sometimes to the point of constituting it virtually as a dictatorship. In all too many cases, democratisation has been a matter of replacing a self-appointed dictator with an elected one.[85]

The concentration of power in the executive branch obviously affected accountability ties vis-à-vis other branches of government at the *horizontal* level. Based on an extensive review of the literature, Nijzink *et al.* (2006) concluded:

> Powerful presidents seem to be one of the most important reasons why modern parliaments in Africa are generally regarded as weak institutions.[86]

Equally, the electoral system in place constituted another important institutional factor shaping patterns of political mobilisation, representation and accountability ties.[87] Systems based on proportional representation generally produced higher voter turnout figures. Accountability ties between citizens and political representatives tended to be more direct and personal in constituency-based electoral systems. The possibility of holding individual parties accountable in systems of proportional representation (and coalition governments) were more restricted. Many party systems that emerged after the democratic transition also constrained patterns of accountability across the African continent. In great contrast to most democracies elsewhere, one-party dominance emerged and prevailed in a considerable number of African democracies.[88] This political trend indeed eroded the potential for horizontal accountability.

Institutional reforms undertaken in the area of decentralization were of particular interest in such highly centralised political contexts. Amidst the many definitions and dimensions, two forms stood out: *deconcentration* and *devolution*. The former entailed a transfer of centrally

[85] Ake, C., (1996) *Is Africa Democratizing?*, Ikeja: Malthouse Press/Centre for Advanced Social Science Monograph (no. 5), p. 6; *idem*. (2000) *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*, Chippenham: Antony Rowe Ltd., p.187.
[86] Nijzink, L., Mozaffar, S. and Azevedo, E. (2006) 'Parliaments and the Enhancement of Democracy on the African Continent: An Analysis of Institutional Capacity and Public Perceptions', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, (12)3-4: 311-335, p.317.
[87] Cf. Lindberg, S. (2005) 'Consequences of Electoral Systems in Africa: A Preliminary Inquiry', *Electoral Studies,* 24: 41-64, for a comprehensive overview of the literature.
[88] Doorenspleet, R. and Nijzink, L. (eds.) (2013) *One-Party Dominance in African Democracies*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

appointed personnel or state agencies to the local level, with continued reporting lines to central state institutions. The latter – embraced in Mali in the 1990s – constituted a real transfer of authority, responsibilities and resources to more autonomous subnational layers of government. Municipal authorities obtained substantial discretionary authority in several policy areas. On paper, devolution changed the intra-state power balance between central and local tiers of government considerably. In practice, "decentralisation in Africa has been widespread but not deep" and research revealed the continued dominance of central government:[89]

> The main conclusion that emerges from African decentralisation experience is that governments have, on the whole, been reluctant to decentralise sufficient power to local level governments to enable them to have significant impact on local service delivery.[90]

In sum, highly centralised institutional and political characteristics continued to characterise many African democracies despite the democratic transition and decentralisation reforms.

Socio-cultural context

This thesis assesses citizens' mobilisation and interest representation by Malian political institutions around prevailing social cleavages such as class, religion, ethnicity and the urban-rural divide. Even so, the emerging literature revealed a notorious lack of programmatic differences amongst political parties and policy debates during electoral campaigns.[91] Gyimah-Boadi's (2007) view captured the wider stance that:

> Contrary to what conventional political theory prescribes, [political parties] are hardly conceived and developed as mechanisms for representation, conflict resolution, opposition and accountability, or institutionalisation of democratic behaviour and attitudes. The continent's parties are largely conceived and organised as vehicles for capturing the state.[92]

[89] Cabral, L. (2011) 'Decentralisation in Africa: Scope, Motivations and Impact on Service Delivery and Poverty', Overseas Development Institute, March 2011 (Working Paper No. 020).
[90] Conyers, D. (2007) 'Decentralisation and Service Delivery: Lessons from Sub-Saharan Africa', *IDS Bulletin* 38(1): 18-32, p.24.
[91] See: Walle, N. van de. and Butler, K.S. (1999) 'Political Parties and Party Systems in Africa's Illiberal Democracies', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 13(1): 14-28.
[92] Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2007) 'Political Parties, Elections and Patronage: Random Thoughts on Neo-Patrimonialism and African Democratisation', in: *Votes, Money and Violence Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa*', Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet / Kwalzula-Natal: University Press, p.25. Also see: Randall, V. and Svåsand, L. (2002) 'Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Africa', *Democratisation*, 9(3): 30-52.

Instead, voter mobilisation and representation appeared to be shaped along alternative lines, with a prominent role for clientelistic and patrimonial networks. In a context of largely agrarian and informal economies with poorly organised and institutionalised socio-economic interest, Van Walraven (2000) contended:

> Ethno-regional and clientelist interests may indeed represent the most rational strategy for political actors to aggregate social interests.[93]

In their seminal work "Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument", Chabal and Daloz (1999) underlined the prevalence of patrons above policies. Citizens supported patrons – not necessarily parties – whom they considered capable of providing them with tangible benefits. Politics was shaped through hierarchical personalised ties rather than intermediary political institutions. At the heart of this patrimonial form of domination was an exchange of loyalty, political support and particularistic favours between patrons at the top and their individual clients (*clientelism*) or larger groups of supporters (*patronage*) in society.[94] Political elites were primarily held accountable for their ability to nourish an informal clientelistic support network on which their power rests.[95] All across the African continent, large segments in society expected their representatives to take care of them in a parental way.[96]

The geographical dimension underpinning such networks proved particularly relevant. Several studies revealed that individual patrons often maintained a strong clientelistic support basis amongst kinsmen and, more specifically, their region of origin.[97] Citizens, from their point view as clients, preferred to rally around a political *fils du terroir* as they believed: that "only a member of the community can be expected to be accountable to its members."[98]

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[93] Reference from: Randall, V. and Svåsand, L. (2001) 'Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Africa', (Paper for ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Grenoble, 6-11 April 2001), p.18. Also see: Hyden, G. (2017) 'The Decentralization Experience in Africa: Beyond Donor-Driven Approaches', *Africa Review,* 9(1): 98-114.
[94] Daloz, J-P. (2005) 'Trust Your Patron, Not the Institutions', *Comparative Sociology,* 4(1): 155-174, p.166.
[95] Daloz, J-P. (2003) '"Big Men" in Sub-Saharan Africa: How Elites Accumulate Positions and Resources', *Comparative Sociology*, 2(1): 271-285, p.278.
[96] Logan, C. and Bratton, M. (2006) 'Voters But Not Yet Citizens: The Weak Demand for Vertical Accountability in Africa's Unclaimed Democracies.' Afrobarometer (Working Paper No.63).
[97] Basedau, M. and Stroh, A. (2009) 'Ethnicity and Party Systems in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa', Hamburg: GIGA, (Working Paper No. 100); Cheeseman, N. and Hinfelaar, M. (2009) 'Parties, Platforms and Political Mobilisation: The Zambian Presidential Election of 2008', *African Affairs,* 109(434): 51-76; Donge, J-K. van (2006). 'Interpreting Political Culture: The Zambian Presidential Elections of 2006', available at: https://www.soas.ac.uk/gdai/residential-school/2009/file59660.pdf.
[98] Hyden, G. (1999) 'Governance and the Reconstitution of Political Order', in: Joseph, R. *State, Conflict and Democracy in Africa*, Boulder, CO / London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, p.188.

Scholars differed about the relative weight of patrimonial forms of domination in relation to official state structures. Chabal and Daloz (1999) contended that patrimonial forms determined political dynamics. Political elites and state officials merely instrumentalised their positions in the state apparatus to distribute public resources amongst their personal networks. The representation of particularistic interests persistently surpassed and trumped public service delivery in the national interest. Based on his extensive study of Nigerian politics, Daloz (2003, 2005) also portrayed patterns of "patrimonial rule" as the "principal mode of legitimation."

Yet, others contended that the state administration was more than a mere façade. The "neo-patrimonialist" concept connected the Westphalian "rational-legal" type of domination with the "patrimonial" form in an analytical sense. Engel and Erdman (2007) defined neo-patrimonialism as:

> The mixture of two co-existing, partly interwoven, types of domination: namely, patrimonial and legal-rational bureaucratic domination.[99]

Exactly how the balance between "rational-legal" and "patrimonial" forms of domination played out in different contexts was simply a matter of empirical enquiry. The combination of strong powers vested in the presidency and patrimonial forms of domination enabled political elites to remain in power for a prolonged period in many countries across the continent. Indeed, both factors appeared to significant in terms of the relative "political stasis" (e.g. the lack of renewal of political elites), which Bleck and Van de Walle (2018) observed in their analysis of electoral politics on the continent since the 1990s.[100]

While patrimonialism was widely recognised as a key factor shaping patterns of political representation and accountability in many African polities, it was also criticised and nuanced. Several empirical studies convincingly challenged its one-dimensional focus on the exchange of public resources in private networks as the sole – or at least primary – anchor of interest representation and accountability ties. The patrimonial framework tended to ignore or at least underestimate broader factors underpinning authority. Nugent (2001), for example, demonstrated the need for Ghanaian politicians to transform money into some kind of moral authority for it to become an effective campaign tool.[101]

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[99] Erdmann, G. and Engel, U. (2007) 'Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 45(1): 95-119, p.105.

[100] Bleck, J. and Van de Walle, N. (2018), *Electoral Politics in Africa since 1990: Continuity in Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-29.

[101] Nugent, P. (2001) 'Winners, Losers and Also Rans: Money, Moral Authority and Voting Patterns in the Ghana

Hansen (2003) offered a detailed account of an official visit by a minister to his hometown in Cameroon.[102] During a public address, the minister emphasised his position as a patron for his region of origin. He assured his support base that he would mobilise state resources to the benefit of "his" area while sharing a big envelope with brand-new banknotes (public resources) amongst the local notables (personal network). Yet, he also legitimised his own position and state authority more generally with subtle reference to notions of honour, religion, violence and hierarchy. Hence, there is a need to shift from a one-dimensional patrimonial model towards a multi-dimensional approach of political representation and accountability.

Political agency was played out on a "cultural field" that was more complex than patrimonial or rational-legal forms of authority could account for.[103] Political culture has often been characterised as a deeply engrained and historically grown style of governance around a set of powerful symbols.[104] The impact of culture upon politics was studied in this perspective. Political culture constituted an historical pattern of continuity more than fluidity or change. Chabal & Daloz (2006) advanced an alternative interpretative approach to depict the relationship between culture and politics that recognised people's agency and captured the dynamics of cultural change. Building upon Clifford Geertz, they argued that culture mainly provided meaning to political agency.[105] People have certain beliefs that influence political behaviour. Schaffer (1998), for example, found that Wolof speakers in Senegal understood the act of voting in the context of locally modified notions of democracy ("demokaraasi"). Voting, they believed, constituted an expression of solidarity ties amongst community members and an opportunity to obtain tangible support from patrons. Much more than a choice between candidates in a sturdy competition, people understood and used the institution of voting as an opportunity to reinforce cooperation and mutual ties. His study convincingly demonstrated the need to take popular perceptions, beliefs and understandings of political institutions, representation and accountability notions into account.

2000 Election', *African Affairs,* 100(400): 405-428; Ellis, S. and Ter Haar, G. *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa*, New York: Oxford University Press.

[102] Hansen, K.F. (2003) 'The Politics of Personal Relations: Beyond Neo-Patrimonial Practices in Northern Cameroon', *Africa*, 73(2): 202-225.

[103] Ruigrok, I. (2011), p.53.

[104] Abbink, J. (2006) 'Discomfiture of Democracy? The 2005 Election Crisis in Ethiopia and Its Aftermath', *African Affairs* 105(49): 173-199; *idem* 'The Ethiopian Second Republic and the Fragile Social Contract', *Afrika Spectrum,* 44(2): 3-28.

[105] Chabal, P. and Daloz, J-P. (2006) '*Culture Troubles: Politics and the Interpretation of Meaning*', London: Hurst & Co, p.21.

So far, this section has introduced key aspects of the institutional, political and socio-cultural national context in which patterns of citizens' mobilisation, interest representation and accountability were shaped through democratic institutions. This section ends with a short reflection on the influence of the international context on accountability ties. This analysis is further extended throughout the different chapters of the thesis.

International context

International aid instituted strong *external* accountability relations of receiving governments towards international donors, often to the detriment of *domestic* accountability ties. Mali proved to be a case in point. The country received an average of 15 per cent of its GDP from aid between 1967 and 2013. This amount increased to approximately 25 per cent (in terms of commitments) in subsequent years.[106] Per capita Official Development Assistance (ODA) tripled from $26 in 2000 to a peak of $84 in 2013. By 2015, international aid had risen to a staggering 75 per cent of central government expenditure.[107] In contrast, Mali's tax-to-GDP ratio decreased from 16.7 per cent (2017) to 14.1 per cent (2018). This percentage was well below the average score of 30 other African countries.[108] Only an estimated one per cent of international donor support provided to Mali benefitted democratic institutions (e.g. elections, judicial sector, promoting political and civil rights).[109] Moreover, aid dispersed in other policy areas hardly included interventions geared towards improving democratic governance in these sectors. International donor support thereby further boosted an already omnipotent executive vis-à-vis other branches of government and society at large. It weakened democratic oversight and widened the gap between rulers and ruled.

With regards to *horizontal* relationships of accountability, Burnell (2012) underlined the detrimental impact of development aid on national checks and balances by institutions such as the legislature.[110] In the case of Mali, Van de Walle (2012) illustrated that budget support negatively impacted the balance of power between the branches of government.[111]

[106] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018), p.13.
[107] Brown, S. (2017) 'Foreign Aid and National Ownership in Mali and Ghana', *Forum for Development Studies,* 44:(3): 335-356, pp.342-343.
[108] OECD (2020) 'Revenue statistics Africa – Mali',
available at: https://www.oecd.org/countries/mali/revenue-statistics-africa-mali.pdf.
[109] Walle, N. van de (2012) 'Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy', United Nations University (Working Paper No. 2012/61).
[110] Burnell, P. (2012) 'External Accountability Meets Accountability Assistance: The Case of Legislative Strengthening in Africa', in: Chirwa, D.M. and Nijzink, L. '*Accountable Government in Africa: Perspectives from Public Law and Political Studies*', pp. 273-292, Tokyo: United Nations University Press.
[111] Walle, N. van de (2012), p.11.

Much of the socio-economic and monetary policymaking dialogue was shaped between donors and the government, outside the realm of the legislature. Parliamentarians often lacked vital information and the potential for parliamentary oversight was limited.

External accountability mechanisms appeared to be weak. Dijkstra (2018), for example, noted that although Malian authorities failed to implement critical reforms that they had committed to, such as the establishment of an Independent Court of Auditors, the donor community refrained from holding them to account.[112] This stemmed from the fact that cooperation in other policy areas was considered (more) satisfactory or because strategic interests were at play and donors preferred to maintain constructive ties with Malian authorities.

In terms of *vertical* accountability relations, civil society organisations received more support from international donors than institutions performing key roles at the horizontal level of accountability, such as the legislature and the judiciary. However, similar patterns of external accountability prevailed to the detriment of domestic ties across Malian society. Many (largely urban-based) civil society institutions lacked effective communication and consultation channels within society, most notably the rural areas. Policy priorities of external funding partners strongly influenced their agenda, often to the detriment of local actors. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (2016) noted that some of the umbrella organisations in Malian civil society were:

> Not sufficiently connected with their respective constituency bases to be inclusive, participatory or accountable.[113]

In fact, some of the most influential actors and networks that were strongly embedded in Malian society and provided effective forms of executive oversight along vertical lines developed outside the realm of official development aid, as is revealed in several of the following chapters.

In sum, this section briefly sketched key features of the context in which democratisation in general and patterns of citizens' mobilisation, interest representation and accountably ties in particular developed across the African continent (see Figure 3). Their influence on the performance of Malian political parties, the party system, the legislature and decentralisation is assessed in more depth throughout this thesis.

[112] Dijkstra, G. (2018) 'Budget Support, Poverty and Corruption: A Review of the Evidence' (EBA Report, No. 04/2018), p.55.
[113] Nyirabikali, G. (2016) 'Opportunities and Challenges for Civil Society Organisations to Peace Building in Mali', SIPRI, (Working Paper, No.2016/1), p.14.

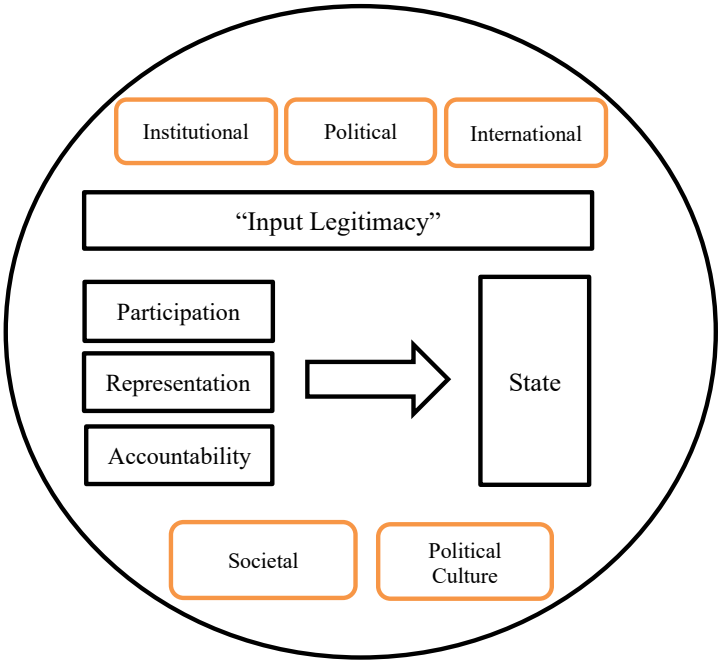

Figure 3: Context factors shaping "input-democracy"

The following section operationalises the overall research question and ensuing sub-questions. On that basis, the research design is specified as well as the various research methods used.

1.2. Conceptual and operational framework

This thesis contributes to a wider body of literature that emerged after the collapse of Malian state authority and legitimacy in 2012. In-depth country-specific and regional studies greatly contributed to improving our understanding of the factors that underlay the series of tragic events that rose to the surface in that troubled year. These factors included the rise of high-value smuggling networks, the increased terrorist threat, the downfall of the Libyan regime, major governance challenges and other factors highlighted in the above. This thesis seeks to complement the existing literature by assessing how central aspects of democratisation affected the challenging process of state formation (and deformation) in the period preceding 2012. Following an exemplary democratic transition that ended decades of authoritarian and often predatory rule in the early 1990s, Malian democracy was expected to shore up state legitimacy.

Democracy, as shown in the previous section, primarily enhances state legitimacy by providing mechanisms that allow for political participation, representation and accountability. Hence, the central research objective of the thesis is to reveal:

How the performance of key democratic institutions in the area of political participation, representation and accountability affected the legitimacy of the Malian state in the context of Mali's emerging heterarchical political order (1992-2012)?

More specifically, this thesis examines the performance of Malian political parties (and the party system), parliament and municipal democratic institutions in enhancing state legitimacy by shaping political participation, representation and accountability (1992-2012). This central research question is addressed in the core (middle) part of the thesis (Chapters 3-5). An introductory historical chapter first traces the historical roots of Mali's heterarchical political order (1960-2012). It illustrates the changing power balance between state and non-state power poles over time with a particular focus on hybrid forms of security provision. The thesis ends with a reflection on the anchoring of a heterarchical order in the five-year period that followed the crisis (2013-2018). Based on this overarching research objective, the remaining part of this section introduces and operationalises the ensuing sub-questions and defines the central concepts for each of these three main sections.

#1. The emergence of a heterarchical political order and hybrid security provision

Research question

What encouraged the emergence of Mali's heterarchical political order? How have patterns of hybrid security provision evolved over time, to the point of state collapse?

- How has the power balance between the Malian state and non-state actors engaged in public security provision shifted over time (*vertically superior* versus *horizontally equivalent*)?
- How has the nature of cooperation between state and non-state actors evolved over time (*complementary* versus *delegatory*)?
- What were the main channels of cooperation (*official* versus *unofficial*)?

Heterarchy

In a heterarchical political order, as noted above, the state operates as one institution amongst many non-state equals rather than obtaining a hierarchically superior position above other power poles in society. The analytical focus shifts from *state* authority to *public* authority.

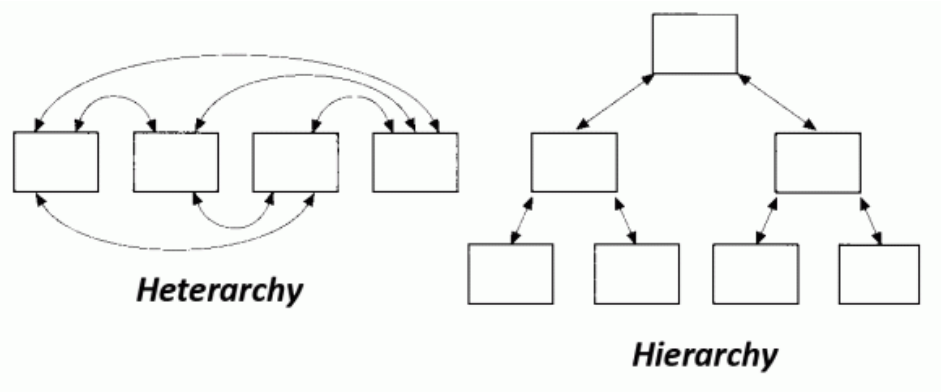

Figure 4: © Klute, G. *et al.* (2016)

In the absence of a hegemonic force, a heterarchical order is inherently less stable than a classical hierarchical political order. Different power poles institute their authority in either cooperation, isolation or conflict with one another and alliances frequently shift over time.

Hüsken and Klute (2015) contended:

> The notion of heterarchy is appropriate to describe the fluctuating, entangling and disentangling tribal, state like, Islamist and jihadist, youth, civil, organised crime, and militia-like forms of political organisation. This comprises varying political practices and rationales as well as different conceptions of power, rule, and legitimacy.[114]

By 2018, the Malian state clearly operated as a "horizontal contemporary" rather than hierarchically superior institution vis-à-vis non-state actors in society. State expenditure, as noted in the above, reached a mere 20 per cent of the national territory. Meanwhile, a myriad of non-state power poles, including armed groups, local militias, self-defense groups, traditional and religious leaders had firmly anchored their authority across the rural areas.

[114] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p.324.

A survey conducted by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) revealed that respondents across the country perceived the Malian state as being incapable of providing basic social and security services, while non-state actors increasingly filled the void.[115] Prior opinion surveys revealed that Malian citizens, much more than people in other West African countries, primarily raised their concerns with traditional and religious leaders.[116] More in-depth studies showed that villagers living in the border area between central and northern Mali, for example, almost entirely relied on these non-state actors for (a minimal provision of) social services and local infrastructure.[117]

In 2018, the Malian state clearly shared most of its core functions with non-state actors in the context of a heterarchical political order. Chapter 2 traces the emergence of this heterarchical order and zooms in on historical patterns of interaction between state and non-state actors in the area of public security provision.

Security defined

Amidst the many definitions of and analytical perspectives on security, one important difference related to the main "referent object" of security that distinguished a state-centred approach from a human security perspective. Luckam and Kirk (2012) noted – in reference to Scott's seminal work – that academic work on security long entailed "seeing like a state."[118] The state apparatus obtained the primary responsibility to protect citizens. The underlying assumption was that "if the state is secure, then so too will those that live within it."[119] This approach thereby strongly focused on the "supply side" of security. Empirical studies, however, increasingly revealed its limitations. State security forces frequently failed to protect citizens or even committed abuses against their own citizenry. In this context, the concept of "human security" (and many related variations, including "citizen's security" or "personal security") gained prominence. The individual, rather than the state, was taken as the principal referent object and security was re-defined in terms of an "entitlement of citizens." The analytical focus thereby shifted from the supply side towards the demand side of security.

[115] Tobie, A. and Chauzal, G. (2018) 'State Services in an Insecure Environment: Perceptions among Civil Society in Mali', SIPRI, December 2018 (Working paper, No. 2018/7).
[116] Bratton, M., Coulibaly, M. and Machado, F. (2000) 'Popular Views on Good Governance in Mali', Afrobarometer, March 2000. (Working Paper, No.9).
[117] Bleck, J. and Michelitch, K. (2015) 'On the Primacy of Weak Public Service Provision in Rural Africa: Malians Redefine 'State Breakdown' Amidst 2012 Political Crisis', Afrobarometer (Working paper No.155).
[118] Luckham, R and Kirk, T (2013) 'The Two Faces of Security in Hybrid Political Orders: A Framework for Analysis and Research', *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, 2(2): 1-30, p. 5.
[119] Owen, T. (2004) 'Challenges and Opportunities for Defining and Measuring Human Security', United Nations Department for Disarmement Affairs (Working Paper), p.16.

A second difference constituted the scope of security. Scholars distinguished a narrow from a broad conceptualisation. The former approach perceived security primarily in terms of protection from violent threats. The broader approach defined security as the protection from a wide variety of threats. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for example, adopted such a multidimensional approach and distinguished as many as seven different sub-categories of security (e.g. economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, political security, community security).[120] This thesis largely focuses on the supply side of security in a narrow sense. The main objective is to assess patterns of hybrid security *provision* over time. How local citizens perceived these various efforts requires additional empirical and historical research.

Hybrid security

The above theoretical outline revealed that non-state actors played a considerable role in public service delivery across the African continent (and elsewhere). "Nowhere is this more striking," Bagayoko *et al*. (2016) noted, "than in regard to the core security, policing and justice functions of African states."[121] On the "supply side", *hybrid security* arrangements are characterised by complex interactions between state and non-state actors. These actors either compete or cooperate for power, resources, legitimacy and thereby determine patterns of both security and insecurity.[122] The hybrid security approach thus moves away from the *state* as sole security provider towards a more heterogeneous conceptualisation of *public* security. The interaction between state and non-state actors is assessed based on a concise operational framework.

Operationalising hybrid security

Three indicators are used to study the historical interplay between state and non-state actors in the security realm under subsequent Malian governments, to the point of state collapse in 2012.

- The power balance refers to the position of the state vis-à-vis non state armed factions, either as *vertically superior* or *horizontally equivalent*;
- The channels of cooperation allude to the interplay between state and non-state factions shaped through *official* channels (a peace process) or through *non-official* channels (personal networks);

[120] *Ibid,* p.18.
[121] Bagayoko, N., Hutchful, E. and Luckham, R. (2016) 'Hybrid Security Governance in Africa: Rethinking the Foundations of Security, Justice and Legitimate Public Authority', *Conflict, Security and Development* 16(1): 1-32, p.1.
[122] Luckham, R. and Kirk, T. (2013), p.7.

- The nature of cooperation assesses whether security cooperation between the state and non-state actors is *complementary* or *delegatory*. In the former case, state and non-state representatives both participate in joint security efforts (e.g. patrols or assaults). In the latter case, the state transfers its formal authority to non-state actors.

This last dimension is based on literature in the field of hybrid warfare.[123] An important difference, however, is that this academic stream is largely focused on the motives of the state (or an external third party) to engage with non-state actors. Such an approach ignores the motives of non-state actors to align with or oppose the state. As a result of an alignment with state forces, local factions, for example, improve their position vis-à-vis other local stakeholders. Therefore, when Malian state and non-state actors engaged in complementary or delegatory relationships, this thesis reflects on the motives behind this engagement from both perspectives.

Security as 'proxy' for national public service delivery?

The first part of this thesis examines the emergence (Chapter 2) and subsequent anchoring (Chapter 6) of a heterarchical political order, in which the exercise of public authority in the public service involves the Malian state as just one institution amongst many non-state equals. It thereby zooms in on historical patterns of change and continuity in the area of public security provision in both northern and central Mali.

The conclusions drawn on this basis do not reflect nationwide patterns. Geographical inclusivity is only partially accounted for as the thesis follows the shifting sands of conflict in Mali. Chapter 2 is largely concentrated on hybrid security provision in the northern regions. Chapter 6 also examines the – even more heterogeneous – patterns of security provision encountered across central Mali as the level of security started to deteriorate. However, the thesis does not address hybrid security provision across Mali's more stable southern regions. Initial research suggests that local coping mechanisms that emerged in response to state absence in those areas varied from the ones witnessed in the northern and southern regions.[124]

Moreover, the historical analysis of hybrid public service delivery is predominantly focused on patterns encountered in the security realm. These patterns do not necessarily reflect similar trends of hybrid statehood encountered in other policy areas. The power balance or task division

[123] For an overview of that literature and more elaborate typology of "hybrid warfare", see: Rauta,V. (2019) 'Towards a Typology of Non-State Actors in Hybrid Warfare: Proxy, Auxiliary, Surrogate and Affiliated Forces', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 33(3):1-20, pp. 7-14.
[124] Tobie, A. and Chauzal, G. (2018).

between state and non-state actors potentially differs across sectors. Non-state actors such as international NGOs can, for example, play a central role in social service delivery while, at the same time, the state itself maintains a leading role in the area of public security provision. The assessment of hybrid security patterns cannot be extrapolated to other policy sectors.

Hence, additional research is required that complements the findings of this thesis to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of public service delivery in the context of a heterarchical political order.

Non-state armed groups loosely defined

Non-state armed groups are generally categorised based on: (1) their level of internal cohesion and organisation; (2) the objectives they pursue; (3) their main adversaries; and (4) whether they (aim to) control territory. Although recognising the benefits of such categorisation for analytical purposes, a strict application to the Malian case is challenging in light of the highly dynamic nature of alliances, group membership and objectives. Non-state armed groups in Mali are characterised by multiple and overlapping goals while their (pro- or con) stance vis-à-vis the state changes over time. There are examples of influential local armed factions who changed their allegiance to a terrorist group, a secular secessionist group and a pro-government militias during the course of just one year. This thesis therefore adopts a broad encompassing definition of non-state armed groups as organisations motivated by political, economic, personal, communal or other goals, capable of using violence against or in cooperation with the state, other armed groups or civilians.[125] The core objective is to study the historical interplay between state and non-state actors; not the functioning of non-state armed groups per se.

#2. Democratisation in the context of an emerging heterarchical order

Research question and sub-questions

How have key democratic institutions affected the legitimacy of the state in the context of Mali's emerging heterarchical order (1992-2012)? More specifically, what have been prevailing patterns of popular participation, representation and accountability provided through the party system, parliament and newly created local democratic institutions?

[125] NATO Strategic Direction South (2019) 'Informal Governance of Non-State Armed Groups in the Sahel', Canterbury: University of Kent, p.4.

Party system (Chapter 3)

- What have been prevailing patterns of *political participation* and *interest representation* provided through the party system?
- What explains the prevalence of one-party (1992-2002) and one-coalition dominance (2002-2012) in the Malian party-system?

Parliament (Chapter 4)

- How has the *accountability* performance of Members of Parliament (2007-2009) affected state legitimacy?
- How have Malian Members of Parliament MPs performed their particularistic constituency-oriented duties and collective legislative and oversight tasks in the years before democracy's decay?

Decentralisation (Chapter 5)

- Which social cleavages shaped *political participation and interest representation* at the local level during three consecutive local elections in one specific rural municipality (1999-2009)?
- To what extent and in which ways have newly established formal *accountability* mechanisms at the heart of Mali's ambitious decentralisation reforms affected state legitimacy (1999-2009)?

Participation, representation and accountability

The core part of this thesis assesses the performance of Malian political parties (and party system), parliament and municipal democratic institutions in enhancing state legitimacy by shaping political participation, representation and accountability (1992-2012).

Political participation is widely regarded as the "*elixir of life* for democracy" but conceptualised in many different ways.[126] The narrowest definition restricts political participation to individual behaviour designed to affect the choice of government through elections. However, most definitions move beyond the *choice of* government personnel and widened the analytical scope by including popular influence over the *choices made by* government personnel.[127] Political participation is then defined as "individual or collective behavior designed to affect the choice of government personnel and/or policies."[128] Another definitional matter concerns the question of whether political participation is limited to activities directly expressed through the political system or whether it also encompasses "non-political activities used for political purposes," such as popular protests, civil society activism

[126] Deth, J.W. van. (2014) 'A Conceptual Map of Political Participation', *Acta Politica* 49: 349-367, p. 350.
[127] Conge, P. (1982) 'The Concept of Political Participation', *Comparative Politics* 20(2): 241-249.
[128] Verba, S. and Nie, N.H. (1972) *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, New York: Harper and Row, pp. 2-3.

or even political violence.[129] I consider such activities to be a type of *civic* engagement rather than political participation. The focus of this thesis, as highlighted above, is restricted to the contribution of a select number of democratic institutions in shaping patterns of popular participation "designed to affect the choice of government personnel and/or policies."

A central debate in the literature on political representation is related to the question of whether representatives act as "delegates," who strictly follow the preferences of constituents or operate as "trustees" with a considerable level of discretionary powers and autonomy and mainly follow their own judgements.[130] In practice, representative democracies feature a mix of both forms as no elected representative acts entirely independently or has the ability to consult citizens and determine voters' preferences on *all* the political issues at stake.

This is precisely why accountability mechanisms are crucial in a representative democracy where political actors take decisions *on behalf of* ordinary citizens. This concept gained much traction in the literature towards the end of the 1990s, as the advantages of the third wave of democracy remained well below expectation.

Scholars revealed the prevalence of weak accountability mechanisms despite the democratic transitions, as highlighted in the above theoretical outline. This thesis draws heavily on the definition and key dimensions of accountability advanced by Lindberg (2013) based on an extensive review of the literature.[131] A relationship of accountability involves an actor or institution that must give an account (e.g. an MP) to someone else (e.g. constituents) about a specific matter (e.g. a policy). The principal components of accountability, as already highlighted, constitute the obligation of – in this example – the MP to inform constituents and justify his or her actions, while the latter obtain mechanisms to sanction the MP. Three key dimensions of accountability emerged in the literature: the *source* of accountability (are political representatives being held accountable internally, within an institution, or externally, by citizens); the *degree of control* that people have over representatives (although difficult to quantify); and the *direction* of accountability (vertical upwards, vertical downwards or horizontal).[132] These dimensions are introduced and operationalised in more detail in the respective chapters.

[129] Deth, J.W. van (2014), p. 358.
[130] Fox, J. and Shotts, W.H. (2009) 'Delegates or Trustees? A Theory of Political Accountability', *The Journal of Politics*, 71(4): 1225-1237.
[131] Lindberg, S. (2013) 'Mapping Accountability: Core Concept and Subtypes', *International Review of Administrative Sciences',* 79(2): 202-226.
[132] Lindberg, S. (2009), p. 11.

In sum, this thesis primarily focuses on the contribution provided by a limited number of prominent democratic institutions in shaping patterns of political participation, representation and accountability. In line with the above theoretical outline, a complementary socio-cultural and institutional approach guided the analysis of these democratic institutions.

Contextualising democratic institutions

Malian political parties, the legislature and a municipal council are the institutions analysed in the core part of this thesis. The assessment of their functioning in daily practices moves well beyond the formal roles and responsibilities and also includes influential informal tasks that their representatives are expected to perform.

The basic concept of an institution is commonly defined as the rules and procedures that structure social interaction by both *constraining* and *enabling* people's behaviour. Many scholars refer to the work of Douglass North in this regard.[133] He strongly emphasised the "constraining" aspect of institutions.[134] Others, like Hodgson (2006), underlined the "enabling" side of institutions in a more explicit manner.[135] By extension, formal institutions are defined as rules and procedures created, communicated and enforced through channels widely accepted as official and often codified in constitutions and legislation. The term official implies that the rules and procedures emanate from an authority, in this case, the state. This thesis addresses formal aspects of Mali's democratic regime, which are defined as the "sets of political procedures – sometimes called the 'rules of the political game' – that determine the distribution of power."[136] Informal institutions are defined as socially shared values, usually unwritten, which are created and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels. This includes patrimonial sources of legitimacy or cultural beliefs. Representatives of Malian political parties, parliament and local democratic institutions are thus embedded in a broader "incentive structure" shaped by a variety of formal and informal factors that influence their functioning. All chapters address the following contextual factors:

- Institutional: Relevant aspects of Mali's democratic regime, most notably the formal powers vested in the executive and legislative branch of government; the electoral system; political parties' regulation; as well as the institutional power balance between the different tiers of government;

[133] Cf. Levitsky, S. and Helmke, G. (2006) *Informal Institutions and Democracy: Lessons from Latin America*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, p.5.
[134] North, D.C. (1991) 'Institutions', '*Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5(1):97-112.
[135] Hodgon, G.M. (2006) 'What Are Institutions?' *Journal of Economic Issues*', 40(1):1-25.
[136] Bratton, M. and Van de Walle, N. (1997), pp. 9-10.

- International: A concise analysis of the mechanisms of cooperation between Mali and international terms in terms of volume, internal distribution, policy priorities and working modalities;
- Societal: Mostly centred on an assessment of the cleavages in society that are most influential in shaping participation, interest representation and accountability ties through the political system.
- Political culture: Popular beliefs that affected political behaviour (e.g. perceptions about legitimacy; accountability; democracy; consensus versus opposition politics…).

The main objective of this core part of the thesis is to assesses the performance of crucial democratic institutions and their contribution to enhancing state legitimacy in this particular context during the two decades that followed Mali's exemplary democratic transition.
However, the state is but one of a number of institutions exercising and legitimising authority in Mali's heterarchical order, as noted above. Influential non-state actors including traditional and religious leaders, non-governmental organisations, urban protest movements, youth networks and armed groups all play a major role in Malian society and institute their authority in reference to multiple sources of legitimacy. Each chapter will therefore also explore the interplay between democratic and other influential sources of legitimacy in a shift away from *state* legitimacy towards *public* legitimacy.

#3. The anchoring of Mali's heterarchical political order in the aftermath of the crisis

Research question

How has the power balance between state and non-state actors in Mali's heterarchical political order evolved in the area of public security provision and decentralised administration in the aftermath of the crisis (2013-2018)?

- A perspective "from below": What has been the role of both state and non-state actors in ensuring basic protection amidst prevailing patterns of insecurity in northern and central Mali? Have security actors started to play a more comprehensive role in decentralised administration as a result?
- A perspective "from above": What has been the impact of the Malian peace process and prevailing patterns of hybrid security provision upon the power balance between state and non-state actors?
- Democratic legitimacy: How have patterns of political participation, representation and accountability shaped democracy's input to state legitimacy in the aftermath of the crisis?

Basic legitimacy

The notion of "basic legitimacy of protection from violence" plays an important role in this chapter. It suggests "those who are able to offer protection from violence are at the same time

those with the best chances to accumulate power and position."[137] This final chapter builds on the historical analysis provided in the first part of this thesis that revealed the increased role of non-state actors in the security realm as well as the assessment of hybrid decentralised administration in the second part.

Now that the research questions, theoretical and operational frameworks have been introduced, the next section specifies the research design and methods.

1.3. Research design and methods

This thesis started as a project in the "IS-Academy" of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which launched this initiative together with several research institutes and universities to increase knowledge about the functioning of, amongst others, fragile states.[138] The Ministry awarded several four-year grants to full-time PhD students and a number of much smaller scholarships to practitioners, enabling them to conduct research on a part-time basis. I was part of this latter category and received support for a study on Malian statehood and democratic institutions. The expected academic output encompassed a number of individual publications, bundled in a PhD thesis at a later stage. This set-up, structured around individual articles, enabled practitioners to combine policy and academic work as it divided the entire workload into manageable, smaller parts with clear deadlines. However, this structure also restricted the cohesion of the entire research project. In order to circumvent this challenge and to improve the overall coherence of this thesis, all previous publications have been considerably revised and extended. Moreover, an overarching post-hoc introductory a well as concluding chapter have been drafted. The expected output from my research also included policy-oriented publications.

In this context, I conducted and supervised an empirical study comparing local accountability mechanisms between municipalities in five sub-Sahara African countries. After summarising the various country reports in a policy brief, which I presented during a meeting of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), I published the main results in an easily accessible brochure.[139] Furthermore, the policy-oriented work included publications on constitutional reform processes. I first elaborated a policy paper on

[137] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p. 116.
[138] In 2019, the IS-Academy was renamed as the Academy for International Cooperation (AIC).
[139] Vliet, M. van. (2011) 'Accountability and Improved Local Service Delivery in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policy Orientations', Leiden: African Studies Centre Leiden, available at: https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/18129.

constitutional reform processes in Zambia and then became the lead author of a handbook presenting guidelines for international organisations supporting these processes in practice.[140] Building on the above theoretical and operational frameworks, the remaining parts of this chapter outline the research design and various methods used, highlight a number of important limitations of this thesis and provide a brief outline of the various chapters.

1.3.1. Research design: Implications of a single-country case study

This thesis focuses exclusively on Mali. As a research method, the case study has well-known limitations in terms of non-replicability, representativeness and generalisation. This section first clarifies why this research method was adopted and subsequently specifies the contribution it nonetheless provides to wider theory-building efforts.

The case study method aligns well with what I still consider to be a pioneering field of research focused on different aspects of newly emerging forms of political order across the African continent. The body of literature is rapidly expanding and innovative approaches are on the rise. However, prevailing theories, e.g. modernisation theory, and analytical frameworks remain too state-centric and unilinear, and have shown their limitations with respect to grasping the complex empirical dynamic across the continent. As a research method, the case study is particularly well suited to obtaining a rich analysis of such processes occurring within their specific context. Comparative studies pull together a large number of cases and define a limited number of independent and dependent variables. A case study, in contrast, enables one to observe and study multiple contextual variables in their natural setting. This is particularly relevant, for example, when studying aspects of public legitimacy, which really requires an in-depth and context-specific analysis. Instead of examining broader patterns of correlation between a limited set of variables, a case study tends to be guided by research questions geared towards understanding *how* and *why* these interactions occur in a certain context. So-called theory-guided case studies are a clear example. Guided by a conceptual framework derived from theory, they focus on interpreting a specific case "rather than to generalise beyond the

[140] Vliet, M. van. (2009) Writing Autobiographies of Nations: A Comparative Analysis of Constitutional Reform Processes. The Case of Zambia. The Hague: NIMD; Vliet, M. van, Wahiu, W. & Magolowondo, A. (eds.) (2012) 'Constitutional Reform Processes and Political Parties: Principles for Practice', The Hague – Leiden: NIMD, IDEA and ASC.

data."[141] However, science does remain a "generalising activity."[142] Despite the obvious limitations inherent to a case study as a result of its very small N, the method can nonetheless be designed in such a way that it can make a valuable contribution to *the process* of theory building – rather than theory building per se. A case study adds empirical data relevant to the testing of well-established theories or generates new insights in emerging fields of interest. This thesis examines or "tests" the impact of several factors, well-established in the literature, that influence the performance of democratic institutions. The combination of institutional and political with societal and cultural factors is of most interest in this regard.

The more exploratory dimension of the thesis concerns the heterogeneous context in which democratisation transpired in Mali. The thesis explores how the functioning of democratic institutions influenced the legitimacy of the Malian state in relation to other major power poles and sources of legitimacy in society. This explorative dimension of the Malian case study certainly obtains wider regional relevance considering the emergence of heterarchial orders in other countries across the Sahel, where the state operates as one institution amongst non-state equals. Finally, key components of this thesis were part of cross-country studies in order to improve the value of the Malian case study for comparative use and generalising efforts. This holds for the chapter on Malian Members of Parliament that builds upon (and extends) the methodology used in a previous case study in Ghana. Likewise, the chapter on one-party dominance was part of a comparative project involving all major regions in sub-Saharan Africa.

1.3.2. Research methods

The case study design allows for the use of a variety of research methods, including qualitative ones, such as interviews and participant observation, and an analysis of existing quantitative data and archival research. By applying such a combination of research methods and by checking and counterchecking findings through triangulation, I attempted to strengthen the overall research design. The empirical work of the thesis is based on a combination of the following methods: 1) participant observation; 2) semi-structured interviews and informal talks; 3) the analysis of archives and existing data from surveys such as the Afrobarometer.

[141] Levy, J. S. (2008) 'Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference', *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 25: 1-18, p. 4.
[142] Lijphart, A. (1971) 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', *American Political Science Review,* 65(3): 682-693, p. 691.

Given my training as an anthropologist and development sociologist, *participant observation* constituted an important research method. I observed the implementation of Mali's decentralization policies and the organisation of three consecutive municipal elections in the rural municipality of Karan in Southern Mali for almost a decade. I regularly visited the area, staying for periods ranging from a number of weeks to five months, and I developed relations of trust with many of my respondents. Mitchel (2006) emphasises the benefit of this method when it is deployed over a longer period and assesses how respondents "constantly renegotiate their position towards each other in a rapidly changing socio-political context."[143] This is exactly why participant observation proved so valuable when analysing patterns of both change and continuity in socio-political trends at the municipal level over a longer period. The method also enabled me to observe events and human behaviour in daily practice, rather than relying solely upon interviews or formal legislation alone, which boosted the validity of my research. There was a significant difference between the formal mandate of the newly established municipal council and its functioning in daily practice, which I was only able to analyse because of my prolonged presence on the ground. Participant observation also enabled me to discover local sociocultural institutions, such as the *kabila* (a family group or "clan" across generations) and *kare* (a generational group across families), that I had been unaware of at the start of my research, but which turned out to be very influential in shaping local political affairs.

A more profound reflection on methodological matters related to this case study is provided at the beginning of Chapter 5. I also used the method of participant representation while studying the functioning of Malian Members of Parliament. I attended many public sessions of the legislature listening to the issues they raised and debated. This provided valuable additional data that contextualised the outcome of my interviews. In addition, I joined the two top contenders of the 2007 presidential election on the campaign trail to gain a better understanding of their interaction with citizens and the campaign dynamics on the grounds. Obviously, the method has a number of disadvantages, which I explain in more detail in the next section. Yet, overall, participant observation proved a valuable addition to the many interviews I conducted.

Throughout the entire research project, I used *structured interviewing* as a research method, but also held many highly informal discussions with respondents. The semi-structured interviews with Malian parliamentarians, for example, contained open questions, but also many closed-ended questions to enable a quantitative analysis of behavioral trends. The interviews were largely based on a questionnaire developed by the African Power and Politics research

[143] De Vries, L.A. (2012), p. 28.

programme in order to increase the comparative value of the case study. I deliberately chose to bring their voices into the wider academic field because this "actor-oriented" perspective adds value to prevailing institutional assessments of African legislatures.[144]

Informal discussions proved to be a particularly useful research method for discussing sensitive matters. Conversations about local conflicts or tensions provided highly valuable research data. Chapter 5, for example, demonstrates competing (and contradictory) power claims by local actors who referred to different repertoires in order to legitimise these claims. Gathering these multiple perceptions and examining how they played out in actual practice increased my understanding of underlying patterns of change and continuity.

My use of *literature review* constituted an important research method for the historical parts of this thesis as well as for Chapter 6. My own archival research was limited to the parliamentary archives, therefore, I relied heavily upon existing studies for most of the historical parts of this thesis. Nonetheless, I do believe that this part of the thesis adds value to the current body of literature. Not only because it combines francophone and anglophone literature on Mali, but also because of its analytical perspective. This thesis provides a unique long-term assessment of patterns of both change and continuity in hybrid security provision strategies by pulling together data from different periods in history and multiple sources into one analytical framework.

I gratefully exploited the *results of the opinion polls* conducted by the Afrobarometer and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (Mali-Mètre) in Mali, which complemented studies published by fellow researchers, policy papers and news outlets. Publications by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) provided particularly valuable data from rural areas in central Mali that are not easily accessible.

The final chapter, which focuses on the anchoring of Mali's heterarchical political order in the period between 2013 and 2018, almost entirely relies on existing studies and public sources rather than empirical data and interviews. This is related to my position as a diplomat, first as an advisor to the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRGR) in Mali and Head of MINUSMA; subsequently, as the Sahel Coordinator with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In these capacities, I encountered all relevant Malian and international stakeholders between 2013 and 2018. I gathered a wealth of data that would have certainly solidified the empirical foundations and scientific validity of Chapter 6. Nevertheless, I decided to keep my work as a diplomat separate from my role as researcher; a choice partly motivated

[144] Long, N. (2001) *Development Sociology: Actor Perspectives.* New York: Routledge.

by the confidentiality of my diplomatic role and the obvious ethical complications of using these data in my thesis without prior consent of the many actors I spoke with at the time. However, the use of this information would also have been problematic in a methodological sense. I interacted with Malian and other stakeholders on behalf of the UN or The Netherlands. The context (and related incentives) in which my interaction with these actors took place was therefore very different from the manner in which I would have talked with these actors (if at all) as a researcher in an interview setting.

Before presenting the results of my research, the following section highlights a number of limitations of this thesis and then briefly recapitulates the outline.

1.3.3. Limitations

The previous sections already referred to some limitations of this thesis caused by the structure of this research project, built around a series of individual publications. The thesis offers a detailed analysis of the functioning of a limited number of democratic institutions and their influence upon state legitimacy rather than a comprehensive assessment. This section briefly highlights additional limitations.

The considerable influence of Islam in the political realm is a subject of critical importance in Malian society but was not addressed in the individual publications that provided the building blocks of this thesis. Although not assessed in detail, the political role of religion is nonetheless incorporated in this final thesis and illustrated by a number of tangible examples. I also included references to the work of other scholars in both academia and policy circles who addressed these developments at greater length.[145] In a similar vein, this thesis highlights key socio-economic trends – most notably centred on the wide urban–rural divide – but certainly does not offer a thorough analysis in this regard.

This dissertation also lacks a balanced gender perspective. A vast majority of representatives of political and sociocultural institutions, who constituted the primary target group of my field research, was male. In my interviews, I primarily aimed for a balance between my respondents in terms of geographical representation, political party membership or membership of a specific

[145] See for example: Soares, B.F. (2006). 'Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era', *African Affairs*, 105, (418):77–95; Schultz, D. E. (2003) 'Political Actions, Ideological Fictions: The Controversy over Family Law Reform in Democratic Mali, *Islamic Law and Society*, 10(1): 132-164; Schultz, D. E., Meyer, B. and Moors, A. (2006) 'Morality, Community, Publicness: Shifting Terms of Public Debate in Mali', in: *Religion, Media and the Public Sphere,* Bloomington: Indiana: 132-151; University Press; Lebovitch, A. (2019). 'Sacred Struggles: How Islam Shapes Politics in Mali.' Policy Brief, European Council on Foreign Relations; Thurston, A. (2013) 'Towards an Islamic Republic of Mali', *Fletcher Forum World Affairs* 37(2): 46-66.

family or generational groups. It proved difficult to build up relations of trust with women, particularly at the local level, and to circumvent their limited inclusion in my research. This lack of a gender balance clearly constitutes an important limitation of this thesis.

Finally, it proved difficult to obtain access to and conduct empirical research about sensitive matters such as the rise of transnational criminality, the presence of radical Islamists in northern Mali or state infiltration in drug smuggling networks. I circumvented this difficulty to some extent by referring to publications of other scholars who had better access to important respondents in this respect. Hence, I certainly owe a debt of gratitude to researchers who gathered empirical data in these difficult circumstances.

1.3.4. Outline of the book

This thesis consists of three main sections. The first two sections focus on the period preceding the 2012 crisis, while the final part covers the five-year period thereafter.

The first part (Chapter 2) examines the emergence of Mali's heterarchical order and illustrates hybrid patterns of public service delivery, with a specific focus on security.

The second and core part examines whether and how patterns of political participation, representation and accountability shaped through the party system (Chapter 3), the legislature (Chapter 4) and municipal democratic institutions (Chapter 5) shored up Malian state legitimacy, against the background of the emerging heterarchical order.

The third part (Chapter 6) examines the anchoring of Mali's heterarchical order in the years that followed the 2012 crisis, despite considerable international efforts in support of the state.

In the general conclusions (Chapter 7), I return to the overarching research question and ensuing sub-questions presented in this introductory chapter.

Chapter 2

A flagship of democracy turned into a shipwreck of anarchy?

An historical analysis of hybrid security provision in Mali.[146]
(1960–2012)

INTRODUCTION

Long perceived as a beacon of democracy on the African continent and a relatively stable anchor in a troubled region, the status of the Malian state radically altered in a short span of time. In early 2012, state authority withered in Mali's northern regions as an opaque alliance of terrorists, former Tuareg rebels and drug smugglers took control of an area encompassing more than two thirds of the country's territory. It thus seemed as though, almost overnight, a flagship of democracy had turned into a shipwreck of anarchy.

However, the speed at which the Malian state lost control over the northern regions exposed the shaky foundations that underpinned state authority in general and security provision in particular. This chapter counters an analysis that interprets the troubled events in 2012 in terms of a sudden collapse of robust state authority. Instead, the chapter examines how subsequent regimes instituted state authority in relation to other power poles in society and traces the historical roots of Mali's heterarchical political order. It zooms in on the historical interplay and changing power balance between state and non-state armed groups involved in hybrid security provision. This analysis is restricted to narrow hybrid security provision in northern Mali *from above* ("supply side"). It does not take popular perceptions of these efforts into account or address broader human security preoccupations *from below* ("demand side").

Three key dimensions guide the historical assessment of hybrid security provision. First, the chapter examines whether security cooperation between state and non-state actors occurred through *official* or *unofficial* channels. Secondly, the chapter assesses changes in terms of the form of cooperation. Did state defence and security forces and non-state armed groups engage in joint security efforts (*complementary*), or has the state relied on non-state actors to act on its behalf (*delegatory*). Finally, it examines shifts in the power balance between state and non-state actors in the security realm. Did the state obtain a *vertically superior* position, or was it merely a *horizontal equivalent* of non-state armed groups?

[146] Elements of this chapter were part of earlier publications: Vliet, M. van (2013) "The Malian State: From Flagship of Democracy to Shipwreck of Anarchy?', in: *Wegweiser zur Geschichte – Mali.* Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh Verlag: 143-156.
and Vliet, M. van (2012) 'The Challenges of Retaking Northern Mali', *CTC Sentinel,* 5(11-12): 1-4.

2.1. INTERMEDIARY AUTHORITIES UNDER COLONIAL RULE

The northern parts of the Sahel, certainly the border area between Mali and Algeria, were amongst the last on the African continent to be colonised.[147] Tuareg warriors fiercely resisted colonial penetration and the vast terrains with a dispersed population proved difficult to control. In this situation, the colonial administration relied on *intermediary authorities* to maximise its geographical scope at limited cost as it sought to institutionalise its dominance over society. In its search for reliable local allies, French authorities made use of the hierarchical social structures that characterised Malian communities. These were organised along both kinship lines (multiple clans, differentiation at the *horizontal level*) and into hierarchical status groups (ranging from noblemen to former slaves, differentiation at the *vertical level*). The hierarchical stratification among Tuareg communities consisted of, for example, noble warriors (*imusgagh)*, free noblemen *(ineslemen)*, free non-noblemen (*imghad)*, craftsmen and bards (*inadan)* and (former) slaves (*iklan)*.[148] Many other communities consisted of similar "cultural fields of hierarchy."[149] The exact meaning of a clan or status group was locally contested and boundaries between social groups were fluid and subject to change.[150] To create a more stable socio-political order, French authorities formalised the clan-based system.

They created the function of *chef de canton* and searched for candidates amongst aristocratic families to fulfil this critical function,[151] thereby reshaping traditional leadership into an intermediary function between local subjects and the colonial state. The chieftaincy emerged into an "essential cog in the colonial system."[152] While the colonial state operated as the supreme hierarchical authority, it granted considerable levels of autonomy to its intermediary allies. In this context, it was important for local clan leaders to be recognised as the leading authority and privileged interlocutor in a particular region. In northern Mali, Ifoghas Tuareg

[147] Lecocq, B. and Klute, G. (2013) 'Tuareg Separatism in Mali', *International Journal,* 86(3):424-434, p. 425.
[148] Keita, N. (2012) *L'Esclavage au Mali*, Paris: l'Harmattan.
[149] For the pastoralist Fulbe in central Mali, see Pelckmans, L. (2011) 'Traveling Hierarchies: Roads In and Out of Slave Status in a Central Malian Fulbe Network.' Leiden: African Studies Collection, N. 34. For the Malinke in Southern Mali, see Jansen, J. (1996) 'Le frère cadet et l'étranger. À la recherche d'un discours sur le statut au Mande', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, (36)144: 659-688.
[150] Hall, B.S. (2011) 'Bellah Histories of Decolonization, Iklan Paths to Freedom: The Meanings of Race and Slavery in the Late-Colonial Niger Bend (Mali), 1944-1960', *International Journal of African Studies*, (44)1:61-87; Lecocq, B. (2010).
[151] Fay, C. (1995) 'La démocratie au Mali, ou le pouvoir en pâture', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*. (35)137: 19-53, p. 40.
[152] Mann, G. (2015) *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 65.

managed to expand their influence over other clans in the Adagh area (today's Kidal region) as a result of their strategic alliances with French authorities.[153]

Colonial forces also relied on allied factions amongst local communities to ensure law and order. Archival research by Gremont (2012) illustrated that French colonial forces aligned with and armed local militias to combat other (nomadic) groups who tried to resist the colonial state.[154] Ifoghas Tuareg established mixed military units with colonial forces to suppress revolts by other clans.[155] In Arab communities, the Berabiche frequently collaborated with French colonial forces.[156] In addition to such *complementary* hybrid security efforts, colonial forces relied on *delegatory* forms of cooperation to maintain order in the stretched-out Sahelian regions. They established auxiliary mobile police forces ('*gourmiers*'), who recruited from amongst local warriors and noble factions.[157] These forces surveyed the dispersed nomadic zones, collected taxes and went after those who rebelled against colonial oppression. Yet, the colonial administration remained the hierarchically superior command with a strong authority over these hybrid security practices.

Throughout the seven decades of colonial rule (1890–1960), the scope of the colonial state remained limited in the northern regions of today's Mali. French colonial authorities focused on the southern regions, in particular those areas with economic potential. As a result, most people residing in the North lacked vital connections to the colonial administration, francophone education system and other public services. Their livelihoods and sociocultural affinity depended more on networks across the Sahara towards northern Africa than the colonial epicentre towards the South. By the end of the colonial period, the French envisioned the establishment of the semi-autonomous Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes (OCRS), encompassing parts of today's Algeria, Niger, Mauritania and northern Mali, in an attempt to safeguard an influence sphere in the Sahel. Many community leaders in northern Mali perceived the OCRS as a strategic opportunity to avoid becoming ruled by the emerging southern elites during a post-colonial era. They fiercely opposed their integration into a Malian

[153] Boilley, P. (1999) *Les Touaregs Kel Adagh.* Paris: Karthala.
[154] Gremont, C. (2012) 'Villages and Crossroads: Changing Territorialities Among the Tuareg of Northern Mali', in: McDougall, J. and Scheele, J. (2012) *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwestern Africa.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
[155] Klute, G. (1995) 'Hostilités et alliances. Archéologie de la dissidence des Touaregs au Mali', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, (35)137: 55-71; Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2010) 'Emerging Forms of Power in Two African Borderlands: A Theoretical and Empirical Research Outline', *Journal of Borderlands Studies,* 25(2): 107-121, p. 110.
[156] McGregor, A. (2013). 'French Cooperation with Tuareg Rebels Risks Arab Rising in Northern Mali', *Terrorism Monitor*, 11(5). Jamestown Foundation.
[157] Evrard, C. (2017) 'Les unités nomades des forces armées et de sécurité des États sahélo-sahariens. Un outil d'inclusion nationale ? Une perspective historique', *Franco-Paix Bulletin* 2(9): 1-7; Lecocq, B. (2010), p. 144.

state and pleaded their case with the French leadership, emphasising the profound sociocultural differences between northern and southern Mali. However, the French eventually aborted the OCRS project. The political leadership in Bamako had perceived the alignment of northern leaders with the colonial forces and the OCRS initiative with great suspicion.[158] Once in office, they were determined to swiftly institute state authority across the entire newborn nation.

2.2. ANCHORING STATE SOVEREIGNTY AND HIERARCHY AT INDEPENDENCE

The Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (US-RDA) guided the country towards independence and, after a short-lived federation with Senegal, Mali was born as a country on 22 September 1960. Its leaders instituted a socialist inspired and highly centralised one-party regime, which they legitimised with a national unity discourse and modernisation agenda for the whole of society. Power was strongly vested in the hands of the party leadership and became increasingly personalised under President Modibo Keita.[159] The regime was driven by a strong desire to position the Malian state as the hierarchical superior locus of authority in society, both on the basis of an anti-imperialist agenda vis-à-vis the former colonial forces as well as domestically over other power poles in society. There was not a great deal of political, economic or civic space outside the realm of the state and little room for dissent. Hence, at independence, a hierarchical political order emerged in Mali rather than a hybrid model in which the state shared core duties with non-state power poles.

In the immediate years after independence, the US-RDA party took full control of the state. Zolberg (1966) demonstrated that the party-state emerged as the prevailing political model across the West African region.[160] In Mali, the US-RDA intended to supervise, control and co-ordinate all the other instruments of government. State officials and party representatives jointly collected state taxes along with party membership fees. In a relatively short time, the party established local structures across Mali's vast territory to ensure the channelling of its directives from the political centre towards the peripheries.

The independence leaders quickly asserted Malian state authority vis-à-vis the ex-colonial authorities. They opted for a radical break with the colonial past, in a much more profound way than most countries in the region. The US-RDA leadership took swift action to "Africanise" the

[158] Boilley, P. (1999), pp. 269-316.
[159] Baudais, V. (2016) '*Les Trajectoires de l'Etat au Mali*', Paris: Karthala.
[160] Zolberg, A.R. (1966) *Creating Political Order: The Party-States of West Africa*, Chicago, IL: Rand McNally & Company, pp. 104-5 and 134-5.

state administration. They replaced French administrators with Malian nationals, notably party rank-and-file, at a much greater pace than in neighbouring countries.[161] They enforced the autonomy of the Malian army by closing French army bases and by rejecting mutual defence cooperation. Moreover, they pulled out of the regional monetary union, thereby delinking Mali's currency from France.[162] The authorities even went out of their way to obtain detailed information about Malian citizens residing in France, whom they encouraged to return home to contribute to the new state.[163]

Domestically, the independence party dominated and controlled the public sphere. The US-RDA took a firm grip of the political, military, social and economic spheres by – as they put it – "weaving a dense spider's web" across society.[164] The regime officially banned influential Islamic organisations as it sought to weaken the position of religious leaders.[165] In a crucial move to institute its political authority over society and to counter the influence of alternative power poles, the US-RDA had gradually restricted the role of the *chef de canton* in the years before independence. The Malian leaders questioned their legitimacy as intermediary leaders during the colonial era and eventually abolished the position altogether.[166] Ideological notions and a general policy geared towards promoting equal citizenship underpinned these measures. Moreover, the US-RDA wanted to lift what they considered to be traditional impediments to a modern society and economy. However, the policy also aimed to further entrench the grip of the party-state over society. The new decentralisation policy replaced the central role of the local chief with a state appointed administrator, who, in turn, appointed a local village chief.

Nonetheless, US-RDA had to acknowledge that it was impossible to entirely bypass the intermediary role of local chiefs in the densely populated and largely pastoralist northern regions. In the run-up to independence, the US-RDA had consistently expressed its commitment to liberate former slaves, who constituted an important electoral constituency to the party, from "feudal" oppression in local hierarchies. The US-RDA profiled itself as a people's party and gradually managed to build a solid support basis amongst the so-called former slaves across the northern regions. Many tribal leaders, in turn, became active members of the Parti Progressiste Soudanais (PSP), a real chief's party.[167] Once in office, Malian independence leaders indeed

[161] *Ibid.*, p.64.
[162] Mann, G. (2015), p.77.
[163] *Ibid.*
[164] *Ibid.*
[165] Thurston, A. (2013) 'Towards an "Islamic Republic of Mali"', *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs,* 37(2): 45-66, p. 49.
[166] Mann, G. (2015), pp. 62-77.
[167] Boilley, P. (1999).

pursued their anti-slavery ideology, promoting equal citizenship as noted above, and reinforced support networks with historically lower ranked factions across the region.[168] Moreover, it enabled "subordinate" factions to create their own administrative units at the local level in order to reinforce their autonomy vis-à-vis the traditional chieftaincy.[169] Mali's independence leaders were particularly keen to institute state authority in these areas because of the rapprochement made by several chiefs towards the French-projected Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes (OCRS). However, in daily practice, the party also relied on local chiefs as crucial intermediaries to exercise public authority and administer these distant and vast areas. In contrast to the overall policy and prevailing practice in other parts of the country, they therefore continued to collaborate with chiefs in the remote northern regions.[170]

Beyond centralisation in the political realm, the US-RDA nationalised the economy and created dozens of state enterprises. State companies secured a monopoly on the export of primary products. The introduction of a national currency, the *Franc Malien*, enabled the government to regulate and tax transnational trade, to the great annoyance of many merchants who resorted to smuggling their goods.[171] Mali's independence leaders aimed to transform the agricultural sector into a modern, socialist, peasant economy. Amselle (2002) portrayed the rise of a state bourgeoisie enforcing (and thereby exploiting) the rural areas to contribute to socialist accumulation.[172] The US-RDA perceived small-scale agriculture as an impediment to development and instituted forced labour on collective fields through a system of local agricultural cooperatives. Farmers perceived these efforts as oppressive, exploitative and reminiscent of the colonial era and tried to wriggle out of the forced labour schemes. As a result, the state-led efforts turned out to be highly unproductive and the commercialisation of cereals diminished over time. Highly personalised – including family-based – support networks between the party-state and privileged entrepreneurs in the commercial realm emerged. Yet, the vast majority of non-privileged economic actors increasingly mobilised against the authorities.

The limited socio-economic efforts undertaken in the North focused on "rationalising" the cattle industry by settling nomadic pastoralists. The US-RDA also perceived pastoralism, as practiced by many Tuareg and Fulani in northern and central Mali, to be an obstacle to national

[168] Whitehouse, B. (2017) 'How Did Mali Get There: (Part 1: Echoes of Decolonization)', 5 May 2017.
[169] Molenaar, F. et al. (2019) 'The Status Quo Defied: The Legitimacy of Traditional Authorities in Areas of Limited Statehood in Mali, Niger and Libya', Clingendael, August 2019 (Research Report).
[170] Lecocq, B. (2003) 'From Colonialism to Keita: Comparing Pre- and Post-Independence Regimes (1946-1968)', *Mande Studies*, 5: 29-47.
[171] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018), p. 9.
[172] Amselle, J.L. (2002) 'La corruption et le clientélisme au Mali et en Europe de l'Est. Quelques points de comparaison', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 4(72): 629-642, p. 631.

development.[173] Yet, their sedentarisation policies threatened local economies and livelihoods. Many citizens in these areas felt increasingly alienated from the state.

On top of their efforts to anchor the authority of the party-state in a physical sense, Malian independence leaders invested in nation building. They promoted a "national myth" as a basis upon which citizens could relate to each other as Malians. However, they primarily rooted representations of a common political community in historical narratives of southern communities, notably the ancient Mali Empire. Various scholars noted the selective historiography and bias towards the Mande/Bambara cultural heritage in this regard.[174] President Modibo Keita was regularly portrayed as a descendant of Sundjata Keita, the alleged founder of the ancient Mali Empire in the thirteenth century.[175]

At the same time, Tuareg leaders across the North made efforts to enhance a sense of belonging amongst their different factions in clear opposition to this "southern" nationalist discourse. The Malian state that emerged at independence thus "harboured at least two nascent national ideas, if not more: the Malian nation and the Tamasheq nation."[176]

It was not long before popular dissent mounted against the policies propelled and advanced in such a coercive manner by Mali's independence leaders. It started with a first Tuareg rebellion in the northern regions. In the early 1960s, the highest leadership position (the *Amenokal*) amongst the Tuareg of the Kel Adagh near the Malian-Algerian border became vacant. Two brothers from the Ifoghas Tuareg clan were in the running to take up the position. The most popular candidate amongst local Tuareg factions aimed to reinforce relations with Algeria, Niger and France and to restrain the influence sphere of the Malian state in the northern regions. The US-RDA opposed France's "imperialist" influence and strove for greater Tuareg autonomy, which frustrated the party-state's centralisation efforts. The independence leaders actively supported the other brother, who was less popular locally but intended to solidify ties with the Malian state. This fuelled already mounting frustration towards the Malian state and a first armed rebellion broke out between 1962 and 1964.[177] The army brutally crushed the revolt, allegedly killing over a 1000 people and poisoning drinking wells.

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[173] Keita, K. (1998) 'Conflict and Conflict resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg insurgency in Mali', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, (9) 3: 102-128.
[174] Charbonneau, B. and Sears, J.M. (2014) 'Fighting for Liberal Peace in Mali? The Limits of International Military Intervention.' *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, (8)2-3: 192-213. Lecocq, B., (2010).
[175] Amselle, J.L. (2002), p. 638.
[176] Lecocq, B. (2010), p. 27. *Kel Tamasheq* ("those who speak Tamasheq") is a term primarily used in reference to pan-Tuareg mobilisation.
[177] Boilley, P. (1999), pp. 317-350.

The locally recruited mobile (camel-mounted) police forces ("*gourmiers*") found themselves in a particularly difficult situation, being deployed to fight their own kin. Accustomed to the terrain, they constituted an important actor in security efforts geared towards suppressing the rebellion. However, after the brutalities displayed by the army, many *gourmiers* jumped ship and joined the rebellion.[178] After the rebellion, Malian authorities refrained from holding the army accountable for the many atrocities it committed. On the contrary, they imposed military rule in the northern regions. Military staff fulfilled key functions in the state administration – from governors to schoolteachers – in these areas. The Adagh area remained isolated from the political, economic and social development in the rest of postcolonial Mali.[179]

While the rebellion in the North was brutally suppressed, popular resistance continued to mount against the authorities across the rest of the country. Citizens perceived the state as increasingly predatory and depicted the authorities in similar local terms as the former colonial regime.[180] Farmers and many entrepreneurs vocally protested against the failing economic policies and coercive governance style. The capacity of the Malian state to realise its leading role in the political, economic and social realms was limited and many of the initiatives it launched proved counterproductive in socio-economic terms. Numerous state-led efforts went against the very grain of local livelihoods and economies. They reduced citizens to subjects of forced labour and provoked firm resistance across the newborn country. Again, the US-RDA relied on repression and intimidation tactics to maintain its grip over society. They sent political opponents to prisons in remote areas and the party deployed an informal militia (the "army of the party") – which was better funded, trained and equipped than the army – across the country.[181] They empowered so-called *brigades de vigilance*, composed of urban youngsters attached to the party, to conduct policing tasks at the local level.[182] These actors were not fully integrated in the state structures but rather operated at the interface between party, state and society.

Although hybrid security practices occurred during the first republic, the Malian state largely dominated the security realm. This reflected the broader ambition of Mali's independence leaders to position the party-state as the central and hierarchically superior institution in society. The party-state constituted the primary institution exercising public authority in the public service. The room for manoeuvring of other power poles in society remained highly restricted.

[178] Lecocq, B. (2010), p. 175.
[179] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2010), p. 110.
[180] Amselle, J.L. (2002), p. 638.
[181] Mann, G. (2003) 'Violence, Dignity and Mali's New Model Army, 1960-1968', *Mande Studies,* (5): 65-82.
[182] Zolberg, A.R. (1966), p. 104.

It was only a challenge from *within* that toppled the regime. In 1968, a military coup ousted the independence leaders from power amidst the increasingly dire economic circumstances and mounting social resistance.

2.3. HYBRID PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE REALM OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Two, at first sight, paradoxical tendencies characterised the second Malian republic (1968-1991). On the one hand, its military leaders instituted a centralised autocratic regime, restricted civil liberties, ruled with a firm hand and sought to maintain the state as the main authority in society. On the other hand, actors operating outside the realm of the formal state increasingly performed key social services. Although hybrid patterns in the exercise of public authority in social service delivery emerged, the state continued to dominate security provision.

After the coup, Mali's new leadership initially established an authoritarian military regime that in 1979 was substituted with a one-party regime. From then on, the Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien (UDPM) and its leader Moussa Traore dominated Malian politics. As the Secretary-General of the party and only candidate during successive presidential elections, Traore was re-elected every five years. Local sections of the party proposed candidates for the legislative elections but the decision-making authority over the final candidate list rested with the party's Central Executive Bureau. The authorities co-opted the powerful class of state bureaucrats that they had inherited from the previous regime by keeping many of the national state companies intact, despite their inefficacies.[183] Fay (1995) illustrated how the party-state gradually established a system of governance based on predation and redistribution.[184] The authorities maintained a support base amongst influential power brokers across all strategic sectors in society in return for their loyalty. At the local level, the Malian state relied heavily on tribal hierarchy. Local chiefs regained their prominent role in conducting local affairs as state intermediaries and managed to reinforce their own position because of their allegiance to the regime. The informal political strategy of co-optation pursued by the UDPM raised public debt but was successful in political terms for many years.

The northern regions, still perceived as "*le Mali inutile"* (the useless part of Mali) in economic terms, received very little support.[185] The military regime "contented itself with the

[183] Bennett, V.P. (1975) 'Military Government in Mali', *Journal of Modern African Studies,* (13)2: 249-266.
[184] Fay, C. (1995), pp. 21-2.
[185] Storhold, K.H. (2001) 'Lessons Learned from the 1990-1997 Peace Process in the North of Mali', *International Negotiation,* 6: 331-356.

outer control of the region to prevent any further upheaval."[186] Many communities in the area lacked strong informal connections to the political centre that were crucial to advancing local interests during the UDPM era. The severe droughts that peaked in 1973-4 and again a decade later reinforced deep levels of popular mistrust vis-à-vis the central authorities across the northern and central regions. The droughts literally destroyed the pastoral economy, thereby inciting rapid urbanisation and sedentarisation. Many youngsters fled the area and settled in neighbouring countries where a considerable number joined the ranks of the armed forces. The Malian state completely mishandled the crisis across the northern and central regions. Citizens perceived the "dysfunctional and corrupt management of external resources by central authorities," with great bitterness.[187]

It was in this period that international organisations and NGOs gradually took on key statehood functions. First, by providing humanitarian aid and subsequently by expanding their scope to development cooperation encompassing a broader range of social services. This widened the already considerable gap between the Malian government, the state and society. The droughts and subsequent responses, Mann (2015) contended, thereby redefined "what government was and could be."[188] He demonstrated that a form of *nongovernmentality* emerged whereby NGO's increasingly performed different state functions. Yet, his nuanced assessment of this period moved beyond a zero-sum analysis or dichotomy between state and non-state governance. The increased role of non-state actors in providing public service delivery also enhanced the state in several ways. For example, it enabled the UDPM to focus on other dimensions of governance. This certainly held for its performance in the area of security. While the role of the state diminished in the area of socio-economic service delivery, its military presence in northern Mali remained considerable. The regime gradually dismantled many local mobile security units. The army also continued to play a leading role in administrating the area.

While the role of non-state actors in delivering social services rose to prominence, the ability of the state to finance development initiatives and to preserve its pyramid of clientelistic support networks became increasingly constrained throughout the 1980s. The subsidies provided to highly inefficient and unprofitable state companies together with the expensive civil service wage bill had overstretched public expenditure.[189] Import tariffs and high export taxes had restricted trade through official channels and the smuggling economy flourished as a result. In

[186] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2010), p.110.
[187] Baldaro, E. and Raineri, L. (2020) 'Azawad: A Parastate between Nomads and Mujahidins?', *Nationalities Papers*, 48(1): 100-115, p. 104.
[188] Mann, G. (2015), p. 169.
[189] Bourdet, Y. (2002) 'Economic Reforms and the Malian Economy', *Africa Development*, 27(1/2): 25-61.

the wake of these budgetary constraints, President Traore called upon the Bretton Woods institutions for financial support. International donors assisted Traore but made their support conditional on considerable cuts to public expenditure and demanded stringent administrative, economic and social reforms. In line with the broader framework of the Structural Adjustment Programmes, Malian authorities froze public wages, discharged civil servants, established performance-based criteria in the public service, ended food subsidies and cut social services. By the late 1980s, the purchasing power of urban households was down to half of the 1962 level.[190] Despite the fact that many citizens struggled to make ends meet amidst dire socio-economic conditions, corruption scandals that involved senior state officials were at the order of the day. Craven-Matthews and Englebert (2018) noted that:

> By the mid-1980s, […] regime members were accused of having stashed away $1 billion in foreign bank accounts (by then about 25 percent of gross domestic product).[191]

Unsurprisingly, popular protests against the authorities swell. Citizens attacked state edifices and targeted properties of the regime's economic collaborators in the capital city Bamako.[192] The state equally faced mounting security challenges in the northern regions. After the devastating droughts, numerous Tuareg youngsters migrated to Libya and Algeria, as noted above, and many had joined the ranks of the national armies. Whereas kinship and hierarchical differences obstructed the construction of a strong common identity in Mali, these migrants were all regarded as Tuareg's away from home. There was more that united than separated them. Many returned home and helped prepare a renewed rebellion in revenge for the brutal repression of the rebellion in the early 1960s, led by their father's generation, and subsequent military rule over the northern regions.

In 1990, they launched several successful attacks against the Malian army. Retaliatory actions by the army caused many civilian casualties, which only further eroded state legitimacy and encouraged other youngsters in the region to join the ranks of the rebellion.

Traore now faced fierce resistance in the capital city and well-trained rebels in the remote northern regions. With support from Algerian officials, he quickly negotiated a way out of the northern crisis and signed an agreement in the town of Tamanrasset in January 1991.[193] State

[190] Ouédrago, D. and Piché, V. (eds.) (1995) *L'Insertion Urbaine à Bamako.* Paris: Karthala.
[191] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018), p. 10.
[192] Harsch, E. (1993) 'Accumulators and Democrats: Challenging State Corruption in Africa' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 31(1): 31-48.
[193] Klute, G. (1995).

authorities made significant concessions to the rebellion by granting the northern regions a specific status with high levels of administrative autonomy. Moreover, they promised that almost 50 per cent of Mali's national infrastructural investment funds would be devoted to the northern regions. Locally recruited staff would replace army officers in the regional state administration and the army would vacate its military posts near Tuareg camps. Combatants of the armed groups would be integrated into the national army.[194] Those northern factions that were associated with the agreement welcomed it. However, other constituencies, most notably Songhay sedentary factions, complained that the deal failed to address their interests and rewarded those who had rebelled against the state. Opposition against the Tamanrasset accord was equally fierce in Bamako. People particularly criticised the granting of autonomy to the northern regions and questioned its impact on Mali's territorial integrity. [195]

Meanwhile, wider protests against the UDPM's poor socio-economic performance, the lack of democratic space and rampant corruption mounted. The "street" emerged as an important space to enforce political change. Different interest groups teamed up. Graduated youth who could not find work in the downsized state administration created the Association of Qualified Youth Demanding Work. Petty traders in the informal sector who were tired of being harassed by corrupt police officers, student movements, the trade unions, newly formed associations demanding a democratic opening all joined in. As the street became an import political arena, the social forces marching on it turned into a powerful political force. The armed forces violently repressed the protests and opened fire on the demonstrators in March 1991. Parts of the army eventually sided with the protesters and ousted President Traore in a military coup. After 70 years of colonial rule and over 30 years of authoritarian rule, Mali was about to institute a democratic regime.

2.4. INSTITUTING A HYBRID POLITICAL ORDER UNDER DEMOCRATIC RULE

A military-led transitional government paved the way for a national conference during which more than 700 delegates discussed the institutional foundations of the new democratic era. The conference drafted a new constitution, an electoral law and political parties' act. A popular referendum adopted the constitution and multi-party elections were organised barely a year

[194] Adeyemi, A.E. (2015) 'Terrorism and Transnational Security Threats in West Africa: A Global Perspective.' PhD Thesis, Obafemi Awolowo University.
[195] Lode, K. (2012); Humphreys, M. and Habaye, A.M. (2005) 'Senegal and Mali' in Collier, P. and Sambanis, N. '*Understanding Civil War: Evidence and Analysis, Volume 1. Africa*', Washington, DC: World Bank, 247-302.

after the coup. Mali witnessed an exemplary democratic transition. The political space opened up after decades of one-party rule and many new political parties registered in the aftermath of the transition. The democratically elected authorities respected civil liberties, new media outlets blossomed and numerous civil society organisations registered during the 1990's. Moreover, the authorities designed one of the most ambitious decentralisation programmes on the continent. Mali emerged as a leading example of democracy on the African continent.

Nevertheless, patterns of continuity in the political realm also prevailed. The institutional set-up of Malian democracy continued to concentrate powers in the executive branch of government. In fact, the formal political system could be characterised as "super-presidential," as the Malian president had few colleagues on the continent with an equal number of powers vested in the presidency. Furthermore, the party system continued to be dominated by a dominant party (ADEMA) and a de facto party-state emerged throughout the 1990s. The next chapters of this thesis provide an in-depth analysis of the democratic regime and party system. This section focuses on the expanding role of non-state actors in the area of security provision throughout the democratic era. It particularly focuses on the security response to renewed conflict in the northern regions and the ensuing peace process. A hybrid political order further anchored and broadened as state and non-state actors shared the core duty of security provision.

During the democratic transition, the "National Pact" replaced the Tamanrasset agreement that was hastily signed by former President Traore.[196] The peace deal aimed at bridging Mali's North–South divide by: orienting more development funds to the northern regions; decentralising governance responsibilities and means; creating the new administrative region of Kidal where key Tuareg rebellion leaders resided; reducing the presence of the Malian military across the North; and reintegrating former rebels into the army and society.[197] However, armed conflict against the Malian state continued during the first years of the democratic regime. Fighting amongst northern factions – the "*Krieg im Krieg*" (the war within the war) as Klute and von Trotha (2000) called it – also escalated.[198] Tensions amongst Tuareg factions had already mounted during the democratic transition phase. The Tuareg Ifoghas faction monopolised the seats allocated to the Tuareg community during the National Conference, the Monitoring Committee of the Tamanrasset peace agreement and positions in

[196] The National Pact is available at: http://tamazgha.fr/IMG/pacte_national.pdf.
[197] For a more detailed analysis of the National Pact, see: Pezard, S. and Shurkin, M. (2015) '*Achieving Peace in Northern Mali: Past Agreements, Local Conflicts, and the Prospects for a Durable Settlement*', Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, available at https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR892.html.
[198] Klute, G. and von Trotha, T. (2000) 'Wege zum Frienden. Vom Kleinkrieg zum parastaatlichen Frieden im Norden von Mali', *Sociologus,* 50(1): 1-36, p. 10.

the transitional government.[199] Other Tuareg clans, including the Imghad and Idnane, felt excluded and contested this Ifoghas dominance. Their rank-and-file became important constituencies of the Armée Révolutionnaire de Libération de l'Azawad (ARLA). This armed group not only fought against the Malian state, but also pursued a regional emancipatory process vis-à-vis the Tuareg Ifoghas. Tuareg factions from the areas between Timbuktu, Gao and Menaka dominated another armed group, the Front Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azaoud (FPLA). Ifoghas Tuareg, in turn, emerged as the principal constituency of the Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad (MPA). Because the National Pact predominantly centred on Tuareg rebels and Malian authorities, the sedentary Songhay inhabitants and former (black) Tuareg slaves in northern Mali felt ignored. A former army colonel helped to establish the Mouvement Patriotique Ganda Koy (MPGK), often simply referred to as the Ganda Koy (literally "masters of the land") to cater to their interests. During much of the first half of the 1990s, northern armed groups continued fighting each other and the Malian army. Violent conflicts led to an estimated death toll between 6000 and 8000 people and soured relations between and amongst northern communities.

Hybrid security patterns came to the fore as the Malian state aligned with specific actors in the conflict to counter other armed groups. The Ifoghas dominated MPA defeated the ARLA and FPLA with the help of the Malian army. Different sections in the army also supported the Ganda Koy.[200] The Malian state thereby managed to exert considerable influence over events in northern Mali through unofficial (complementary and delegatory) forms of cooperation with loyal armed groups. The Ifoghas leadership of the MPA, in turn, managed to uphold and further enhance its dominance, if not regional hegemony, over other Tuareg factions as a result of its strategic partnership with the Malian state. In fact, the Ifoghas chieftaincy appropriated a number of rights and key public functions of the state in the Adagh region. Klute and von Trotha (2000) conceptualised the emerging state of affairs as a form of "para-statehood."[201] Through a process of informal decentralisation, or privatisation, the Ifoghas Chieftancy assumed the national state's monopoly on the use of violence in the most northern region. It mediated between the region its internal and external affairs, controlled external financial resources and thereby secured their dominance over other local factions. This constituted a move away from (direct) complementary forms of cooperation to more (indirect) delegatory arrangements.

[199] Klute, G. (1995).
[200] Lecocq, B. and Klute, G. (2013), p. 427.
[201] Klute, G. and von Trotha, T. (2000), pp. 31-2.

In addition to this prevalence of hybrid security practices through unofficial channels, security cooperation through official channels advanced during the implementation phase of the National Pact. France supported the establishment of a number of official military units composed of both army soldiers and (former) Tuareg rebels who conducted so-called mixed patrols.[202] Moreover, approximately 2500 rebels integrated into the army and civil service while an additional 9500 ex-combatants received financial support and training for their socio-economic reintegration into society.[203] The numbers integrated, although considered too few by some and too many by others, did improve interethnic contacts within the army's structures.[204] Yet, the disarmament of rebels was only partially successful as combatants handed over light weaponry but kept a significant arsenal sequestered. Importantly, the withdrawal of the army from numerous northern sites, as stipulated by the peace agreement, significantly reduced the geographical scope of the state. Certainly because alternative security arrangements foreseen by the peace accord, the so-called Special Security Units, were never operationalised. As the army vacated several military sites across the northern regions, the state would come to rely ever more on non-state armed groups to counter security threats in the area.

In sum, non-state actors enlarged their role in hybrid security provision practices in northern Mali throughout the 1990s. The Ifoghas chieftaincy managed to position itself into an "intermediary position" of domination, governing *internal* local and regional affairs while monopolizing *external* ties with the central state and international organisations.[205] It obtained a considerable level of discretionary authority between the state (above) and citizens (below). Though increasingly relying on delegatory forms of security cooperation, at distance, the state was still positioned, hierarchically, above its intermediary partners up North.

This power balance altered during the course of the next decade. The withdrawal of state forces from several sites in northern Mali weakened state presence. More importantly, however, the rise of high-value transnational networks facilitated major sources of income and arms to the northern armed groups beyond the state. At the same time, several "glocal" jihadist groups became anchored in the socio-political fabric of northern Mali, as the next section demonstrates.

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[202] Klute, G. and von Trotha, T. (2004) 'From Small War to Parasovereign Peace in the North of Mali', in: *Healing the Wounds: Essays on the Reconstruction of Societies after War*, Oxford and Portland, OR: Hart Publishing, pp. 109-144.

[203] Gold, R. (2013) "Initiatives for Peace in Northern Mali in the 1990's – Lessons Learned." *A Contrario,* Criminal Law, available at: https://acontrarioicl.com/2013/02/13/initiatives-for-peace-in-northern-mali-in-the-1990s-lessons-learned/#_edn12.

[204] Norris, C. (2000) *'Mali-Niger: Fragile Stability'*, UNHCR Centre for documentation and research (Paper No. 14).

[205] Klute, G. and von Trotha, T. (2000), fn. 2.

2.5. TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS AND THE RISE OF A HETERARCHICAL POLITICAL ORDER

Throughout the first decade of the new millennium, the intermediary form of para-statehood gradually gave way to an even more heterogeneous political order in northern Mali. A wide variety of "tribal, Islamist and jihadist, youth, civil, organised crime, and militia-like forms of political organisation" became anchored in the socio-political fabric of the region.[206] Actors across northern Mali obtained access to considerable rent-seeking opportunities and heavy weaponry through transnational networks. The balance of power between state and non-state actors shifted as a result. In an analytical sense, the state lost its vertically superior position managing ties with intermediary para-states, powerbrokers and armed proxies. Instead, it became one of the horizontally equivalent institutions competing for influence in northern Mali. A heterarchical political order thus emerged.

During the 2000s, northern Mali became a vital hub for global drugs smuggling networks and the nerve centre of a regional kidnapping industry. Intercontinental drug networks benefitted from the social infrastructure underpinning the ancient trading and smuggling networks. Subsidised consumer goods from both Libya and Algeria had long been sold across the region, while transnational cigarette smuggling networks had risen to prominence in the 1980s. Demands for, in particular, small arms increased throughout the 1990s.[207] Ellis (2009) traced the historical roots of West Africa's role as "transit point" in transnational drug networks to the early 1960s.[208] In 2007, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) assessed that 25 per cent of cocaine entering the European market arrived via West Africa.[209] By 2009, this figure had dropped to an estimated 17 per cent and possibly even less in the year after.[210] However, as these data were primarily based on actual cocaine seizures, which were modest in comparison to the likely cocaine flows affecting the continent, it remained difficult to obtain an accurate picture of the actual quantities involved. In 2008, officials confiscated 750 kilograms of cocaine in a single arrest, equalling the value of one third of Mali's total annual

[206] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p. 324.
[207] Sidibe, K. (2012) 'Criminal Networks and Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms in Northern Mali', *IDS Bulletin* (43)4: 74-88; Lacher, W. (2012) 'Organised Crime and Conflict in the Sahel-Sahara Region'. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Carnegie Paper).
[208] Ellis, S. (2009) 'West Africa's International Drug Trade.' *African Affairs,* 108(431): 171-196.
[209] UNODC (2007) *'Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa: The Threat to Stability and Development*'. 9 December 2007.
[210] Dechery, C. and Ralston, L. (2015) 'Trafficking and Fragility in West Africa', World Bank (Report No. 98903); EMCDDA–Europol (2010); 'Cocaine: A European Union Perspective in the Global Context', April 2010 (Issue No.2).

military expenditure.[211] The drugs were transported by road but also flown into the region. In November 2009, a burned-out Boeing 727-200 (originating from Venezuela) carrying an estimated 10 tonnes of cocaine was found near Gao.[212] Although the number of cocaine flights remained elusive, a US security official referred to a "growing fleet" of jets, and interviews with local observers suggested that multiple flights were taking place.[213] Moroccan cannabis constituted a particularly lucrative contraband passing through northern Mali. Hence, the region was integrated into smuggling networks operating at a truly global scale and the value of the contraband was unmatched by any other product. This raised the stakes in terms of obtaining control over territory across northern Mali, or at least the high-value goods passing through strategic territorial junctures. Consequently, rivalry within and amongst northern factions intensified. Moreover, the precarious power balance that had characterised relations between the Malian state and various competing northern factions altered.

Conflicts between competing smuggling networks, tied to local factions, amplified. In December 2007, for example, Ifoghas Tuareg stole seven cars loaded with cocaine from Arab smugglers, almost inciting a violent response from a large group of Arabic youngsters.[214] A year later, local Ifoghas and Arab Berabiche community leaders just managed to avoid violent confrontations over smuggling routes between community members. Members of competing Saharawi and Malian Arab smuggling networks did clash regularly.[215] Moreover, violent confrontations between "aristocratic" Ifoghas and Kounta factions, on the one hand, and traditionally "subordinate" Tuareg and Arab clans, on the other hand, transpired as a result of disputes linked to the smuggling economy. Similar tensions were witnessed in local and regional political institutions when former "vassals" turned drugs money into campaign funds in an attempt to improve their political representation.

In order to protect their drugs convoys and profits derived from the trade, smugglers established their own militias or aligned with existing armed groups. The arms trade flourished alongside drug smuggling and Mali witnessed an inflow of heavy weaponry.[216] It was the downfall of Colonel Gaddafi, however, that constituted a real game changer when it came to

[211] O'Regan, D. (2010): 'Cocaine and Instability in Africa: Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean', Africa Security Brief N.5. The seizure took place in 2008.
[212] 'Mali Tackles Al Qaeda and Drug Traffic', (*The New York Times*, 1 January 2011).
[213] Burbank, J (2010). *Trans-Saharan Trafficking: A Growing Source of Terrorist Financing*, Center for the Study of Threat Convergence. Occasional Research Series Washington, DC: The Fund for Peace; 'Boeing Transporting Cocaine from South America to Africa Crashes' (*The Telegraph,* 16 November 2009); interviews with local actors are reflected in Sidibe, K. (2012), esp. p. 85.
[214] Scheele, J. (2010) 'Tribus, États et fraude. La région frontalière algéro-malienne', *Études rurales* (2):79-94.
[215] 'Mali. Trafic de drogue et tensions communautaires', (*Jeune Afrique,* 15 September 2011).
[216] ICG (2018) 'Drug Trafficking, Violence and Politics in Northern Mali', 13 December 2018 (Africa Report No. 267).

the availability of military equipment. Some of the criminal networks engaged in drug trafficking also started smuggling Libyan arms.[217] More importantly:

> Hundreds of ethnic Tuareg fighters left Libya during and after the 2011 conflict and drove across the desert to northern Mali, and took with them arms that had not previously been common such as anti-tank weapons, mortars, and heavy machineguns.[218]

These weapons did more than boosted the military capacity of Tuareg-led armed groups; the UN also reported that arms originated from Libya "significantly reinforced" terrorist groups operating in Mali.[219]From 2003 onwards, Algerian Islamic radicals started using the region as a safe haven. Many scholars have indicated the arrival of some 500 to 1000 representatives of the Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC), established by the most radical Islamic militants of the Algerian bloody civil war.[220] Following a change of leadership, the GSPC reinforced its ties with Al-Qaeda and formally rebranded itself as Al-Qaeda the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in early 2007. The group established a lucrative kidnapping industry and primarily targeted Westerners, whom they released in exchange for significant ransom payments. This multi-million-dollar industry targeted more than 50 people between 2003 and 2011.[221] These ransom payments constituted the most important source of revenue and bolstered AQIM in northern Mali. Kidnappers initially captured most hostages in Algeria, Mauritania or Niger and subsequently negotiated their release from northern Mali. Sidibe (2012) noted that AQIM also benefitted from established networks with drug traffickers: "AQIM escorts drug convoys and provides security to the destination, and in turn, drug traffickers provide AQIM with funds."[222] AQIM leaders notably solidified relations with Berabiche Arabs in and around Timbuktu – with whom they shared both linguistic and cultural

[217] March, B. (2017) 'Brothers Came Back with Weapons: The Effects of Arms Proliferation from Libya', *PRISM,* 6(4): 79-96.
[218] *Ibid.* p. 82.
[219] UNSC (2015) 'Final Report of the Panel Experts Established Pursuant to Resolution 1970 (2011) Concerning Libya', New York (Report No. S/2015/128).
[220] Harmon, S. (2010) 'From GSPC to AQIM: The Evolution of an Algerian Islamist Terrorist Group into an Al-Qa'ida Affiliate and Its Implications for the Sahara-Sahel Region', in: *Concerned African Scholars,* Bulletin 85: 12-29; Ould Mohamedou, M-M. (2011) 'The Many Faces of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb.' GCSP Policy Paper N.15. According to the US National Counterterrorism Center, members were "fewer than 1000", available at: www.nctc.gov/site/groups/aqim.html.
[221] Daniel, S. (2012) '*AQMI al–Qaïda au Maghreb islamique, l'industrie de l'enlèvement*'. Paris : Fayard; Ould Mohamedou, (2011).
[222] Sidibe, K. (2012); Burbank, J. (2010), p. 25.

ties – and the informal militias established by the latter to protect their smuggling interests.[223] Yet, the strong "crime-terror" nexus often referred to in relation to AQIM remained unwarranted and appeared conflated. Flexible alliances of convenience characterised these partnerships. AQIM's offshoot, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), maintained much stronger links with traffickers.[224]

How did Malian authorities respond to these rising challenges? President Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT), who had made a successful political comeback during the 2002 elections, relied on what the International Crisis Group aptly referred to as a policy of "remote-control governance through dubious criminal and mafia intermediaries" in the northern regions.[225]

In response to two successive Tuareg rebellions that erupted in 2006 and 2007, delegatory forms of security cooperation with non-state actors, though unofficial channels, now clearly prevailed. The Malian defence forces, largely confined to urban pockets and isolated military camps, played a limited role. The Touré regime relied on private militias that well-known (mostly Arab) traffickers had established to secure their drugs transports and protect their zones of influence in the smuggling economy. At times, the army sent senior military officers to train these irregular forces.[226] Malian army representatives also occasionally commanded these militias, despite the fact that these forces maintained close ties with AQIM.[227] In response to a small but violent rebellion that erupted in 2007, a lieutenant and former Tuareg rebel, Elhajj Ag Gamou, established an unofficial military unit composed of (Imghad) clan affiliates. His group secured victory against the rebels in 2009.[228]

By now, Mali's recurrent hybrid security practices rested on increasingly shaky foundations. State officials almost entirely outsourced security provision to local "Big Men" and their militias. In sharp contrast, armed groups opposing the Malian state considerably reinforced their military capabilities, the numbers of recruits and weaponry.

During the first half of the year 2012, the Malian state descended into a deep crisis at the centre and completely collapsed in the northern regions. From January onwards, a renewed Tuareg revolt incited an unprecedented series of dramatic events. In the run-up to the rebellion, former Tuareg rebel leaders succeeded in overcoming various factional differences.

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[223] Marchal, R (2012) 'Is a Military Intervention in Mali Unavoidable?' 12 October 2012, available at: https://noref.no/.
[224] Dechery, C. and Ralston, L. (2015); Briscoe, I. (2014) 'Crime after Jihad: Armed Groups, the State and Illicit Business in Post-Conflict Mali', CRU Report, May 2014.
[225] ICG (2012) 'Mali: Avoiding Escalation', 18 July 2012, (Africa Report No. 189), p.7.
[226] The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (2014) 'Illicit Trafficking and Instability in Mali: Past, Present and Future', January 2014, Research Paper.
[227] Lacher, W. (2012).
[228] Lecocq, B. and Klute, G. (2013), p. 429.

In October 2011, they established the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) together with the National Movement of Azawad (MNA), which regrouped a younger generation of Tuareg. The return of many well-armed Tuareg fighters from Libya "catalysed" the rebellion. The MNLA initially managed to establish a broad coalition amongst the different Tuareg factions. Important to note, though, is that despite this enhanced cooperation, internal unity amongst the Tuareg was far from complete. Government allied factions, notably the "subordinate" Imghad, remained loyal to the Touré regime and hundreds of fighters returning from Libya also joined the military ranks. Moreover, one of the principal leaders of the previous rebellion, Iyad Ag Ghali, established his own resistance movement. He failed to convince fellow Tuareg leaders to establish an independent Tuareg state under sharia law. Iyad Ag Ghali had become an early convert to the largest Muslim missionary organisation Tablighi Jama`at and was later expelled from Saudi Arabia, where he worked at the Malian consulate, for maintaining contact with Sunni extremists.[229] He called his own group Ansar Al-Din ("Defenders of Faith") and recruited from amongst the Ifoghas Tuareg and Kounta Arabs.

On 17 January 2012, the MNLA launched its first attack in northeastern Mali. The little that was left of the Malian army faced – in the words of the Malian Minister of Foreign Affairs – around a thousand well trained fighters "with heavy machineguns mounted on all-terrain vehicles, forming a potent insurgent weapon that combined mobility and firepower."[230] The Tuareg rebels now pursued independence from Mali rather than increased autonomy.[231]

On 22 March 2012, a group of disgruntled junior officers and soldiers staged a chaotic military coup. Ordinary citizens did not take to the streets to defend their democratically elected president. In an opinion poll conducted shortly afterwards, more than six out of ten people in Bamako expressed their support for the military coup.[232] Afrobarometer surveys confirmed this sentiment of considerable popular dissatisfaction with Malian authorities, the democratic regime and the state.[233]

The military coup in March 2012 engendered a power vacuum at the centre of the state. The military junta arrested senior army generals, the chains of command broke apart and rebel groups took full control over strategic areas in northern Mali as soldiers fled southwards. Government-aligned Tuareg and Arab militias moved into exile in both Niger and Mauritania.

[229] Flood, D.H. (2012) 'Between Islamization and Secession: The Contest for Northern Mali', *CTC Sentinel,* (5) 7: 1-6.
[230] March, B. (2017), p. 82.
[231] Lecocq, B. and Klute, G. (2013), p. 425
[232] Whitehouse, B. (2012) 'Bamako's Lone Pollster Strikes Again'.
[233] Bratton, M. and Gimah-Boadi, E. (2015).

On 6 April 2012, the MNLA declared Azawad an independent state and subsequently tried to assert its authority over northern Mali. The territorial delineation of the term Azawad is subject to different interpretations and strategic considerations. The MNLA demarcated Azawad within Mali's original colonial boundaries in order to avoid direct opposition to its independence project from neighbouring countries. It pushed its occupation southwards well beyond the Niger River – often considered as the internal border between northern and southern Mali – up to Douentza.[234] The MNLA entered into negotiations with Ansar Al-Din and established a government to rule over the new state. For a while, it seemed as though a long-lasting dream had finally come true for the rebel leaders. However, "the MNLA's sovereignty was limited by the competition of powerful non-state armed actors deeply embedded into the local social structure, such as communal militias and jihadist groups."[235]

Indeed, it soon became clear that the MNLA did not control northern Mali. While the MNLA had claimed responsibility for the ousting of the Malian army in strategic northern areas in its savvy media campaign, reality on the ground had been different. A group of seasoned scholars noted that the "[a]ssaults on Aguelhoc, Tessalit and Kidal were all carried out by an alliance of Jihadi-Salafi movements […] who did not directly claim their victories."[236] Lacher (2012) demonstrated that the MNLA never really controlled Timbuktu, as influential local Arab drug smugglers aligned their militias behind AQIM instead of the Tuareg rebels.[237] Moreover, popular legitimacy of a Tuareg-led independent state was extremely limited across northern Mali, most notably in the town of Gao, where Songhay militias – who had fought bitterly against Tuareg factions throughout the 1990s – were dominant. The looting and misbehaviour of MNLA rank-and-file only further reduced their popularity in the area.

In July 2012, just three months after the fall of the Malian state, jihadist groups ousted the MNLA from most urban areas across northern Mali. During the second half of that year, AQIM, MUJAO and Ansar Al-Din became the leading actors governing northern Mali. The groups dismantled the state bureaucracy, imposed a monopoly of violence and established their own judicial and administrative system while putting in place favourable (tax) policies for traders, smugglers and pastoralists. Molenaar (et al., 2019) demonstrated that the customary "qadi" – a highly respected traditional religious figure in reconciliation and justice, administering verdicts based on Islamic sharia law – particularly gained influence in this period across northern

[234] Jacobs, F. (2012) 'All Hail Azawad', 10 April 2012.
[235] Baldaro, E. and Raineri, L. (2020), p. 108.
[236] Lecocq, B. and Mann, G. (eds.) (2013) 'The Blind and the Hippopotamus: A Multivocal Analysis of the Current Political Crisis in the Divided republic of Mali', *Review of African Political Economy* (40)137: 343-357, p.348.
[237] Lacher, W. (2012), p.16.

Mali.[238] The three organisations coordinated efforts amongst themselves but maintained a considerable degree of autonomy.[239] Tapping into supranational and local support networks, each of these actors asserted control over a specific stronghold.

In Gao, the MUJAO top leadership consisted of radical Islamists from Mauritania, Algeria and Mali. However, the group also attracted jihadists from Sudan, the Western Sahara, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, and also recruited in neighbouring villages.[240] The resources gained through global drug smuggling and kidnapping networks were of critical importance to its leadership and enabled the organisation to recruit widely. Various reports equally suggested that people from neighbouring villages joined out of religious conviction.[241] MUJAO legitimised its authority not only in reference to repertoires related to the "global jihad." It also made use of symbols from the ancient Songhay Empire in a move to raise popular support, which the Tuareg rebels had clearly lacked in Gao.[242]

AQIM's primary focus constituted Timbuktu. While preserving its image as the regional branch of Al-Qaeda, the top leadership of AQIM was very much aware of the need to anchor itself in the social-cultural environment of northern Mali. In a letter sent to the AQIM and Ansar Al-Din leadership in northern Mali, the principal AQIM leader Abdelmalek Droukdel expressed his frustrations with their strict adoption of sharia law because it alienated local citizens from the organisation. He lamented their failure to develop and maintain strategic alliances with other influential actors in northern Mali.[243]

The Islamists in both Gao and Timbuktu initially gained some degree of popular legitimacy beyond the (modest) group of religious supporters because of their capacity to restore order after the Tuareg revolt. Nevertheless, this support rapidly dwindled. Local opposition to their strict application of sharia law was widespread and voiced by influential traditional and religious authorities, women's and youth associations.[244] Malian organisations and media outlets recorded hundreds of human rights abuses, varying from residents being stoned to death, having their limbs amputated or jailed for offences against sharia law. The prohibition of

[238] Molenaar, F. et al. (2019).
[239] Baldaro, E. and Raineri, L. (2020), pp. 109-110.
[240] 'Mali Crisis: Foreign Fighters Come to Help Islamists' (*BBC*, 23 October 2012); Flood, D.H. (2012) 'Between Islamization and Secession: The Contest for Northern Mali', *CTC Sentinel*, 5(7) 1-6; Aa, G. van der (2013) 'Sahara is Terreurnest' (*Elsevier*, 19 January 2013).
[241] Daniel, S. (2012) 'Scores of New African Recruits Swell Al-Qaeda Offshoot's Ranks in Mali' (*Middle East Online*, 18 July 2012).
[242] Lebovich, A. (2012) 'Trying to Understand MUJWA', (*Al Wasat*, 22 August 2012).
[243] Siegel, P.C. (2013) 'AQIM's Playbook in Mali', *CTC Sentinel,* (6)3: 9-11.
[244] Lecocq, B. and Mann, G. (et.al.) (2013).

listening to music, smoking or watching football and the obligation for men to accompany their (veiled) women in public only further alienated ordinary citizens from their new authorities.

While MUJAO and AQIM dominated Gao and Timbuktu respectively, Ansar Al-Din's stronghold was Kidal, where its leader Iyad Ag Ghali had been a prominent figure for many decades. His organisation benefitted from the financial support provided by AQIM and recruited many new Tuareg members after the marginalisation of the MNLA. Senior people within the traditional hierarchies aligned with his organisation but local opposition against the radical Islamist orientation was also fierce. Tuareg women, known for their prominent role in public life, repeatedly protested despite harsh reprisals.

Meanwhile, the prolonged crisis at the centre of the state frustrated any viable move to counter events in the northern regions. Diplomatic pressure raised by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the wider international community eventually spearheaded the establishment of an interim government in Bamako.

In April 2012, three weeks after the military coup, Dioncounda Traore was sworn in as interim president. Finding a solution to the security challenges in the North remained unfeasible, however, as different political factions and junta leaders continued to compete for influence.

In January 2013, the situation drastically altered when the Islamists overplayed their hand. Ansar Al-Din fighters moved across the "border" separating northern and southern Mali, in an attempt to gain control over the strategic airport near Sevare. This would pose considerable challenges to any future international military intervention.

On 11 January, French forces suddenly and swiftly launched a military campaign to dislodge the radical Islamists from the northern regions, at the request of Mali's interim president. The French managed to drive many Islamists out of the principal urban areas with targeted airstrikes and the deployment of more than 4000 boots on the ground, although numerous Islamists went into hiding in the rural areas. It goes well beyond the scope of this chapter to provide an analysis of the military intervention. Nevertheless, two points are particularly relevant as background to Chapter 6, which assesses the "internationalisation of hybrid security practices" in more detail.

First, although being invited by the Malian state, French forces also collaborated with the MNLA because the group obtained useful knowledge of the terrain and positions of radical Islamists across northern Mali. Many citizens, however, perceived this cooperation as a clear breach of the country's sovereignty, certainly in light of the MNLA's recent attempt to achieve independence from the Malian state by means of military force.

Secondly, French forces were soon drawn into existing local conflicts. Tensions between Tuareg and Arab (smuggling) factions, particularly in the Kidal region mounted, as Arab leaders feared being dominated and sidelined because of the French-Tuareg "alignment."[245] Chapter 6, as indicated, provides a more detailed analysis of the different alignments between international and local military forces.

By the end of January 2013, public security provision obtained an increasingly heterogeneous character and involved a range of state and non-state actors at the local, national and international level, who were tied together in complex and dynamic relations. The Malian state obtained an increasingly marginalised role in shaping hybrid security provision.

2.6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter traced the roots of Mali's heterarchial political order. At independence, the country's leadership set out to firmly institute state authority in society and left very little scope for other power poles. They positioned the state as the central and hierarchically superior locus of authority. The party-state enforced its authority in an institutionalised manner by creating a large state bureaucracy with tentacles across all sectors. Huge state enterprises, for example, emerged in the economic realm. Subsequent regimes largely relied on informal networks with influential and loyal power brokers across society to maintain their power basis in society. However, the state's ability to maintain and fund these (unproductive) clientelistic ties and networks of patronage became increasingly restricted over time. This chapter revealed that the role of the state in public service delivery gradually decreased. Firstly in the area of a number of social services and subsequently in the security realm too. In contrast, non-state actors increasingly boosted their authority. The material resources and immaterial sources of legitimacy that became available through transnational networks played a key role in this regard.[246] During the first decade of the millennium, non-state actors increasingly operated as horizontal contemporaries of the organs of the state and a heterarchical political order gradually emerged across northern Mali.

Hence, the state shared more and more core duties with non-state power poles over time. The analytical focus thereby shifts from *state* authority and state services to *public* authority

[245] McGregor, A. (2013) 'French Cooperation with Tuareg Rebels Risks Arab Rising in Northern Mali', *Terrorism Monitor*, 11(5), Jamestown Foundation.

[246] This is not to suggest a sharp dichotomy between state and non-state actors as individual state representatives equally profited from lucrative smuggling networks. In general, the rise of transnational networks did contribute to a significant shift in the power balance between state and non-state actors.

and hybrid forms of public services. The chapter particularly focused on historical patterns of security provision under successive Malian governments. It examined changes in the interplay between state and non-state actors based on three dimensions: (1) the power balance (the state as *vertically superior* vs *horizontally equivalent*); (2) the channel (*official* vs *unofficial*); and (3) the nature of cooperation (*complementary* vs *delegatory*).

Over time, Malian state authorities progressively *delegated* security provision to non-state actors as the presence of the Malian Defence and Security forces reduced across northern Mali. In the 1990s, efforts to formalise security cooperation between state and non-state actors through the official channels of a peace process made considerable headway. However, *informal channels* of hybrid security cooperation eventually prevailed. The *vertically superior* position of Malian armed forces over non-state armed groups gave way to a power balance in which the army was just one institution amongst equals in the wider context of the heterarchical order. By 2013, Mali's increasingly heterogeneous security realm involved a myriad of local militias with or without links to traffickers, terrorist groups, armed groups, the army and international forces. Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the anchoring of Mali's heterarchical order in the five-year period after the 2012 crisis. Despite considerable international efforts in support of the Malian state, non-state actors actually further expanded their role in security provision and other public services provided at the local level.

Before looking forward, the following chapters first examine the functioning of key democratic institutions in the period preceding the 2012 crisis. The next chapter assesses patterns of political participation and representation as shaped through the party system and expected to boost state legitimacy in the wake of Mali's emerging heterarchical political order.

Chapter 3

The party system and democratisation

From one-party dominance to one-coalition dominance.[247]
(1990-2012)

INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter briefly mentioned Mali's exemplary democratic transition in the early 1990s that followed three decades of authoritarian and predatory rule. Members of a National Conference jointly designed a democratic institutional framework that steered the country to multiparty elections in 1992. Associational life subsequently blossomed and many political parties officially registered. The democratically elected leaders respected political, civil rights, and guaranteed press freedom. At first sight, the transition thereby provided an ideal setting in which a balanced multi-party system could flourish that ensured robust popular participation, interest representation and executive accountability.

However, the Malian party system was characterised by prevailing patterns of one-party and one-coalition dominance, the (near) absence of a parliamentary opposition and persistently low levels of popular participation during the two decades that succeeded the democratic transition.

This chapter first provides an overview of this remarkable trajectory of the Malian party system. The following core part then aims to explain the endurance of one-party and one-coalition dominance in the Malian context. In line with the theoretical and operational outline, a complementary socio-cultural and institutional approach guides this analysis.

Well-known institutional factors in the literature include executive dominance, the electoral system and political parties' legislation. Together with the impact of international aid, these constitute critical factors that influenced the trajectory of a party system "from above." The chapter then moves to the wider socio-cultural context in which the multi-party system developed and assesses patterns of citizens' mobilisation and interest representation. The relevance of different social cleavages (e.g. class, ethnicity, religion, and region) for the support basis of Malian parties is explored.

[247] This chapter constitutes a considerably extended version of a previous publication that was part of a comparative analysis of the remarkable endurance of one-party dominance across the African continent. Cf. Vliet, M. van (2013) 'Mali: From Dominant Party to Platform of Unity', in: [247] Doorenspleet, R. and Nijzink, L. (2013) *One-Party Dominance in African Democracies*, Boulder, Co.: Lynne Rienner Publishers. Factors identified by the editors based on a substantial review of the literature of relevance to the trajectory of one-party dominance in Mali are reflected in the operational framework of this thesis.

Furthermore, popular beliefs and citizens' expectations about the role and responsibilities of political parties also potentially influences the trajectory of one-party dominance. This certainly applies to Mali where President Touré repeatedly linked one-coalition dominance in the party system to the cultural virtues of consensus in Malian society. These are all factors that influence the trajectory of party systems "from below."

The conclusions reflect on how patterns of political participation and representation as shaped through the party system affected state legitimacy in the context of Mali's heterarchical order.

3.1. THE TRAJECTORY OF ONE-PARTY TO ONE-COALITION DOMINANCE

The Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) secured two thirds of parliamentary seats in the 1992 elections and nearly four fifths in the 1997 polls. Similar to other countries on the African continent, a highly fragmented opposition equally characterised the Malian party system.[248] ADEMA was therefore in a good position to win the next round of elections in 2002. The party controlled the presidency and had a majority of seats in parliament while the opposition was weak and divided. Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, opposition parties struggled to regain electoral terrain in the context of a dominant party system.[249] The first two multi-party elections thereby provided a solid foundation for the emergence of a one-party dominant *system* in Mali, which arises once a political party maintains its dominance after three consecutive elections.

However, the 2002 elections failed to institute a one-party dominant system as ADEMA secured less than a third of the available seats. In the run up to the presidential elections, fierce competition between senior party representatives over the succession of President Konaré, who was forced to step down after completing his two terms in office, tore the party apart. A "reformist" faction within ADEMA internally sidelined former prime minister and party chairperson Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK). Together with a number of close allies, Keita decided to break away and formed his own political movement, which he later transformed into the party Rally for Mali (RPM). An entire network of national, regional and local party representatives jumped ship. IBK thereby effectively divided the ADEMA vote during the much-disputed first round of the 2002 presidential elections.[250]

[248] Van de Walle, N. (2003) 'Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party Systems', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41(2): 297 – 321.
[249] Bratton, M. and Van de Walle, N. (2002).
[250] Boilley, P. (2002) 'Présidentielles Maliennes. L'Enracinement Démocratique?', *Politique Africaine,* 86: 171-182.

Prior to the second round, he mobilised his supporters against ADEMA – the party he had just broken away from – and thereby paved the way for independent presidential candidate Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) to win the presidential elections.[251] Re-aligning themselves with the likely winner, numerous senior ADEMA representatives openly supported Touré against their own candidate, Soumaila Cissé, in the run-up to the second round of elections. Obviously frustrated by this lack of support from his own party, he left ADEMA and created the Union for the Republic and Democracy (URD) in 2003. A considerable number of party representatives followed him too.[252] After these realignments, Touré indeed secured victory in the 2002 elections. These elections thereby illustrated a broader pattern identified by Cheeseman (2010), i.e. that so-called open seat elections, in which an incumbent ruler does not participate, appeared to pose particular challenges for ruling parties on the African continent.[253] These challenges are often related to internal wrangles between persons and factions seeking to secure the party ticket for these elections.

The end of one-party dominance did not bring about a balanced party system with a strong opposition. In fact, one-coalition dominance merely substituted one-party dominance. ATT's electoral platform consisted of a broad and loose alliance of regional power brokers, a myriad of civic associations and some smaller parties. As an independent candidate, he lacked a solid support base in parliament. He therefore invited all main political actors to partake in a grand coalition on condition that they all accepted his authority. Following years of political polarisation, he reiterated the need for political stability and a unified socio-economic agenda. ATT legitimised one-coalition dominance in reference to core social values of unity, harmony and cooperation. These references were, however, also linked to a constellation of power relations and material interests. The grand coalition enabled President Touré to curtail alternative centres of political power and boosted his own authority. In addition, it allowed a wide range of political actors to secure access to state resources and nurture their support networks. Former opposition leaders gratefully accepted his invitation that (re-)established their access to the resourceful political centre and enabled them to nurture personalised support networks. Leading politicians of the ADEMA era also realigned with the new – politically independent – president who ruled based on full parliamentary consensus after the 2002 elections. Many of the political networks that had jointly operated under the institutional cover

[251] The elections were marked by serious irregularities, with 28 per cent of the votes annulled by the constitutional court.
[252] Cissé suspected former President Konaré to have backed the candidature of Touré.
[253] Cheeseman, N. (2010) 'African Elections as Vehicles for Change', *Journal of Democracy*, 21(4): 139-153.

of the dominant party now found their way back into business under a new label. While a formal classification of Mali's party system pointed to a dramatic change in the 2002 elections, a great deal of continuity was actually witnessed on the ground in terms of the centrifugal forces around the executive.

In the run-up to the 2007 elections, political parties confronted the question whether to field their own presidential candidate or to support the incumbent president's quest for a second term in office. Two major party splits had weakened ADEMA, but it still controlled more than 30 per cent of seats in parliament and its political networks covered almost the entire national territory. Yet, the incumbent president obtained a privileged access to state resources, appeared on national television more often than the weatherman did and was backed by the business community. Furthermore, the costs of political isolation in case of an electoral loss against the incumbent were considerable. Once condemned to the opposition benches, parties lose their valuable connections to the resourceful centre and, as a consequence, their support networks. ADEMA therefore opted for a "middle way" strategy. They acknowledged the limited chance of defeating incumbent candidate Touré. They therefore became a driving force behind the establishment of a "grand coalition" of more than forty political parties. This Alliance for Democracy and Progress (ADP) aimed to improve the position of political parties during a second mandate of independent President Touré. During ATT's first mandate, political parties obtained only a limited number of ministerial positions in comparison to the civic movements and personal affiliates of the president.[254] By increasing their joint electoral weight in the run-up to the elections, the parties reinforced their control over key ministries after the elections to the detriment of civic associations and people from Touré's personal network. From that position of strength, they could subsequently start preparing the "open seat" elections in 2012. The 2007 elections and ADEMA's "middle way" strategy again revealed the major difference between an "open seat" election and electoral contests in which incumbents do participate. The ADP coalition indeed secured a solid electoral victory in 2007. One-coalition dominance thus prevailed during Touré's second mandate (2007-2012). It did not amount to a full parliamentary consensus as three small but vocal opposition parties also secured parliamentary representation.

Before examining the incentives "from above" that encouraged the endurance of one-party and one-coalition rule in Mali, the following section provides a brief historical background of the party that dominated the Malian party system during the 1990s. In contrast to many other

[254] Baudais, V. and Chauzal, G. (2006) 'Les Partis Politiques et l'Indépendance Partisane d'Amadou Toumani Touré', *Politique Africaine*, (104): 61-80.

African dominant parties that obtained a lengthy historical track record as liberation or resistance movements, ADEMA was a young and weakly institutionalised dominant party.[255]

3.2. HISTORICAL LEGACY

ADEMA emerged out of the democratic movement that played a pivotal role in ending authoritarian rule in 1991, before it won the 1992 elections. The party's main constitutive blocks were: (1) the Malian Party of Labour (PMT); (2) the Malian Party for Democracy and Revolution (PMDR); and (3) the Committee to Defend Democratic Freedoms in Mali (CDLDM). Urban elites connected to Malians living in Senegal and France dominated the PMT. The trade unions constituted the party's main support basis in Mali.[256] The most influential branch of the PMDR originated amongst Malians residing in the Soviet Union. In 1986, these two movements, together with CDLDM and several representatives of the former ruling party Sudanese Union-African Democratic Rally (US-RDA), established the National Democratic People's Front (FNDP). This broad platform, the Malian Student Association (AEEM) and the National Congress for Democratic Initiative (CNID), mobilised Malians against military rule in the early 1990s.[257]

The military regime violently put down a protest march in central Bamako in March 1991, a military coup led by Lieutenant-Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) deposed General Moussa Traore.[258] The movements that had cooperated in the framework of the FNDP decided to establish a political party, ADEMA, and divided National Executive Committee positions amongst themselves. The merger of these groups created a substantial electoral basis in the run-up to the 1992 elections. The new party attracted members of the educated elite at the local, regional and national level. Teachers and nurses occupied important positions in the party structures at the grassroots.[259] After heated internal debates, the party also decided to co-opt numerous regional and local power brokers who had collaborated with the former regime.

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[255] Doorenspleet, R. and Nijzink, L. (2013).

[256] In the early 1970s, the trade unions publicly demanded that the military return to the barracks on various occasions and hand over power to a civilian government. Many of their leaders were jailed by the Traore regime. Camara, B. (2001) 'Le Processus Démocratique au Mali depuis 1991. Entre Fragmentation de l'Espace Politique et Coalitions: Quels Sont les Impacts de la Démocratisation sur la Condition de Vie des Maliens', available at: https://www.bakarycamara.ml/processus.pdf.

[257] For a more detailed analysis of the groups that were mobilised and the issues around which this popular protest was organised, see: Fay, C. (1995) 'La Démocratie au Mali, ou le Pouvoir en Pâture', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines,* 35(137): 19-53.

[258] Officially, 106 people were killed and 708 injured. See: Amundsen, I. (2002) 'Towards Democratic Consolidation: Party Politics in Mali', Paper presented to the African Studies Association 43rd annual meeting.

[259] Diarrah, C.O. (1991) *Vers la Troisième République du Mali,* Paris: l'Harmattan; Amundsen, I. (2002).

Already before the 1992 elections, significant tensions between the PMT and PMRD factions arose within ADEMA. While PMRD was a more intellectually and ideologically oriented movement, which had always kept its distance from the military regime, PMT representatives were more pragmatic and some, including President Konaré, had served as ministers under the military regime. The ensuing internal wrangles fuelled several breakaways and party splits, of which the creation of the Movement for the Independence, Renaissance and Integration of Africa (MIRIA) in 1994 by ADEMA's vice-president and a number of other senior PMT representatives was the most noteworthy.

This brief historical sketch provides some background to the demise of ADEMA as a dominant party in 2002. The young party was weakly institutionalised, faced considerable internal wrangles and had witnessed several breakaways before the major splits in the early 2000s. However, the main objective of this chapter is not to understand why ADEMA lost its dominance over the party system. The principal subject of interest is to unravel why one-party dominance and one-coalition dominance prevailed. The next section first examines several well-known institutional factors in the literature.

3.3. INSTITUTIONAL ARCHITECTURE

One-party dominance in Mali emerged after almost thirty years of one-party rule. Under previous authoritarian regimes, power was centralised in the hands of the president while boundaries between the ruling party and the state were blurred. This continued to be the case after the democratic transition. Executive dominance constituted a clear pattern of continuity from the authoritarian into the democratic era.[260] Both Siaroff (2003) and Van Cranenburgh (2008) convincingly showed that Mali's "semi-presidentialism" label obtained little explanatory value about the actual degree of presidential power.[261] In fact, the Malian president had very few colleagues on the entire African continent with equally strong institutionally anchored powers. Mali's democratic regime could justifiably be referred to as "super-presidential" rather than semi-presidential. While the system was based on the French

[260] Sears, J.M. (2007); Jourde, C. (2008) 'The Master is Gone, but Does the House still Stand? The Fate of Single-Party Systems after the Defeat of Single Parties in West Africa', in: Joseph Wong and Edward Friedman (eds.), *Political Transitions in Dominant Party Systems: Learning to Lose*, Abingdon, UK and New York: Routledge, pp. 75-90.

[261] Siaroff, A. (2003) 'Comparative Presidencies: The Inadequacy of the Presidential, Semi-Presidential and Parliamentary Distinction.' *European Journal of Political Research,* 42(3): 287-312. Cranenburgh, O. van. (2008) 'Big Men Rule: Presidential Power, Regime Type and Democracy in 30 African Countries', *Democratisation,* 15(5): 952-974.

constitution, the mandate vested in the executive was stronger in the Malian case. French advisors provided input to the draft constitution, which delegates of the National Conference discussed.[262] Cissé (2006) even regarded Mali's 1992 constitution as a pale copy of the French 1958 constitution.[263] However, both political systems differ in several ways, especially with regard to the power balance between the executive and legislative branch of government. In Mali, for example, a two thirds majority in parliament was required to censure the government, whereas a simple majority can pass a vote of no confidence in France. The next chapter provides a more detailed analysis of executive – legislative ties in Mali. The most relevant point in the context of this chapter is that control over the presidency provided ruling parties and coalitions with considerable benefits and encouraged the endurance of one-party dominance.

Controlling an extremely powerful presidency indeed provided ADEMA major advantages compared to other parties and many opportunities to entrench its dominance. The party provided local and regional power brokers with jobs in the government administration and strategically distributed spoils of the state. ADEMA maintained a strong grip on key economic activities, particularly in the lucrative cotton and gold sectors. One group of senior ADEMA representatives was popularly known as the "clan CMDT", as they occupied the strategic positions in the national cotton company. By the end of their second term in office, ADEMA controlled 90 per cent of the directorships of ministries and key management positions in public enterprises.[264] ADEMA also obtained privileged access to state media. The national television and radio company (ORTM) extensively covered party activities and perspectives. This preferential treatment by the state media was most effective in the early years of the ADEMA government. The explosive growth of independent community radio stations slightly countered this advantage in subsequent years.[265]

Secondly, ADEMA greatly benefitted from the electoral system in place. The National Conference adopted a majoritarian system of closed party lists in both single- and multi-member constituencies (contingent on the number of inhabitants).[266]

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[262] Massicotte, L. (2009) 'Mapping the Road to Democracy: The National Conference of Mali 29 July to 12 August 1991', Paper at conference 'Changer la Donne Politique. Nouveaux Processus Constituants', Québec, available at: http://www.cms.fss.ulaval.ca/recherche/upload/chaire_democratie/fichiers/mali._27082009_161330.pdf.

[263] Cissé, A. (2006) '*Mali, Une Démocratie à Refonder'*, Paris: L'Harmattan.

[264] Dante, I., Gautier, J-F., Marouani, M.A., Raffinot, M. (2001), 'Institutionalising the PSRP Approach in Mali', available at: http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/2197.pdf, p.5.

[265] Schultz, D.E. (1999) 'In Pursuit of Publicity: Talk Radio and the Imagination of a Moral Public in Urban Mali', *Africa Spectrum,* 34(2): 161-185.

[266] Under the so-called two-round majority run-off system, if only a simple majority is obtained during the first round, the two top lists compete in a second round. The quorum is set at 60,000 inhabitants for a seat. See the Mali page of the Electoral Knowledge Network website for an historical overview and more in-depth analysis of the electoral systems in Mali, available at: http://aceproject.org/main/english/es/esy_ml.htm.

Vengroff (1993) demonstrated that under a system of proportional representation, ADEMA would have obtained 43 parliamentary seats, instead of the 73 seats it actually secured in the 1992 elections.[267] The opposition, on the other hand, would have done much better if a system of proportional representation had been in effect. US-RDA would have secured 21 seats instead of the eight seats it obtained, whereas RDP would have won ten rather than six seats. Moreover, the fact that the presidential elections were organised a few months prior to the parliamentary elections also had an impact. It created strong incentives for local and regional power brokers to align themselves with the party that won the presidency and thereby further entrenched one-party dominance. Not surprisingly, electoral reforms became one of the main demands of an increasingly frustrated opposition following the first round of elections in the early 1990s. President Konaré accommodated some of these requests. The number of seats of the National Assembly increased from 116 to 147 and the number of single-member constituencies was reduced to the advantage of multi-member constituencies. The latter move benefitted smaller parties as it encouraged larger parties to establish electoral alliances in the run-up to elections.

Yet, the dominant party, ignoring protests by other parties, also used its parliamentary majority to allow the 1997 balloting to take place in a highly controversial context. They initially rushed a new electoral law through parliament in 1996, which the Constitutional Court subsequently annulled. ADEMA then initiated a process of inter-party dialogue and agreed to establish an Independent Electoral Commission. The Commission, however, proved unable to prepare the elections in the short time available. After a chaotic first round, the Constitutional Court saw no other option but to officially annul the results.[268] The opposition parties demanded that all major problems related to the electoral process, such as the major challenge of an unreliable voters register, would be resolved before a new round of elections took place. ADEMA ignored this wish and set a date for new elections in just a month's time. Several opposition parties boycotted these elections and both President Konaré and ADEMA secured a substantial but controversial victory.[269]

[267] Vengroff, R. (1993) 'Governance and the Transition to Democracy: Political Parties and the Party System in Mali', *Journal of Modern African studies,* 31(4): 541-562, pp. 555-56.
[268] Two major problems became immediately apparent: the register of eligible voters was flawed and the electoral commission was unable to produce voter cards on time. See for a more detailed analysis: IFES (1997) 'Elections Législatives et Présidentielles de 1997, République du Mali', Election Monitoring Report, available at: https://ifesworld.org/en/.
[269] In 1999, a national stakeholder conference managed to resolve some of the issues but the flawed electoral process of 1997 had, by then, already ensured the continuation of ADEMA's initial dominance.

Thirdly, the Political Parties Act influenced the trajectory of Mali's party system. The National Conference established minimal criteria for the registration of political parties, reflecting the desire to open up the political space after decades of one-party rule.[270]

Participants of the National Conference still fiercely objected public funding for political parties. Nevertheless, the government introduced it in 2000. Parties without representation in parliament became entitled to a basic amount of state funding. The Political Parties Act and the system of public funding of political parties thereby contributed to a fragmented party system.[271] More than 25 parties registered between April 1991 and December 1991. A decade later, 120 parties had received a registration card.[272] In parliament, nine smaller parties initially surrounded the dominant party, ADEMA. This number dropped to seven in 1997. This high level of fragmentation seems to have contributed to ADEMA's initial dominance.[273] When ADEMA lost its dominant position in 2002, the fragmentation of the party system increased again. During the elections in 2007, 15 political parties gained parliamentary representation.

Finally, the presidential term limit strongly influenced the Malian trajectory of one-party dominance. Cheeseman (2010) revealed a broader trend across the African continent whereby ruling parties found it more challenging to secure victory in "open seat" elections as compared to those polls in which the president in office participated.[274] It appeared to be much more problematic to maintain a grip on power, despite having privileged access to state resources, during open seat elections. The fact that the incumbent Malian President Konaré was not allowed to stand in 2002 not only created opportunities for opposition candidates, but also incited succession challenges within ADEMA that eventually led to a party split. ADEMA's dominant position indeed abruptly ended in the context of the 2002 open seat elections but was then, as noted above, substituted by one-coalition dominance.

In addition to the above institutional factors, the international context also contributed to the favourable context in which one-party or one-coalition dominance endured.

[270] The procedure consisted of three simple administrative steps and excluded criteria related to national representation or organisational capacity.
[271] Baudais, V. and Chauzal, G. (2006).
[272] PPRCPP/NIMD (2004) 'Répertoire des Partis Politiques au Mali', The Hague: NIMD.
[273] Samaké, M. (2007) *L'Expérience Malienne du Financement Public des Partis Politiques* (unpublished).
[274] Cheeseman, N. (2010).

3.4. INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

International development aid, as shown in the introductory chapter, affects the power balance between the different branches of government on the receiving end. Mali obtained around three times more aid than other African developing countries in terms of the percentage of its GDP. Between 1967 and 2013, it secured an average of 15 per cent of its GDP from aid.[275] The amount of aid received in the 1990s was more limited than during the 2000s, when worldwide campaigns for the Millennium Development Goals mobilised additional support. During the first decade of the new millennium, international donors supported Mali with approximately $5.6 billion and aid covered around 25 per cent of all public expenses by the Malian government.[276] Only an estimated one per cent of this support aimed to reinforce democratic institutions. Reviewing aid modalities in Mali, Van de Walle concluded that:

> While the role of domestic institutional mechanisms of accountability seemed critically important to democratic consolidation, they appeared to be often ignored or undermined in Mali by the modalities of aid delivery.[277]

This section only briefly touches upon the most direct influences on one-party dominance. First, international donors did not stand up for key democratic principles at important junctures of Malian democracy. The 1997 elections constituted a striking example. The newly established Electoral Commission was largely unprepared to ensure a level playing field for all candidates and to adequately organise the polls in the short time frame that it was given. Even the voting register was outdated and incomplete. A request by Malian parties to postpone the elections was denied. A united block of opposition candidates then decided to boycott the polls. Nonetheless, donors readily accepted the results and quickly turned the page, despite their considerable financial contribution to the flawed electoral process.

[275] Craven-Matthews, C. and Neglebert, P. (2018), p.13.
[276] Walle, N. van de. (2012) 'Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy'. UNU-WIDER Research Paper WP2012/61; Bergamaschi, I. (2013) "Mali: How to Avoid Making the Same Mistakes', *Africa in Fact,* N.10, available at https://gga.org/; Walle, N. van de (2012).
[277] Walle, N. van de. (2012), p.11.

Jourde (2008) noted that:

> Even a country like Mali, in which the legislative and presidential elections of 1997 were clearly unsatisfactory in terms of fairness and freeness, never faced any significant pressure. In fact, as the opposition parties boycotted an electoral contest they legitimately saw as too flawed, the president got re-elected with a "one-party style" score of 85% […] and yet he was not the subject of the usual foreign "concerns" following the election.[278]

This seemed to reflect a broader pattern as donors refrained from taking measures in response to the apparent failure of the Malian government to implement (agreed upon) measures that would have bolstered domestic accountability, partly because cooperation in other areas was successful or the strategic interests at play.[279] On a structural level, aid equally exacerbated executive dominance and further enhanced the position of the president:

> Interventions intended to build up state capacity typically assist the ruler. While the intention may be to build an institution, the outcomes are typically to provide more resources to the ruler […], and to create opportunities for patronage through institutions that provide employment, contracts and projects.[280]

The impact of aid not only stemmed from the amount of funding involved, but also from the working procedures between international donors and the Malian government. Much of the policy dialogue and monitoring of this cooperation primarily involved senior state representatives and international organisations. Institutions like the legislature played a marginal role and obtained limited access to information. Hence, decisions about key socio-economic policies and programmes primarily stemmed from a dialogue between donors and the government and not through a domestic democratic decision-making process. The next chapter provides a more detailed analysis of the impact of aid on executive – legislative ties.

[278] Jourde, C. (2008) 'The Master is Gone, but Does the House still Stand? The Fate of Single-Party Systems After the Defeat of Single Parties in West Africa', in: Joseph Wong and Edward Friedman (eds.), *Political Transitions in Dominant Party Systems: Learning to Lose*, Abingdon, UK and New York: Routledge, pp. 75-90.
[279] Dijkstra, G. (2018) 'Budget Support, Poverty and Corruption: A Review of the Evidence', EBA Report 04/2018, p. 61.
[280] Waal, de A. (2009) 'Fixing the Political Market Place: How Can We Make Peace Without Functioning State Institutions?', 1 January 2010, (The Chr. Michelsen Lecture).

Aid equally reinforced the incentives political actors faced to rally around the executive. They had a strategic interest to be associated to – and influence the distribution of – all the development resources made available through the executive. Baudais and Chauzal (2006) contended that this particularly – but certainly not exclusively – held for those political elites who had been sidelined during the decade of one-party dominance under ADEMA.[281] The one-party coalition established under President Touré enabled them to reconnect with the formal centre of political gravity and its resources. These connections to the state played an important role in the efforts political parties undertook to mobilise and sustain their support base and to respond to the incentives they faced "from below," as the following sections demonstrate.

3.5. SOCIAL CONTEXT

One of the most remarkable characteristics of Mali's representative democracy, as an indirect system geared to ensure the expression of popular will, was the persistently low levels of popular participation recorded in successive elections. A mere 20 per cent of Malians participated in the elections throughout the 1990s and these figures only slightly increased during the following decade as voter turnout reached 26 per cent in the 2002 elections and 32 per cent in 2007.[282]

Malian citizens displayed limited interest in political affairs compared to citizens in other African countries. In fact, Mali revealed the lowest levels of political interest in any country surveyed in the Afrobarometer up until the year 2000. Very few people declared themselves to be "very interested" (10 per cent) or "somewhat interested" (24 per cent) in politics and government. Almost two thirds (64 per cent) proclaimed that they were simply "not interested."[283] Moreover, Malian citizens maintained very little contact with democratically elected officials in the period between elections compared to people in other West African countries. They raised most of their concerns with other power poles in society, like traditional (29 per cent) or religious leaders (per cent) rather than contacting a political party representative (9 per cent), a Member of Parliament (5 per cent) or central state representative (3 per cent).[284] People also trusted traditional and religious leaders much more than political actors. In 2008,

[281] Baudais, V. and Chauzal, G. (2006).
[282] The data are taken from International IDEA's Voter Turnout database, available at: http://www.idea.int/vt/survey/voter_turnout.cfm.
[283] Bratton, M. Coulibaly, M. & Machado, F. (2000) 'Popular Views on Good Governance in Mali', Afrobarometer, March 2000. (Working Paper, No.9).
[284] *Ibid.*

71 per cent indicated having a lot of trust in religious leaders and 65 per cent in traditional leaders while the ruling party, opposition and parliament obtained scores of respectively 21 per cent, 17 per cent and 32 per cent.[285]

Hence, the anchoring of Mali's "super-presidential" democratic regime into society seemed "super-limited." The above theoretical outline denoted political participation as the "elixir of life for democracy." In Mali, it seemed to characterise democracy's breathlessness instead. Most citizens were not mobilised through the party system but relied on alternative authorities in the context of Mali's hybrid political order. The remaining part of this section examines these restricted patterns of citizens' mobilisation and representation through the party system. It first assesses the relevance of different social cleavages (e.g. class, ethnicity, religion) in this regard.

Class

The previous chapter illustrated how a small group of "native" citizens, connected to the colonial administration and francophone education system, emerged as a dominant political class after independence. These linguistic and educational factors remained crucial socio-economic factors shaping – by restricting – patterns of political participation. Urban upper-middle-class francophone men dominated the National Conference that defined the institutional pillars Mali's democratic regime.[286] French remained the official language and Van de Walle (2012) aptly noted that Mali was:

> Among the very few democracies in having a majority of its citizens unable to speak the language of government and public administration.[287]

Education levels and illiteracy levels restricted political participation through the party system in a similar vein. Bleck (2011) revealed the well-known positive correlation between education, political knowledge and participation for the case of Mali.[288] Even pupils attending primary school supported their parents in liaising with political and state representatives as a result of their ability to speak French. Yet, despite the considerable efforts undertaken after the democratic transition illiteracy rates remained sky-high and participation rates very low.

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[285] Afrobarometer 2008. 'Round 4, Survey Mali.'
[286] Jourde, C. (2008) 'The Master is Gone, but Does the House still Stand? The Fate of Single-Party Systems after the Defeat of Single Parties in West Africa', in: Wong, J. and Friedman, E. (eds.), *Political Transitions in Dominant Party Systems: Learning to Lose*, Abingdon, UK and New York: Routledge, pp. 75-90.
[287] Walle, van de N. (2012), p. 13.
[288] Bleck, J. (2011) 'Schooling Citizens: Education, Citizenship, and Democracy in Mali', August 2011, Phd Cornell University.

The first democratically elected President, Alpha Oumar Konaré, made it a personal quest to support and improve the functioning of the education sector. Enrolment figures for primary schools indeed augmented from 26 per cent at the democratic turn to 36.4 per cent in 1999. Throughout the next decade, primary school enrolment further improved and attained 55.6 per cent in 2004 and then 75.4 per cent in 2010. However, this considerable progress in quantitative terms was not accompanied by qualitative improvements or significant advancements in superior levels of education. By the end of 2018, only a third of the Malian population was able to both read and write.

There was a particular disparity in terms of access to education and a wide range of other public services between the urban and rural areas.[289] During the first two decades that followed Mali's democratic transition, the urban-rural divide widened significantly. Urban poverty rates dropped from 72.7 per cent (1989) to 37.2 per cent (2001) and 31.8 per cent (2006) but rural poverty remained almost unaltered. Differences between the capital city Bamako and the rural zones were particularly profound.[290] This is certainly not to suggest a homogenous socio-economic urban setting. The previous chapter already illustrated the very different urban interests groups, including well-educated youth without jobs, petty traders, student and trade movements, which joined forces to oust the authoritarian regime in the early 1990s.

Sears (2007) analysed the complexities of social class formation during the democratic era and distinguished a small "upper political elite" and "upper middle class" from an emerging middle class of petty bourgeoisie and the vast majority of rural masses (e.g. farmers, herders or fishers, migrant workers).[291] In a wider context characterised by a largely informal and predominantly agricultural economy with weakly organised interest groups, individual parties did not mobilise support along the socio-economic cleavage. The support base of Mali's main political parties was not at variance at all in terms of class. The policy manifestos of the leading parties, which all emerged from ADEMA, did not appeal to distinct socio-economic interests groups in society either. In fact, the Malian party system was not an arena where class-based interests were mobilised and expressed, rather it constituted an expression of upper-class dominance.

[289] *Ibid;* Bleck, J. and Michelitch, K. (2015) 'On the Primacy of Weak Public Service Provision in Rural Africa: Malians Redefine 'State Breakdown' Amidst 2012 Political Crisis', Afrobarometer (Working paper No.155).
[290] Walle, N. van de. (2012), pp. 13-15.
[291] *Ibid.* pp. 39-43.

Thurston (2018) noted that the Bamako-based political elite formed an exclusive:

> Single broad network rather than rival camps offering the Malian people genuine choices about the future of the country.[292]

While there were some notable exceptions in this regard, it certainly reflected the general pattern encountered under one-party (1992-2002) and one-coalition (2002-1012) dominance. In sum, socio-economic factors strongly impacted – i.e. restrained – political participation. However, they did not constitute the main social cleavage around which political representation was shaped. The question remains, then, how did this small network of well-educated, francophone, urban political elite, mobilise rural support?

Ethnicity

Ethnic cleavages have played a prominent role in research on African political parties and party systems. Considering the ethnic heterogeneous character of many African polities, scholars expected the emergence of highly fragmented party systems after the introduction of multiparty democracy. However, "ethnic parties" hardly developed across the continent or in Mali. Several studies confirmed that the vast majority of parties could not be labelled as an "ethnic party."[293] Although Malinke people voted more often for RPM than any other party, the RPM obtained a much broader ethnic support base.[294] While URD was sometimes considered to be a Songhai party, owing to the ethnic background of many of its senior party members, its actual support base revealed that it could not be classified as an ethnic party. The National Congress for Democratic Initiative (CNID) actually constituted the only party that did qualify as an ethnic party.[295] During the 1990s, the dominant party, ADEMA, attracted supporters from different ethnic groups. No particular ethnic group considered the party to be "theirs." In other words, in the context of a relatively heterogeneous society, ADEMA established itself as a multi-ethnic party. This reflected a broader trend on the continent where so-called ethnic congress parties – a multi-ethnic party based on an elite coalition between two or more ethnic groups – emerged

[292] Thurston (2018) 'Mali's Tragic but Persistent Status Quo', p.18.
[293] Basedau, M. and Stroh, A. (2009) 'Ethnicity and Party Systems in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa', Hamburg: GIGA (Working Paper, Nr. 100); Dowd, R.A. and Driessen, M. (2008) 'Ethnically Dominated Party Systems and the Quality of Democracy: Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa**',** Afrobarometer (Working Paper no. 92); Cheeseman, N. and Ford, R. 2007. 'Ethnicity as a Political Cleavage', Afrobarometer (Working paper N.83); Posner, D. (2004) 'Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa', *American Journal of Political Science* 48(4): 849-863.
[294] Basedau, M. and Stroh, A. (2009), p. 15.
[295] Cheeseman, N. and Ford, R. (2007), p. 14.

as the most common type of party.[296] However, the fact that ADEMA, as the dominant party, attracted support from different ethnic groups did not reveal much about *how* this mobilisation occurred. Highly personalised and geographically oriented relationships proved particularly influential, as the next section reveals.

Politics of proximity

An increasing number of empirical studies revealed the importance of geographical proximity as a factor shaping patterns of voter mobilisation across the African continent.[297] In Mali, personalised clientelistic networks also influenced the relationship between political parties and local power brokers. In fact, support networks amidst local hierarchical structures constituted a decisive factor in voter mobilisation.[298] In other words, informal ties between national elites and local traditional chiefs or other influential power brokers proved crucial for establishing and maintaining a support basis. In his dissertation on Mali's process of democratisation, Sears (2007) underlined that "the links to regions of origin are key to political mobilisation and economic redistribution."[299]

During the 1992 elections, for example, President Konaré won in all but nine constituencies. Not coincidentally, these nine electoral districts were the home constituencies of his direct competitors.[300] Independence party US-RDA is marginalised on the political scene today but managed to keep one parliamentary seat in Timbuktu. Indeed, the hometown of its leader. As one party president explained:

> Politics is first of all real knowledge of a social milieu', a 'reservoir of confidence," and a "whole social network that puts itself at your disposal because you too have known how to be sociable and to be in symbiosis, in phase with society.[301]

[296] Erdmann, G. and Badeseau, M. 'Problems of Categorising and Explaining Party Systems in Africa', GIGA, January 2007 (Working Paper, No. 40).
[297] Lindberg, S. and Morisson, M.K. (2005) 'Exploring Voter Alignment in Africa: Core and Swing Voters in Ghana.' *Journal of modern African Studies*, 43(4): 1-22; Erdmann, G. (2007) 'Ethnicity, Voter Alignment and Political Party Affiliation – An African Case: Zambia', Hamburg: GIGA (Working Paper no.4); Stroh, A. (2009) 'The Power of Proximity: Strategic Decisions in African Party Politics', Hamburg: GIGA (Working Paper No. 96).
[298] Koter, D. (2009) 'Ties and Votes: Social Structure and Electoral Politics in Africa.' Paper presented at the meetings of the American Political Science Association, Toronto, Canada.
[299] Sears, J.M. (2007), p. 156.
[300] Vengroff, R. (1993).
[301] Party president Mamadou Bakary 'Blaise' Sangaré, quoted in Sears, J.M. (2007), p. 169.

Several political parties with a small, localised support base have been able to secure parliamentary representation over time. In such a context, political parties merely provided senior politicians with the institutional tools to maintain and nourish personalised and geographically concentrated support networks. Failure by the leader of a smaller party to nurture these networks often led to a re-orientation of clients towards another political entrepreneur. Fearing precisely that scenario, the leader of a smaller party active in the Mopti region decided to merge with ADEMA, thereby securing a continued flow of resources for his personalised network.[302] These highly personalised dynamics lay at the root of many party scissions and reconfigurations. As Bleck (2010) noted, Malian citizens did not strongly identify with a particular party and often switched parties.[303]

In sum, highly personalised bonds between urban elites and local power brokers, rather than institutionalised interactions through political parties, played an important role in shaping (restricted) patterns of voter mobilisation and representation along geographical lines. The following section provides a brief assessment of the role of religion, arguably one of the most important mobilising forces in Malian society.

Religion

Islam played a central role in the day-to-day life of a vast majority of Malian citizens and an increasingly important public role during the two decades that are the focus of this chapter. People relied on religious jurisprudence to regulate family affairs (heritage, marriage and disputes).[304] Religion also played a key – if not leading – role in mass mobilisation in Malian society. Different Sunni and Sufi currents emerged over time and their leaders became strong voices in society with a significant influence in the public sphere. Anyone who ever attended religious gatherings led by one such leader, frequently organised in one of Bamako's football stadiums, witnessed the number of people they appealed to. Religion, in all its varieties, was firmly anchored in Malian society across the entire national territory, including the most remote rural areas. Yet, the official role of religion in Mali's formal democratic system is limited and restricted. The 1992 constitution anchored the "laïcité" of the Malian state, in accordance with its French counterpart. The predominantly urban francophone National Conference participants blocked an attempt to permit the creation of Islamic political parties. Religion, or different religious streams, also did not constitute a cleavage around which individual parties mobilised

[302] Personal communication party leader, August 2011.
[303] Bleck, J. (2010).
[304] Soares, B.F. (2006).

support. At times, religious leaders endorsed specific political candidates and actively raised support amongst their followers in the run-up to elections. Successive presidents and political actors also frequently consulted religious actors. In general, however, religious leaders maintained a certain distance from the electoral process and exerted their influence indirectly. As Lebovitch (2019) noted:

> The history of Islamic organisations and activism in Mali since the colonial period is largely one of a pursuit of autonomy from the government, as well as indirect power through social influence and pressure rather than elections.[305]

Nevertheless, from that position, they actively participated in and shaped the outcome of public debates. Soares (2006) illustrated the proactive stance of religious leaders on several issues of morality, such as the opening of nightclubs and bars during Ramadan, the widespread practice of gambling, gender issues or the opening of a pornographic cinema in Bamako. This public role became ever more pronounced and visible after Mali's transition to democracy as many new media outlets became available.[306] In the run-up to the 2002 elections, the public and political role of Islamic leaders further increased.[307] During three mass rallies, they called upon their followers to support candidates who embodied "Islamic values." The next chapter provides another illustrative example of a highly effective campaign by religious leaders against a progressive Family Code adopted by the Malian parliament in 2009. Beyond issues related to public morality or the role of religion in society, religious leaders also played a prominent role in propagating matters related to governance in general and anti-corruption in particular.

Clearly, religion constituted a particularly strong mobilising force in Malian society. Not officially from *within* the formal democratic system or as a cleavage of individual party support; rather, more from the *outside* inwards, in an indirect yet certainly no less influential way. In this regard, Thurston (2013) aptly noted:

> French-educated technocrats and career politicians may dominate elections and government bureaucracies, but Muslim preachers and leaders of mass-based religious organizations will continue to constitute powerful pressure groups […].[308]

[305] Lebovitch, A. (2019), p.9.
[306] Soares, B.F. (2006).
[307] Thurston, A. (2013).
[308] *Ibid*., p. 61.

This short reflection on the role of religion only adds to the restricted social anchorage of the party system in Malian society. Very basic but influential factors such as language, education and religion restrained political participation through the official intermediary channels. Indeed, Beck (2011) contended:

> [I]n the democratic context, the Malian political landscape remains dominated by a Francophone-educated elite despite its majority Muslim population.[309]

The next section further explores the socio-cultural anchorage of the party system with a particular focus on prevailing popular beliefs and expectations of parties and politicians.

Political culture

Following Mamdani's (1996) seminal Citizens and Subject, the previous chapter highlighted the "bifurcated" nature of political domination during the colonial era and the different types of rule in urban (civilian) and rural (communitarian) areas. The urban-rural divide, as shown in the above, remained one of the most central cleavages in Malian society ever since. This also applied to popular perceptions about democracy and the role of political parties that considerably varied along the urban-rural divide. The Afrobarometer noted in 2000:

> Any liberal interpretations are concentrated among urban, educated, non-poor groups. In this respect, Mali's urban elites, like other Africans, are adopting universal political values while its rural masses remain attached to indigenous, culturally specific conceptions of democracy.[310]

Indeed, Mali's party system generally developed in a socio-cultural context in which virtues of cooperation, unity and consensus were widely shared.

[309] Bleck, J. (2011) 'Schooling Citizens: Education, Citizenship, and Democracy in Mali', August 2011, Dissertation Cornell University', p. 54.
[310] Bratton, M. Coulibaly, M. & Machado, F. (2000), table 8.

Public opinion data revealed that Malian political culture is not a fertile breeding ground for political competition:

> The Malian conception of democracy is largely communitarian. It centre on a set of political values such as equality and justice', 'mutual respect', 'unity' and 'working together.' […] Malians prefer social consensus and national unity to political and economic competition.[311]

Likewise, two thirds of the Malian population took the view that "opposition parties should concentrate on cooperating with government and helping it develop the country," rather than "regularly examine and criticize government policies and actions."[312] Moreover, the expectation that politicians take care of their followers prevailed over the notion of critical political scrutiny by Malian citizens. The importance of receiving tangible top-down assistance often overrides the provision of bottom-up accountability. Sears (2007) noted that:

> While poorer Malians want more economic democracy, they generally agree with the paternalistic, authoritarian, and hierarchical norms, practices and institutions that could make such redistribution happen […].[313]

Other surveys revealed that large majorities of Malians did not to see a role for themselves in holding elected officials to account in the period between elections but delegated this responsibility to other political actors instead. Two thirds of the population endorsed the statement that "people are like children; the government should take care of them like a parent," while a third believed that "[g]overnment is like an employee; the people should be the bosses who control the government."[314] Clearly, patrimonial forms of (upwards) accountability prevailed over democratic forms of (downwards) accountability. Political elites faced particularly strong incentives "from below" to take care of and cater for the needs of their (restricted) geographical support base. In the eyes of Malian citizens, state legitimacy predominantly depended on the personal performance of individual political leaders.[315]

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[311] Bratton, M. Coulibaly, M. & Machado, F. (2002) 'Popular Views of the Legitimacy of the State in Mali.' *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* 36(2): 197-238, p. 208.
[312] Afrobarometer, (2009) 'Popular Attitudes towards Democracy in Mali: A Summary of Afrobarometer Indicators 2001-2008', available at: www.afrobarometer.org.
[313] Sears, J.M. (2007), p. 512.
[314] Afrobarometer. 'Summary of Results: Round 4 Afrobarometer Survey in Mali', available at: www.afrobarometer.org.
[315] Bratton, M., Coulibaly, M. and Machado, F. (2002).

Rallying around the powerful executive constituted a strategic choice for political actors in such a context, certainly in light of prevailing popular perceptions against opposition politics and in favour of national consensus. This was exactly how President Touré justified and sold his grand parliamentary coalition. Touré contended that his consensual form of democracy was based on mutual consent, inclusivity and enabled constructive cooperation in the public interest. However, such a stance offered a much too static – and romanticised – interpretation of political culture and democratic practice. It obscured the lack of participation by a majority of Malian citizens and the narrow particularistic interests that dominated the party system. The next and final section provides a brief reflection on the impact of the party system upon state legitimacy in the context of Mali's heterarchical order.

3.6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The trajectory of one-party dominance in Mali has been quite extraordinary. Ever since Mali's democratic transition in the early 1990s, strong "centrifugal" forces have characterised the party system as all main political actors persistently rallied behind a powerful executive. ADEMA dominated the party system during the first decade of multi-party politics. The "open seat" elections in 2002 marked the end of ADEMA's dominance but a balanced party system with a strong opposition did not emerge; instead, a dominant coalition merely replaced the dominant party.

The Malian case, firstly, confirmed the impact of well-known institutional factors in enhancing the trajectory of one-party dominance "from above." The particularly strong – historically rooted – powers vested in the presidency clearly expedited the endurance of one-party and one-coalition dominance. The electoral system also proved particularly advantageous to the emergence of one-party dominance in the polls of 1992.

Moreover, political leaders faced strong incentives "from below" that encouraged them to rally around the executive locus of political power. Opting for a role in opposition role was not a particularly attractive option from the point of view of a political leader in such an institutional and social context. Hence, one would expect one-party or one-coalition dominance to prevail in one form or another in the future. Chapter 6 provides a brief analysis of how the party system evolved during the post-coup period (2013-2018).

Finally, this chapter demonstrated that the party system did not make a significant contribution to (the "input side" of) state legitimacy during the first two decades following Mali's democratic transition. The chapter revealed highly restricted patterns of political

participation and representation through the party system. Only a small minority of citizens participated in elections or maintained contact with party representatives. Very basic but influential factors such as language, education and religion contributed to the deep divide between political elites and the day-to-day life of most Malian citizens. Exclusive networks between national political elites and local power brokers primarily shaped political mobilisation and representation. Patrons prevailed over policies and personal ties trumped institutionalised partisan politics. The party system did not effectively bridge the state society devide. Most citizens, certainly across the rural areas, continued to rely on other power poles in Mali's heterarchical political order where indigenous and religious sources of legitimacy remained particularly influential.

In fact, the party system further exacerbated popular disillusionment with the state as many citizens increasingly contested the elitist pillars of politics. After two decades of multi-party democracy, an overwhelming majority of citizens felt that the country's political parties pursued only selfish interests.[316] During the 1990s, popular frustration with the elitist form of democracy advanced by ADEMA steadily mounted.[317] A decade later, people reproached political elites to take care of themselves more than anything else as corruption figures steeply mounted. Moreover, Malian citizens primarily pointed in the direction of their own political elites rather than foreign terrorists or Tuareg rebels in explaining the implosion of state authority in 2012.[318] At the local level, youngsters questioned the legitimacy of local powerbrokers who long monopolised ties with national political elites. De Bruijn and Both (2017), for example, illustrated that Fulani youngsters in central Mali gradually realised that neither their elites, nor the state had ever really done anything for them.[319] Yet, this chapter clearly revealed that Mali's party system did not provide accessible and effective intermediary political channels to raise and express such popular discontent. The next chapter extends this analysis and examines the role of the Malian legislature in holding an increasingly discredited executive branch of government accountable. Accountability constituted the third democratic pillar expected to reinforce state legitimacy together with political participation and representation.

The chapter examines the performance of Malian parliamentarians in the years preceding democracy's decay in 2012.

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[316] FES (2013) 'Mali-mètre N.03', available at: http://www.fes-mali.org/index.php/mali-metre; Whitehouse, B. (2013) 'Mali's Coup, One Year On', available at: http://bridgesfrombamako.com/.

[317] Results of an opinion poll, summarized by Sears (2007), pp. 188-9.

[318] Bratton, M. and Coulibaly, M. 2013. 'Crisis in Mali: Ambivalent Popular Attitudes on the Way Forward', *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, 2(31): 1-10.

[319] De Bruijn, M. and Both, J. (2017) 'Youth Between State and Rebel (Dis)Orders: Contesting Legitimacy from Below in Sub-Sahara Africa', *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 28(4-5): 779-798.

Chapter 4

The legislature and democratisation

An in-depth analysis of the functioning of Mali's hybrid legislature. [320]
(2007-2009)

INTRODUCTION

Parliaments lie at the very heart of democracy as they fulfil their responsibilities of law making, overseeing the executive and linking citizens to the policymaking process. The legislative branch of government performs a leading role in shaping democratic accountability. Its members play a unique dual role in this regard. They are expected to hold the executive accountable on behalf of all citizens and are, at the same time, accountable to the constituents they represent. Strong parliaments proved "an unmixed blessing for democratisation" in post-communist societies and significantly contributed to democratic consolidation in Latin America.[321] African legislatures have generally been much less successful, however, in strengthening democracy. In fact, the Malian legislature was situated at the very centre of democracy's decay during the 2000s.

Both state authority and legitimacy eroded during this period. Popular satisfaction rates with democracy steadily dropped and frustration with the Touré-led administration intensified. Popular disenchantment stemmed in particular from the regime's tolerant stance on corruption and the significant privileges granted to those aligned to the political centre.[322] State authorities, as highlighted in Chapter 2, allowed loyal allies in northern Mali and senior officials to profit from the criminal economy in an attempt to weaken armed groups that opposed the state. The Touré regime also allocated large plots of land to politically well-connected investors based on opaque deals kept secret from the larger public.[323] Touré regime cronies acquired land titles on the outskirts of Bamako, ignoring the rights of local residents.

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[320] This chapter is based on a previous publication: Vliet, M. van. (2014). 'Weak Legislatures, Failing MPs, and the Collapse of Democracy in Mali', *African Affairs*, 113 (450): 45-66. It has been adapted and extended in the context of this dissertation.

[321] Fish, S.M. (2002) 'Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies', *Journal of Democracy,* (17)1: 5-20; Scott Morgenstern and Benito Nacif (eds.) (2002) *Legislative Politics in Latin America.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[322] Hussein, S. (2013) 'Mali: West Africa's Afghanistan', *The RUSI Journal,* 158(1): 12-19.

[323] Kone, Y. (2012). 'Lessons from Mali's Arab Spring: Why Democracy Must Work for the Poor.' Christian Aid: Bamako (Occasional Paper No.8).

A similar pattern prevailed in rural areas.[324] International media widely covered corruption scandals in the Malian health sector, in particular in relation to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Mismanaged and fraud in the public administration moved well beyond a number of isolated incidents, however. In 2010, Mali's Auditor General reported a loss of income of around 50 million euros because of mismanagement and fraud in the administration. The next annual report revealed an amount of 15 million euros of public expenditure that was unaccounted for or missing.[325] The Auditor drew these conclusions based on an inspection of a limited number of public institutions. Therefore, the total amount of mismanaged funds must have been even higher. Yet, the authorities provided almost no judicial follow-up to the reports presented by the Auditor General. This fuelled popular perceptions that public officials who broke the law were not punished and that the judiciary "granted preferential treatment according to class and income."[326]

In this context, scholars qualified the (chaotic) military coup in Mali as a "guardian coup" that served to protect the interests of ordinary citizens against civilian mismanagement.[327] In great contrast to the early 1990s, when citizens withstood fierce state repression and took to the streets demanding a return to democracy, there was no public outcry to defend the democratically elected president this time around. On the contrary, an opinion poll conducted shortly after the military coup revealed that two thirds of citizens in Mali's capital Bamako was actually pleased with the ousting of Touré.[328] At the same time, most people held the political elites – much more than the northern rebellion, the coup leaders or terrorist organisations – responsible for the chaos the country experienced in 2012.

This chapter provides an analysis of the legislature's performance some years before democracy eventually collapsed. It seeks to unravel the actual contribution of the legislature in shaping patterns of accountability, thereby underpinning Malian state legitimacy.

The first section defines the stage upon which parliamentarians performed their core duties. In line with the previous chapter, it addresses factors that influenced the context in which they operated "from above" and "from below."

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[324] Whitehouse, B. (2012) 'What Went Wrong in Mali?'; Baumgart, J. 2011. *Assessing the Contractual Arrangements of Large-Scale Land Acquisitions in Mali with Special Attention to Water Rights*, Bonn: GIZ.

[325] The reports are available on the website of the Auditor General: http://www.bvg-mali.org/9-bvg/rapports/2-rapports-annuels.html.

[326] Afrobarometer. 'Summary of Results: Round 4 Afrobarometer Survey in Mali.' See previous comment about this ref. This should be Afrobarometer (year).

[327] Bergamaschi, I. (2014), p. 356.

[328] Whitehouse, B. (2012) 'The Force of Action: Legitimizing the Coup in Bamako, Mali', *Africa Spectrum,* 47, 2-3 (2012), pp. 93-110. The opinion poll results are available at: http://www.bamakobruce.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/rapport_sondage_crise_malienne11.pdf.

The core part of the chapter provides an empirical analysis of the performance of individual parliamentarians. This assessment takes into account formal responsibilities in the area of: (1) executive oversight; (2) legislation; (3) constituency development, as well as the informal task of: (4) maintaining clientelistic support networks. The Malian legislature is thus (re-)conceptualised as a hybrid institution that comprises both formal and informal duties, as clarified in the introductory chapter and in accordance with Lindberg's (2010) earlier study of the Office of a Ghanaian Parliamentarian (see below).[329] This section also examines the tasks Malian parliamentarians prioritised and how the different duties affected each other.

The chapter ends with a short reflection on the impact of prevailing patterns of democratic accountability provided through the legislature upon the legitimacy of the state in relation to other power poles in Mali's heterarchical political order.

This study adopted several research methods to obtain data about the performance of the various parliamentary duties in daily practice. In-depth interviews with 15 parliamentarians by the end of 2009 were complemented with archival research, observation of a budgetary session and constituency visits.[330] Before turning to the outcome of this empirical assessment, the stage upon which Malian MPs operated is elaborated.

4.1. MALI'S HYBRID LEGISLATURE CONTEXTUALISED

Executive-legislative ties

Much of the academic literature focuses on the broader institutional context in which African legislatures operate. The centralisation of power around the presidency emerged as one of the principal factors restraining the performance of African parliaments.[331] Based on a review of the literature, Nijzink *et al.* (2006) concluded that:

> Powerful presidents seem to be one of the most important reasons why modern parliaments in Africa are generally regarded as weak institutions.[332]

[329] Lindberg, S. (2010) 'What Accountability Pressures Do MPs in Africa Face and How Do They Respond? Evidence from Ghana', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 48(1): 117-142.
[330] More methodological background to this study as well as the questionnaire are included in the appendices (pp. 228-248).
[331] Van Cranenburgh, O.B.R.C. (2009) 'Restraining Executive Power in Africa: Horizontal Accountability in Africa's Hybrid Regimes,' *South African Journal of International Affairs*, (16)1: 49-68. Nijzink, L., Mozaffar, S. and Azevedo, E. (2006; Barkan, J.D. (2008) 'Legislatures on the Rise?', *Journal of Democracy,'* (19)2: 124-137.
[332] Nijzink, L., Mozaffar, S. and Azevedo, E. (2006), p. 317.

The Malian case is anything but an exception to this broader pattern, as already briefly noted in the previous chapter. The institutional imbalance between the executive and legislative branch of government appeared to be particularly prominent in sub-Saharan African countries governed under a semi-presidential system of which Mali is a case in point. The Malian president had few colleagues on the continent with an equally strong, formally anchored mandate.

A broader analysis of executive-legislative ties further illuminates the challenging context in which Malian Members of Parliament (MPs) operated. Although they had a number of official tools at their disposal to hold the executive answerable, they lacked effective instruments to enforce sanctions upon the executive.[333] They could not dismiss individual ministers and faced considerable thresholds to censure the entire cabinet. The ability of the president to dissolve parliament further restrained MPs from using this right in daily practice as they had often made considerable personal investments to become elected (see below). Although ministers were appointed from outside parliament, they participated in parliamentary committee meetings when legislative matters were discussed and had substantial influence over the parliamentary agenda that was elaborated "respecting the issues prioritised by the government."[334] Internal capacity challenges also constrained the performance of the Malian legislature. Most parliamentary committees have one assistant at their disposal and some basic ICT facilities but lacked their own budget to, for example, organise study visits across Mali or to commission detailed advisory reports. Furthermore, the official requirement to clarify ways in which the government should fund specific legislative amendments constituted a significant obstacle in light of the limited support that was available.

One-party and one-coalition dominance

A second factor emerging from the literature that restricted the performance of collective parliamentary tasks "from above" relates to the political context. In numerous African countries, executive-centred politics thrived in a setting of one-party dominance. Various studies revealed the limited potential of parliamentarians to critically scrutinise the executive and proactively engage in legislative actions in such a political environment.[335]

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[333] Answerability and enforceability constitute the two pillars of accountability. See Lindberg, S.I. (2009) 'Accountability: The Core Concept and Its Sub-types', *African Power and Politics Project* (Working paper, No.1).
[334] Malian National Assembly, Internal Rules and Regulations (article 54).
[335] Salih, M.M.A. (ed) (2005) *African Parliaments: Between Governance and Government.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; Rakner, L. and Van de Walle, N. (2009) 'Opposition Parties and Incumbent Presidents: The New Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Sub-Saharan Africa', in Lindberg, S. (ed.) (2009) *Democratisation by Elections: A New Mode of Transition?*, Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

The previous chapter presented and analysed one-party dominance by the Alliance pour la Démocratie au Mali - Parti Africain pour la Solidarité et la Justice (ADEMA-P.A.S.J.) throughout the 1990s. One-coalition dominance substituted one-party dominance as politically independent President Touré established a "platform of national unity" after his victory in the 2002 elections. President Touré often portrayed Mali's consensual model of democracy as an African alternative to the Western style of democracy that thrived on competition and rivalry. He claimed that his consensual model not only guaranteed stability, but also contained effective checks and balances. "There are strong debates in parliament but at the end of the day disunity is avoided," he stated, adding, "while there is no hostile opposition, there is parliamentary control and the majority controls the government."[336] However, the analysis provided in the previous chapter confirmed an earlier conclusion drawn by Sears (2007) that Malian democracy was not effective in "combining consensus and pluralism, but rather seeks consensus at the cost of pluralism."[337] In other words, the pressure for parliamentarians to remain loyal to rather than critically scrutinise the executive persisted after the 2002 elections.

In a number of African countries, larger opposition parties and backbenchers from the ruling party had, by then, established "coalitions of change" that started pushing for institutional strengthening of the legislature.[338] In Mali, however, the vast majority of opposition benches remained vacant throughout the last two decades and patterns of parliamentary loyalty towards the executive prevailed.

International context

The international context constituted a third factor restricting the potential of many African legislatures to fulfil their oversight and law-making tasks, certainly in the most aid-dependent countries. In Mali, international aid had covered an important component of the national budget throughout the previous decade, as illustrated in the previous chapter. Donors provided almost 40 per cent in the form of direct budget support. The previous chapter equally pointed at the "democratic deficit" of the ways in which international agencies and bilateral donors provided their support. For the case of Mali, Bergamaschi (2014) specifically contended that:

[336] 'A Confrontational Democracy Does Not Fit Africa', (*NRC,* 22 January 2012).
[337] Sears, J.M. (2007), p.172.
[338] Barkan, J.D. (ed.) (2009) '*Legislative Powers in Emerging African Democracies'* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

> Aid has done little in favour of democratisation or enhanced horizontal accountability, i.e. the establishment and strengthening of checks and balances able to control the executive branch of power. Budget support in particular acted as a strategic rent for the incumbent regime, which in Mali in the 2000s was increasingly discredited domestically.[339]

Burnell (2012) underlined that international aid entrenched relations of *external* accountability from receiving governments towards international donors, often to the detriment of *internal* accountability relations vis-à-vis their own citizens and the legislature.[340] Gould *et al*. (2005) previously depicted this pattern based on their groundbreaking work, which illustrated that the elaboration of international Poverty Reduction Strategies often undermined the consolidation of democratic forces, structures and ideas in developing countries.[341] In addition to domestic factors, this external dimension reinforced the rise of what Mkandawire (2010) called "choiceless democracies" across the African continent.[342]

Beyond these factors shaping the context in which Malian MPs operated "from above", the manner in which the legislature was rooted in society – the broader "incentive structure" confronting individual parliamentarians as well as prevailing popular expectations – influenced the way parliamentarians behaved in daily practice.[343] The following section briefly highlights the impact of the formal electoral system in place as well as the informal institutions of clientelism/patrimonialism and the politics of proximity in this regard.

Electoral system

By shaping the manner in which political representation is institutionalised, an electoral system significantly influences the relationship between individual parliamentarians and ordinary citizens. In Mali, parliamentary elections were held under a two-round majority run-off system in either single or multi-member electoral districts, depending on the number of inhabitants. In such a context, individual parliamentarians were confronted with a strong incentive to represent the interests of their electoral constituency at the national level and to provide constituency

[339] Bergamaschi, I. (2014), p. 369.
[340] Burnell, P. (2012), pp. 273-292.
[341] Gould, J. *et al*. (2005) *The New Conditionality: The Politics of Poverty Reduction Strategies*, London: Zed Books.
[342] Mkandawire, T. (2010) 'Aid, Accountability, and Democracy in Africa', *Social Research*, 77(4); 1149-1182; *idem* (1999) 'Crisis Management and the Making of "Choiceless Democracies" in Africa', in: R. Joseph (ed.) *State, Conflict and Democracy in Africa*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, pp. 119-36.
[343] Burnell, P. (2009) 'Legislative Strengthening Meets Party Support in International Assistance: A Closer Relationship?' *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, (15)4: 460-480.

services.[344] Ordinary citizens perceived these latter responsibilities as the key priorities of Malian MPs. Although there was substantial popular support for the collective oversight and legislative tasks by parliament, popular pressure to fulfil individual constituency-oriented responsibilities clearly prevailed. Roughly three quarters of Malian citizens believed that "parliament needed to make the laws because it is composed of people's representatives" and almost two thirds also "wanted the president to explain in parliament on a regular basis how tax money is spent."[345] However, ordinary citizens did not consider these collective tasks, particularly critical to the wider process of democratisation, a strong priority. Adopting legislation was still regarded as a principal parliamentary duty by 26 per cent of the population but less than one in ten Malians regarded executive oversight as a priority function. The formal task that Malian citizens primarily expected their parliamentarians to engage in was to represent constituency interests at the national level.[346]

Informal institutions

A vast body of literature also revealed the prevalence of highly personalised, clientelistic networks in shaping the way ordinary citizens were linked to the decision-making process in many African societies.[347] Across the entire continent, large segments of society expected their representative to take care of them in a "parental" way.[348] Highly personalised political networks historically bridged the state-society divide in Mali, too.[349] The previous chapter demonstrated the importance of geographically oriented networks between national political elites and local power brokers. These informal networks have long been considered an *alternative* that people relied on in the wake of poorly functioning formal institutions.

However, in his innovative study of the various tasks that Ghanaian citizens held their parliamentarians accountable for on a day-to-day basis, Lindberg (2010) adopted another analytical perspective. He considered the distribution of public goods in clientelistic networks to be an *integral part* of the parliamentary institution.[350] Hence, he "re-conceptualised" the

[344] Barkan, J.D. (2009).
[345] Afrobarometer. 'Summary of results: round 4 Afrobarometer survey in Mali.'
[346] *Ibid.*
[347] A 'narrow' definition of clientelism is adopted here, referring to the politically motivated distribution of private goods within a personalised network of *individual* supporters, in contrast to patronage that entails the distribution of (semi-) public goods to *larger groups*. See: Erdmann, G. and Engel, U. (2006) 'Neopatrimonialism Revisited: Beyond a Catch-All Concept.' Hamburg: GIGA research programme, legitimacy and efficiency of political systems (Working Paper No. 16).
[348] Logan, C. and Bratton, M. (2006) 'Voters But Not Yet Citizens: The Weak Demand for Vertical Accountability in Africa's Unclaimed Democracies.' *Af*robarometer (Working Paper No.63).
[349] Cooper, F. (2002); Fay, C. (1995); Koter, D. (2009).
[350] Lindberg, S. (2010).

legislature as a hybrid institution generating both formal and informal responsibilities for its members. The relevance of this re-conceptualisation of the legislature moves well beyond Ghanaian borders. Cheeseman (2009) revealed the institutionalisation of informal networks between Kenyan parliamentarians and their constituents because of elite pressure "from above" and incentives "from below."[351]

Much of the academic literature considered the collective oversight and legislative duties of parliamentarians as crucial for the overall process of democratisation. Likewise, the prevalence of clientlistic ties by parliamentarians was perceived as detrimental to the overall performance of the legislature and its contribution to democracy. Lindberg (2010), however, again nuanced this perspective. He revealed that the clientelistic demands faced by individual Ghanaian parliamentarians also contributed to collective parliamentary actions. The persistent pressure to fund the healthcare bills of individual constituents, for example, encouraged them to collectively adopt a nationwide healthcare insurance system. The interplay between the various parliamentary functions was not inevitably a negative one and therefore needs to be examined empirically. For this reason, the following sections not only provide an overview of the various core functions performed by Malian parliamentarians, but also offer an assessment of their interplay in daily practice.

4.2. THE PERFORMANCE OF MALI'S HYBRID LEGISLATURE IN DAILY PRACTICE

Candidate selection and electoral campaigns

Becoming adopted as a parliamentary candidate and elected to office obviously precedes the actual performance of various parliamentary duties. Analysing the principal dynamics during this pre-electoral period provided nonetheless important background information on the kinds of incentives MPs were likely to face once in office. The monetisation and personalised character of the relations between potential candidates and constituents was already apparent throughout this phase. Having been formally adopted by local party branches, the majority of parliamentarians indicated that a track record in the party at either local or national level was an important selection criterion in the run-up to the 2007 elections. However, many MPs also mentioned one's individual financial capacity and family status. Parties expected all MPs to fund the largest share of their own campaigns, making financial capacity an indispensable

[351] For an illustration in the case of Kenya, see: Cheeseman, N. (2009) 'Kenya Since 2002: The More Things Change the More They Stay the Same', in L. Whitfield and Mustapha ed., *Turning Points in African Democracy.* London: James Currey.

criterion for selection. Equally, clan and cast membership played a role for many parliamentarians; one explained that:

> In my locality, I am the "protégé" of the families that traditionally obtain authority and they have a lot of influence within the constituency.[352]

The relevance of dynamics related to the "politics of proximity" introduced in the previous chapter also surfaced in the interviews with MPs. In geographically larger multi-member constituencies, political party affiliation did not primarily guide the establishment of coalition lists. Instead, the candidate list strategically united individual candidates who maintained a personal support networks in different geographical "sub-entities":

> Together, we cover all the important areas in our constituency. I take care of my home village and five surrounding villages while my coalition partners [on the electoral list] take care of their own home areas within the constituency.[353]

Once adopted as a parliamentary candidate, financial resources played a crucial role during the electoral campaigns. All but one of the incumbent MPs included in the survey indicated that their campaign budget had at least tripled compared to the previous elections in 2002. Five parliamentarians spent less than 15,000 euros, four between 15,000 and 30,000 euros, another four between 30,000 and 75,000 euros, while one parliamentarian invested 120,000 euros in a vast and scattered constituency during the 2007 legislative campaigns. Although some parliamentarians personally covered most of their expenses, the majority relied on their social network for financial support (family and friends rather than party or businesses). One parliamentarian from a northern constituency already noted the infiltration of drug money into the 2007 electoral campaigns. The financial sponsors, as will be shown below, had a strong influence on parliamentarians after they had been elected into office.

Asked why they believed people had voted for them, the vast majority of parliamentarians mentioned their personal ability to provide constituency service. A promise of development projects was considered the most effective campaign message, followed by a commitment to support individual constituents who faced financial challenges. Malian MPs primarily tried to

[352] Interview MP, N.8, Bamako, 15 December 2009.
[353] Interview MP, N.2, Bamako, 8 December 2009.

win support amongst swing voters by promising job opportunities, constituency development programmes and by dishing out small sums of cash.

Performing four core parliamentary duties

First, responding to clientelistic demands constituted a core duty of Malian MPs. Once elected into office, many constituents expected personal financial support from their parliamentarians. "Parliamentarian in Mali is becoming the Secretary General of social demands," as one MP noted.[354] Malian parliamentarians categorised the actors who primarily expressed these kinds of demands in the following order of priority: (i) local party representatives; (ii) people who actively supported the MP on the campaign trail; and (iii) ordinary citizens. Malian parliamentarians strategically selected and ranked the people they supported through the provision of private goods: (i) campaign supporters; (ii) family members; and (iii) traditional leaders. Although this latter group rarely asked for such support, many parliamentarians regularly offered money and services to influential local leaders in order to maintain their backing. Nevertheless, Malian MPs mostly distributed private goods and services to those people who had assisted them during the 2007 electoral campaigns. They particularly invested much time and energy in lobbying the executive to provide (relatives of) these strategic supporters with a job in the state bureaucracy. One MP stated that: "I particularly try to find job opportunities in the ministries controlled by my party." [355] One of his colleagues indicated that he had already "provided thirty youngsters with an internship and had managed to offer six close friends a job over the last years."[356] Ordinary citizens frequently demanded their parliamentarian to cover school fees, arrange accommodation for students in the capital city, to pay hospital bills or to find them a job within the state bureaucracy. While Malian MPs often provided small amounts of cash to these constituents, they restricted the distribution of substantial personal favours to a small network of family members, campaign supporters and local leaders. Most parliamentarians indicated that it was simply impossible to cover the large number of personal requests. When they visited their constituency, they faced, on average, over 70 demands for private assistance from individual constituents. Instead of responding to all these individual requests, they tried to arrange for constituency development projects simultaneously supporting many people.

[354] Interview MP N.10, Bamako, 17 December 2009.
[355] Interview MP N.4, Bamako, 10 December 2009.
[356] Interview MP N.5, Bamako, 11 December 2009.

Secondly, all parliamentarians interviewed – without exception – prioritised this task of constituency service and constituency representation in daily practice. However, they lacked an official financial instrument, such as a Constituency Development Fund, to provide such services themselves. Malian parliamentarians therefore relied on their informal networks across the executive branch of government to make these constituency needs both known and to address them. The 2010 budgetary session attested to this as many parliamentarians not only proactively voiced the needs of their constituency but also tried to persuade the executive to prioritise these concerns within next years' budget. The following example is illustrative:

> During the 2007 campaigns, President Touré promised to invest in the construction of new secondary schools in the area of Yanfolila. But today, there are still 900 students packed in only three secondary school buildings. Will the government invest more in building classes over here in 2010?

Members of Parliament from different electoral constituencies also teamed up in order to represent matters of common, regional, interest:

> We, as MPs from Bandiagara and Douentza, are very concerned about the routes between Bandiagara, Mopti and Douentza. Already in 2008, there was a promise to have these routes improved but this has not been done. What has the government planned to do next year in order to address this concern?

The vast majority of parliamentary interventions during the budgetary session concentrated on these very particularistic constituency needs. Parliamentarians were seen cooperating but they also competed amongst each other to have their constituency priorities addressed by the executive.

Maintaining constructive working relations within the executive branch of government was considered essential for representing constituency needs effectively and for providing constituency services. No less than three quarters of the parliamentarians interviewed indicated that being part of the ruling coalition was a great advantage in this respect. One MP stated:

> I maintain a close relation with the president and often discuss problems that have arisen in my constituency with him directly. He then usually intervenes.[357]

Two other colleagues revealed that:

> For setting up a community school and other services in your constituency, you need signatures and funds from the minister of education. It certainly helps if your party is friends with that minister.[358]

> One of the wards in my constituency did not have access to electricity. So I went to see president Touré. I told him there were households in my constituency who had their doors decorated with his campaigning poster but lacked access to electricity. The president personally called the director of the national electricity company in my presence and gave instructions. If the President had not intervened, we would still be waiting today. But now, they have electricity. So, you see, access to the president is crucial for developing my constituency.[359]

In case a parliamentarian did not directly benefit from his or her alignment with the executive, there were still subtle advantages to point out. An MP explained:

> Even though I haven't played a role in ensuring that a particular road is now being improved in my constituency, it still looks good on me and I can at least claim to have contributed.[360]

Moreover, a majority of parliamentarians indicated that being able to provide a tangible service to one's electoral constituency was the achievement they were most proud of. Only one MP mentioned a legislative act in this respect and none referred to a particular oversight success. All the others referred with pride to a range of constituency accomplishments from the provision of medicines to local healthcare centres, a successful lobby bringing electricity to one's home region, water sanitation projects or the procurement of an ambulance for the constituency.[361] In

[357] Interview MP N.13, Bamako 19 December 2009.
[358] Interview MP N.1, Bamako 8 December 2009.
[359] Interview MP N.10, Bamako 17 December 2009.
[360] Interview, MP N.3, Bamako 9 December 2009.
[361] A similar pattern was witnessed when MPs were asked which of their colleagues' achievements they appreciated most.

line with prevailing popular expectations and the campaign promises made, Malian parliamentarians were seen to prioritise their constituency representation and service-delivery tasks in daily practice. The performance of these constituency-oriented tasks strongly influenced their collective law-making and oversight tasks. Before presenting the interplay between these different parliamentary tasks, however, an overview of those collective responsibilities that are particularly crucial to the overall democratisation process are presented.

Thirdly, the performance of collective law-making tasks was concentrated during the two parliamentary sessions that ran from the first Monday in April (for a maximum of 90 days) and the first Monday in October (up to 75 days). Going through the parliamentary archives, it appeared that Malian MPs – like many of their colleagues in the world – rarely used their right to initiate legislation. They drafted six bills (*propositions de loi*) between 2002 and 2007, most of which focused on the working conditions and salaries of Members of Parliament themselves. Between 2007 and 2009, four bills were elaborated that addressed specific policy matters. The Malian parliament was active in amending legislation proposed by the executive, although a number of other African parliaments have also been proactive in this respect.[362] The Malian parliament amended around 25 per cent of the *projets de loi* during Touré's first mandate and altered 20 per cent between 2007 and 2009. Malian parliamentarians also frequently formulated so-called policy recommendations, which did not require detailed budgetary justifications. MPs adopted more than 40 recommendations (in total) during the parliamentary sessions in October 2008 and April 2009. The recommendations covered a wide range of policy matters in the judicial, agricultural, transport and banking sector. The legislative performance of Malian parliamentarians thus appeared moderate but not as weak as one might have expected given the political and institutional restrictions presented in the previous section. More in-depth research, particularly on the performance of legislative committees, is nonetheless required to arrive at more robust conclusions in this respect.

Fourthly, Malian parliamentarians rarely used the oversight instruments at their disposal although there has been a gradual increase since the early 1990s. They primarily used these instruments to obtain clarifications (*answerability*) from the executive, whom they rarely sanctioned (*enforceability*). Thirty-eight oral questions were recorded between 2002 and 2007. Sixteen oral and seven written questions were presented to government between 2007 and 2009.

[362] Barkan, J.D. (ed.) (2009).

By comparison: only four written and 15 oral questions were recorded during the first legislature (1992-1997).[363] Furthermore, eight government interpellations took place between 2002 and 2007 and six had been set-up between 2007 and 2009. The issues tabled varied from the challenges faced in the education sector, the consequences of the worldwide financial crisis for the Malian economy and issues related to fiscal/monetary policies. The legislature secured one rare oversight success in forcing the executive to alter the 2010 budget following the sale of Mali's national telephone company. The government obtained significant additional revenue after selling 51 per cent of the shares of Mali's national telephone company SOTELMA to Maroc Telecom. The executive allocated these funds to different budgetary lines without formally consulting parliament. Frustrated by their exclusion, opposition Members of Parliament organised a press conference and requested that the Minister of Finance respond to oral questions in parliament. President Touré tried to calm tempers but parliament nonetheless adopted an amendment to ensure that the additional resources were integrated into a revised version of the 2010 budget.

In sum, as members of a hybrid institution, Malian parliamentarians performed a wide range of tasks that were obviously not given the same priority in daily practice. They devoted most of their time and energy to performing individual constituency-oriented tasks. The following section demonstrates that in order to achieve success in this priority area, parliamentarians had to curb their responsibility to hold the executive accountable. In other words, a negative interplay prevailed between the individual and collective duties of Malian MPs.

4.3. THE INTERPLAY AT PLAY: PARTICULARISTIC AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

As noted at the start of this chapter, in Ghana, recurrent demands faced by MPs to pay the healthcare bills of individual constituents prompted improvements in national insurance schemes. In Mali, constituency-based interests also inspired collective action in a number of cases. The above-mentioned effort by MPs to obtain a revised 2010 budget from the Malian government is a good example. Parliamentarians motivated their request to include revenues earned from the sale of Mali's national telephone within a revised 2010 budget as follows:

[363] Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2008) *L'Assemblée Nationale du Mali sous la troisième république. Un guide à l'usage des élus, des citoyens et des partenaires extérieurs.* Bamako: Imprim Color. No data were available about the number of written questions between 2002 and 2007 in the parliamentary archive.

> I am not from the opposition, but my people are suffering and we need to use this money effectively. We need to be involved as parliamentarians.
>
> Where I live, people have no access to television. We could have used this money to assist them. […] I just want my locality to be able to develop together with the rest of Mali.

Moreover, numerous parliamentarians revealed that constituency-based demands to improve local healthcare centres and to address pertinent land issues had encouraged them to jointly adopt nationwide policy recommendations in these areas.

Yet, the collective actions undertaken were primarily those that also benefitted individual constituencies. Malian MPs were much more hesitant to adopt collective measures that could harm their individual ties with the executive. In fact, the empirical assessment revealed a very strong trade-off between collective and individual parliamentary tasks. This seriously hampered the legislature's collective oversight responsibilities. In other words, the prevailing pattern witnessed in the years before democracy collapsed constituted a negative relation between particularistic representative tasks on the one hand and collective oversight tasks on the other hand. As noted above, Malian parliamentarians relied on their informal networks across the executive branch of government to perform their constituency-oriented tasks in the absence of an official instrument such as a Constituency Development Fund. In return, representatives of the executive branch expected them to refrain from critical scrutiny, at least in public, of sensitive political subjects as the following observations by Malian MPs illustrated:

> I go and see the minister in person. Questioning him in public will frustrate him. He will get angry with you and then he is not going to assist you anymore.[364]
>
> We, as Members of Parliament from the ruling majority, are always expected to automatically defend every minister. Political discipline has become increasingly important and has limited our room for manoeuvring. We are expected to shut up.[365]

Another clear-cut example concerned the failed attempt of the Malian legislature to have an open debate with the prime minister about the implementation of the parliamentary policy

[364] Interview MP N.12, Bamako, 19 December 2009.
[365] Interview MP N.1, Bamako 8 December 2009. Interestingly, the room for manoeuvre was considered greater during President Touré's first mandate (2002-2007), which was characterised by a full parliamentary consensus.

recommendations adopted between 2007 and 2009. The executive almost routinely accepted these recommendations, but MPs had limited possibilities to verify their degree of implementation. The prime minister, however, did not want to discuss these matters in parliament in front of the cameras and raised pressure on the Speaker to allow cabinet to respond in writing. Many MPs favoured an open debate but, not wanting to harm their ties with the executive, abstained from protesting. Collective parliamentary oversight was equally restricted on matters of national security. An MP representing a northern constituency indicated that he formally requested the Minister of Defence to come to parliament to discuss the rising presence of Salafists in his electoral constituency. President Touré, however, personally demanded local notables in this constituency to force the MP to withdraw his request:

> We finally did the consensus thing and I spoke to the Minister of Interior behind closed doors.[366]

Other MPs complained that the French National Assembly debated Mali's security challenges more openly than the country's own parliament. However, many admitted abiding by executive pressure and refrained from addressing the matter in public sessions.

The obstacles opposition parliamentarians faced when performing their individual constituency-oriented tasks further illustrated the importance of maintaining constructive ties with the executive. During the 2010 budgetary session, an opposition MP who served as a minister in a previous cabinet complained about an infrastructural problem in his constituency. A long-time serving colleague from the ruling coalition stood up and responded, "he should stop complaining." Having failed to address the problem while in government himself, "the MP could not expect the current government to solve his problems now." The comment was made with a slightly ironic tone and generated laughter in the House. Nevertheless, opposition MPs did face considerable challenges to performing their constituency-oriented tasks. One parliamentarian indicated that his lengthy career as a senior civil servant granted him access to several ministries, despite the fact that his party was in opposition. Other opposition MPs encountered significant obstacles. One MP recalled that during the 2007 campaigns, "constituents were told by our competitors that their constituency could not develop if they voted for us, the opposition."[367] Another colleague indicated that:

[366] Interview MP N 14, Bamako, 19 December 2009.
[367] Interview MP N.11, Bamako, 18 December 2009.

> Civil servants are often afraid to assist us. We therefore have far less opportunities to ensure the needs of our constituents are known at the right places and to ensure that relevant state institutions take action.[368]

Well aware of the consequences for one's potential to safeguard both individual and constituency interests, the vast majority of parliamentarians from the ruling coalition indicated that they took care not to fall out of grace with the executive.

In sum, the Malian legislature often refrained from holding an increasingly discredited executive accountable and played a modest role in the legislative domain. This performance was clearly linked to the wider incentive structure in which parliamentarians were embedded. Both formal (electoral system) and informal (clientelism/patronage, politics of proximity) incentives incited MPs to focus on constituency-related matters. Their dependence on an omnipotent executive to achieve results in these priority areas only further eroded their already limited potential to provide executive oversight (at least in public).

So far, this chapter has focused exclusively on the (dis)incentives confronting Malian MPs and how these, in turn, affected their limited role in performing collective legislative and oversight duties. The following and final section expands this narrow scope. It reveals how other influential power poles considerably shaped the legislative process and executive oversight.

4.4. THE LEGISLATURE IN THE CONTEXT OF A HETERARCHICAL POLITICAL ORDER

The exercise of public authority in the context of Mali's heterarchical order involved both state and non-state actors who legitimised their authority in reference to multiple sources. None of the actors constituted a hegemonic force in society and public authority was thus shaped through constant interactions between these actors and multiple legitimising repertoires. As noted in the introductory chapter, Sears (2007) referred to Mali's "triple heritage" of indigenous, religious and Western democratic aspects with respect to the struggle for legitimacy.

This interplay also characterised the legislative process, as the revision of Mali's Family Code in 2009 clearly illustrated. In that year, Malian authorities elaborated a revised Code that included substantial progressive changes encouraging gender equality. Modifications included the formal repeal of the so-called obedience clause – referring to the inferior status of women

[368] Interview MP N.15, Bamako, 19 December 2009.

in relation to their husbands; abolishing the legal status of religious marriage; a rise in the age of marriage to counter child marriage; as well as changes in heritage rights amongst married couples. The National Assembly adopted the revised version of the Code in August 2009, almost unanimously. International donors had tied their overall financial support to the Malian state to tangible improvements in the area of gender equality.[369] Parliamentary approval took place shortly before a new transfer of international aid was scheduled. However, within a short space of time, religious movements mobilised over 50,000 people in Bamako to protest these changes. They set-up highly visible media campaigns and blamed MPs for having voted in favour of a text that did not reflect "traditional" or religious values prevailing in Malian society. Then president of the umbrella of Islamic organisations in Mali and one of the most influential religious leaders, Imam Mahmoud Dicko, stated:

> They have spoken of marriage as being a secular act. We have said it is too much for a country like Mali where everyone is a believer. There are no non-believers in Mali. In one manner or another, people believe […] To say in this country that marriage is a secular act and to make it a law, it is not a good thing, it truly insults Mali.[370]

Their campaigns proved highly effective and the government withdrew the Code. Barely two years after having approved the progressive Family Code, the legislature unanimously adopted a revised version that took into account most of the objections raised by religious leaders.[371] The course of events reinforced popular perceptions that both the legislature and the state were out of sync with wider society. In contrast, Bergamaschi (2014) noted that religious leaders:

> Consolidated their power as spokespersons of average citizens and accumulated political capital.[372]

Hence, the democratic decision-making process regarding the Family Code weakened state legitimacy more than it enhanced it. It reinforced the position of non-state power poles vis-à-vis the state.

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[369] Siméant, J. (2014) '*Contester au Mali. Formes de la mobilisation et de la critique à Bamako*', Karthala : Paris, pp. 205-228.
[370] Thurston, A. (2013), p. 52.
[371] Ahmed, B. (2011) 'Mali. Un nouveau code de la famille, avec la bénédiction des islamistes', (*Jeune Afrique,* 5 December 2012).
[372] Bergamaschi, I. (2014), p. 368.

A similar pattern characterised the interplay between state and non-state actors in the area of executive oversight. This chapter has illustrated the highly restricted role of the legislature in this regard. In such a context, actors operating outside the official democratic channels – almost inevitably – played a prominent role in holding the executive accountable. In the early 1990s, the "street" in Mali's capital Bamako emerged as a pivotal political space when protest marches led by different youth constituencies and other urban factions eventually triggered a military coup that ended authoritarian rule (ref. Chapter 2). Siméant (2014) illustrated how a wide variety of urban interest groups, ranging from trade unions, various youth associations, anti-globalisations movements, small op position parties, have taken to the streets ever since.[373] While the issues raised during such demonstrations varied, poor state performance in the socio-economic realm was central to many of them. With the exception of a very small parliamentary opposition, political parties and parliament refrained from critically holding the executive to account on such issues. The streets constituted the primary political space for their expression. Popular protests once more played a major role in inciting regime change in 2012. This time around, it started with a march in Kati led by women married to soldiers who had lost their lives in the emerging conflict in northern Mali. They wanted to hold the political and military hierarchy accountable for having failed to provide the soldiers with adequate weapons, basic rations and a minimum of support. As they marched towards the presidential palace in Bamako, their movement turned into a broad-based demonstration that spread to other cities. This march of the "war widows" provided the "initial spark" that ultimately led to the chaotic military coup that ousted President Touré.[374]

After the coup d'état, youth groups continued to play a particularly important role in holding political leaders accountable. Rap groups like Les Sofas de la République and many other musicians encouraged urban youngsters, through music and social media, to hold their corrupt leaders to account.[375] Similar initiatives had been taken in neighbouring countries where groups like Y'en a marre in Senegal and Le Balai Citoyen in Burkina Faso successfully held their political elites accountable at important junctures in the democratic process. In rural areas, as briefly highlighted in the previous chapter, youth networks increasingly contested the position of local elites who had long monopolised (informal) ties with political elites at the national level. Improved access to social media enabled these youngsters to share experiences, to

[373] Siméant, J. (2014), pp. 15-69.
[374] Peterson, B.J. (2013) 'The Malian Political Crisis: Taking Grievances Seriously', 27 March 2013, (Opinion Piece, African Arguments).
[375] Whitehouse, B. (2012) 'Fighting for the Republic, with Beats and Rhymes', 5 June 2012 (Blog, Bridges from Bamako).

reinforce a common narrative and to organise themselves. As a result, consciousness about their marginalised position increased. Those youth groups, De Bruijn and Both (2017) noted, "most actively challenge the existing frames of legitimacy" and engaged in a "search for alternative legitimate orders."[376] Some moved in the direction of alternative orders propagated by non-state armed groups, militias or terrorist groups, as Chapter 6 further demonstrates.

Clearly, protests against the political elites had a very heterogeneous character and moved in different directions. A profound analysis of these diffuse responses is certainly beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, the common point of departure for these diverse trajectories constituted a shared sense amongst protestors that the Malian democratic system failed to channel their interests and contestations with the state.

4.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on an analysis of the performance of different parliamentary tasks, this chapter revealed that Mali's hybrid legislature refrained from holding an increasingly discredited executive accountable in the years preceding the 2012 coup. The case study confirmed and illustrated well-known institutional (executive dominance), political (one-party/coalition dominance) and international (aid) challenges that restricted executive oversight. In line with the electoral system in place and wider societal expectations, particularistic tasks clearly prevailed in daily practice. Becoming an MP in Mali, as highlighted in the above, was like "becoming the Secretary General of social demands." In this context, a strong trade-off between collective and particularistic parliamentary tasks prevailed. MPs relied on constructive ties with – and informal networks across – the executive branch of government to fulfil their particularistic tasks. Hence, the hybrid legislature functioned as an extension of the executive branch of government geared towards the redistribution of national resources along particularistic – and geographically centred – interests. The national interest and the delivery of public goods played a marginal role, merely a by-product of prevailing particularistic interests. When MPs faced similar constituency demands, this potentially incited collective action in the national interest. Nevertheless, if joint action jeopardised their personal or particularistic interests, MPs refrained from intervening collectively. In practice, actors operating outside the official channels and beyond democratic institutions provided the bulk of executive oversight.

[376] De Bruijn, M. and Both, J. (2017), p. 780.

President Touré often presented Mali's consensus democracy as an alternative to a confrontational western-type characterised by dissent and opposition. The consensus model, he argued, mobilised and unified different interest groups in society, thereby boosting state authority and legitimacy. However, the analysis presented in the previous and current chapter points in a different direction. If Mali's consensus democracy displayed a sense of unity, that was largely because dissent had to be expressed though alternative channels beyond – and often in opposition to – the state. While intended to enhance state legitimacy, the democratic structure actually reinforced non-state power poles in Mali's heterarchical political order.

The next chapter moves beyond the national democratic system and provides an analysis of Mali's ambitious decentralisation reform package. It is based on extensive empirical research at the local level. This enabled a more in-depth understanding of the actual interplay between state and non-state actors, material and immaterial resources, and ways in which this interaction shaped a decentralised administration in the context of a heterarchical order.

Chapter 5

Decentralisation and democratisation

The functioning of a hybrid political institution at the local level.[377]
(1999-2009)

INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s, the Malian government set out to transfer central state responsibilities and resources to newly established local municipal authorities supervised by locally elected councils. Thousands of villages and nomad fractions were regrouped into 703 municipalities after an extensive process of administrative and territorial restructuration.

These ambitious decentralisation reforms aimed to enhance state legitimacy and spearhead economic development by reinforcing democratic accountability at the local level. The literature on decentralisation and accountability – addressed in more detail below – predicts such positive outcome provided that: (1) elected officials at the local level ('actors'); (2) obtain considerable influence ('power'); (3) over essential policy areas ('domains'); while (4) being held accountable by ordinary citizens ('downward' accountability).

Hence, a central research question concerning the actual implementation of decentralisation reforms in Mali is whether and to what extent it engendered downwardly accountable elected municipal actors with significant domains of discretionary power.

In addressing this research question, the analysis presented in this chapter moves beyond a merely institutional approach. Mali's decentralisation reforms were obviously not implemented in a socio-cultural vacuum. The newly created municipal council encountered several informal power poles that played a leading role in local governance affairs long before the roll-out of the decentralisation programme in the 1990s. This included the influential council of elderly at village level, which legitimised its authority in very different ways than through a popular mandate obtained in elections. This chapter therefore addresses the research question from an anthropological perspective. It is based on in-depth fieldwork around the first (1999), second (2004) and third (2009) local elections in Karan, a village some 90 kilometres south of Mali's capital Bamako. This longitudinal empirical research examined how patterns of interaction

[377] This chapter is based on an earlier publication: Vliet, M. van (2011) 'Family Matters: The Interplay between Formal and Informal Incentives for Accountability in Mali 's Local Communities', in: Chirwa Danwoord and Lia Nijzink (eds.) (2011), *Accountable Governments in Africa: Perspectives from Public Law and Political Studies*. Cape Town: UCT Press. Several parts have been extended and adapted in the context of this thesis.

between both state and non-state actors and multiple sources of legitimacy shaped decentralised administration over a longer period.

The chapter starts with a short recap of the key concepts and theoretical framework presented in the general introduction to this thesis. The next section addresses a number of methodological considerations, most notably the considerable advantages and limitations of an in-depth case study. The central part of the chapter presents an empirical assessment structured around three consecutive local elections. The final part relates these empirical findings to the overarching research question and the expected benefits from decentralisation reforms according to the prevailing literature.

5.1. THEORIES AND CONCEPTS

5.1.1. Decentralisation

Decentralisation is any act whereby a central government formally cedes powers to actors and institutions at lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy.[378] Efforts to redistribute state authority, responsibilities and resources to subnational units of the state can serve a wide variety of purposes. Previous experiences with decentralisation across the African continent reflected a desire to: better control the rural areas from the centre (in colonial times and during one-party rule); reduce national governments' expenditure (during the years of Structural Adjustment Programmes in the 1980s); or to improve political participation and the accountability of local governments (in the era of democratisation).[379] Indeed, this latter objective took centre stage in Mali during the 1990s. The chapter builds on the definition of democratic decentralisation as highlighted by Ribot (2002), which "occurs when powers and resources are transferred to authorities representative of and downwardly accountable to local populations."[380] Malian authorities were not short of ambition in this regard and designed a far-reaching reform programme, at least on paper.

First, the reforms envisaged a profound change in the relationship and power balance between central and decentral state institutions. The authorities did not opt for a process of

[378] Rondinelli, D.A. (1981) 'Government Decentralisation in Comparative Perspective', *International Review of Administrative Sciences,* 47(2): 133-145.
[379] Olowu, B. (2001), 'African Decentralisation Policies and Practices from 1980s and Beyond', The Hague: ISS (Working Paper No. 334), pp. 6-11.
[380] Ribot, J.C. (2002), 'African Decentralisation: Actors, Powers and Accountability. Democracy, Governance and Human Rights', Geneva: UNRISD Programme (Working Paper No.8)', p. 2.

deconcentration, which would have entailed a transfer to the local level of centrally appointed personnel and agencies with continued reporting lines to their superiors in Bamako. In other words, through deconcentration, a national government merely represents itself at the local level but remains in control of policies and budgets, thereby maintaining a strong form of upwards accountability. Instead, Malian authorities envisaged a true process of *devolution*, which involved a real transfer of authority, responsibilities and resources to more autonomous subnational layers of government. The democratically elected political leadership replaced an authoritarian regime that had been in power for almost 25 years. They acknowledged that the need to restore state legitimacy and decentralisation became an important strategy in this respect.[381] The need to contain recurrent rebellions in the northern regions constituted another motive guiding the ambitious reforms. By allowing the northern regions greater autonomy, the territorial boundaries of the country could be safeguarded.[382]

In 1993, Malian authorities established the Mission de Décentralisation (MDD) with a mandate to develop a legal framework for the implementation of the ambitious decentralisation programme. It did not take long for the government to discuss tangible proposals envisaging: (1) a profound restructuration of Mali's administrative hierarchy; (2) the creation of elected bodies at regional, district and local level;[383] and (3) the exact mandate of the new municipal institutions.[384] The local administration teams included a mayor, three civil servants and secretaries to the municipality.[385] Following this preparatory legislative work, the authorities officially endorsed the creation of 683 new local municipalities – regrouping thousands of villages – in 1996.[386] They scheduled the first municipal elections in 1999. The discretionary authority of local governments included policy areas such as municipal policing, public health, sanitation, civil registration, local infrastructure, transport and tax collection. [387] These newly established municipalities encompassed multiple villages in order to reach a certain scale that improved administrative efficiency and ensured a solid (tax) income basis. However, in the case

[381] Kassibo, B. (ed). (1997) 'La décentralisation au Mali. Etats des lieux', *Bulletin de l'APAD* 14; Sy, O. (1998) *La Décentralisation et les Réformes Institutionnelles au Mali. Le Cadre d'une Nouvelle Dynamique de Démocratisation et de Développement*, Bamako: MDRI ; Traore, O. and Ganfoud, B.O.A. (1996) *Problématique Foncière et Décentralisation au Mali*, Bamako: Centre Djoliba.
[382] Seely, J.C. (2001). Sall, A. (1993) '*Le Pari de la Décentralisation au Mali. (1) Contribution, (2) Textes Fondamentaux (1955–1993)*, Bamako: Sodifi.
[383] Directly elected at the community level; indirectly at the district and regional level.
[384] N. 95-022, 95-34, 97-08.
[385] In larger communities more civil servants were envisaged.
[386] N. 96-059. This brings the total number of municipalities to 703.
[387] Centre Djoliba & KIT. (2003) *Soutenir La Mise en Oeuvre de la Décentralisation en Milieu Rural au Mali. Tome 1, Thème d'Actualité. Tome 2, Boîte à Outils.*, Amsterdam: KIT. 67 per cent of taxes were reserved for the municipal council, 15 per cent for the district council, 5 per cent for the regional council and 3 per cent for the association of municipal councils.

of Karan, the focus of this in-depth case study, the village constituted the new municipality by itself for reasons presented below.

Secondly, the decentralisation reforms envisioned far-reaching changes in the relationship between state authorities and Malian citizens. Political decentralisation and local multi-party elections accompanied the above institutional reforms. Following Ribot (2002), Hyden (2008) and Olowu (2001), three specific elements of democratic decentralisation are particularly important: These concern the *actors* that take control of decentralisation; the *power* they obtain; and the *domain* over which they acquire authority. When it comes to the *actors*, Olowu (2001) argued, "many traditional rulers in different parts of Africa have used decentralised power to obstruct development of their people by diverting decentralised resources to personal uses […] because of their fear that these may break their hold on local power."[388] Hyden (2008) underlined the importance of addressing *power* relations when studying the performance of institutions in Africa. Policy outcomes were not only the result of institutional changes, but also determined by informal power relations.[389]

Based on these three dimensions, Ribot (2002) noted that representatives of decentralised democratic institutions "must have a *domain* of discretionary decision-making powers, that is, one of local autonomy. It is with respect to this domain of powers that decentralised actors represent, are accountable to, and serve the local population."[390] Reviewing much of the decentralisation literature, he concluded, "[d]ecentralisation is not taking the forms necessary to realise the benefits that theory predicts, because it fails to entrust downwardly accountable representative actors with significant domains of autonomous discretionary power."[391]

Research conducted in subsequent years confirmed this finding and revealed the lack of a real transfer of authority, responsibilities, human and financial resources from the central level to the newly established municipal institutions.[392] Sears (2017) noted that agents of the central authority obstructed decentralisation as it entailed a "reduction of their powers and privileges to which they had become accustomed and felt entitled."[393] It was under President Touré (2002-2012) that decentralisation de facto came to a standstill:

[388] Olowu, B. (2001), p.17.
[389] Hyden, G. (2008). 'Institutions, Power and Policy Outcomes in Africa'. London: ODI Africa Power and Politics Programme (Discussion Paper No. 2).
[390] Ribot, J.C. (2002), p. 25.
[391] *Ibid*, p. 3.
[392] IIED (2006) *Making Decentralisation Work for Sustainable Natural Resource Management in the Sahel: Lessons from a Programme of Action-Research, Policy Debate and Citizen Empowerment*, London: IIED, ch. 5.
[393] Sears, J. (2017) 'Unmet Hopes to Govern Mali's persistent Crisis'.; Centre FrancoPaix. p.12.

> By around 2003, ATT abandoned genuine efforts at decentralization. He abolished centres created to provide training to local officials and kept power and money in central government institutions. This meant that decentralized institutions were deprived of the tools necessary to function autonomously from the central government, or even to function at all.[394]

Likewise, Baudais (2016) stipulated that the limited transfer of resources did not enable municipal governments to deliver services.[395] Wing and Kassibo (2014) also concluded that decentralisation in Mali merely reproduced a weak national government at the local level.[396] Chapter 6 of this thesis addresses these challenges related to the power balance between central state authorities and decentralised institutions in more detail.

This chapter focuses on the assertion of the decentralisation reforms to democratise the ties between municipal authorities and citizens at the local level. More precisely, to answer the question whether the reforms engendered new political representatives ("actors"), with a considerable influence ("power") over central policy areas ("domain") for which they were being held accountable by ordinary citizens ("downwards/upwards").

5.1.2. Accountability

Accountability emerged as a prominent concept in both academic literature and donor policies in the decade that followed the many democratic transitions during the so-called third wave of democratisation. Together with political participation and representation, it constituted a key pillar under democracy's main proposition to underpin these states with renewed popular legitimacy after decades of authoritarian rule. Various authors warned against what Lindberg (2009) referred to as the "inherent dangers of a Byzantine conceptual nightmare leading to […] severe confusion about what the core meaning of accountability is."[397] Accountability is, by definition, relational. An agent, for example a political representative, performs a number of tasks in response to expectations held by, say, another party or a group of citizens. The political representative is first required to inform, explain and justify his actions to these citizens. In other words, the first component of an accountable representative is *answerability* to citizens.

[394] Lebovitch, A. (2017) 'Reconstructing Local Orders in Mali: Historical Perspectives and Future Challenges', Washington, DC: Brookings (Local orders paper series No. 7), p.8.
[395] Baudais, V. (2016).
[396] Wing, S.D. and Kassibo, B. (2014) 'Mali: Incentives and Challenges for Decentralization', in: Dickovick, T. and Wunsch, J. (eds.). *Decentralization in Africa*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, pp. 113-136.
[397] Lindberg, S. (2009) 'Accountability: The Core Concept and Its Subtypes', London: ODI Africa Power and Politics Programme. (Working paper No.1), p. 2.

Secondly, citizens must have the capacity to pass judgement and impose sanctions on the representative. Such *enforceability* constitutes the second major component of accountability.[398] In this chapter, the impact of the introduction and subsequent functioning of the new municipal councils on both answerability and enforceability aspects of the accountability relationship between local political representatives and citizens will be assessed.

The legislative framework that guided Mali's decentralisation policies offered many opportunities for ordinary citizens to be better informed by and seek justifications from local state representatives, either directly or indirectly, via the elected councilors (e.g. the *answerability* side of accountability). The legislative framework, for example, obliged the municipal authorities to draft the annual budget in a participatory manner and to present financial reports to citizens.[399] A majority of councilors could equally force the mayor to take specific actions or impose sanctions on the municipal authority ("*enforceability*").

Based on a substantive review of literature dealing with the concept of accountability, Lindberg (2009) identified three key dimensions: the *source* of accountability (are representatives being held accountable internally, within an institution, or externally, by citizens); the *degree of control* that people have over representatives (although difficult to quantify); and the *direction* of accountability (vertical upwards, vertical downwards or horizontal).[400] One of the central propositions of Mali's decentralisation reforms that takes centre stage in this chapter was the ambition to institute a *strong* degree of *downward* accountability of elected municipal representatives towards *local citizens*.

Before introducing the empirical analysis, the following section briefly recaps key notions of the theoretical outline provided in the introductory chapter that are relevant to the assessment of decentralisation in the wider context of Mali's heterarchical political order.

5.1.3. Decentralised administration in a heterarchical setting

A substantial group of scholars examined processes of democratisation by focusing on formal institutions.[401] Political and economic scientist Schumpeter constituted an important source of

[398] Brinkerhoff, quoted in Ribot (2002), considers answerability to be the essence of accountability. Burnell (2003), however, clearly demonstrates that answerability is considerably reduced if the potential to sanction is limited: Burnell, P. (2003) 'Legislative-Executive Relations in Zambia: Parliamentary Reform on the Agenda', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 21(1): 47-68.
[399] Sy, O. (1998).
[400] Lindberg, S. (2009), p. 11.
[401] Huntington, S.P. (1992); Diamond, L., Linz, J.J. & Lipset, S.M. (eds.) (1990) *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

inspiration in this respect. He considered the mere presence of democratic institutions – most notably elections – to be the primary indicator of democracy. Many policy papers also focused on various institutional aspects of democratic consolidation and broader governance reforms in Africa.[402] A firm belief that development and democracy could be spearheaded through formal institutional change underpinned these approaches. Institutional thinking also inspired the roll-out of ambitious decentralisation programmes across the African continent. The basic idea was that new governance institutions could generate accountable political behaviour. Formal institutions, as defined in the introductory chapter, referred to the rules and procedures created, communicated and enforced through channels widely accepted as official and often codified in constitutions and legislation. The term official implies that the rules and procedures emanate from an authority, in this case the state. However, politicians are not solely embedded in a formal institutional setting. Their behaviour is equally shaped by a wide range of informal institutions, defined as socially shared values, usually unwritten, which are created and enforces outside officially sanctioned channels.[403]

Neo-patrimonialism emerged as a particularly influential paradigm in academic research dealing with the interplay between formal and informal institutions, certainly but not solely across the African continent. The neo-patrimonial paradigm, which has its roots in the 1970s and 1980s, guided many studies on the African state, politics and governance practices.[404] It demonstrated the prevalence of informal patrimonial forms of domination in the institutional setting of the state. In practice, state officials actually operated as so-called patrons and exchanged public resources in their particularistic networks of individual people (clientelism) or groups of dependents (patronage) in return for their loyalty and support. African state institutions were therefore re-conceptualised as hybrid institutions in which both impersonal rational-legal bureaucratic and personalised patrimonial forms of domination co-existed.[405] Scholars took different positions about the balance between these two forms of domination. However, the prevailing tendency in this research stream pointed at the overriding influence of patrimonial logic to the detriment of formal rational-legal procedures.

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[402] World Bank (1989) *Annual Report*, Washington, DC: The World Bank; *idem* (1993) *Annual Report*' Washington, DC: The World Bank, available at: https://www.worldbank.org; UNDP (1991) *Human Development Report: Financing Human Development,* available at: https://www.undp.org/.

[403] Levitsky, S. and Helmke, G. (2006), p.5.

[404] Eisenstadt, S.N. (1973) *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

[405] Médard, J.F. (1982) 'The Underdeveloped State in Africa: Political Clientelism or Neo-Patrimonialism?', in: C. Clapham (ed.) *Private Patronage and Public Power: Political Clientelism and the Modern State.* London: Frances Pinter.

Several scholars challenged, or at least nuanced, the neo-patrimonial paradigm. Hagmann (2006) argued that neo-patrimonialism emerged into a "catch-all concept" used to explain political processes without always presenting the empirical evidence of the actual informal practices.[406] Others denounced its usage for putting too much emphasis on informal dynamics and not enough focus on the formal rules and regulations that did seem influential in practice.[407] Empirical studies also revealed that patronage was only one amongst many aspects characterising relations between African politicians or state officials and ordinary citizens.[408] The neo-patrimonial approach tended to overestimate the influence of money or other material advantages exchanged between political patrons and their clients.

The institutional and neo-patrimonial approaches have both been criticized for lacking a cultural-oriented perspective on democratic consolidation in Africa. Hyden (2008) underlined that institutions cannot be studied in isolation from the norms and values of the societies within which they develop.[409] Schaffer (1998) contended that democratic values that underpin specific institutions are not necessarily universal.[410] Based on extensive fieldwork in Senegal, he demonstrated that elections had a different meaning amongst Senegalese people compared to citizens in the United States. Reasoning along similar lines, Van Donge (2006) noted: "An emphasis on political culture should heighten awareness of the various forms which democratic values may take in different societies."[411] Besides the notion that democratic values take different forms, political and historical anthropologists emphasised that "multi-party democracy [in Africa] has simply been assimilated into a broader range of thought." [412] This thesis follows Chabal and Daloz's (2006) call for an interpretative approach, focusing on popular beliefs that shape political agency, and to examine the meaning people themselves give to specific institutions.[413] This chapter therefore introduces existing cultural repertoires used

[406] Hagmann, T. (2006) 'Ethiopian Political Culture Strikes Back: A Rejoinder to J. Abbink', *African Affairs*, 105(421): 605-612, pp. 605-7.
[407] Wiseman, J.A. (1999) 'Book Review of Africa Works: Disorder as a Political Instrument', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37(3): 560-562. Engel, U. & G.R. Olsen (eds.) (2005) *The African Exception: Contemporary Perspectives on Developing Societies*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited; Lindberg, S. (2006).
[408] Hansen, K.F. (2003) 'The Politics of Personal Relations: Beyond Neo-Patrimonial Practices in Northern Cameroon', *Africa*, 73(2): 202-225; Therkildsen, O. (2005) 'Understanding Public Management through Neo-Patrimonialism: A Paradigm for All African Seasons?', in: Engel, U. & Olsen, G.R. (eds.) (2005).
[409] Hyden, G. (2008), p.3.
[410] Schaffer, F.C. (1998) *Democracy in Translation: Understanding Politics in an Unfamiliar Culture*, London and Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
[411] Donge, J-K. van. (2006), pp. 97-98.
[412] Abbink, J. & Hesseling, G. (eds.) (2000) *Election Observation and Democratisation in Africa,* Basingstoke and New York: Macmillan. Geschiere, P. (1997) *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*, Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.
[413] Chabal, P. & Daloz, J.P. (2006).

locally to legitimise authority and shape accountability as well as influential cultural institutions at the local level before presenting an empirical assessment of the decentralisation in Karan.

A final point of critique, or at least nuance, to institutional and neo-patrimonial perspectives on decentralisation relates to the central position of the state in these approaches. In the context of a heterarchical political order, several power poles, both state and non-state, interact and jointly shape decentralised administration. The exercise of public authority in the public service involves multiple actors operating beyond or besides the state. In various chapters, this thesis revealed the central role of religious and traditional authorities in this regard, specifically in rural localities. Local communities, as underlined in the introductory chapter, should not be seen as a one-dimensional socio-political arena, but rather as an emerging public space in which different actors and modes of domination and legitimation confront one another.

This chapter therefore extends the patronage concept and uses "Patronage Plus" as an analytical lens to account for this multitude of actors and the multidimensional relationships between material and non-material resources at play. It empirically examines how interactions between formal and informal institutions, official and unofficial actors, and different legitimising repertoires shaped decentralised administration over a longer period. The study opted for an in-depth empirical assessment concentrated on a single case study. The next section briefly clarifies the advantages and limitations of that methodological choice.

5.2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter presents results based on extensive fieldwork conducted around the first (1999), second (2004) and third (2009) local elections in Karan, a village some 90 kilometres south of Mali's capital city Bamako, close to the Guinean border. Karan is located in the second region of Mali, Koulikouro, in the district of Kangaba. In cultural terms, it is part of the *Mande* region, which extends over parts of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Mali.

Based on longitudinal empirical research in a single locality, the results are characterised by the well-known advantages and limitations of a case study. The method enabled a thorough contextualised analysis of the functioning of a democratic institution at the local level. It provided the possibility to move beyond formal institutional aspects of decentralisation reforms and take the sociocultural context in which political agency was shaped prominently into account. Recurrent and lengthy periods in the research area created relations of trust with key respondents. In-depth interviews enabled a nuanced understanding of socio-political dynamics and accountability mechanisms in practice. Moreover, the longitudinal perspective allowed for

a dynamic assessment of hybrid democratic practices over time. It thereby avoided a recurrent criticism of the hybrid political paradigm that it offers a static account that fails to account for change.

The research primarily relied on participant observation, which provided invaluable information on often sensitive matters. I attended and observed local campaign events, public meetings, informal discussions amongst local *grins* (groups of friends), the functioning of an unofficial local "policing" network and family group meetings. I often witnessed tensions between representatives of the newly created democratic institution and existing (informal) institutions. I used different research methods (e.g. questionnaires, open interviews, participants observation, focus groups) to enhance the validity of the research data.

Yet, the adopted research method inherently restricts the representativity of the data. This holds especially true for the case of Karan in the context of the decentralisation reforms. As a municipality comprising just one village, Karan constituted a rather exceptional case. The decentralisation reforms generally regrouped several villages into one municipality in order to achieve scale advantages and administrative efficiency. Nevertheless, Karan, for reasons clarified below, constituted an atypical case and did not merge with other villages into one municipality. The lack of representativity of the present case study also risks contributing to the prevailing "Mande-centric" appreciation of Malian politics that was highlighted in the introductory chapter of this thesis. The context in which the decentralised reforms were implemented in Karan greatly differed from that in many other parts of the country in terms of security, the role of religion, geographical distances vis-à-vis municipal and central state representatives, the financial means involved in decentralised administration and many more disparities. Notwithstanding these considerable limitations in terms of representativity, the conclusions derived from the in-depth case study do have relevance beyond the mere physical boundaries of the small municipality of Karan. This benefit lies, as highlighted in the introductory chapter and in line with Lijphart (1971), in the *process* of theory building.[414] This case study particularly contributes to a better understanding of the interplay between existing "traditional" political institutions, democratic institutions and different sources of legitimacy at the local level. It assesses how political agency is shaped by incentives generated through newly established formal institutions and socially accepted norms enforced outside official channels in the context of decentralised administration. While the outcome of this interplay varies from place to place, it constituted a central dynamic characterising the implementation of the

[414] Lijphart, A. (1971) 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', *American Political Science Review,* 65(3): 682-693, p. 691.

decentralisation reforms in many localities. The study thereby contributes to – and can be compared with – a wider body of empirical studies examining similar processes with diverse outcomes in different geographical settings.[415] Moreover, the geographical scope of this analysis is broadened in Chapter 6 of this thesis, which assesses the emerging role of non-state armed groups in decentralised administration in northern Mali.

5.3. EXISTING LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

The short theoretical recap provided above noted that informal institutions that shape the incentive structures faced by political actors involved in decentralised administration are broader than resource-driven forms of patronage and are often culturally shaped. This section therefore introduces influential local cultural institutions, sources of political legitimacy and accountability mechanisms that existed in the research area before the creation of new municipal authorities and local elections in the context of the decentralisation reform package.

The most important political institution at the local level was the council of elderly. This village council met on a weekly basis in the vestibule of the village headman and managed all local economic, political and social affairs. Political representation and access to representative positions was based on a number of criteria: (1) claims of autochthony expressed through stories of origin; (2) patronymics (*jamuw*);[416] (3) *kabilaw*;[417] (4) hierarchical status groups; (5) seniority; and (6) gender. These criteria should not be interpreted as "predetermined cultural/ancestral patterns" that, in an objective and static manner, easily determined who was entitled to local political representative functions and who was excluded.[418] Rather, different (groups of) people used these criteria to present their – often contradictory – authority claims. As claims of autochthony were important for gaining access to powerful positions, different (interest) groups portrayed themselves as the most autochthonous inhabitants of a particular village in order to claim their right to become a political representative.

[415] Cf. Fay, C. (2006), for a broader collection of case studies.
[416] "Patronymic" refers to a person's last name, but also to an historical figure. Patronymics have a strong social meaning in *Mande* and specific relations exist between patronymics. For example, a teasing relationship exists between certain patronymics that allows people to neglect certain moral codes and tell each other off.
[417] A *kabila* is one of the most important socio-political institutions at the local level. Its members work together on a communal field, put aside money collectively and meet on a regular basis to discuss internal and village affairs. A *kabila* groups together a number of families (and the migrants these host) that have a shared ancestor.
[418] Olivier de Sardan, J.-P. (2008) 'Researching the Practical Norms of Real Governance in Africa', London: ODI Africa Power and Politics Programme, (Discussion paper No.5), p. 3.

The origin of a *Mande* village tended to be presented (and, as such, still referred to by citizens today) as a pact between its first inhabitants and groups that arrived at a later stage. In Karan, the Keïta's were considered the most autochthonous inhabitants. According to their version of the "myth of origin", their ancestor founded Karan and met two other families, the Traore and Dumbia, with whom he established a pact.[419] Consistent with this pact, the function of village headman (*dugutigi*) was to be taken up by the Keïta, whereas the Traore and Dumbia would become mediators in the village (locally referred to as the *furugnoko*). Citizens frequently referred to this pact and the *furugnoko* indeed played a mediatory role. Although many other families arrived in the centuries following the establishment of Karan, these three most-autochthonous families with the patronymics (*jamuw*) Keïta, Traore and Dumbia monopolised the 11 village council seats. Claims of autochthony thus highly influenced one's access to representative functions. As Jansen (1995, 1996) underlined, oral traditions in *Mande* were much more than storytelling about some ancient past.[420] The stories were references shaping social life and justifying power relations.

Another criterion that influenced one's chances of becoming a member of the village council is the *kabila* to which one belongs.[421] In Karan, the sons and grandsons of the founder of the village established five different *kabilaw.* The selection of village council members was based on the different *kabilaw* in the village. In other words, the village council members represented their *kabila.* However, the number of representatives differed for the various *kabilaw*. The two *kabilaw* that were established by the sons of the village founder obtained three seats in the village council; those established by his grandsons obtained only two positions and the *kabila* founded by his great-grandson just one seat. Yet again, claims of autochthony expressed through genealogies appeared to be an important factor determining one's access to representative positions. The earlier a *kabila* was founded, the more autochthonous it was and the more representatives it received in the village council.[422]

The hierarchical set-up of *Mande* society, which echoed India's caste system, also influenced the access to representative functions. Society was divided into noble people (*hooronw*),

[419] Many different versions of the origin story exist. The Traore and Dumbia, for example, claim that they had arrived in Karan before the Keïta but that the latter were more powerful, hence the Traore and Dumbia could not maintain the position of village headman themselves. These origin stories must not, therefore, be analysed as true accounts of some ancient past, but more as a reflection of actual power relations in local society. By presenting themselves as autochthonous inhabitants, different groups make status claims in local society.
[420] Jansen, J. (1995) *De Draaiende Put. Een Studie naar de Relatie tussen het Sunjata-epos en de Samenleving in de Haut-Niger (Mali)*, Leiden: CNWS; *idem*. (1996) 'The Younger Brother and the Stranger in Search of Status Discourse for Mande', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 144 (46-4): 659-684.
[421] *Kabilaw* is plural and *kabila* singular.
[422] In 2009, the number of seats was augmented from 11 to 15 and equal representation amongst the five *kabilaw* was being considered.

followed by craftsmen – usually bards and smiths – (*nyamakalaw*) and former slaves (*jonw*).[423] Access to the village council was limited to noblemen only. Representatives of the *nyamakalaw* and *jonw* "caste" could not become village council members. Lastly, all council seats were reserved for relatively old men, many of whom had been members since the early 1960s.[424] Seniority was an important factor determining political authority. The village headman was the oldest Keïta amongst the oldest living generation. In daily life, norms prohibited people from publicly contradicting older brothers or fathers. The official political role of women was rather limited at the village level, although a number of women were very active in other domains of public life (such as in NGOs and women associations).

The *kare*, a generational group, constituted a last important and noteworthy local institution. A *kare* was formed by a generation of young boys collectively circumcised. They remained members of the same *kare* throughout their entire lives and donated funds to each other's marriages, supported members if they fell ill and met on a regular basis to discuss local events. Whereas a *kabila* provided vertical lines of solidarity (family ties crossing generations), a *kare* constituted a horizontal solidarity group (generational ties crossing family lines). Although Karan's village councillors did inform, consult with and justify their actions towards members of their *kabilaw* (and were thus answerable), the opportunity to hold village councillors accountable was restricted. It seemed almost impossible to pass judgement against or sanction village councillors who had been in office for 40 years. Hence, the enforceability side of accountability was limited and vertical downward accountability between village councillors, who obtained a wide sphere of influence, and local citizens was relatively weak.

The next section of this chapter examines the extent to which the introduction of Mali's decentralisation programme adapted and strengthened local mechanisms of accountability over time as predicted by theory.

5.4. DECENTRALISATION REFORMS IMPLEMENTED: THE CASE OF KARAN

5.4.1. The first local elections: Consensus-building instead of electoral competition

Existing notions of political representation and participation greatly influenced the establishment and subsequent functioning of the first municipal council in Karan.

[423] The social organisation is more flexible than in India as the social status of particular groups might change over time, as clarified in the introductory chapter.
[424] In 2009, an agreement was reached to renew the village council members.

This became apparent during the selection process of candidates in the run-up to the 1999 elections. Representatives of the *furugnoko*, the families that played a mediatory role according to the "pact of origin," met with the village council, the principal unofficial political institution in Karan. They proposed to develop a consensus list comprising representatives from the various *kabilaw* instead of organising competitive elections based on party lists that could possibly generate conflict in the village.[425] The proposal was accepted and each *kabila* leader called for a meeting to identify representatives who would sit on the new official institution (the municipal council) on behalf of the *kabila*. The leadership of the five *kabilaw* put together a consensus list in accordance with the power-sharing arrangement between the different *kabilaw* in the village council. The list included only noble people and descendants from the three families that claimed to be the autochthonous inhabitants of Karan (Keïtas and *furugnoko*). Candidates were either Keïta, Traore or Dumbia. No other *jamuw* was represented on the list. On election day, Karanese citizens voted for the consensus list.

The newly elected (official) municipal council differed from the (unofficial) village council in two respects: seniority and gender. Karan's municipal councillors were much younger than Karan's village council members were and included a female representative. The age difference enabled the village council to secure control over their "younger brothers" in the municipal council, based on local seniority norms. In daily life, younger brothers were expected to conduct tasks away from home, whereas older brothers were responsible for internal (family) affairs.[426] This division of labour now applied as reference to guide the relationship and division of responsibilities between the two institutions. According to the law, the municipal council constituted the main institution governing local affairs. In practice, however, the municipal council only maintained contact with the state bureaucracy, produced official state documents (birth and marriage certificates) and tried to attract foreign NGOs to invest in Karan. The municipal council was, in other words, used as a gateway to the world outside the village. The (unofficial) village council continued to dominate all internal affairs, notably tax collection, conflict management and decision-making over a wide variety of internal matters. All major decisions were taken in the vestibule of the village headman, i.e. not in the municipal town hall.[427]

[425] The 1997 national elections had generated considerable tensions in Karan between supporters of two rival candidates. Some people would no longer speak to each other, marriage proposals were refused on the basis of political affiliations and, for some time, the losing side refused to contribute to the development efforts of the village.
[426] Jansen, J. (1995); Vliet, van M. (2004).
[427] A local survey conducted in 2002 confirmed popular views on this division of labour between the two institutions.

Tensions between the village council of elderly and the newly created municipal council arose in the years after the local elections. The first elected mayor previously worked in the state bureaucracy and became frustrated with the gap between his official mandate and the limited authority he had in daily practice. The mayor was cut off from the two main local sources of finance: annual funds provided by the national cotton company and local tax collection. The village council continued to manage these funds. Yet, the village council had not kept up-to-date financial records and was unable to account for the manner in which it spent these funds in recent years. More than 3,000 euros were missing. The village councillors indicated that citizens had not yet paid their taxes, whereas many people indicated they had indeed paid the village council. No records were available for verification. The mayor continuously tried to persuade the village councillors and citizens to allow the municipal council to manage these funds, without which he could not execute most of his official responsibilities. He also frequently pointed to the existing lack of financial transparency, which greatly frustrated some of the village councillors. This issue would play an important role in the run-up to the second local elections in 2004.

Clearly, neither the 1999 elections, nor the new municipal council were able to shape local political behaviour according to their official mandate. Instead, the new formal structures were based on existing, informal power relations shaped around cultural notions of political representation, hierarchy and loyalty. The immediate impact of Mali's decentralisation programme on local accountability was therefore minimal. The new political actors did not obtain sufficient power to act according to their official mandate, obtained an external sphere of influence and were primarily held accountable by the village council, based on family ties and local norms of seniority, rather than ordinary citizens.

5.4.2. Second elections in Karan: Informal power basis further reduces formal impact

In the run-up to the second local elections in 2004, a *furugnoko* proposal to allow for another consensus list and a second mandate for the incumbent mayor was rejected. The mayor's ambition to control local financial resources irritated the head of the village council. He saw the elections as an opportunity to consolidate the supremacy of the village council over the municipal council. The head of the village council was also the leader of the largest *kabila* in Karan, called Dubala. Notably, young members of Dubala also dominated the local branch of

one of the main political parties, the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA).[428] A pact was rapidly agreed upon: the head of the village council would mobilise the people of "his" *kabila* behind ADEMA while the party, once elected, would safeguard the interests of the village council. The incumbent mayor, in turn, tried to mobilise his own *kabila*, called Kurula, behind the Party for Democracy and Renewal (PDR) in his ambition to become re-elected.

The election results led to a stalemate in the municipal council with regard to the election of the mayor. Both PDR (with strong support from Kurula) and ADEMA (with a firm support basis in Dubala) obtained five seats. Adama Keïta secured the eleventh and last seat on behalf of the Union for the Republic and Democracy (URD). He had been able to secure support from his direct family and sections of the youth association in Karan. His vote for either ADEMA or PDR would determine which party secured the position of mayor.

Adama Keïta had been an active member and representative of the local branch of ADEMA in Karan. He had, however, left the party with two other rank-and-file members following a conflict with the local Secretary-General, Treasurer and Chairman of the party. Nevertheless, he supported ADEMA in the vote for the election of the second mayor of Karan:

> I wanted to vote for PDR. Prior to the elections, I had even reached an agreement with their leader. I did not like the candidate from ADEMA nor the party. I had just broken away from it! After the elections, the leader of PDR offered me 250.000 Fcfa and a motorcycle in order to secure my support. As I come from the *kabila* Dubala, the leader of Dubala informed me that I would be suspended from the *kabila* if I did not vote in favour of ADEMA. What could I do? It would complicate the rest of my life if I lost support from my *kabila*. It is my family. My life. I wasn't awarded a cent by ADEMA or Dubala, but I voted in favour of ADEMA.

Contrary to his own political preferences and despite the financial offers made to him, Adama Keïta voted in favour of ADEMA. This is just one example (of many) of the way in which informal ties and family (*kabila*) pressure continue to strongly influence the selection of political actors at the local level. Such culturally shaped power relations can thus be much more influential than pure patronage and money politics. As it turned out, the leader of the *kabila* Dubala played a determining role in Adama Keïta's choice for an ADEMA mayor.

Once elected, the new ADEMA mayor indeed stopped the municipal council's quest to gain control over local funds. He also avoided any competition with the village council, headed by

[428] Cf. Chapter 3 for detailed information about ADEMA, the party that dominated Malian politics between 1992-2002.

the leader of his own *kabila*, and he did not criticise the village council for its failure to account for part of the tax money it had received from Karanese citizens. Under the new mayor, transparency of local affairs actually deteriorated. The mayor appointed young friends – mostly from ADEMA and Dubala – to head various local management boards. Although these boards were all officially required to report to the municipal council on a regular basis, they only reported informally to the mayor in person. Municipal councillors of rival parties were left in the dark. The mayor himself refused to report to ordinary citizens. During his mandate, tax collection reduced from 3.9 million Fcfa to 2.3 million Fcfa, leaving the municipality unable to pay the salaries of municipal staff. The vast majority of local people suspected a rise in corrupt practices but their biggest frustration was the lack of information provided by the mayor and his allies.[429] Public frustration with the performance of the mayor, certainly within the four other *kabilaw*, continued to mount. Interestingly, when asked why the police or regional authorities were not informed of the suspected corruption, almost all interviewees indicated that "relations between our families never end; they are more important than money. This is between us here in Karan."[430] A local cultural institution (*kare*) then started to lead a call for improved local governance, albeit outside the official local governance legislative framework. In Karan, the Sobessi *kare* were considered the local police but they decided to use their mandate in a wider sense.[431] One of them expressed a commonly held feeling as follows:

> Karan has fallen into a well. We, as Sobessi, need to get Karan back out of there. The elderly people in the village council and the current mayor have not managed the village well. Many projects that arrived in Karan already failed upon entry. They are responsible for Karan's decay. We have to change.

The Sobessi managed to build popular support for the removal of the corrupt management board of the local infirmary. They then initiated an ultimately overambitious action to replace the members of the village council. The head of the village council started to put pressure on a

[429] There were serious indications of corruption in the local health board, the management of the local granary and other institutions. The mayor also claimed to have lost more than 2 million Fcfa of public funds while driving with his motorcycle to a neighbouring village.
[430] The former mayor had informed the authorities over alleged corruption by the current mayor with respect to his management of the local granary, but this was condemned by almost everyone, even those who believed the current mayor to be highly corrupt. Only 90 kilometres from the capital city, formal state institutions such as the police seemed to have little impact in this situation.
[431] Members of the *kare* primarily mediate in conflicts between families, e.g. if crops are being eaten by someone else's cattle.

number of Sobessi to stop their campaign for renewal. The case of Noumouri Keïta is illustrative:

> Our quest for renewal of the village council as Sobessi was not easy. When we started our opposition against the current members of the village council, my wife was taken away from me. She had to return to her hamlet where she was born. The leader of my kabila was behind all this. That is how he put pressure on me and tried to stop me from supporting the quest for renewal of the village council.

The mayor indicated that the Sobessi had no formal mandate to remove the village councillors. He continued to support the head of the village council and the Sobessi finally dropped their case. Shortly after, the Malian Parliament passed a law that called for the renewal of village councils nationwide. This provided the formal grounds for renewal in Karan. Finally, in 2009, the village council was renewed. The mayor, however, refused to obtain the formal approval of the regional state authorities based on which the new village council could start operating and the elderly continued to influence local affairs.

Ten years after its introduction, the impact of Mali's decentralisation programme on local accountability continued to be limited. Although formal electoral competition had now taken place, the informal (*kabila*-based) power basis of the new mayor limited his influence sphere once elected. Family ties proved more influential than patronage politics in shaping political behaviour during the second electoral mandate. The municipal council's sphere of influence remained limited to external affairs and accountability relations were primarily oriented towards the village council to the detriment of ordinary citizens. An informal power arrangement between the mayor and the head of the village council also blocked the officially required renewal of the village council. The Sobessi *kare* held the village and municipal councils answerable for a lack of transparency and even enforced a renewal of the local infirmary board. Hence, a local cultural institution managed to realise some degree of downward accountability at the local level.

5.4.3. Third local elections in Karan: Alternation of power

Because of the informal deal between the head of the largest *kabila* Dubala and the mayor, opportunities for ordinary citizens to hold the poor-performing mayor accountable were limited during the second electoral mandate. The official requirement to organise another local election

in 2009 provided an opportunity to ensure an alternation of power. However, this required a campaign strategy based on culturally shaped tactics and informal patronage in order to succeed. In the run-up to the elections, two main competing blocks were formed. On the one hand, PDR representatives, who narrowly lost the 2004 elections, and other (smaller) local parties established the *ben kan* list.[432] The *kabila* Kurula, the *kare* Sobessi, the Karanese people residing in Bamako and the village mediators (*furugnoko*) constituted their primary support base. On the other hand, the ADEMA and URD parties, the head of the village council, the *kabila* Dubala and the younger *kare* Sankassi all supported the incumbent mayor. The *ben kan* list aimed to maintain the support from its own electoral bases, while mobilising support amongst the Sankassi *kare* and Dubala *kabila* during the campaign. They therefore put together their list of candidates in a strategic manner. The *kabila* Kurula, its main support base, obtained the two top positions on the electoral list, which also included representatives of the four other *kabilaw.*[433] The same applied to the different generational groups (*karew*). The list only included people considered to be "true autochthones."[434] One's personal financial means constituted another important criterion for being placed on the list. Two men residing in Bamako headed the *ben kan* list. The number one, Djibril Naman, worked as a director for the National Railway Company, often travelled to Europe and had sound political contacts. The campaign repeatedly underlined his personal wealth, as illustrated below. Djibril Naman was a member of the Sankassi *kare* and obtaining wide support within "his" *kare* as well as the other younger generations constituted a key priority during this campaign. According to one of the main campaign strategists:

> We knew URD and ADEMA had strong support in the Sankassi *kare*. The second mayor had awarded numerous local management positions to its members. We therefore decided that the head of our list should be someone from the Sankassi *kare*. We organised various informal meetings with all Sankassi in order to secure their support for Djibril because he was one of them.

[432] Because their list was supported by the village mediators (who had tried to mobilise everyone behind the list), they referred to their alliance as the *ben kan* list, meaning the list of consensus.
[433] As various group representatives explained: "If you propose a list with people from just one, two or three *kabilaw*, the people will not accept it. You need to keep every *kabila* on board."
[434] A comment by one of the non-autochthones who presented himself as a candidate in 2004 and invested a lot of money during his campaigns is illustrative in this respect: "During the electoral campaigns in 2004, I offered local citizens a cow, 50 kilos of rice and spent 20.000 Fcfa for preparing the sauce. Some 150 people showed up and ate with me. Nevertheless, I only obtained 63 votes. My competitors had gone around the various hamlets saying that if I would be elected, I would take Karan's money to my own native town. People here prefer local candidates."

Continued references to important cultural values constituted an important ingredient of the *ben kan'*s campaign strategy. They stressed that the *furugnoko* supported their list and that, according to Karan's pact of origin, people needed to respect the wish of their mediators.[435] In addition, the large network and wealth of leader of their list, Djibril Naman, was emphasised. During a rally, the campaign team stated:

> If everyone votes for Djibril Naman, we will mobilise the rich Karanese people residing in Bamako to come and invest in Karan. You have to vote for someone who has the capacity to build something for the entire community. You have to vote for us. We will build a community radio station here in Karan. We will also build a house within which the youth can gather.

Djibril Naman generated huge cheers from the crowd when he promised that the local mosque, which the community had started to build, would be finished in no time if he was elected. The message was clear. You either vote for the incompetent incumbent mayor or for someone who has the capacity to act as a patron for Karan and can provide tangible support to the municipality. Members of the *ben kan* list also increased pressure on URD and ADEMA candidates not to campaign actively, by making use of informal (and powerful) family ties. A striking example, amongst many, concerned the ambition of Naman Sidibé to become the leader of the ADEMA list:

> I wanted to become head of the list, but family pressure stopped me from doing so. The leader of my *kabila*, who supported the *ben kan* list, told me that I had to withdraw. My father told me the same. He said that if I did not, the family would not support me if I ever got in trouble. That I would learn what life is like if you are not supported by your family. My room for manoeuvring was therefore rather limited. I could maintain a lower position on the list, but could not openly campaign or head the list.

On election day, the results were clear. Out of the eleven seats available, the *ben kan* list secured eight seats, ADEMA just two and URD one. The leader of URD responded: "I invested so much money and received only one seat in return. If it were not in politics, people would be jailed for such an offence." When the new mayor took office, the financial records indeed showed many

[435] Campaigning slogans used during their visits to the hamlets were: "*I fa boh ye*" (you respect the words of your father) and we are the group of *ben kan* or *ben makan* (consensus).

irregularities. The former mayor, together with one of his allies, was obliged to pay back a percentage of the funds that had disappeared. The new mayor paid the rest from his own pocket and refused to inform state authorities of the matter in order to "maintain social stability and avoid further tensions between families." The mayor replaced management bodies of local institutions, who started to report on a regular basis to the municipal and village councils. The new municipal council also organised various public consultative meetings. Transparency thereby improved. The new municipal council agreed upon a division of labour with the village council. It would continue to focus on external matters and accepted the mandate of the village council to manage internal affairs "because they would otherwise feel marginalised which would create problems for us," according to one of the municipal councillors. The municipal staff increased its influence sphere in the area of tax collection. However, it worked closely together with the *kare* Sobessi (regarded as the local police). The funds and network of the new mayor already proved valuable for Karan during the first six months of his mandate. He travelled to Spain to motivate the Karanese migrants living there to sponsor a Karanese development project. He also paid a large share of the repair costs of a dirt road connecting Karan to the main road and he took a friend working for the National Media Institute to Karan in order to secure state assistance for a local radio station.

Overall, the formal requirement to organise local elections in 2009 opened up the possibility for people to sanction the second mayor of Karan. His political adversaries were well aware that they had to come up with a culturally sensitive campaign strategy and present their candidate as a good patron for Karan. The patron had to obtain local cultural capital in order to win the elections. After the elections, the third mayor of Karan secured more power than his predecessors, primarily due to his own capital and network. In contrast to the competition between the municipal and village councils during the first mandate and the informal deal between the village headmen and the mayor, which negatively affected the provision of public goods during the second mandate, a constructive agreement was now reached between the new mayor and the new village council. The sphere of direct influence of the municipal council remained directed at Karan's external relations. The new municipal council greatly improved information provision and public consultation, thereby allowing ordinary citizens to hold them answerable. However, the dependence on the funds and network of the mayor and the top-down nature of these patron-client relations did not leave much room for strong enforceability mechanisms. Thus, accountability only partially and gradually improved following the third elections and remained largely *upwards* rather than truly *downwards*. The provision of public

goods eventually saw a rapid and dramatic improvement but primarily thanks to the informal role of Karan's patron rather than the formal role of the municipality.

5.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The case material presented here compels scholars and international development agents to be modest when it comes to promoting democratic accountability and thereby state legitimacy through institutional change. The new municipal institutions introduced by Mali's decentralisation policies encountered various existing power poles and were incorporated in informal ties that restricted their functioning at the local level. In practice, the powers, spheres of influence and degree of downward accountability of Karan's new municipal council considerably lagged behind its official mandate. This study thereby confirms Ribot's (2002) conclusion and that of subsequent research:

> Decentralisation is not taking the form necessary to realise the benefits that theory predicts, because it fails to entrust downwardly accountable representative actors with significant domains of autonomous discretionary power.[436]

In other words, Mali's decentralisation programme did not affect the degree, source and direction of accountability in Karan in the ways its legal foundations stipulated.

Mali's decentralisation programme did contribute to improvements in the provision of public goods in Karan. Not because of the official powers assigned to the municipal council, but because of informal patron–client relations that penetrated the new institution. Local elections offered successful people in Bamako an opportunity to invest in their villages of origin and to start building a political support base. Based on these informal (family) ties, a wealthy Karanese entrepreneur living in Bamako decided to invest his private funds, time and network to improve the quality of life for the people in Karan. Yet, the empirical data presented above also underlined the need to further refine the neo-patrimonial paradigm that dominates academic literature on African political developments. Local political relationships appeared to be much more complex than an exchange of goods, money and other favours between so-called patrons and clients. Powerful positions at the local level were based on cultural values such as autochthony, seniority and family solidarity. Informal hierarchical family ties strongly influenced an individual's "political room for manoeuvre." Moreover, political support bases

[436] Ribot, J.C. (2002), p.3.

were primarily built in cultural institutions, notably the *kabilaw* and *karew.* Even the "patron of Karan" had to run a culturally sophisticated campaign to secure victory during the third municipal elections.

In sum, the creation of a municipal council and introduction of local elections did not enhance state legitimacy in ways expected from and predicted by institutional theory in the context of Mali's heterarchical political order. In practice, much more heterogeneous patterns of decentralised administration prevailed, which were best captured through the analytical lens of "patronage plus." These involved multiple patrons – both state and non-state actors – who legitimised their authority in a multi-dimensional way. Political legitimacy was established through the interplay between both material and immaterial resources.

Thus far, the thesis has focused entirely on the gradual emergence of a heterarchical political order in Mali in the period that preceded the 2012 crisis. The next and final chapter examines the anchoring of Mali's heterarchical order during the five years period that followed.

Chapter 6

Multiparty democracy turned into a militiacracy?
In the aftermath of the crisis
(2013-2018)

INTRODUCTION

When things fell apart in Mali, a French-led military intervention dislodged an opaque alliance of jihadists from the main urban centres across the north of the country. Shortly thereafter, elections marked the return of a democratic regime. The UN Security Council deployed a stabilisation mission (MINUSMA) to assist Malian authorities, amongst others, to extend and re-establish the state administration throughout the country. By mid-2015, the Malian government signed an internationally brokered Peace and Reconciliation Agreement with the main northern armed groups. That same year, representatives of more than 60 countries, multilateral institutions and the private sector pledged $3.25 billion in support of Mali.

Nevertheless, a heterarchial political order only anchored during the five years that followed the 2012 crisis, despite considerable international efforts and the restoration of a democratic regime. The Malian state did not substantially expand its position in or influence over other power poles in society. In 2018, public expenditure by the Malian state covered a mere 20 per cent of the national territory, as noted in the introductory chapter. More than two thirds of Malian state representatives were not present at their duty stations in the northern and central regions. The state remained largely confined to isolated urban pockets. Its role in the realm of security provision remained particularly restricted. Craven-Matthews and Englebert (2018) contended that, "[t]he Malian military may have barracks and people wearing uniforms, but it still appears to have none of the basic operational dimensions of an actual military."[437] A wide variety of non-state armed groups and international military forces played a leading role in performing this core statehood function in practice.

This final chapter examines, in an explorative manner, why Malian state authority remained so restricted and non-state armed groups endured as influential power poles across the northern and central regions in the period between 2013 and 2018. This chapter mainly focuses on the security realm and decentralised administration.

[437] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018), p. 6.

The first part adopts an analytical perspective "from below." It illustrates the deteriorating security trends and considerable contribution made by non-state armed actors to providing some basic form of protection amidst state absence. Consistent with the approach adopted in Chapter 2, this analysis is restricted to the "supply side" of security. Additional empirically grounded research is certainly required to take popular perceptions of the different security actors and their efforts more prominently into account. The section ends with a reflection inspired by the notion that "protection from violence" constituted an increasingly important source of legitimacy in a context of widespread insecurity. The literature suggests that, "[t]hose who are able to offer protection from violence are at the same time those with the best chances to accumulate power and position."[438] Accordingly, this section explores the extent to which the prominent role of non-state armed actors in the security realm evolved into a broader role in the area of decentralised administration.

The second part of the chapter adds a perspective "from above." It first analyses Mali's protracted peace process and its subsequent implementation phase. State authorities and leaders of the northern armed groups largely dominated both processes. This part first demonstrates that the persistent efforts aimed at re-integrating the northern armed groups into reconstituted and unified state security and governance structures yielded few results. It subsequently illustrates how patterns of hybrid security provision by the Malian state as well as international actors prevailed in that context.

The third and final part of the chapter briefly assesses prevailing challenges to Malian democracy in the post-crisis years. More specifically, it examines prevailing patterns of popular participation, representation and accountability in order to assess democracy's contribution to enhancing state legitimacy in the aftermath of the 2012 crisis.

6.1. SEEN FROM BELOW: DISPERSED DISPUTES AND A FRAGMENTED SECURITY LANDSCAPE

6.1.1. Rise and geographical spread of the terrorist threat

In 2012, a loose alliance of terrorist organisations still occupied northern Mali while severe power struggles between military and civil factions paralysed the state at the centre. Unsurprisingly, most Malian citizens believed their country was moving in the wrong direction.[439] Just 12 per cent of all Malians and three per cent of citizens living in the occupied

[438] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p. 116.
[439] Afrobarometer 'Round 5, Afrobarometer Survey', available at: https://afrobarometer.org/.

northern regions felt secure. After the French-led international military intervention in 2013, two thirds of the Malian population now believed the country was moving in the right direction. More than six out of ten citizens felt secure and 76 per cent of (urban) citizens in northern Mali indicated that a basic level of security had been restored. Based on an assessment of Afrobarometer survey data, Penar and Bratton (2014) concluded that these positive perceptions about the security situation in the country significantly contributed to the overall optimistic mood in the country.[440]

However, already from 2015 onwards, Malian citizens faced a sharp increase in the number of violent incidents of a different nature than they were used to. Armed confrontations involving non-terrorist armed groups and Malian Defence and Security forces decreased. In contrast, extremist violence became ever more prominent. Moreover, the geographical pattern of violent incidents changed. Whereas violent incidents used to be concentrated in Mali's northern regions, they now moved southwards to the central Mopti region and spread across borders.[441]

The year 2017 marked a real turnaround in terms of intensity of violence and the geographical locus of incidents. It recorded more violent incidents than witnessed in the previous 20 years.[442] The formation of the jihadist coalition Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM) constituted a major driving force behind these rising patterns of insecurity. Various jihadist organisations that controlled different parts of northern Mali established JNIM together with the Maacina Liberation Front, a network of jihadist groups that gained ground across central Mali. The leader of the alliance, Iyad Ag Ghali, pleaded allegiance to Al-Qaeda. This merger enabled the organisation to improve coordination between the individual branches and to intensify recruitment efforts. Between October 2017 and February 2018, JNIM conducted an average of 12 terrorist attacks per month. Most attacks took place in central Mali.[443]

Another major development constituted the formation of the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) by a former spokesperson of MUJAO, which concentrated its efforts around Mali's border area with Niger.[444] From early 2018 onwards, the group managed to establish a considerable local support base and expanded its activities.

[440] Bratton, M. and Penar, P. (2014) 'Mali's Public Mood Reflects New Found Hope', Afrobarometer Policy Paper, No.9, p. 5.
[441] ACLED (2015) 'Mali – July 2015 Update', 10 July 2015.
[442] ACLED (2017) 'Mali – March 2017 Update', 11 April 2017; *idem* (2018) '2018: The Year in Overview', 11 January 2019.
[443] ACLED (2018) 'Mali: The Regionalization of Armed Rebellion', 16 February 2018.
[444] Warner, J. (2017) 'Sub-Saharan Africa's Three "New" Islamic State Affiliates', *CTC Sentinel*, (10):1.

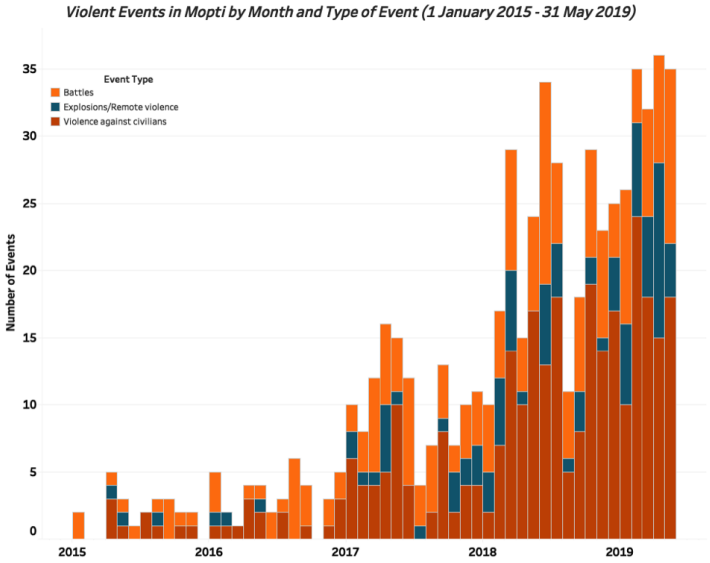

Figure 5: Rising levels of insecurity in Mopti, central Mali (® ACLED)

These terrorist organisations targeted civilians as well as Malian, non-state and international armed forces. After several terrorist assaults on restaurants and hotels in Mali's capital, a complex suicide attack on a military camp in Gao killed more than 70 people.

During 2018, the number of violent incidents increased by another 40 per cent compared to the year before.[445] In the third quarter of 2018 alone, 287 Malian civilians were killed, 38 injured and 67 were abducted.[446] The national army also faced heavy losses. The UN recorded over 300 fatalities and many more serious injuries amongst the rank-and-file of the Malian army between mid-2016 and late 2018.[447] The UN mission MINUSMA itself faced 177 fatalities between early 2013 and late 2018.

This significant rise in terrorist attacks successfully compounded the return of the Malian state administration across the northern regions. It also incited the departure of state representatives from the central region. In 2018, as noted above, a mere 30 per cent of state officials occupied their duty station in the northern regions and central Mopti region.[448] Defence and Security forces operated in urban areas and near isolated military camps but lacked presence across the rural areas where terrorist organisations expanded their influence.

[445] ACLED (2018) 'The Year in Overview', 11 January 2019.
[446] UNSG report on the situation in Mali, 25 September 2018, available at: https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/reports.
[447] UNSG reports on the situation in Mali.
[448] UNSG report of on the situation in Mali, 6 June 2018.

In this context, as shown below, non-state actors increasingly filled that void and constituted pivotal security providers – at a very basic level – across the rural areas.

By 2018, the popular mood in the country had radically altered compared to the widespread optimism noted in 2013. Two thirds of Malian citizens now indicated that the country was again moving in the wrong direction. Up until 2017, national priorities, in the eyes of Malian citizens, continued to be dominated by socio-economic matters, most notably food security, youth employment as well as access to health services and water. In 2018, security constituted the primary concern of citizens in northern and central Mali. One year later, it had become the overarching national priority.[449] By this time, around 90 per cent of people in Timbuktu, Segou and Mopti noted a deteriorating security situation during the course of the previous year.[450]

Between 2015 and 2018, jihadist organisations present in Mali also expanded their activities into neigbouring countries guided by a Salafist-jihadist policy of "Sahelisation."[451] From 2016 onwards, the number of attacks beyond Mali's border significantly increased (see Figure 6). Terrorists conducted deadly attacks on hotels and restaurants in Burkina Faso, quite similar to those in Mali. In Burkina Faso, a locally anchored group, Ansarul Islam, which maintained ties to Malian jihadist groups, had conducted dozens of attacks since December 2016.[452] Niger witnessed a similar rise in assaults throughout this period. In 2016, Boko Haram was still responsible for the vast majority of attacks conducted on Nigerien soil. However, 2017 marked a considerable shift, as attacks conducted in Niger by Al-Qaeda and IS-related groups based in Mali grew in importance.[453]

In sum, security threats involving northern armed groups and the Malian state gradually faded into the background between 2013-2018. Yet, the terrorist threat significantly intensified and gradually shifted to central Mali and towards neighbouring countries. The following section illustrates how Jihadist organisations anchored into the socio-cultural fabric by exploiting local grievances vis-à-vis the state and existing tensions within and between communities in both northern and central Mali.

[449] FES (2020) 'Mali-Mètre', N.11, March 2020; FES (2018) 'Mali-Mètre', N.10, October 2018.
[450] FES (2018).
[451] Dentice, G. (2018) 'Terrorism in the Sahel Region: An Evolving Threat on Europe's Doorstep', EuroMesco Policy Brief, N. 80, p. 4; Lounas, D. (2018) 'Jihadist Groups in Northern Africa and the Sahel: Between Disintegration, Reconfiguration and Resilience', MENARA, October 2018 (Working Paper No.16).
[452] IPI (2017) 'Extremist Expansion in Burkina Faso: Origins and Solutions', 12 May 2017; ICG (2018) 'Burkina Faso's Alarming Escalation of Jihadist Violence', Commentary, 5 March 2018.
[453] Small Arms Survey (2017) *Insecurity, Terrorism, and Arms Trafficking in Niger'*, Geneva: Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.
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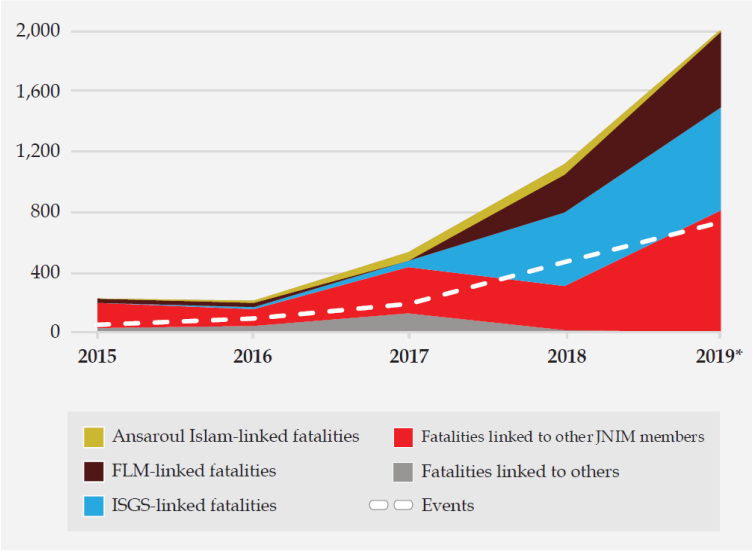

Figure 6: Trends in militant Islamist group activity in the Sahel (®Africacenter.org).

6.1.2. Dispersed disputes: Exploiting local fault lines and exacerbating violent conflict

Previous parts of this thesis (cf. Chapters 4 and 5) revealed that youth constituencies, (semi-) nomadic herders and the wider rural population increasingly resisted the Malian state, which instituted its authority based on exclusive clientelistic ties with regional powerbrokers. Jihadist organisations strategically allied with marginalised sections of the population across both northern and central Mali. They exploited grievances towards the central state and local elites. These factions considered the state as either absent, predatory, corrupt or obstructive to their basic livelihoods.[454] In response, terrorist organisations adopted an anti-elitist and pro-pastoralist agenda vis-à-vis marginalised constituencies while offering avenues for economic, financial and social status mobilisation and emancipation.[455]

The Maacina *katiba* active in central Mali constituted a noteworthy example in this regard. After an initial attempt to establish a broad inter-ethnic support base, it eventually aligned with marginalised Fulani constituencies.[456] The leader of the Maacina *katiba* linked his calls for

[454] ICG (2017); Tobie, A. and Sangare, B. (2019) 'The Impact of Armed Groups on the Populations of Central and Northern Mali', October 2019, SIPRI; Namie di Razza (2018) 'Protecting Civilians in the Context of Violent Extremism: The Dilemmas of UN Peacekeeping', IPI, 28 October 2018 (Policy Brief).
[455] Tobie, A. and Sangare, B. (2019).
[456] *Ibid.*

Jihad to the Fulani identity.[457] He recurrently referred to the ancient Maacina Empire, an historical period of Fulani hegemony that sharply contrasted with their present-day marginalisation in central Mali. Although unable to cater for public services on a large scale, the organisation instituted new forms of governance that regulated and improved access to critical natural resources for its supporters. Moreover, they exploited frustrations amongst Fulani youth vis-à-vis traditional authorities who maintained preferential ties with the central state administration but had failed to cater for the wider needs of the community. These ties between individual Fulani and terrorist groups tended to be conflated in popular perceptions as a relationship between terrorism and the entire Fulani community, which obviously seriously undermined the level of inter-communal distrust in the central region.

Jihadist groups indeed strategically exploited – and thereby aggravated – intercommunal rivalries. Conflicting interests over the use of scarce natural resources – especially land and water – or competition over economic opportunities, including high-value smuggling networks, all contributed to these rising tensions. The central regions Mopti and Segou witnessed a particularly dramatic surge in inter-communal violence. The overall number of conflict-related fatalities in Mopti alone grew more than tenfold between 2015 and 2018.[458] A 2018 report by Human Rights Watch identified over 200 civilians died in inter-communal violence in the Mopti region.[459] Moreover, traditionally subordinate factions challenged stringent social stratification and local hierarchies. While these tensions regularly erupted into violent clashes in the past, the scale of such conflicts amplified in recent years.

The anchoring of MUJAO in the area around Menaka and the Malian border with Niger revealed how terrorist groups exploited existing intercommunal tensions. This area has long been prone to (violent) confrontations opposing Doussak Tuareg and Tolebe Fulani herders. Conflicts mostly centred on access to natural resources or banditry (e.g. cattle theft). The Tuareg faction first joined the ranks of the MNLA, the armed group that led the secessionist struggle against the Malian Defence and Security forces in 2012. Later, they created their own armed group, the Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA). Their increased armed capabilities encouraged, amongst others, Fulani youngsters in the area to align with and seek protection through MUJAO.[460] A Nigerien state official reiterated, "Young Peuls [Fulani] don't join

[457] ICG (2019) 'Speaking with the Bad Guys: Towards Dialogue with Central Mali's Jihadists', 28 May 2019, (Africa Report No. 276).
[458] Ibid.
[459] HRW (2019) '"We Used to Be Brothers', Self-Defense Group Abuses in Central-Mali', December 2018.
[460] Guichaoua,Y. and Pellerin, M. (2018) 'Faire la paix et construire l'état. Les relations entre pouvoir central et périphérie sahéliennes au Niger et Mali', IRSEM, July 2017.

MUJAO to fight jihad but to protect themselves against the Tuaregs with whom they are in conflict over resources."[461] MUJAO indeed sided with Fulani factions in this area and defended their interests in cases of intercommunal land disputes. This stance greatly contrasted with the Malian state, which had frequently frustrated or simply ignored their needs.[462] MUJAO also cancelled state taxes and abolished the fees that herders were charged by landowners to obtain access to grazing lands. While MUJAO established its authority by coercion, it also offered education, military training and salaries to numerous Fulani youngsters who thereby enhanced their social status, future prospects and religious identity. Yet, the divergent trajectories of Fulani youngsters should also be emphasised as some joined other militias and many did not take part in any of the armed groups at all.[463]

In sum, the local anchoring of jihadist groups clearly perpetuated and exacerbated violent conflict within and amongst communities in northern and central Mali. It is in this context that a myriad of local militias, self-defence and vigilant youth groups were created to defend local territorial or wider factional interests and to fill the security vacuum across northern and central Mali, as the next section illustrates.

6.1.3. An archipelago of "micro-zones of influence" in the sand [464]

As state presence remained largely confined to the main urban pockets across northern and central Mali, an archipelago of local armed groups and militias controlled bits and pieces of the vast rural territory in ever shifting alliances. The rise of factional and geographically concentrated armed groups – increasingly organised along narrow community, clan or cast lines – served a combination of interests. This included the protection of constituents, personal ambitions of its leadership, defending lucrative interests in the smuggling economy or expanding influence in the political realm over other local factions.

Surveys conducted by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) revealed that local communities across northern and central Mali predominantly relied on local non-state security initiatives in the absence of state security.[465] Citizens, for example, indicated

[461] Small Arms survey (2017), p. 30.
[462] De Bruijn, M. and Both, J. (2017).
[463] Pelckmans, L. (2013) 'Mali: Intra-ethnic Fragmentation and the Emergence of New (in)security Actors', in: 'Protection and (In)security beyond the State: Insights from Eastern Africa and the Sahel', Danish Institute for International Studies, Research Report, pp. 43-50.
[464] A useful term for depicting the prevailing pattern of local armed groups instituting their authority in compact territories, taken from: Thurston, A. (2018) 'State Fragility in Mali', Policy Brief, June 2020, Clingendael.
[465] Tobie, A. and Chauzal, G. (2018).

that Malian Defence and Security Forces were much less present than non-state security actors were in the administrative *cercles* in central Mali (Mopti and Segou). They also considered the latter more effective. Over 60 per cent of citizens relied on local militias for their protection against banditry, other militias or jihadist groups.[466]

Across central Mali, local militias and self-defence groups emerged to protect local constituencies from attacks by jihadists or other communal groups in the absence of the state. They often originated as loose alliances of small village-based groups. Some evolved into broader and more structured organisations with an increasingly prominent communal and ethnic profile. Beyond self-defence, local militias played a role in securing improved access to land and water by (the threat of) force or by ensuring financial opportunities for disenchanted youth. The selling of stolen cattle, for example, evolved into a lucrative industry and incited the creation or expansion of local militias.[467] The Dozo (or Donsos) constituted a militia with a particularly strong communal profile. It regrouped traditional Bambara hunters from many village-based self-defence groups across central Mali that aimed to protect villagers against the rising terrorist threat and other communal militias. These highly localised groups evolved into a wider regional self-defence operational structure, amidst continued state absence. The Dan na Ambassagou group also expanded its organisational capacity by uniting multiple Dogon self-defence groups from different villages across the border area between Mali and Burkina Faso. Yet, Dogon citizens in the Douentza area established their own loose alliance of village-based armed groups. Several Fulani, in turn, created the Alliance for the Salvation of the Sahel to protect themselves, notably against other militias.[468] During 2018, the level of intercommunal violence in central Mali amplified in a context already clarified above. The increased numbers of deadly clashes involved numerous armed self-defence groups. Many horrifying retaliatory killings of ordinary citizens of different communities took place. The UN, amongst others, expressed particular concerns about the "indiscriminate targeting of members of the Fulani […] community."[469] Ursu (2018) noted that divisive issues at the origin of group tensions, such as competing access to natural resources, translated into more intense ethnic divisions as these conflicts escalated and intercommunal ties militarised.[470]

[466] Tobie, A. and Sangare, B. (2019).
[467] Guichaoua, Y. and Pellerin, M. (2018).
[468] HRW (2018); Tobie, A. and Sangare, B. (2019).
[469] OHCHR 'Press Briefing Notes on Nicaragua, Mali and Kashmir,' July 17, 2018. Quoted in HRW (2018), p. 36.
[470] Ursu, A-E. (2018) *Under the Gun: Resource Conflicts and Embattled Traditional Authorities in Central Mali*, The Hague: Clingendael Institute; ICG (2018); *idem* (2016) 'Central Mali: An Uprising in the Making?', 6 July 2016, (Africa Report No. 238).

Across northern Mali, (coalitions of) armed groups dispersed along faction lines and localised territorial interests in the five-year period that followed the 2012 crisis. The trajectory of the MNLA illustrated this prevailing pattern of fragmentation. Initially, the group obtained a broad support base amongst multiple Tuareg clans with strongholds in both Kidal and Menaka as clarified in Chapter 2.[471] In March 2014, the MNLA faced a first breakaway due to mounting tensions between influential Idnane and Ifoghas Tuareg leaders. The MNLA leadership expelled Ibrahim Ag Assaleh, whom it considered to be too closely aligned to the government. This former Member of Parliament for Bourem in the Gao region subsequently created his own movement, the Coalition of the People for Azawad (CPA). The CPA had a modest military presence on the ground, so the breakaway was not that big a blow for the MNLA. The creation of the Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA) led to a more significant weakening of the MNLA. It constituted a breakaway of the Menaka wing and the departure of most of its militants from the Doussak and Chamanamas Tuareg factions.[472] They complained that the MNLA was far too focused on Kidal and invested little in protecting (the interests of) the Menaka area. Yet, clan-based tensions subsequently also weakened the MSA. The group eventually split into a separate Doussak and Chamanamas Tuareg armed faction.[473] In October 2016, another substantial breakaway occurred when Tuareg clans from the Timbuktu region, mainly linked to the Kel Antessar Tuareg faction, left the MNLA. Together with clan members in civil society, they formed the Congress for Justice in Azawad.[474]

Unity in the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), founded in 2012, also proved short-lived as the group had already split into two factions by 2013.[475] One united Gao-based Arab factions aligned to the Malian government, while the other drew much of its support from both

[471] By the time the MNLA was ousted from Kidal by Ansar Al-Din, led by former seasoned Tuareg-rebel-turned-jihadist leader, Iyad Ag Ghali, numerous MNLA rank-and-file had already joined Ansar Al-Din in 2012.
[472] Moussa Ag Acharatoumane, co-founder of both the MNLA and MSA, criticised the dominance of the Kidal-based Ifoghas with respect to coordination and the lack of support received for Menaka-centred security challenges; Lebovitch, A. (2017) 'Reconstructing Local Orders in Mali: Historical Perspectives and Future Challenges', Washington, DC: Brookings (Local orders paper series No. 7); 'Mali. Le mouvement pour le salut de l'Azawad, nouveau groupe politico-militaire', (*RFI*, 11 September 2016); Sandor, A. (2017) 'Insecurity, the Breakdown of Social Trust, and Armed Actor Governance in Central and Northern Mali', August 2017, Centre Francopaix en résolution des conflits et missions de paix.
[473] Boutellis, A. and Zahar, M-J. (2017) *A Process in Search of Peace: Lessons from the Inter-Malian Agreement*, New York: International Peace Institute, available at: https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/IPI-Rpt-Inter-Malian-Agreement.pdf; Bencherif, A. (2018) 'Le Mali post "Accord Algiers". Une période intérimaire entre conflits et négociations', *Politique Africaine,* 2(150): 179-201.
[474] McGregor, A. (2017) 'Anarchy in Azawad: A Guide to Non-State Armed Groups in Northern Mali', *Terrorism Monitor* (15)2; Bencherif, A. (2018).
[475] The MAA was established out of the Arab Nationalistic Liberation Front (FNLA) and former members of an Arab militia led by Colonel Ould Meydou, upon which former President Touré leaned to counter a small Tuareg rebellion in the mid-2000s. The split in 2013 occurred along clan lines and was fuelled by territorial as well as commercial interests between competing smuggling networks, as illustrated below.

Berabiche Arabs in the Timbuktu region and some Tilemsi Arabs, and joined an anti-government coalition of armed groups.

The smuggling economy remained a key arena in which armed groups competed for influence and profit. Armed groups in northern Mali supported traffickers by securing the transport of high-value illicit goods. In return, they received the financial means to fund the salaries of their recruits, vehicles and weapons. Obtaining control or considerable influence over specific strategic hubs along the main smuggling routes therefore constituted an important source of revenue. These nodes were situated along the road that enters western Mali from Mauritania with hubs around Lere, Ber and Lerneb as well as a second route that heads to Gao and Algeria via Tarkint, Tabankort, the Tilemsi Valley, Kidal and In-Khalil. For example, competing trafficking networks of Berabiche and Lamhar Arabs, linked to the Arab-dominated armed group MAA, on the one hand, and Tuareg Idnanes, a core constituency in the MNLA on the other, regularly clashed in their attempt to control Il-Khalil and Ber.

This kind of rivalry between local factions, shaped along clan and cast lines, characterised wider patterns of armed governance in the realm of the decentralised administration. The next section illustrates that armed groups expanded their role vis-à-vis other power poles in a context of state absence and widespread insecurity.

6.1.4. Armed governance and decentralised administration

Several authors demonstrated that decentralisation across northern and central Mali intensified power struggles between different factions struggling to control the local administration and its related advantages.[476] Fierce competition between local clans or casts sometimes erupted into violent confrontations. Lecocq and Klute (2013) contended that old and new conflicts about tribal hierarchies and other disputes, most notably access to natural resources, "were fought both within the new game of decentralised […] administration and local democracy."[477] Exactly how these patterns of competition between local factions played out and whether they turned violent or not, obviously differed from one place to the other. However, people referred to the fusion of violence and democracy as "demokalashi" for a reason.[478]

[476] Hesseling, G. & Van Dijk, H. 'Administrative Decentralisation and Political Conflict in Mali', in Patrick Chabal, Ulf Engel and Anna-Maria Gentili (eds.) (2005) *Is Violence Inevitable in Africa? Theories of Conflict and Approaches to Conflict Prevention.* Leiden: Brill; Pezard, S. and Shurkin, M. (2015), pp. 15 & 30.
[477] Lecocq, B. and Klute, G. (2013), p. 428.
[478] *Ibid*.

Since the ousting of the Malian state in 2012 and its modest return subsequently, armed governance gained further prominence and the role of armed groups in the local decentralised administration increased in northern Mali. It became crucial for the leadership of local clans or castes to obtain strong representation in the realm of armed governance in order to defend and promote their interests vis-à-vis other factions. The (historic) rivalry between Ifoghas and Imghad Tuareg factions clearly illustrates this point. The traditional leadership of the Ifoghas Tuareg (see Chapter 2), long dominated other Tuareg factions. Its representatives emerged as the principle regional powerbroker of the central state in the Kidal region. Yet, both Idnane and Imghad factions, amongst others, increasingly contested Ifoghas supremacy. Imghad Tuareg, for example, successfully secured key local representative positions and the parliamentary seat for Kidal in 2013, at the expense of Ifoghas candidates. The Ifoghas chieftaincy was equally concerned about its limited influence over the main Tuareg armed groups in the area. The Idnane and many young Tuareg dominated the MNLA while the forceful Groupe Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Alliés (GATIA) promoted the interests of Imghad Tuareg and its allies. The traditional Ifoghas leadership obtained scant control over both movements and worked through the armed group Haut Conseil pour l'Unité de l'Azawad (HCUA) to defend its interests.[479] Together with the MNLA and an Arab armed group, the HCUA established a coalition called the Coordination of Azawad Movements ("the Coordination"). In the words of Thurston (2018), this primarily constituted "something of an *Ifoghas-Arab* front that could face down challenges from […] the *Imghad*."[480] As noted above, over time, the MNLA's influence reduced because of the many splits it faced. Consequently, the HCUA gradually became the leading force in this armed coalition.

Clearly, decentralised administration, armed governance and factional politics along local clan and caste lines became increasingly intertwined. In the end, all politics is indeed local. Traditional authorities and the leadership of armed groups maintained close ties, as illustrated above. On the ground, representatives of the armed groups increasingly sidelined and overtook functions and responsibilities of both traditional leaders and the – very distant – state. Empirical research across northern Mali by Molenaar *et al*. (2019) revealed that:

[479] The HCUA emerged from a merger in May 2013 of the Higher Council for Azawad and the Islamic Movement of Azawad. The latter constituted an opportunistic spin-off by several senior Ifoghas leaders from Ansar Eddine, a movement labelled as a terrorist organisation by the UN Security Council and listed by the UN Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee in March 2013. The formation of HCUA thus enabled these Ifoghas leaders to avoid being officially branded as terrorists.
[480] Thurston, A. (2018), p. 27.

> A logic of armed politics has captured the regions of Kidal and Ménaka, in which non-state armed actors of both the pro-autonomy alliance *Coordination des movement de l'Azawad* (CMA) in Kidal and the pro-central state *Platform coalition* in Ménaka have successfully extended their leverage vis-à-vis modern state authorities and traditional authorities.[481]

The growing role of the CMA undermined elected officials, as the Mayor of Kidal noted:

> My position and power as Mayor has changed since the arrival of the new masters who drove the Malian state out, even though I am the emanation of the people who chose me through the ballot.[482]

Displaying its authority in administrating the region of Kidal, the leadership of the CMA:

> published a set of policy measures for the region including regulations for road traffic, narcotics, and alcohol trafficking, settling territorial disputes, health issues, and the role of religious authorities in dispute settlement. […] To underline the CMA's ability to enforce these regulations, Ag Intallah also announced the launch of Operation Re-education, a two-week police operation.[483]

Bøås and Strazzari (2020) noted that this ability to use force indeed constituted one of the key resources required to establish and uphold authority across northern Mali.[484] The CMA, for example, ran a local policing body in Kidal alongside its branch of armed militants. Traditional justice actors in the region increasingly relied on armed groups to help enforce their decisions. Ordinary citizens also began to address issues of law and order directly with representatives of armed groups instead of contacting traditional authorities.[485]

In central Mali, the security landscape, as demonstrated in the previous section, appeared even more fractured compared to the northern regions. Initial research suggested that the wider

[481] Molenaar, F. et al. (2019), p. 88. The *Platform Coalition* assembled groups that opposed the secessionist Tuareg rebellion and frequently aligned with the Malian authorities. It included the Coordination of Patriotic Movements and Forces of the Resistance (CMFPR), a branch of the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), an early offshoot of a Tuareg armed group, the Coalition of the People for Azawad (CPA) and later also GATIA.
[482] Molenaar, F. *et al*. (2019), p. 100.
[483] Heide, van der L. (2019) 'Dumping One Government Won't Fix Mali', Opinion Piece, *Foreign Policy*, 20 April 2019.
[484] Bøås, M. and Strazzari, F. (2020), p.11.
[485] Molenaar, F. et al. (2019), p. 106.

role of local militias or terrorist groups in the realm of decentralised governance was linked to issues of law and order, as well as some social service provision to the most marginalised constituencies.[486]

Hence, the armed groups derived a form of "basic legitimacy of protection from violence." This source of legitimacy suggests that, "[t]hose who are able to offer protection from violence are at the same time those with the best chances to accumulate power and position."[487] Previous chapters have already revealed the importance of indigenous, religious and liberal democratic sources of legitimacy in Mali's heterarchical order. This chapter thus highlights the rise of another key source of legitimacy that is particularly relevant in an insecure environment. Again, much more empirically grounded research is needed to examine the ability of armed groups to provide services in daily practice and the ways in which citizens perceive the increased role of different armed groups. The above sections merely assessed the supply side of security and power balance between different actors involved in armed governance.

In sum, five years after the French-led military intervention, the role of the state remained very limited and often confined to urban pockets across both northern and central Mali. In contrast, the role of armed groups in offering basic protection and shaping decentralised administration clearly expanded on the ground. Between 2013 and 2018, Mali's heterarchical political order became ever more heterogeneous as a myriad of armed groups, militias and other power poles instituted their authority across in many "micro-zones" of influence.

The next part assesses the Malian peace process and the subsequent implementation process of the peace accord that were both dominated by northern armed groups and Malian state authorities. The number of violent incidents between these former adversaries significantly dropped. However, the overall objective of the peace process in terms of unifying the northern armed groups and state representatives into reformed state structures yielded few results.

6.2. SEEN FROM ABOVE: PREVALENCE OF HYBRID SECURITY AND GOVERNANCE PATTERNS

6.2.1. The peace process: Pacification without unification

During the 2012 crisis, Malian state authority completely vanished across the northern regions. A French-led military intervention subsequently dislodged the terrorists from all main urban areas and helped the Malian state back on its feet. Building on its strong informal ties with all

[486] Tobie, A. and Sangare, B. (2019); ICG (2019) 'Speaking with the 'Bad Guys'.
[487] Hüsken, T. and Klute, G. (2015), p. 116.

actors across involved, the Burkinabe government swiftly brokered a preliminary peace agreement between the Malian interim government and northern armed groups. The deal acknowledged Mali's territorial integrity, the unitary state and paved the way for a new round of elections to restore state legitimacy. In terms of participants, importantly, the preliminary deal sought to separate the "good guys" amongst the northern armed groups from the "bad guys," who refused to distance themselves from terrorist activities. However, it took until mid-2014 before Mali's newly elected state authorities and the leaders of the "compliant" (e.g. non-terrorist) northern armed groups engaged in an official peace process. The process was a clear attempt to unify compliant northern armed groups and the Malian state into reconstituted, more inclusive and effective state structures. This would enable a joint response against the terrorist threat caused by "non-compliant" groups. Hence, the stage seemed to be set for the Malian state to expand and re-institute its authority in society.

The Algiers peace process: Armed groups in the driving seat

Between mid-2014 and early 2015, an Algeria-led mediation, with direct and active involvement of the wider international community, provided a platform for five rounds of negotiations. These negotiations centred on Malian authorities and two grand coalitions of northern armed groups already mentioned above, the "Platform" and "Coordination." However, members of the latter coalition refused to negotiate with the armed groups gathered in the Platform coalition, as they had not been a direct party to the conflict in 2012. Unable to unite the three parties around the same table at the same time, a two-track diplomatic approach eventually prevailed. Formal negotiations between the mediators and the two individual coalitions took place separately for most of the time.

The set-up of the Algiers process thus privileged the armed groups and Malian authorities. As a result, the armed groups significantly expanded their sphere of influence to the detriment of other power poles in society, including civil society organisations, religious and traditional leaders and youth networks. Moreover, the structure did not enable local community representatives or ordinary citizens to participate or contribute in a meaningful way. Tellingly, 83 per cent of Malian citizens indicated not having "any" or only "poor" knowledge of the Malian peace agreement two years – and again four years – after it had been signed.[488]

The top-down, exclusive negotiations between the parties frequently took place outside Mali and were poorly suited to address rising levels of mistrust amongst and within northern

[488] FES, 'Mali-Mètre', N.9, November 2017.

communities or Malian society at large. The negotiating parties regularly consulted with their own constituencies and handpicked a number of "civil society" representatives to provide input during one of the rounds of negotiations. However, the entire process remained a far cry from the locally driven, community-based, reconciliatory processes that positively influenced the peace process in the 1990s, as highlighted in Chapter 2.

The negotiations centred on four thematic areas: (i) the institutional set-up of the Malian state; (ii) defence and security aspects; (iii) justice/reconciliation mechanisms; and (iv) socio-economic and cultural aspects. Consensus building on the institutional set-up and distribution of power in the political system proved particularly challenging and remained an important point of divergence. While the Coordination pushed for a federal state model that provided maximum autonomy to the northern regions within the confines of the national state, both the Platform and the government called for enhanced decentralisation ("regionalisation"). The peace process proved unable to build genuine consensus on the outcome document. In the end, the Algerian-led international mediation team submitted a final peace agreement to all parties built around profound institutional regionalisation and quotas for improved political representation of northern communities. While state authorities and the Platform initialled the agreement, the Coordination refused to accept the final proposal, which they believed failed to incorporate their main political aspiration. The Coordination eventually signed the deal in June 2015 after considerable international pressure and a soft commitment that some of their observations could be addressed during the implementation phase. The agreement indeed defined a two-year implementation period. However, the deadline was recurrently extended amidst a lack of progress. Five years after the signing of the agreement, it was still ongoing.

In the same vein as the *peace* process, armed groups and Malian authorities largely dominated the actual *implementation* process. Their representatives met during regular meetings of the follow-up committee (the Comité de Suivi de l'Accord). The next section first reveals the poor level of implementation of key aspects of the peace accord that aimed to establish reconstituted inclusive state institutions. The subsequent section then shows the prevalence of particularistic interests of these actors that superseded issues of national interest throughout the implementation process, which originally covered a two years period but was ongoing at the end of 2018.

The implementation phase: State building and the national interest into the background

Of the four main subjects central to the Malian peace agreement, the parties mostly focused on the political and security aspects. The Independent Observer noted that justice and reconciliation as well as developments aspects of the accord received much less attention.[489]

The establishment of a specific Development Fund for the northern regions constituted an important element of the peace agreement. It could generate a peace dividend that reinforced societal by-in to the peace process. Nonetheless, the fund had not been established by the end of the two-year implementation period. The Malian government regularly reiterated its reluctance to transfer resources to the northern regions in the absence of state officials. Moreover, ministers questioned the geographical focus of the fund. Malians living in the southern regions would perceive it as a reward for rebellion.[490] By the end of 2018, little progress had been achieved across the northern regions in terms of peace dividends as the government struggled to develop tangible implementation modalities of the fund during the two-years implementation period. The Independent Observer also reported that the signatory groups largely neglected justice issues throughout the two-year implementation phase. This sharply contrasted with the importance that Malian citizens attached to these matters. A majority of people even considered the fight against impunity amongst the top priorities of the entire process.[491] In 2018, the Independent Expert for Human Rights in Mali reported that:

> No significant progress has been observed on a judicial level since the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, in which the Government had committed to ending impunity. Most perpetrators of abuses and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law go unpunished.[492]

The Human Rights division of the UN's stabilization mission to Mali recorded over 600 cases of human rights violations, involving more than 1400 victims during the two-year

[489] The Carter Center, 'Report of the Independent Observer: Observations on the Implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, Emanating from the Algiers Process. Observation Period January 15 to April 30 2018, May 2018, available at: https://www.cartercenter.org/. According to Article 63 of the 2015 peace agreement, the Independent Observer's job is to impartially identify blockages in the implementation process and recommend steps for enhancing implementation. The Center's role as the Independent Observer was recognised by the United Nations Security Council in Resolution 2391 in December 2017.

[490] Boutellis, A. and Zahar, M-J. (2017).

[491] Moreover, when asked to choose, a large majority of Malians prefers retributive justice – meaning that offenders will be punished – rather than restorative justice – meaning that victims will be compensated (See: https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Policy%20papers/ab_r5_policypaperno13.pdf).

[492] Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Mali, 2 February 2018, A/HRC/37/78.

implementation period.[493] It is noteworthy that groups labelled as terrorist armed groups committed only a small minority (39) of these offences, while the armed groups (246) and Malian Defence and Security forces (288) were responsible for the majority of cases. The authorities launched very few investigations and hardly any legal proceedings took place, revealing persistent levels of impunity in recent years.[494]

When it came to national reconciliation, the peace accord called for the organisation of a National Conference to discuss the root causes of Mali's recurrent crises. The outcome was supposed to emanate in a National Charter for Peace, Unity and Reconciliation that could be integrated into the revised constitution. Organised between 27 March and 2 April 2017, the National Conference united more than 1000 people and offered representatives from a wide variety of organisations, armed groups, regions, professional and ethnic background a (one-off) opportunity to engage with one another on fundamental matters of mutual concern.[495] The initiative was widely appreciated. The status of the conference, however, remained unclear and the authorities failed to integrate the outcomes into the constitutional reform process.[496] Beyond the conference, the Algiers accord did not foresee the set-up of a nationwide and locally driven reconciliatory process.

State authorities and the northern armed groups, as noted above, primarily focused on the security and political components in the agreement. Nevertheless, a stalemate between the two subjects soon obstructed any substantial progress towards unified state institutions. Malian political elites were unwilling to implement key political reforms by transferring substantial powers and resources to subnational levels of government if the armed groups did not disarm first. The latter, in turn, refused to hand over their (heavy) weaponry in the absence of a viable political track. Both parties thus refused to restrain their own power base in the collective interest. The impasse persisted throughout the five years covered by this chapter.

The security aspects of the peace agreement proved particularly illustrative in this regard. The objective was to "reconstitute" the Malian Defence and Security forces so that they became more inclusive, representative and efficient. However, by the end of 2018, the UN Under-

[493] Available at: https://minusma.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/executive_summary_english.pdf.
[494] *Ibid.*
[495] The outcome of the conference is available at: http://www.malinet.net/editorial/rapport-general-de-la-conference-dentente-nationale-bamako-du-27-mars-au-02-avril-2017/. For a comprehensive analysis of the conference, see Sy, O. Dakouo, A. and Traore, K. (2018), *La Conférence d'Entente Nationale. Mise en oeuvre et leçons apprises pour le dialogue national au Mali.* Berlin: Berghoff Foundation.
[496] The authorities did develop legislation on national reconciliation, peace building and amnesty that, somewhat ironically, proved more divisive than unifying. The proposed bill was fiercely criticized by Malian human rights associations who indicated that it risked instituting a culture of impunity, which had already proven detrimental to Mali's longer-term stabilization efforts.

Secretary General for Peacekeeping noted that the foreseen security reforms were operationalised.[497] The unification of different influential armed power poles under a single chain of command and control proved extremely challenging. The security paragraphs of the peace agreement foresaw a vast Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) as well as Security Sector Reform (SSR) programme. In December 2015, Malian authorities formally launched the Commission for Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR). Nevertheless, it took another year before the authorities nominated its president. In practice, the Ministry of Defence long considered DDR a "lower priority" and mainly an avenue for "rebel groups to benefit from more resources."[498] Many officers in the armed forces resisted the integration of Tuareg rebels, some of whom had been integrated in the 1990s but had deserted again in the run-up to the 2012 rebellion. During an official meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the implementation process, the Minister of Defence openly stated that he did not feel committed to or restrained by the peace agreement. The armed groups, in turn, long refrained from presenting lists of combatants who could go through the motions from cantonment to reintegration. The cantonment of their fighters and handover of arms would seriously weaken their local power position and leverage vis-à-vis the government and other power poles. In September 2018, the parties eventually reached an initial agreement on the criteria for reintegration of armed combatants. However, conflicts over rank, the number of combatants, their salaries and per diems persisted.[499] None of the armed parties showed up to the official launch of the reintegration process on 6 November 2018.

During the implementation period of the Algiers peace agreement, the security situation in the central region Mopti dramatically deteriorated, as revealed above. The region was effectively sidelined from the entire peace process that centred on the northern armed groups. Representatives of several communities in central Mali, particularly Fulani, felt "that history is repeating itself: peace is being built without them if not against them." Many believed that "you need to take up arms to be heard."[500] In March 2018, a delegation composed of Malian authorities, Members of Parliament, NGOs and local community leaders visited central Mali. In October, Prime Minister Maiga promised that local militia members would benefit from a

[497] Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping operations to the UNSC, 19 October 2018.
[498] For an elaborate assessment of security sector reforms, see: Bagayoko, N. (2018) '*Le processus de réforme du secteur de la sécurité au Mali*.' Centre FrancoPaix en résolution des conflits et missions de paix, 1 February 2018; Bencherif, A. (2018); Le Cam, M. (2018) 'Dans le Nord du Mali, l'incertitude du désarmement', (*Le Monde*, 8 November 2018).
[499] Bencherif, A. (2018); Le Cam, M. (2018).
[500] ICG (2016).

Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reinsertion (DDR) programme.[501] A few months later, the authorities indeed managed to launch the preparatory works for an accelerated DDR programme to the benefit of non-state militias present in the Mopti region.[502] However, it proved extremely difficult to convince or force militias across the region to hand over their arms in a context characterised by recurrent terrorist attacks, violent intercommunal conflicts and scant protection offered by state institutions outside the urban pockets. When a couple of hundred fighters did agree to be cantoned, the state and international partners proved unable to swiftly move forward with the DDR process and the fighters eventually took up arms again.

In sum, by the end of 2018 some incremental steps towards reformed and unified state institutions had been taken. Yet, the different power poles in Mali's heterarchical political order safeguarded their own sphere of influence as the next section reveals. In its capacity as Independent Observer of the actual implementation of the peace accord, the Carter Center reported that Malian armed groups and political elites predominantly focused on short-term measures to their own benefit, often without a clear relation to or even at the expense of key tenets in the peace agreement and the national interest.[503]

Particularistic interests dominating the implementation process

Compared to the minimal efforts and advances in the above areas of national interest, the Malian parties devoted much more time and energy to negotiating so-called interim measures of the peace agreement. Certainly, they benefitted directly from these measures in the area of security and the decentralised administration. They were originally intended to build confidence between all parties during a three-month period after the signing of the peace agreement ahead of more comprehensive institutional reforms. In practice, these "interim" clauses became the main focus of negotiations between the armed groups and Mali's political leadership for many years. The creation of so-called interim authorities proved to be a case in point.

The peace agreement stipulated that elected members of local and regional councils in northern Mali would be replaced by people designated by the armed groups and Malian government. These interim authorities thereby (temporarily) institutionalised a hybrid form of decentralised administration that officially anchored the position of armed groups in the realm

[501] HRW (2018).
[502] 'Mali. Le difficile processus de désarmement dans le Centre, confronté à la présence de jihadistes', (*Jeune Afrique,* 28 December 2018).
[503] The Carter Center, 'Report of the Independent Observer: Observations on the Implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, Emanating from the Algiers Process. Observation Period January 15 to April 30 2018, May 2018, available at: https://www.cartercenter.org/.

of local governance. Representation in and control over these institutions enabled the armed groups to position themselves in the run-up to future elections and express claims of regional authority. Malian opposition parties and local citizens fiercely contested the legitimacy of the interim authorities. They questioned the legality of instituting different governance arrangements between northern and southern Mali, but the Constitutional Court allowed for it. In addition, they criticised the undemocratic character of their composition by people representing state officials and non-state armed groups based on an exclusive deal stuck between the signatory parties outside the realm of a legislative process. In Gao, youth and civil society groups protested against the fact that these interim authorities were imposed in a top-down manner without their consent. People also contested their legitimacy in other regions.[504]

While the interim authorities should have been established three months after the peace agreement had been signed, it took a full year before state authorities and representatives of the Coordination and Platform reached a power-sharing agreement that underpinned their establishment. The Coordination obtained the presidency of the regional authorities in Kidal, Timbuktu and Taoudeni while the Platform would lead Gao and Ménaka. The deal also provided additional positions to the armed groups, including advisors to regional governors and lower-level state officials. However, it took until April 2017, almost two years after the peace agreement had been signed, before the regional authorities were officially installed in all five regions amidst persistent tensions over proposed candidates and representational challenges. In Timbuktu, for example, armed splinter groups pressed for their inclusion into these institutions by sieging the regional council building. In the end, they obtained positions as advisors in the decentralised administration. Various Arab and Tuareg factions also raised concerns about their underrepresentation, which led to additional delays. The operationalisation of the interim authorities thus continued to be hampered by controversies about their level of inclusivity. These challenges clearly reflected the complexities of Mali's extremely heterogeneous heterarchical order, as illustrated in the first part of this chapter.

Similar patterns characterised the implementation of interim measures in the security realm. The peace agreement defined an interim period during which representatives of the compliant armed groups and state Defence and Security forces would conduct joint military patrols in order to restore mutual confidence ahead of more comprehensive security reforms. To this end, the agreement envisaged the creation of temporary regional military command structures, so-called Operational Coordination Mechanisms ("MOCs"), which supervised these joint patrols.

[504] FIDH (2017) 'Mali. Terrorisme et impunité font chanceler un accord de paix fragile', (Note de position, May 2017, No.692f).

The MOCs regrouped 200 representatives of the Malian army and another 200 representatives from each of the two coalitions of armed groups in Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal. All parties were expected to handover light and heavy arms to enable the MOCs to function.

In practice, however, the armed groups refrained from handing over vital equipment and sufficient personnel that could make the instrument work in the collective interest but would, at the same time, weaken their authority in their own stronghold.

In May 2018, after almost three years of negotiation – instead of the three months foreseen by the peace accord – the parties officially launched the MOCs. Yet, they remained ineffective in the case of Gao and largely non-existent in both Timbuktu and Kidal. By October 2018, the MOC battalion in Gao consisted of 725 soldiers but obtained only six heavy weapons, all provided by the government.[505] In Kidal and Timbuktu, the parties managed to fill just one third of the MOC positions. In 2017, a complex terrorist attack targeted the MOC in Gao killing more than 70 people. The MOC was poorly equipped to protect itself, let alone Malian citizens. The mechanism was also unable to effectively contribute to security efforts during the 2018 presidential elections and conducted few patrols in practice.[506] In November 2018, the CMA coalition officially reiterated its stance to refrain from transferring its heavy weaponry to the MOCs. It limited its contribution to some combatants and light weapons. Clearly, the attempt to unify different state and non-state armed forces in order to protect Malian citizens against the rising terrorist threat had achieved few results by the end of 2018.

Armed groups also protected their territorial influence sphere in the context of the MOC. In November 2018, the CMA coalition blocked over 170 combatants from four armed groups that arrived from Gao and Menaka and intended to participate in Kidal's MOC. The CMA declared that the inclusivity of the MOC needed to reflect "realities on the ground." As three of the four movements had no solid support base in the Kidal region, the CMA blocked them from partaking in the MOC and sent them back to Gao and Menaka. It did not want other groups to increase their presence in the CMA's influence sphere. Likewise, CMA representatives from Kidal had previously been blocked from participating in Gao's MOC.

In light of the limited progress achieved in fostering inclusive national defence and security institutions, the next section reveals that hybrid patterns of security provision prevailed in the five-year period that followed the 2012 crisis.

[505] Carter Center, October 2018.
[506] *Ibid.* ; Savey, A. and Boisvert, M-A. (2019) *The Process of DDR in Mali: A Journey Full of Pitfalls*, Paris: Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (Observatoire du monde arabo-musulman et du Sahel), 21 December 2018.

6.2.2. The prevalence of hybrid security provision in the aftermath of the crisis

Fragmentation of hybrid security provision

Soon after the 2012 crisis, Malian authorities revived hybrid security patterns witnessed during the Touré era (2002-2012) and previous regimes, as demonstrated in Chapter 2. In 2014, the Malian army attempted to take control of Kidal, the stronghold of the Tuareg rebellion, by force. It did so on the basis of a complementary form of hybrid security provision as both official army soldiers and representatives of un unofficial Imghad militia took part in the assault. In May 2014, Prime Minister Mara was adamant to demonstrate that Kidal was part of Mali's national territory and should be administered by representatives of the state rather than Tuareg armed groups. He insisted on visiting the town on 17 May. This period preceded the Algiers peace talks and the non-state armed groups as well as Kidal-based civil society movements vociferously protested his visit, in the absence of a functioning peace process. Demonstrators successfully blocked the airstrip and prevented an airplane transporting Malian ministers from landing in Kidal. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Mara managed to avoid the runway by travelling in a UN helicopter. Army General and leading Imghad representative Ag Gamou accompanied the prime minister that day. Soon after Mara arrived in Kidal, the Governor's office was set on fire. The prime minister was extracted from the scene and taken to the UN base in Kidal. Nevertheless, eight people, including six Malian civil servants, died that day. This provoked furious reactions across the country. The government issued a statement describing the events in Kidal as a declaration of war and indicated that an appropriate response would follow.[507]

In the early morning of 21 May, the Malian army – supported by an Imghad dominated militia – attacked Kidal with the objective of regaining control over the city by force.[508] However, it was defeated in five hours. The armed groups subsequently regained control of several northern cities, including Aguelhoc, Menaka, Tessalit, Tessit and Anefif, significantly altering the power balance between the authorities and armed groups.[509] Barely two years after the secessionist rebellion had driven out the Malian state of the northern regions, its presence was again reduced in several northern localities. The participation of the Imghad Tuareg militia infuriated other Tuareg factions in control of Kidal at that point in time.[510] The first part of this

[507] 'Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Mali', 9 June 2014. S/2014/403.
[508] McGregor, A. (2016) 'The Fox of Kidal: A Profile of Mali's Tuareg General, al-Hadjj ag Gamou', *Militant Leadership Monitor,* (7)11.
[509] Bencherif, A. (2018).; Boutellis, A. and Zahar, M-J. (2017).
[510] 'Mali. El Hadj Ag Gamou, le renard de Kidal' (*Jeune Afrique*, 10 June 2014).

chapter referred to the fierce competition between Ifoghas and Imghad Tuareg factions in Kidal. After the defeat and retreat of the Malian army from large parts of northeastern Mali, a group of 66 Imghad Tuareg, fearing retaliatory attacks, sought refuge at a nearby UN camp.

From then on, the Malian state relied on more delegatory forms of hybrid security provision. Only months after the defeat of the Malian army, the Groupe Autodéfense Touareg Imghad et Alliés (GATIA) was established to protect the interests of Imghad Tuareg and its allies. It did not take GATIA long to launch a series of attacks against non-state armed groups that had been part of the rebellion against the Malian state with the aim of regaining territorial control. The group had a strong military posture and indeed managed to dislodge the MNLA in various localities across the Gao region.[511] GATIA also established checkpoints around the city of Kidal in order to gain a form of territorial control along the main transport routes. The advances secured by GATIA on the battlefield benefitted the Malian state. The militia transferred the control over some of its territories to Malian armed forces.[512] International security personnel stationed in northern Mali witnessed joint movements and the use of similar (transport) equipment by the national army and GATIA. In an official Facebook post by the American Embassy in Bamako, the US Ambassador called upon the Malian government to:

> Put a stop to all ties both public and private with GATIA, a group of armed militia that is not contributing to peace in the north.[513]

Similar to the Touré era, Malian authorities allowed loyal factions to profit from illicit trafficking, also to prevent non-allied movements from benefitting too much from this lucrative trade. A case in point constituted the arrest of alleged trafficker Yoro Ould Daha in early 2014 by the French military for his activities under the banner of terrorist organisation MUJAO. A week later, Malian authorities released him and he then played an important role in support of loyalist armed groups that ousted groups opposing the state from Menaka.[514] The authorities could build on well-established networks with individual powerbrokers across the northern regions, thereby exerting influence indirectly.

This was not the case in central Mali, where loosely organised local militias operated at much greater distance from the state. Malian authorities or the Defence and Security forces did not

[511] Boutellis, A. and Zahar, M-J. (2017).
[512] 'Report of the Secretary-General on the Situation in Mali', 23 December 2014, S/2014/943.
[513] 'US Calls on Mali Government to Sever Ties with Northern Militia', (*Reuters*, 28 September 2016).
[514] Raineri, L. and Strazzari, F. (2015).

officially support specific local militias in terms of training, arms delivery or funding. Yet, influential political and military state actors initially tolerated the rise of some militias in the region anticipating their contribution to counterterrorism efforts in the rural areas, where the state was particularly weak.[515] Several militias also received support from individual representatives – often fellow community members – in the central state.[516] Moreover, numerous accounts, including those provided by Malian state officials, referred to joint patrols conducted by Dozo or Bambara militias and state security forces. These militias also reportedly escorted state representatives across the region.[517] In an indirect delegation of security provision to Dogon and Bambara militias, a 2018 motorcycle ban along transport routes in Mopti was widely perceived to be selectively implemented. Malian state officials enabled these militias to roam freely in the region, in large numbers, while restraining other militias, most notably Fulani, from doing so.[518] Dogon militias continued to man checkpoints and check ID cards of passing citizens along different roads. As the level of communal violence rose, the capacity of the central state to exert real influence over the militias appeared to be very limited. Those militias initially tolerated by the government hardly contributed to counterterrorism objectives and prioritised their own localised interests, such as improving access to natural resources through violent means against other villages and communities. Moreover, the state failed to impose and implement the aforementioned ordonnance, aimed at disarming militias, as well as its commitment to investigate flagrant cases of human rights abuses allegedly conducted by militias. Quite to the contrary, military operations by the Malian army reportedly resulted in serious human rights violations including extrajudicial killings, torture and arbitrary arrests.[519]

In the border areas between Mali and Niger, the Malian state aligned itself with specific local militias during anti-terrorist operations. In 2015, as noted in the first part of this chapter, the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) settled in the area. Numerous Fulani Tolebe youngsters joined or realigned their self-defence militias with this terrorist organisation.[520] By then, local Doussaks Tuareg youngsters had established an armed group that allied with GATIA.[521] Historic rivalries between the two communities over access to pasture, land, water

[515] ICG (2019) 'Central Mali: Putting an End to Ethnic Cleansing', 25 March 2019.
[516] HRW (2018); FIDH (2018).
[517] Tobie, A. and Sangare, B. (2019).
[518] *Ibid*.; HRW (2018).
[519] HRW (2017) 'Mali: Unchecked Abuses in Military Operations', 8 September 2017.
[520] Ibrahim, I.Y. and Zapata, M. (2018) 'Early Warning Report. Regions At Risk. Preventing Mass Atrocities in Mali', April 2018, available at: https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/Mali_Report_English_FINAL_April_2018.pdf.
[521] GATIA was dominated by Imghad Tuareg, aligned with the Platform coalition and (tacitly) supported by Malian Defence and Security Forces.

and economic opportunities were now being played out in the context of terrorism. State forces allied with Tuareg armed groups to counter ISGS and affiliated Fulani militias.

In sum, hybrid security patterns showed a great deal of continuity despite becoming more diffused in the years that followed the 2012 crisis. The security landscape was now composed of a myriad of local armed groups and militias. The following section reveals how international actors and military interventions were shaped in the context of this heterogeneous context.

Internationalisation of hybrid security provision

Ever since the French-led military intervention in 2013, international military actors continued to play a crucial role in Mali including with respect to the growing terrorist threat in the following years. In 2014, the French regional counterterrorist mission Barkhane replaced the Mali-based Serval operation. It stationed approximately 1000 of its troops in northern Mali. In addition, UN stabilisation mission MINUSMA deployed up to 13,000 military personnel and almost 2000 police offers. Around 70 per cent of its staff operated from either northern or central Mali. Craven-Matthews and Engelbert (2018) estimated that the budget of these two missions corresponded to 75 per cent of the Malian state's domestic revenues.[522] The EU deployed over 500 experts for its training missions to build the capacity of Mali's military (EUTM) and police (EUCAP) personnel. The Malian state clearly continued to considerably depend upon international actors to provide security across its national territory after the 2012 crisis.

The UN Security Council recurrently emphasised that Malian Security and Defence Forces were primarily responsible for providing security across the country. The UN mission MINUSMA merely aimed to support and certainly not to replace Malian state institutions. However, considering the extremely limited presence of the state in northern and central Mali, the UN mission was forced to operate and patrol without the involvement of Malian security forces in several localities. In these areas, security provision was de facto delegated to international actors such as MINUSMA and to the French force Barkhane.

Although Malian authorities persistently increased the national Defence and Security budget, Craven-Matthews and Englebert (2018) noted that the Malian economy simply extracted insufficient domestic resources to singlehandedly fund the security personnel and material currently provided by external actors.

[522] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018), p. 14.

Considering the state's absence in most rural areas across northern and central Mali, it came as no surprise that hybrid forms of cooperation between international forces and local militias also emerged. Chapter 2 briefly noted that collaboration between the French mission Serval and the MNLA provided valuable intelligence to the French military during the 2013 intervention. In subsequent years, the Barkhane operation also cooperated with non-state armed groups, such as the MSA and GATIA. These armed groups participated in operations against Islamic State in the border area between Mali and Niger.[523] Their representatives attended high-level security meetings in Paris.[524] This clearly showed that international actors became part of Mali's fractured and fragmented security landscape, dominated by non-state actors. While these pragmatic forms of cooperation are effective from a military point of view, they undermine longer-term state building initiatives. In line with the analysis of the local anchorage of jihadists in northern and central Mali provided above, Ibrahim and Zapata (2018) also cautioned that, "[a] surge in counterterrorism operations against jihadists in Menaka risks inadvertently exacerbating a longstanding intercommunal conflict."[525]

Individual regional powerbrokers equally shaped transnational security practices and reinforced the position of armed groups. Pellerin and Guichaoua (2018) noted that countries like Mauritania and Morocco provided resources to specific armed groups in an attempt to influence the course of events in Mali and to prevent security threats to cross borders.[526] The very same held for Algeria, long-time mediator in recurrent Malian crises, which used its historical ties with key Tuareg leaders in the Kidal region to prevent the quest for independence amongst some Malian Tuareg to affect Algerian Tuaregs.[527] Moreover, Algeria and Libya long competed for influence in northern Mali and established networks of supporters in Kidal in particular. This was equally true for the longstanding rivalry between Algeria and Morocco that at one point risked spilling over into and affecting the Malian crisis.[528] Hence, many of Mali's neighbours provided financial, diplomatic or material support to specific armed groups also based on long-standing sociopolitical and cultural ties. Although the terms "proxy" or

[523] 'Le chef djihadiste Al-Sahraoui accuse et menace deux communautés du Mali', (*RFI*, 28 June 2018); ACLED (2018) 'From the Mali-Niger Borderlands to Rural Gao: Tactical and Geographical Shifts of Violence', 6 June 2018; Sandor, A. (2017).
[524] 'Ag Gamou et Ag Acharatoumane en visite de travail à Paris', (*Jeune Afrique*, 24 Mai 2017).
[525] Ibrahim, I.Y. and Zapata, M. (2018).
[526] Guichaoua, Y. and Pellerin, M. (2018).
[527] Ammour, L.A. (2013) 'Algeria's Role in the Sahelian Security Crisis', *International Journal of Security and Development* (2)2, 28: 1-11.
[528] Wing, S.D. (2016) 'French Intervention in Mali: Strategic Alliances, Long-Term Regional Presence?', *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 27(1): 59-80.

"satellite" groups is too strong, these transnational ties certainly influenced security dynamics in Mali.

Even the, at first sight, technocratic support provided by the EU to raise the capacity of the Malian Security and Defence forces proved to be sensitive. The International Crisis Group (2014) reported that tensions between Tuareg factions influenced the actual (non-) deployment of military units trained by the EU.[529] The very same held for the selection of a Malian battalion for the regional G5-Sahel force. In early 2017, regional authorities from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger established this joint military force in the wake of the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the Liptako-Gourma border area between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. [530] They mandated the force to tackle, amongst others, cross-border terrorist threats and trafficking and to support the restoration of state authority, public services and humanitarian support in fragile border areas.[531] In Mali, however, the composition and effective operationalisation of the Malian battalions under the command of the G5-Sahel was constrained by the limited progress in reconstituting an inclusive national army.

In sum, during the five years that followed the 2012 crisis, both non-state armed groups and external partners played a major role in shaping one of the most pivotal tasks of statehood. Rather than moving towards a state-centred hierarchical order, a form of transnational security provision emerged that cut across global/local and state/non-state boundaries.

The following and final part of this chapter offers a brief assessment of the functioning of Malian democracy during the five-year period that followed the 2012 crisis. It reveals remarkable patterns of continuity with pre-crisis period under President Touré and similar challenges that restrained democracy's contribution to state legitimacy.

6.3. STATE LEGITIMACY CHALLENGED DURING THE POST-CRISIS PERIOD

In the years before the 2012 crisis, popular satisfaction with the leadership of President Touré and the democratic regime type had dwindled. The previous chapters revealed critical challenges related to political participation, representation and accountability that undermined

[529] ICG (2014).
[530] The set-up of a comprehensive joint force is a long-term objective. The countries prioritised mutually coordinated military operations, under joint command, in border areas during a preliminary period. The cross-border management cooperation between Chad and Sudan as well as the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram served as examples.
[531] While the border area between Chad/Niger and Mali/Mauritania are included as operational areas, the Liptako-Gourma area at the very heart of the G5-Sahel's territory received priority.

and gradually eroded state legitimacy. This section examines, in an explorative way, key trends in these three areas in the years that followed the series of dramatic events in 2012.

The international community had a strong interest in restoring Mali's constitutional order. Following its military intervention, France wanted to avoid a prolonged unconstitutional period at all costs, while several donors could only allocate foreign aid to the Malian state once it obtained a formal democratic status. Moreover, the operationalisation of MINUSMA's mandate required the re-establishment of constitutional order.[532]

Soon after the French-led military intervention, Mali organised presidential elections in July (first round) and August 2013 (second round) in every region across the country, including the stronghold of the Tuareg armed groups Kidal. Turnout figures were quite high by Malian standards. Moreover, the mere fact that the elections were organised in areas until recently far beyond state control marked the initial success of Mali's return to democratic rule.[533] Citizens widely perceived these elections as free and fair and overall support for democracy increased from 62 per cent in 2012 to 75 per cent in 2013. Malian democracy thus got off to a relatively good start. Former Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) secured a landslide victory in the 2013 presidential elections. He obtained more than 77 per cent of the votes during the second round of these elections. Openly supported by influential religious leaders, he capitalised on his reputation as a sturdy politician who had restored civil oversight over the army and effectively tackled social unrest during the 1990s. He campaigned with a pledge to "put Mali first" and restore the country's honour.

The legislative elections took place on 25 November (first round) and 15 December (second round) 2013. The separate organisation of the presidential and legislative elections significantly favoured the president elect. Now that Keita had secured the presidency, influential local powerbrokers strategically shifted allegiance in support of his party – the Rassemblement Pour le Mali (RPM) – in the run-up to these legislative elections. By doing so, they maintained their individual networks with the executive intact, which were critical for nourishing their support base. Several regional powerbrokers in the former ruling party ADEMA also defected to RPM in the run-up to the legislative elections.[534] Most noteworthy and controversial was the move by two leading representatives of the Tuareg armed rebellion, Hamada Ag Bibi (MNLA) and Mohamed Ag Intallah (HCUA) and the subsequent decision by the IBK regime to lift the arrest

[532] Boutellis, A. and Zahar, M-J. (2017).
[533] Almost 50 per cent of the population above 18 years old casted their vote. In Mali, voter turnout is calculated on the basis of all citizens above 18 years old while in many other West African countries this is done on the basis of those voters who have registered themselves, a system that usually leads to higher turnout figures.
[534] Thurston, A. (2018) 'Mali's Tragic but Persistent Status Quo.'

warrants issued against them. The personal interests of the leadership of these state and non-state power poles converged in the run-up to the elections.

The creation of two new northern regions, Taoudeni and Menaka, illustrated how informal trade-offs between national elites and regional power poles in society continued to shape interest representation through the political system. Former president Touré had taken the initiative to create these two regions in December 2011 but never managed to implement this decision because of the Tuareg rebellion that broke out and the subsequent coup. Arab leaders fiercely lobbied the Bamako-based political elites to provide them with "their" own region and "their own parliamentarians" by creating the region of Taoudeni.[535] On 28 February 2018, the Malian government officially approved the creation of Taoudeni and Menaka. These regions were situated above hydrocarbon basins and strategically located alongside trafficking networks.[536] Their establishment was perceived as:

> An attempt to buy off powerful traffickers and businessmen by giving them control over resources and the movement of people and goods within their regions.[537]

The decision also provided President Keita with a firm political support basis for his re-election in 2018. A local RPM party official in Taoudeni recalled:

> Our faction leaders made a commitment to IBK: to provide him with a gift after having granted Taoudeni an official status as region. What gift is better than to thank him during the elections?[538]

In a similar vein, the creation of the Menaka region enabled Iwellemmdan Tuareg to position themselves as critical powerbrokers of the state in this area and to enhance their position vis-à-vis other Tuareg factions. Thurston (2018) aptly noted that building a political support basis by reviving informal networks with regional powerbrokers:

[535] ICG (2014).
[536] Blanc, F. (2015) 'Menaka, nouvel enjeu du dénouement de la crise politico-sécuritaire au Mali', Territoire de Paix, 12 June 2015.
[537] Lebovich, A. (2017) 'Reconstructing Local Orders in Mali: Historical Perspectives and Future Challenges', (Local Orders Paper Series). Section 6.3.1. below further elaborates upon the impact of transnational (trafficking) networks on local political, security and social dynamics.
[538] 'Présidentielle au Mali. Comment IBK a conquis les voix du Nord', (*Jeune Afrique*, 24 August 2018).

> Perpetuated the perception that electoral politics do not necessarily function to place popularly legitimate actors in office, but rather reinforce behind-the-scenes negotiations for positions and influence amongst national and regional elites.[539]

Many regional powerbrokers predominantly used their privileged access to government networks and resources to their own advantage.[540] This revival of informal networks between the state and regional powerbrokers resembled the dynamics witnessed during the Touré era.

This also held for the centripetal forces of parliamentary coalition building characterised by the rallying of most political forces around the Executive (cf. Chapters 3 and 4). The Rassemblement pour le Mali (RPM) secured 66 seats in parliament during the 2013 elections, a notable increase from the 11 seats it secured during the second mandate of President Touré. However, the party subsequently managed to establish a dominant parliamentary coalition in support of the president of as much as 115 seats.[541] This comfortable two-thirds majority constituted a "light version" of president Touré's one-coalition dominance (cf. Chapter 3). During parliamentary debates, members of the presidential majority coalition vigorously defended rather than scrutinised the executive.[542] Locally, a similar pattern of realignment with the presidential party was witnessed as numerous powerbrokers rallied behind the RPM in the run-up to the municipal elections of 20 November 2016.[543] RPM increased its local council seats from a mere 300 in 2009 to more than 2500 in 2016.

President Keita (IBK) maintained a firm grip over the government by frequently changing Prime Ministers. He appointed no less than five different Prime Ministers in the period after 2013, each serving, on average, only a year.[544] Although not formally mandated to dismiss the prime minister, "the frequency with which IBK has changed Prime-Ministers during his first term in office is strong evidence of the president's informal powers."[545] He used the government

[539] Thurston, A. (2018).
[540] ICG. (2014).
[541] 'Déclaration de groupe parlementaire. 11 parties créent l'alliance pour le Mali (APM) de 26 députés pour soutenir IBK', (*Indépendant,* 21 January 2014); 'La transhumance offre la majorité absolue à RPM', (*RFI*, 7 July 2014).
[542] 'Entorse au principe de la séparation des pouvoirs. Quand les députés de la majorité deviennent des auxiliaires de la Primature', (*Le Prétoire*, 26 June 2015).
[543] The elections were boycotted by the Coordination in Kidal. The armed groups opposed these elections as it believed that, according to the Algiers accord, the concerted nomination of local interim authorities by the Malian government and armed groups should have prevailed the holding of these municipal elections. In approximately 40 municipalities, in mostly northern and some central regions, the elections did not take place due to security challenges.
[544] Also see Chauzal, G. (2015) 'Commentary: Bamako's new government', 11 February 2015, available at: https://www.clingendael.org/publication/commentary-bamakos-new-government.
[545] Sears, J. (2018) 'Mali's 2018 Election: A Turning Point'?, Reliefweb, 24 September 2018; Moestrup, S. (2018) 'Mali – Fifth Time's the Charm: IBK's New Winning Team?', *Presidential Power*, 15 January 2018.

as an arena to carefully manage a delicate support base amongst Mali's political class rather than to promote policies in a consistent and durable manner. The president's son became chair of the prestigious parliamentary Commission of National Defence, Internal Security and Civil Protection; his father-in-law the Speaker of the National Assembly; and one of his nephews was appointed Secretary-General of the Presidency. Malian citizens indicated that IBK was putting his "family first" rather than "Mali first."[546]

The rallying of most political actors and influential power brokers around the new president weakened the political basis for democratic accountability. Keita also tried to further increase the – already considerable – institutional power base vested in his office. He did so by influencing a constitutional reform process that intended to legally anchor the outcome or the Algiers peace agreement. In 2016, Malian authorities tasked a Constitutional Reform Commission to develop proposals that reflected the Algiers accord and "other shortcomings" in the constitution, without further specifying the latter.[547] The prime minister initially established the commission but President Keita reversed this decision and took the process firmly into his own hands.[548] In March 2017, the Malian government presented a constitutional reform bill to parliament introducing several changes to the original proposal drafted by the Commission. Importantly, they further enhanced the powers of the president by allowing him to remove the Prime Minister, to appoint one third of the newly created Senate as well as the head of the Constitutional Court.[549] The authorities clearly used the reform process to further enhance the already omnipotent presidency instead of reshaping the distribution of powers in Mali's democratic regime. Parliament initially rubberstamped the bill. Again, executive oversight had to come from outside the democratic channels. Keita's move provoked mass protests in Bamako and other urban areas. Popular demonstrations continued to swell and the government eventually felt compelled to postpone the referendum on the constitution. An opinion poll indicated that 35 per cent of citizens opposed the reform, 11 per cent supported it while a majority stated not to be informed or to have an opinion.[550]

[546] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018), p. 7.
[547] Sylla, K. (2019) 'Mali's Proposed Constitutional Reform: Mal-Intentioned, or Merely Inept?', 26 June 2019, available at: https://bridgesfrombamako.com/.
[548] *Ibid.*
[549] The Bill also proposed dropping the prerequisite of a referendum for most future constitutional changes and did not include specific positions for youth, women and traditional leaders in the senate as stipulated by the peace agreement.
[550] FES, 'Mali-Mètre', No. 9, November 2017.

Hence, patterns of democratic accountability remained extremely weak and contributed to the gradual erosion of state legitimacy during Keita's first term in office. Corruption and deteriorating governance flourished easily in this context. Although the president declared the year 2014 as "the year to fight corruption," high-level scandals surfaced that allegedly involved people close to the president's inner circle. This included the purchase of an expensive presidential plane, kept outside the regular state budget, and new equipment for the army at artificially inflated prices as well as the unlawful usage of no-bid clauses.[551] The International Monetary Fund (IMF) subsequently suspended its support programmes to Mali. The overall quality of governance deteriorated considerably during IBK's term in office. Between 2014 and 2018, Mali's score in the Mo Ibrahim corruption index decreased by 20 points (on a 0–100 scale).[552] In the Afrobarometer survey for 2014/2015, Malian citizens displayed their dissatisfaction with government efforts to tackle corruption.[553] In the 2016/2018 round, 44.2 per cent of 1,200 informants believed corruption had increased a lot and a further 27.2 per cent said that corruption had increased somewhat or stayed the same.[554]

After a hopeful start in 2013, popular satisfaction with the way democracy functioned dropped again, close to the (low) pre-coup levels, during the course of IBK's term in office.

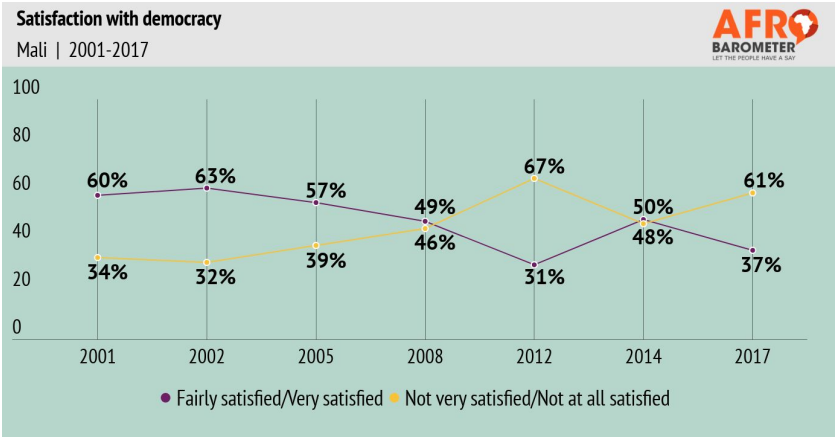

Figure 7: Decreasing levels of satisfaction with Mali (® Afrobarometer).

[551] BTI 2018 Country Report Mali, available at: www.bti-project.org; Shipley, T. (2017) 'Mali: Overview of Corruption and Anti-Corruption', U4 Anti-corruption Centre, Chr. Michelsen Institute.
[552] Craven-Matthews, C. and Englebert, P. (2018).
[553] Bleck, J. Dembele, A. and Guindo, S., (2016).
[554] Shipley, T. (2017).

Although sketched in an exploratory manner, prevailing patterns of political participation, representation and accountability shaped through the democratic channels certainly did not enhance the position of the state vis-à-vis other power poles in the context of Mali's heterarchical order. In fact, the functioning of Malian democracy in the years after the 2012 crisis made people turn away from the state towards alternative power poles. As Mali's exclusive and inaccessible democratic institutions persistently failed to channel citizens' mobilisation, interest representation or popular frustrations with the state, non-state institutions are likely to gain ever more ground in society.

6.4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the context of a rapidly deteriorating security situation, state presence beyond urban pockets in northern and central Mali remained extremely limited. As the exercise of public authority became increasingly tied to the ability to use force, armed groups extended their influence over other power poles in the realm of decentralised administration in Mali's heterarchical political context. A wide variety of armed groups, communal militias, loosely organised and highly localised security initiatives emerged and anchored across specific territorial strongholds. Amidst this highly diffused security landscape, leaders of non-state armed groups operated at the intersection of multiple networks from which they drew material and immaterial resources. They maintained ties across the formal/informal and local/national/global divide with traditional authorities, central state representatives, political leaders, other armed groups, transnational networks, international military actors and many others.

Initiatives that aimed to strengthen and boost the inclusivity of state institutions yielded very few results in the aftermath of the 2012 crisis. Instead, informal ties between national elites and regional powerbrokers continued to bridge the wide divide between the political urban centre and periphery. Again, the leadership of armed groups played a prominent role in this regard. Not least because of their privileged position in the peace process and the prevalence of hybrid forms of security cooperation with the central state and international military missions.

Hence, far from moving in the direction of a hierarchical and state-centred political order, Mali's heterarchical order has become increasingly diversified in recent years with a more prominent role for armed groups amidst other power poles in both northern and central Mali. None of the state or non-state actors emerged as a dominant hegemonic force in the five years that followed the 2012 crisis. On the contrary, high levels of volatility and fluidity prevailed as armed groups fragmented, reconfigured and alliances recurrently shifted.

Finally, one of the most striking features of the post-crisis period constituted the limited influence that Malian citizens could exert over the way out. They were marginalised in the peace process, could make little contribution to national reconciliation and increasingly relied on armed actors, who they had not chosen but who offered some form of protection. By 2018, the country formerly known as a flagship of democracy seemingly moved towards a militiacracy. More in-depth empirical research is definitely required to assess popular perceptions about the different actors instituting their authority, in particular the armed groups, and their (in)ability to contribute to public service provision in the context of Mali's increasingly fragmented heterarchical political order.

Chapter 7

General conclusions
Public authority and legitimacy in a heterarchical context

INTRODUCTION

This Malian case study joins an expanding body of literature in the academic fields of political science, sociology, history, regional studies and anthropology that challenges prevailing state-centred and institutional approaches to both political authority and legitimacy.

The first part of the thesis deconstructed Malian *state authority*. Classical views in the literature portrayed the state as the supreme institutional locus of political power and authority in society. The state was on top of society and so it should be. Such a hierarchical order was required to prevent anarchy. In Mali, however, a heterarchical political order gradually emerged in which the state was but one of the institutions amongst many non-state equals involved in the exercise of public authority. This heterogeneous order became further anchored in the period that followed the profound 2012 crisis, despite considerable international support geared towards rebuilding the Malian state and the restoration of a democratic regime.

The core part of the thesis deconstructed Malian *state legitimacy* in two different ways. First, in responding to the overarching research question, this thesis revealed the limited contribution of key democratic institutions in underpinning state legitimacy. In fact, their performance seems to have weakened the position of the state vis-à-vis non-state power poles in Mali's heterarchical context. Secondly, the thesis showed that non-actors mobilised alternative sources of legitimacy beyond democracy that remained highly influential in society.

This chapter briefly summarises the main conclusions of the individual chapters in these two core areas of the thesis. On that basis, it ends with a short reflection on the need to move beyond state-centred institutional blueprints when analysing processes of *public authority* and *public legitimacy* in the context of a heterarchical order.

FROM STATE AUTHORITY TO PUBLIC AUTHORITY

The first part of the thesis examined the gradual emergence of a heterarchical political order in Mali. This historical assessment warned against the static approach of "hybrid" political orders and revealed substantial patterns of change over time. The series of dramatic events in 2012 marked a change in the power balance between state and non-state actors involved in *public* authority rather than a sudden collapse of robust Malian *state* authority.

At independence, the state still constituted the hierarchically supreme institution that dominated all other power poles in society. Although lacking much capacity itself, the socialist regime left very little room for non-state actors in the socio-economic, political or religious realm and curtailed the position of the chieftaincy at the local level. Yet, after its demise in 1968, hybrid forms of authority soon emerged and anchored in society. The state first shared the exercise of public authority with non-state actors in the area of social service delivery and eventually relied on non-state power poles to assist in countering security threats. After the turn of the century, the power balance in this hybrid set-up progressively shifted in favour of non-state actors. The state was completely ousted from northern Mali in 2012 and has struggled to regain a foothold ever since. In fact, a heterarchical order in which the state was but one institution amongst many non-state equals had firmly anchored across both northern and central Mali by 2018.

This part of the thesis focused, in particular, on historical patterns of public service delivery in the security realm. The monopoly of the legitimate use of violence constituted a critical cornerstone of classical Westphalian notions of state authority. Up until the early 1990s, Malian Defence and Security forces indeed performed a leading role in this area. However, the state increasingly relied on informal channels of cooperation with loyal non-state armed groups to counter security threats in northern Mali ever since. While the material basis and physical presence of the state remained limited, armed groups expanded their authority based on the resources that became available through transnational networks. Armed groups significantly boosted their income and armoury through channels other than those provided by the state. They enlarged their sphere of influence and filled the void of the state, particularly across the rural areas. The Malian case study thereby illustrated the substantial impact of transnational networks in shaping the exercising of public authority in the public service.

I initially referred to the patterns of hybrid security provision in terms of a "*militia-tary" strategy* deployed by the Malian state. I considered the label justified as the interaction between

state and non-state actors persisted over time, evolved into a de facto institutionalised practice and was guided by a longer-term strategic objective to counter recurrent security threats.
To a certain extent, such an analysis holds true for explaining patterns of interaction between the central state and loyal non-state groups in northern Mali. Yet, there was little evidence of the systematic and large-scale cooperation encountered in several other countries in terms of training and the provision of logistical and material support. Furthermore, this way of conceptualising hybrid security provision was unsuitable for depicting the situation in central Mali where the state had even less influence over the myriad of local militias and self-defence groups active on the ground.

More fundamentally, the notion of a "militia-tary strategy" placed too strong an emphasis on the role and influence of the state. It still presented the state as a central, overarching and hierarchically superior institution that deliberately shaped and largely determined its relationship and partnership with non-state groups. Such a conceptualisation failed to grasp and adequately represent the power balance between state and non-state actors involved in public security provision in a heterarchical context. First, the material resource basis of centralised statehood in a place like Mali remained extremely restricted. It proved inherently challenging for any central institution to singlehandedly exercise its authority, let alone provide protection across all corners of such vast geographical area characterised by such profound security challenges. Secondly, influential factors beyond the state clearly shaped hybrid security patterns and how these evolved over time. Multiple networks became available that enabled non-state armed groups to increase their authority, as already noted in the above. International military actors equally strongly influenced the power balance in Mali's heterarchical setting. Hence, the exercise of public authority in general and security provision in particular could not be reduced or understood in terms of a strategy by the state alone in the context of a heterarchial political setting. In such a setting, a single actor did not exclusively shape hybrid patterns of security provision. These patterns relied on the motives and capabilities of multiple actors and proved much more diffuse than the concept of a strategy suggests.

The second part of this thesis then examined the expected contribution by a number of key democratic institutions in enhancing state legitimacy in this particularly heterogeneous context.

FROM STATE LEGITIMACY TO PUBLIC LEGITIMACY

Since the early 1990s, Mali has constituted a leading example of democracy on the African continent. Successive leaders respected political and civic rights, the level of press freedom was substantial and associational life truly blossomed. The country embarked on one of the most ambitious decentralisation reforms across the African continent. Power was handed over peacefully from one president to another in the 2002 polls. Mali was even on the verge of becoming a fully consolidated democracy according to Huntington's (1991) "two-turn over test" in the 2012 elections when a military coup abruptly ended President Touré's term in office.[555]

In this context, democratisation was expected to boost the popular legitimacy of the Malian state and to help it expand its position in society over other power poles. The core part of this thesis examined the performance of a selected number of democratic institutions in underpinning this so-called input side of state legitimacy. It assessed the contribution of: (1) Malian political parties and the party system; (2) the legislature; and (3) municipal democratic institutions in shaping political participation, representation and accountability. Each individual chapter combined a political-institutional approach with a wider socio-cultural analytical perspective. The analysis reveals that the democratic institutions examined in this thesis have not enhanced state legitimacy in line with their official mandate and as expected from theory. Quite to the contrary, the democratic structure seems to have weakened the position of the state vis-à-vis other power poles in Mali's heterarchical context.

Malian democratic institutions remained poorly rooted into Malian society. The institutions did not succeed in performing one the most fundamental functions of a democratic regime, that of ensuring popular participation into the political process and connecting people to the choices made by state representatives. Only a small minority of citizens participated in successive elections or maintained contact with (elected) political representatives. Very basic but influential factors such as language, education and religion consolidated the wide divide between the democratic system and the Malian *demos*. The vast majority of citizens did not speak or write the official language of government. Religion played a central role in people's private life and the public sphere but was formally kept outside the political system in accordance with the French notion of *laicité*. Initially, influential traditional institutions were largely ignored in the decentralisation reforms.

[555] Huntington took a minimalist and procedural take on democratic consolidation, which he considered to be achived if two peaceful transfers of power in successive elections occurred. CF. Huntington, S. P. (1992).

In practice, political mobilisation and representation centred on exclusive networks between national political elites, local power brokers and a small minority of citizens. Patrimonial sources of legitimacy and a logic of personal proximity guided these ties. People supported political actors from their own vicinity and expected a redistribution of national resources to their home area. Patrons prevailed over policies and personal ties trumped institutionalised partisan politics. These exclusive patterns of representation connected a few privileged to the state but alienated most citizens from the political centre. Popular dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy increased together with widespread frustration with the country's political elites and the expanding levels of corruption.

However, the official democratic channels did not offer many opportunities to hold an increasingly discredited executive branch of government accountable. The thesis illustrated the continued concentration of power in the Malian presidency and considerable institutional imbalance between the different branches of government in the decades that followed the democratic transition. The prevalence of a single party or coalition dominating the political system and capturing state structures in the absence of a viable political opposition equally constituted a clear political pattern of continuity over time.

In practice, one of the most pivotal institutions in terms of shaping accountability, the Malian legislature, functioned more as an extension of the executive branch of government geared towards the redistribution of national resources to the geographically centred support base of its members. The national interest and the delivery of public goods played a marginal role as a by-product of prevailing personal or particularistic interests.

In the absence of accessible democratic channels, citizens relied on non-state actors beyond – and often in opposition to – the state. Therefore, while intended to enhance state legitimacy, the performance of the democratic institutions assessed in this thesis actually weakened the state and boosted non-state power poles in that way. Although not assessed in detail, the thesis showed that other sources than democratic legitimacy remained influential or gained more prominence in recent decades. Democracy certainly did not emerge as the only game in Mali's heterarchical town. Most citizens, certainly across rural areas, continued to rely on non-state power poles who legitimised their authority in reference to religious or indigenous sources of legitimacy. The ability to protect people became another critical basis of legitimacy as the security situation deteriorated.

The Malian case study thereby revealed the limitations of an institutional and state-centred perspective on legitimacy. Instead, an analytical approach that moves away from state legitimacy and focuses on public legitimacy captures the complex interplay between different actors and sources of legitimacy in the context of a heterarchical political order.

BEYOND STATE-CENTRED INSTITUTIONAL BLUEPRINTS

This thesis contributed to a wider body of literature that underlined the need to change the analytical perspective on processes of statehood and democratisation in Africa. Prevailing state-centred institutional approaches first portrayed Mali as a showcase of democracy as it ticked most of the institutional democratic boxes. After the 2012 crisis, Mali's status on the international scene changed as a "fragile" or "weak" state in comparison to the ideal type of a Westphalian state. The country was now assumed to be "in transition" towards becoming a modern state and democracy. Such normative perspective echoed historically contested modernisation theories, which assumed that countries and polities progressed along a single magic road towards modernity.

However, this thesis underlined the diversity of statehood trajectories and showed that the functioning of democratic institutions significantly differed from place to place and time to time. State formation (and deformation) as well as democratisation are clearly open-ended processes. In Mali, the exercise of public authority in the public service (decentralised administration, security provision, and legislation) was certainly not confined to state institutions. Instead, it involved both state and non-state actors in complex and multi-dimensional interrelationships. In Mali's heterarchical context, political authority and legitimacy was captured through the analytical lens of "Patronage Plus." Citizens relied on multiple patrons – both state and non-state actors – who legitimised their authority in a multidimensional way. Political legitimacy was established through the interplay between both material and immaterial resources.

This thesis thus revealed that understanding these dynamics requires an approach that centres on the interaction between state and non-state actors as well as the interplay between multiple sources of legitimacy. Hagmann and Péclard (2010) developed a heuristic framework that enables such an analytical perspective beyond institutional blueprints.[556]

[556] Hagmann, T. and Péclard, D. (2010), pp. 539-562.

It offers a useful framework for studying diffused patterns of state formation and legitimisation. The model also enables researchers to better understand how local, national and transnational actors forge and remake the state through a process of negotiation and contestation.

Their framework is based on a heterogeneous group of *actors* that mobilise different sets of *resources* and *repertoires* to institute their authority. Resources thereby refer to the material basis that actors mobilise to institute their authority, while repertoires constitute the (symbolic) sources that they refer to in order to express and legitimise their authority. This provides a useful analytical perspective for continued research of multi-dimensional practices of public authority and legitimacy in Mali's heterarchical context.

Certainly, in light of the deteriorating situation in the country and wider region, such empirically grounded research is much needed and deserves full support.

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APPENDICES

Chapter 4 - Methodological clarifications

The principal data used for Chapter 4 were gathered through semi-structured and in-depth interviews with 15 Malian parliamentarians. Such an "actor-oriented" approach was chosen to complement prevailing institutional and political analyses of African legislatures.[557] In recognition of the limited size of the sample, representing 10 per cent of all MPs, a selection of parliamentarians was made that ensured maximum regional representation and included all main parliamentary parties. The semi-structured interviews were largely based on a questionnaire, included below, developed by the African Power and Politics research programme of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) to increase the comparative value of the case study. I added a number of research topics, notably the section addressing the adoption and electoral process in the run-up to the 2007 elections. Most interviews lasted approximately two hours and follow-up interviews were conducted with almost half of all parliamentarians to further discuss some of their initial responses. The tables below provide an overview of the level of representation of the sample. While these interviews provided an important source of information, additional research methods focused more on actual parliamentary behaviour and complemented these data. The legislative and oversight performance of current MPs was compared with that of their predecessors on the basis of archival research. Observation of parliamentary debates and constituency visits further contributed to understanding the actual responses provided by parliamentarians to the incentives they faced.

Table 1: Regional representativeness sample

Region	**National Assembly (2007)**	**Sample**
Segou	25	1
Sikasso	25	4
Koulikouro	23	1
Kayes	21	2
Mopti	20	2
Bamako	14	2
Gao	8	1
Timbuktu	7	1
Kidal	4	1

[557] Norman Long (2001), *Development Sociology: Actor Perspectives* . New York: Routlegde.

Table 2: Parliamentary party representativeness

Party Name	National Assembly (2007)	Sample
Adema-P.A.S.J.	51	3
URD	34	3
RPM	11	1
MPR	8	1
CNID	7	2
SADI	4	1
PARENA	4	1
UDD	3	1
US-RDA	1	1
Independents	15	1
PSP	1	0
PCR	1	0
BARICA	1	0
MIRIA	1	0

While the level of representation does not neatly reflect the number of MPs allocated to each region or the parliamentary strength of each party, all regions and principal parties are included. Various opposition parties were well-represented in the survey in order to examine potential differences with MPs from the ruling majority. Much effort was undertaken to have representatives of the most Northern regions included.

Chapter 4 – Questionnaire (based on ODI original)[558]

A. Contexte politique

1. À quel parti appartenez-vous?
……
……

2*. Combien de temps avez-vous été membre de ce parti? De quels autres partis avez-vous été membre?
……
……
……

3*. Combien de mandats avez-vous fait au parlement? Pour quel parti / quels partis?
……
……
……

[558] Les questions avec *** soit** ne font pas partie du questionnaire ODI d'origine, soit elles ont été modifiées pour traiter le contexte malien.

4*. Quelle était la principale raison pour laquelle vous avez rejoint le parti dont vous avez été le candidat lors des élections de 2007?
……
……
……
……

5. En plus de mon salaire de député, j'ai une autre source de revenu substantiel :
- o Oui
- o Non

6. En tant que député, je suis membre du conseil d'administration d'une entreprise d'Etat / département / agence
- o Oui
- o Non

Sélection des candidats [559]*

7. Lorsque que vous avez décidé de devenir candidat de votre parti aux élections législatives de 2007, quels ont été les **deux principaux groupes cibles** dans lesquels vous avez investi en vue d'influencer positivement votre sélection en tant que candidat?
- o La section locale de mon parti
- o Les branches locales d'autres partis
- o Le Comité exécutif national
- o Les citoyens locaux
- o Les leaders locaux traditionnels / religieux
- o Autre, à savoir ……..
  ……
  ……

8. Beaucoup de partis au Mali demandent souvent aux candidats de payer une redevance au parti pour pouvoir être inscrit sur la liste des candidats. Laquelle des affirmations suivantes est correcte dans votre cas :
- o On m'a demandé une contribution, et je l'ai payée (la somme de ... ... FCFA)
- o On m'a demandé une contribution, mais j'ai refusé de payer quoi que ce soit (la somme de ... ... FCFA)
- o On m'a demandé une contribution, mais j'ai juste payé une quote-part (j'ai payé .... FCFA des ... . FCFA demandés)
- o On ne m'a pas demandé de payer une contribution

9. Si vous avez payé une contribution au parti, à qui avez-vous versé cette somme?

- o au Parti national
- o à la branche locale du parti
- o En partie au parti national, en partie à la branche locale
- o Autre, à savoir ……
  ……..
  ……..

[559] Cette partie a été ajoutée au questionnaire ODI d'origine. Non seulement elle donnera des informations supplémentaires sur les relations entre un député et son parti en ce qui concerne l'obligation de rendre compte, mais aussi elle contribuera à une étude plus élaborée sur la démocratie interne du parti.

10. Quels autres types de stratégies avez-vous afin de maximiser vos chances d'être retenu comme candidat?
……
……
……
……
……

11. Quelles sont, selon vous, les trois plus importantes raisons pour lesquelles votre parti vous a retenu comme candidat?

- o J'ai été, pendant longtemps, un membre actif du parti au niveau local / régional
- o J'ai été, pendant longtemps, un membre actif du parti au niveau national
- o J'ai un bon caractère
- o J'ai aidé de nombreuses personnes et familles dans la circonscription
- o Je viens d'une des familles les plus autochtones et nobles de la zone
- o J'ai amélioré / je vais améliorer la circonscription
- o J'ai bien travaillé / je vais bien travailler dans l'élaboration des lois et pour faire des déclarations au Parlement
- o Je suis / serai vigilant dans le contrôle des actions du gouvernement par rapport aux abus de pouvoir
- o Je suis riche
- o J'ai de bonnes relations avec d'autres partis au niveau local

12. Si vous avez été élus sur la base d'une liste de coalition avec d'autres partis, qui a conduit le processus de négociation avec ces autres partis?

- o moi-même en tant que candidat
- o Notre branche exécutive locale
- o Un représentant du Comité exécutif national
- o Un ministre originaire de la région
- o Autre, à savoir ……..
  ……..
  ……..

13. Si vous avez été élu sur la base d'une coalition, en quoi est-il important pour vous d'entretenir de bonnes relations avec les autres partis au niveau local, après votre élection?

- o Très important
- o Assez important
- o Pas important

14. Si vous avez été élu sur la base d'une coalition, êtes-vous tombés d'accord sur une répartition des tâches avec les autres députés élus de votre circonscription quand il s'agit de maintenir les relations avec la circonscription?

- o Non, nous n'avons discuté d'aucune forme de répartition des tâches
- o Oui, effectivement, nous avons convenu que ……
  ……
  ……
  ……
  ……
  ……

La campagne électorale et les élections

15.* Laquelle des déclarations suivantes correspond à votre situation au cours des élections de 2007 :
- o Je me suis porté candidat pour la première fois lors des élections législatives de 2007
- o J'avais été candidat avant, mais n'avais jamais gagné
- o J'avais été auparavant député de ma circonscription

16. Quelles sont, selon vous, les trois principales raisons pour lesquelles les électeurs ont voté pour vous?
- o Je suis un bon candidat
- o Je suis candidat du parti pour lequel ils votent habituellement
- o J'ai aidé beaucoup de personnes et de familles dans la circonscription
- o Ils appartiennent à ma tribu ou à mon groupe ethnique
- o Ils écoutent les familles ou amis qui votent pour moi
- o J'ai amélioré / je vais améliorer la circonscription
- o Je suis / serai vigilant dans le contrôle des actions du gouvernement par rapport aux abus de pouvoir
- o J'ai bien travaillé / je vais bien travailler dans l'élaboration des lois et pour faire des déclarations au Parlement
- o Je suis du même parti que le candidat présidentiel qu'ils soutiennent

17. Envisagez **20 électeurs indécis typiques** de votre circonscription qui pourraient être persuadés de changer leur vote avant une élection. Combien d'entre eux, selon vous, seraient enclins à changer leur vote :

	Personne	1-2	5	10	15	Toutes
si on leur donne «une petite somme d'argent", disons 1000 F CFA, ou un petit cadeau						
si un membre de la famille se voit attribuer un emploi						
si le candidat est originaire de la tribu						
si le candidat fait venir un projet de développement dans la circonscription						
si le candidat fait parvenir les besoins de la circonscription à l'attention des médias et du parlement						
si le candidat fait preuve de vigilance dans le contrôle du gouvernement par rapport au budget national et aux abus de pouvoir						
si le candidat appartient au mouvement du candidat présidentiel qu'ils aiment le mieux						

18. Pour les campagnes électorales auxquelles j'ai participé, j'ai dépensé, **pour ma campagne**, y compris le matériel électoral, les meetings, le transport, le personnel et les cadeaux aux circonscriptions etc., environ la somme totale de.

2002:……. FCFA
2007……... FCFA

19. Au cours des campagnes électorales auxquelles vous avez participé, combien de votre fonds de campagne avez-vous dépensé **pour les cadeaux personnels, les factures, les funérailles ou autres biens personnels** pour les circonscriptions? Faites S.V.P une estimation :

2002: …….FCFA
2007: …….FCFA

20. En 2007, mon fonds de campagne provenait de (plusieurs options possibles)
- o Mon salaire de député
- o Autres traitements
- o Des dons de la famille élargie
- o Autres dons individuels
- o Des Maliens vivant à l'étranger
- o Du sponsoring du parti national
- o Du sponsoring du parti local
- o Des entreprises
- o Autres,…….
  ……

En 2002, mon fonds de campagne provenait de (plusieurs options possibles)
- o Mon salaire de député
- o Autres traitements
- o Des dons de la famille élargie
- o Autres dons individuels
- o Des Maliens vivant à l'étranger
- o Du sponsoring du parti national
- o Du sponsoring du parti local
- o Des entreprises
- o Autres,….. …….
  ……

21. Ma **source de financement** la plus importante, la plus grande, a été en :
2007: source:……. montant de ……..
2002: source……... montant de …….

22. La catégorie de dépenses **la plus coûteuse** pour ma campagne électorale de 2007 a été :
- o les meetings
- o les affiches, tee-shirts, et autres matériels
- o le transport pour la campagne
- o les aides et cadeaux aux personnes
- o les payements aux militants locaux du parti
- o Autre, à savoir ……
  ……...

23. La catégorie de dépenses **la plus coûteuse** pour ma campagne électorale de 2007 a été :
- o les meetings
- o les affiches, tee-shirts, et autres matériels
- o le transport pour la campagne
- o les aides et cadeaux aux personnes
- o les payements aux militants locaux du parti
- o Autre, à savoir……
  ……..
- o Je n'étais pas candidat en 2002

24. Sur quels sujets portait votre campagne à l'élection de 2007? Prière **indiquer les trois sujets les plus importants**.
- o Soutenir les citoyens ordinaires par exemple avec des dons, des prêts, le payement des frais de scolarité
- o Être fidèle aux personnes qui ont soutenu ma campagne pour me faire élire
- o Faire des dons à des groupes vulnérables dans la circonscription, des orphelins, des personnes âgées, handicapées
- o Réaliser des projets de développement dans la circonscription
- o Être fidèle aux positions de la direction de mon parti politique
- o Représenter la circonscription au parlement, faire des déclarations et être vu dans les médias
- o Contribuer à l'adoption de bonnes lois pour le pays
- o Contrôler le gouvernement pour éviter des abus de pouvoir

25. Certaines personnes disent qu'au cours de la campagne électorale, les députés aident beaucoup les citoyens et leur donnent beaucoup de choses - de petits cadeaux, des payements de factures, des bines personnels. Pensez-vous que **des citoyens ont reçu les "choses"** ci-dessus des députés lors de la campagne électorale de 2007?

- o Oui, beaucoup
- o Oui, un peu
- o Oui, quelque peu
- o Non, très rarement
- o Non, pas du tout

26. Si vous comparez la campagne électorale de 2007 à celle de 2002, pensez-vous que la campagne de 2007 a enregistré **plus de ces** petits cadeaux et assistance que celle de 2002?

- o Oui, beaucoup
- o Oui, quelque peu
- o Presque la même
- o Non, moins
- o Non, beaucoup moins

27**.** Si vous avez participé aux campagnes électorales de 2007 et de 2002, pensez-vous que vous ou votre équipe de campagne a distribué plus de ces petits cadeaux et assistance en 2007 qu'en 2002?

- o Je n'ai pas participé à la campagne de 2002
- o Oui, beaucoup
- o Oui, un peu
- o Presque la même
- o Non, moins
- o Non, beaucoup moins

28. Au cours de votre campagne de 2007, lequel des groupes suivants avez-vous essayé de cibler avec vos cadeaux et assistance? Prière classer les trois plus importants pour vous.

- o Les personnes susceptibles de voter pour un autre candidat (électeurs indécis)
- o Les cadres et militants locaux du parti
- o Les leaders communautaires (chefs, imams, …)
- o Certains groupes ethniques
- o Des groupes islamiques particuliers
- o Les femmes et les jeunes
- o Les pauvres et analphabètes
- o Les groupes professionnels (agriculteurs, femmes du marché, enseignants,..)
- o Aucun groupe particulier, mais seulement ceux qui réclamaient
- o Autre, à savoir …..

29. Que pensez-vous des candidats qui donnent des cadeaux, de l'argent, paient des frais, obtiennent des emplois et participent à d'autres besoins personnels de leurs électeurs?

- o Bien (le devoir de chef de prendre soin des gens, aider les autres, montrer qu'on est une bonne personne)
- o Assez bien (à bien des égards, c'est bien, mais cela comporte de mauvais aspects)
- o Rien (c'est normal pendant les élections)
- o Assez mal (à bien des égards, c'est mauvais mais il y a quelques aspects positifs)
- o Assez mal (c'est un achat de votes / de la corruption, c'est mauvais pour le développement)

<u>Obligation de rendre compte</u>

30. À votre avis, quel est le principal moyen, s'il en existe, par lequel vos circonscriptions vous obligent à rendre compte entre les élections?

- o Pas vraiment, les élections sont la meilleure façon
- o A travers les leaders traditionnels / chefs religieux
- o A travers les conseillers municipaux
- o Lors des réunions / forums publiques
- o En me parlant personnellement
- o A travers les cadres locaux du parti
- o A travers les lettres / les pétitions
- o A travers la radio / autres médias

31. Quelles sont selon vous les trois choses les plus importantes que les citoyens de votre circonscription **aimeraient que vous fassiez** en tant que député?

- o Soutenir les citoyens ordinaires par exemple avec des dons, des prêts, le payement des frais de scolarité
- o Être fidèle aux personnes qui ont soutenu ma campagne
- o Faire des dons à des groupes vulnérables dans la circonscription, des orphelins, des personnes âgées, handicapées
- o Réaliser des projets de développement dans la circonscription
- o Être fidèle aux positions de la direction de mon parti politique
- o Représenter la circonscription au parlement, faire des déclarations et être vu dans les médias
- o Contribuer à l'adoption de bonnes lois pour le pays
- o Contrôler le gouvernement pour éviter des abus de pouvoirs

32. La plupart des députés reçoivent en général des visites de personnes venant les voir à la maison / au bureau, dans la circonscription quand ils y sont. En moyenne, combien de personnes viennent vous voir par jour pour demander de l'assistance? Ou, quand vous faites le tour de vos circonscriptions, combien de personnes vous approchent-elles pour les mêmes raisons?

Moyenne journalière: …….. personnes

33. Si 20 personnes parmi l**es cadres / militants du parti local** de votre circonscription venaient vous demander un service quelconque : combien de personnes sur 20 vous demanderaient de faire quelque chose à propos de : [*Cochez la réponse dans chaque ligne]*

	Aucun	1-2	5	10	15	Tous
Une aide financière personnelle, payement de frais, de factures, un prêt ou un emploi						
Des préoccupations de la communauté/ du groupe ethnique, ou des questions avec les autorités locales						
Des événements concernant la communauté, les funérailles, les mariages ou d'autres choses du même genre						
Aider les groupes vulnérables (orphelins, personnes âgées, handicapés)						
Des projets de développement communautaire						
Parler des besoins de la circonscription dans les médias ou au parlement						
Points de vue, politiques et leadership de votre parti						
Pour couvrir les frais liés au fonctionnement du parti local						
une loi ou politique particulière au parlement						
Le contrôle du gouvernement / abus de pouvoir						

34. Si 20 **chefs / leaders traditionnels** de votre circonscription venaient vous demander un service quelconque : combien de personnes sur 20 vous demanderaient de faire quelque chose sur :

	Aucun	1-2	5	10	15	Tous
Un peu d'aide financière personnelle, payement de frais, de factures, un prêt ou un emploi						
Des préoccupations de la communauté/ du groupe ethnique, ou des questions avec les autorités locales						
Des événements concernant la communauté, les funérailles, les mariages ou d'autres choses du même genre						
Aider les groupes vulnérables (orphelins, personnes âgées, handicapés)						
Des projets de développement communautaire						
Parler des besoins de la circonscription dans les médias ou au parlement						
Points de vue, politiques et leadership de votre parti						
une loi ou politique particulière au parlement						
Le contrôle du gouvernement / abus de pouvoir						

35. Si 20 **chefs / leaders traditionnels** de votre circonscription venaient vous demander un service quelconque : combien de personnes sur 20 vous demanderaient de faire quelque chose sur :

	Aucun	1-2	5	10	15	Tous
Un peu d'aide financière personnelle, payement de frais, de factures, un prêt ou un emploi						
Des préoccupations de la communauté/ du groupe ethnique, ou des questions avec les autorités locales						
Des événements concernant la communauté, les funérailles, les mariages ou d'autres choses du même genre						
Aider les groupes vulnérables (orphelins, personnes âgées, handicapés)						
Des projets de développement communautaire						
Parler des besoins de la circonscription dans les médias ou au parlement						
Points de vue, politiques et leadership de votre parti						
Le contrôle du gouvernement / abus de pouvoir						

36. Les députés reçoivent souvent des visites de beaucoup de personnes venant solliciter une **assistance personnelle**. Regardez les groupes énumérés ci-dessous. Si 20 personnes de (chaque groupe) viennent vous voir, combien d'entre elles pourriez-vous aider?

	Personne	1-2	5	10	15	Toutes
Les cadres / militants du parti local						
Les leaders / chefs communautaires locaux						
Personnes appartenant à votre propre groupe ethnique						
Votre famille élargie et amis proches						
Des citoyens ordinaires						
Les élus locaux						

37.* Depuis que vous avez été élu député, avez-vous été approché par un groupe spécifique de lobbying?

- o Non, je n'ai jamais été approché par un tel groupe de pression

- o Oui, par des personnes faisant du lobbying pour le compte de
  - Une entreprise
  - Un syndicat
  - Une ONG
  - Les chefs religieux
  - Autres,…….

38.* Si vous avez reçu des groupes de pression, dans quelle mesure avez-vous pris en compte les questions pour lesquelles ils vous ont contacté en tant que député?

- o La plupart du temps, j'ai défendu les intérêts pour lesquels ils se battent
- o Parfois, j'ai défendu les intérêts pour lesquels ils se battent
- o Je n'ai jamais défendu les intérêts pour lesquels ils se battent

La perception du rôle de député

39. Dites-moi si vous êtes d'accord ou pas avec les déclarations suivantes sur le rôle d'un député.
[A noter que l'on ne peut pas consacrer la plupart de son temps sur les trois choses]

Un député est comme la mère ou le père de la circonscription et doit utiliser la plupart de son temps et de son énergie pour les besoins de sa circonscription
- o Je suis tout à fait d'accord
- o Je suis d'accord
- o Ni l'un ni l'autre
- o Je ne suis pas d'accord
- o Je ne suis pas du tout d'accord

Un député est un législateur et devrait utiliser la plupart de son temps et de son énergie à voter des lois pour le pays
- o Je suis tout à fait d'accord
- o Je suis d'accord
- o Ni l'un ni l'autre
- o Je ne suis pas d'accord
- o Je désapprouve fermement

Un député doit utiliser la plupart de son temps et de son énergie à contrôler les actions du président et du gouvernement et chercher à savoir comment ils dépensent les fonds
- o Je suis tout à fait d'accord
- o Je suis d'accord
- o Ni l'un ni l'autre
- o Je ne suis pas d'accord
- o Je ne suis pas du tout d'accord

40. Dans un **Mali idéal**, qu'est-ce qui, selon vous, doivent être les trois plus importantes responsabilités des députés?
- o Soutenir les citoyens ordinaires par exemple avec des dons, des prêts, le payement des frais de scolarité
- o Être fidèle aux personnes qui ont soutenu sa campagne
- o Faire des dons à des groupes vulnérables dans la circonscription, des orphelins, des personnes âgées, handicapées
- o Réaliser des projets de développement dans la circonscription
- o Être fidèle aux positions de la direction du parti politique
- o Représenter la circonscription au parlement, faire des déclarations et être vu dans les médias
- o Contribuer à l'adoption de bonnes lois pour le pays
- o Contrôler le gouvernement pour éviter des abus de pouvoir

41. Au Mali actuel, quelles sont selon vous les trois choses que les députés font réellement?
- o Soutenir les citoyens ordinaires par exemple avec des dons, des prêts, le payement des frais de scolarité
- o Être fidèle aux personnes qui ont soutenu leur campagne
- o Faire des dons à des groupes vulnérables dans la circonscription, des orphelins, des personnes âgées, handicapées
- o Réaliser des projets de développement dans la circonscription
- o Être fidèle aux positions de la direction du parti politique
- o Représenter la circonscription au parlement, faire des déclarations et être vu dans les médias
- o Contribuer à l'adoption de bonnes lois pour le pays
- o Contrôler le gouvernement pour éviter des abus de pouvoir

42. Depuis le début de ce mandat législatif en 2007, environ combien :

	Aucun	1-2	3-5	6-10	10+
De déclarations avez-vous faites au parlement					
De fois avez-vous fait des activités de contrôle de l'action de l'exécutif					
De fois êtes-vous retourné à votre circonscription					
D'amendements législatifs dans lesquels vous avez été impliqués					
Réunions de comités dans lesquels vous avez pris part au parlement					
Dans combien de réunions avec les ONG avez-vous été pour discuter de politiques?					
De fois avez-vous été dans les médias					
De funérailles, de mariages, de célébrations avez-vous suivi dans votre circonscription					
De personnes de votre circonscription avez-vous essayé de rendre service, ou aider à trouver un emploi					

Données personnelles

43. Je suis :
- o un homme
- o une femme

44. J'ai..... Ans

45.* Je représente :
- o Une circonscription à prédominance urbaine
- o Une circonscription à prédominance rurale

46. Ma région est :
- o Bamako
- o Koulikouro
- o Ségou
- o Mopti
- o Kayes
- o Kidal
- o Gao
- o Tombouctou
- o Sikasso

47. Mon groupe ethnique est :

……
……
……

48. Mon plus haut niveau de qualification scolaire est :
- o l'école primaire
- o l'école secondaire
- o l'école coranique / medersa
- o l'université
- o le troisième cycle

49*. Quelle est votre religion ?
- o l'islam
- o le christianisme
- o l'animisme
- o autre

50. Combien de fois vous rendez- vous à l'église/la mosquée/autre sanctuaire ?
- o 1-2 fois/mois
- o Une fois par semaine
- o Un certain nombre de fois chaque semaine
- o Tous les jours

51. Quelle était votre profession avant de devenir député?
……
……
……..

52. À votre avis, quel genre de démocratie est le Mali aujourd'hui
- o Une démocratie totale
- o Une démocratie, avec des problèmes mineurs
- o Une démocratie avec des problèmes majeurs
- o Pas une démocratie

QUESTIONS SUPPLÉMENTAIRES SUR LE CONTEXTE DANS LEQUEL LES DEPUTES OPERENT

Mandat parlementaire

53. À votre avis, le mandat global accordé au parlement par la constitution malienne pour que vous puissiez effectuer vos tâches :
- o Est suffisant
- o devrait être augmenté
- o devrait être diminué

54. À votre avis, en jetant un regard le processus budgétaire, les députés :
- o ont une influence suffisante pour modifier le budget national
- o n'ont pas d'influence suffisante pour modifier le budget national

55. Est-ce que le gouvernement dépense l'argent pour des fins **non autorisées** par le Parlement?
- o Oui, cela est courant
- o Cela se produit, mais pas de façon régulière
- o Non, cela ne se produit pas

56. À votre avis, les **possibilités juridiques** pour vous d'élaborer une proposition de loi sont :
- o suffisantes
- o devraient être augmentées
- o devraient être diminuées

57. Si une majorité de députés au Parlement propose des amendements à un *Projet de Lois* spécifique, y a-t-il suffisamment d'instruments juridiques pour contraindre le gouvernement à prendre **ces amendements en compte**?
- o Oui, ils sont disponibles
- o Non, ces instruments doivent être augmentés
- o Non, mais cela ne me dérange pas

58. Quand il s'agit du contrôle du gouvernement par le Parlement :
- o Les lois actuelles prévoient des possibilités suffisantes
- o Les lois actuelles ne fournissent pas assez de possibilités, un changement est nécessaire

  ……..
  ……
  …….

59. Quand il s'agit **de questions orales et écrites** posées par les députés à certains ministres, avec laquelle des affirmations suivantes êtes-vous d'accord?
- o Les ministres ne prennent pas la réponse à ces questions très au sérieux
- o Les ministres répondent aux questions posées, mais ne modifient presque jamais réellement leurs politiques en conséquence
- o Les ministres répondent aux questions et modifient également leurs politiques en conséquence

60. Quand il s'agit de la mise en place de **commissions parlementaires d'enquête**,
- o Il est relativement facile de les mettre en place et le parlement l'a fait au cours des cinq dernières années
- o Il est relativement facile de les mettre en place mais le parlement ne l'a pas fait au cours des cinq dernières années
- o Il est difficile de les mettre en place, parce que …….

  ……..
  ……..
  ……..

61. Quand il s'agit de représenter les intérêts de votre circonscription au parlement et dans les médias :
- o Les lois actuelles prévoient des possibilités suffisantes
- o Les lois actuelles ne fournissent pas assez de possibilités, un changement est nécessaire

……..
……
…….

61. Quand il s'agit d'aider votre circonscription grâce à des projets de développement communautaire :

- o Les lois en vigueur au Mali me donnent suffisamment de possibilités pour le faire, par exemple …....
  ……..
  ……..
  ……..
- o Les lois en vigueur au Mali ne me donnent pas suffisamment de possibilités pour le faire, parce que …
  ……
  ……
  ……..
  ……..

62. Le Mali passera en revue de nombreuses lois dans les années à venir, veuillez indiquer les trois réformes qui selon vous méritent une grande priorité

- o Améliorer les conditions légales pour permettre aux députés d'influencer la législation
- o Améliorer les conditions légales pour permettre aux députés de contrôler le gouvernement
- o Améliorer les conditions légales pour permettre aux députés de contribuer au développement de leur circonscription
- o Améliorer les conditions légales pour permettre aux députés de présenter les intérêts de leur circonscription au Parlement
- o Améliorer le traitement des membres du Parlement
- o Réduire les pouvoirs du président
- o Empêcher la législation qui interdit l'adoption de la transhumance
- o Modifier le système électoral
- o Adopter un système parlementaire au lieu d'un système semi-présidentiel
- o Adopter un régime présidentiel au lieu d'un système semi-présidentiel

Le fonctionnement interne du Parlement malien

61. À votre avis, les ressources financières qui sont à la disposition du Parlement sont :
- o suffisantes pour couvrir la plupart de mes responsabilités en tant que député
- o insuffisantes, pour que les députés puissent faire …

……
……
……

62. À votre avis, le salaire et les *indemnités* versés aux membres du Parlement sont :
- o suffisants pour qu'ils s'acquittent de leurs devoirs
- o insuffisants. Le salaire est trop juste. J'ai des problèmes pour faire ….

……
……
……

63. À votre avis, y a-t-il des paiements informels substantiels faits à l'endroit des députés? Si oui, de qui?
……
……
……

64. Quand il s'agit de personnel de soutien, à votre avis, les députés :
- o ont assez de personnel de soutien, y compris le soutien administratif, juridique, de politiques
- o n'ont pas assez de soutien. Sinon, j'aurais certainement fait plus ……..

……
……..
……..

65. Quand on regarde les commissions parlementaires, laquelle d'entre elles est la plus importante à votre avis et pourquoi ?
……
……
……
……

66. Jusqu'où est-il important d'avoir la présidence d'une des commissions et pourquoi?
- o Pas très important, parce que ……

……
……
……
- o Très important, parce que ……..

……
……
……

Consensus de ralliement

67. Dans la période précédant les élections de 2007, il y avait un grand débat au sein de la plupart des partis soit pour présenter un candidat présidentiel ou pour soutenir le président sortant Touré. Votre parti a-t-il présenté son propre candidat à la présidentielle?

- o Oui
- o Non

Quel a été selon vous l'impact de ce choix sur vos chances d'être élu comme député?

- o Mes chances ont augmenté
- o Pas d'impact significatif
- o Mes chances ont diminué

Expliquez SVP: …….
……..
……..
……..
……..

68. **Si vous êtes dans l'opposition :** Qu'est-ce que vous considérez être le plus important désavantage de votre action comme député de l'opposition par rapport à vos collègues de la majorité au pouvoir?
……
……
……
……
……

Ou

Si vous êtes du «*mouvement majoritaire* »: Qu'est-ce que vous considérez comme l'avantage le plus important pour votre action en tant que député de la majorité au pouvoir par rapport à votre collègue député de l'opposition?
……
……
……
……
……

69. Quand il s'agit de créer des emplois et de développer votre circonscription, c'est :

- o un avantage d'être député du mouvement majoritaire
- o un avantage d'être dans l'opposition
- o cela n'a pas vraiment d'importance que l'on soit de l'opposition ou de la majorité

Veuillez expliquer SVP: …….
……..
……..
……..

70. Quand il s'agit de représenter les besoins de votre circonscription au parlement, c'est :
- o un avantage d'être député du mouvement majoritaire
- o un avantage d'être dans l'opposition
- o cela n'a pas vraiment d'importance que l'on soit de l'opposition ou de la majorité

Veuillez expliquer SVP : …….
……..
……..
……..

71. Quand il s'agit de voter ou d'amender des lois pour le pays c'est :

- o un avantage d'être député du mouvement majoritaire
- o un avantage d'être député du mouvement majoritaire
- o cela n'a pas vraiment d'importance que l'on soit de l'opposition ou de la majorité

Veuillez expliquer SVP : …….
……..
……..
……..

72. Quand il s'agit de contrôler l'action du gouvernement, c'est :

- o un avantage d'être député du mouvement majoritaire
- o un avantage d'être député du mouvement majoritaire
- o cela n'a pas vraiment d'importance que l'on soit de l'opposition ou de la majorité

Veuillez expliquer SVP: …….
……..
……..
……..

73. Si vous voulez être efficace en tant que député au Mali, vous devez vous aligner sur la position du président républicain
- o Tout à fait d'accord
- o D'accord
- o Neutre
- o Pas d'accord
- o Pas du tout d'accord

La discipline de parti

74. S'agissant de votre groupe parlementaire, comment décririez-vous le niveau de la discipline de parti :
- o très élevé, nous devons garder la ligne du parti sur presque toutes les lois qui sont votées
- o c'est seulement sur un nombre limité de lois qu'on nous demande de rejoindre la ligne du parti
- o Nous sommes tout à fait libres de voter comme nous le souhaitons en tant que députés individuels

75. Dans votre groupe parlementaire, qui a le plus d'influence sur la détermination de la ligne de parti?
- o Un débat ouvert entre les députés nous permet de nous prononcer sur la façon dont nous allons voter
- o Le chef du groupe parlementaire a une voix décisive
- o Le Comité exécutif national et chef du parti a une voix décisive
- o Autre, à savoir ……
……
……

76. Pour laquelle des tâches suivantes est-il important d'avoir une bonne relation avec le chef de votre groupe parlementaire?
- o Pour exercer mes fonctions législatives en tant que député
- o Pour représenter les intérêts de ma circonscription au niveau national
- o Pour le contrôle de l'action du gouvernement
- o Pour contribuer au développement de ma circonscription
- o Aucune

77. En jetant un regard en arrière sur les deux dernières années de mandat, veuillez indiquer si le niveau de la discipline de parti a créé des obstacles pour vous :

- o Pour exercer mes fonctions législatives en tant que député
- o Pour représenter les intérêts de ma circonscription au niveau national
- o Pour le contrôle de l'action du gouvernement
- o Pour contribuer au développement de ma circonscription
- o Aucun

Veuillez expliquer SVP :……...
……
……
…….

78. Serait-il favorable pour vos chances d'être réélu en 2011 si vous êtes candidat du parti que vous représentez actuellement?

- o Oui, cela contribuerait à améliorer mes chances
- o Non, je ne pense pas que cela aurait une incidence sur mes chances
- o Non, cela pourrait même affecter négativement mes chances

Veuillez expliquer SVP:……...
……
……
…….

79. Qu'est-ce que vous considérez comme votre plus grande réalisation depuis que vous avez été (ré) élu en 2007?
Veuillez expliquer SVP ……
……..
……..

80. Quel député, selon vous, a été capable de faire beaucoup pour tous les Maliens ou pour sa circonscription depuis 2002?
Veuillez expliquer SVP …….
……..
……..
……..

SUMMARY

This Malian case study joins an expanding body of literature in the academic fields of political science, sociology, history, regional studies and anthropology that challenges prevailing state-centred and institutional approaches to both political authority and legitimacy.

The first part of this thesis deconstructs Malian *state authority*. Classical views in the literature portray the state as the hierarchically supreme institutional locus of political authority in society. The state is on top of society and so it should be. The state monopoly on the legitimate use of violence constitutes a critical cornerstone of this classical definition. This thesis, however, illustrates the gradual emergence of a "heterarchical political order" in Mali. Instead of a hierarchically superior institution, the state increasingly operated as a "horizontal contemporary" of non-state actors in society. In this context, the state was but one of the institutions amongst many non-state equals involved in the exercise of public authority. The state shared key statehood functions with non-state actors. Hence, the analytical perspective shifts from *state authority* towards more hybrid forms of *public authority*.

The thesis offers an historical assessment of hybrid security provision since Malian independence up until 2018. The analysis reveals that the Malian state increasingly relied on non-state armed groups to counter recurrent security threats in the northern regions. Transnational smuggling, kidnapping and terror networks played a prominent role in reshaping the power balance to the benefit of non-state actors. Based on these shaky foundations, state authority withered in the blink of an eye when a Tuareg rebellion revived and an opaque alliance of drug smugglers, radical Islamists and armed groups took control of almost two thirds of the national territory in Mali's *annus horribilis* 2012 (Chapter 2). In the five-year period that followed the crisis, the heterarchical order only further anchored despite considerable international support geared towards rebuilding the Malian state. By 2018, Malian state authority was largely confined to the main urban centres and state expenditure reached a mere 20 per cent of the national territory. A myriad of non-state actors, including traditional and religious leaders, armed groups, militias and self-defence groups instituted their authority across the rural areas (Chapter 6).

The core part of the thesis deconstructs democracy's contribution to Malian *state legitimacy*. After an exemplary transition in the early 1990s, Mali emerged as a poster child for democracy on the African continent.

In 2012, the country came within a hair's breadth of reaching the status of a fully consolidated democracy according to Samuel Huntington's institutional definition of two peaceful transfers of power through elections. In practice, disgruntled soldiers staged a chaotic military coup just before the elections that very same year. Democracy collapsed and Malian citizens actually welcomed the ousting of a highly discredited regime. In contrast with the country's international reputation, popular satisfaction with the way democracy worked and how the political elites performed had both dwindled.

The assessment provided in this thesis is centred on three conceptual pillars upon which democracy's contribution to state legitimacy (so-called input democracy) stands according to the literature: (1) political participation; (2) representation; and (3) accountability. In theory, democracy provides the institutions that connect people and their interests to the decision making process as well as the mechanism that ensure effective checks and balances. The analysis is limited to the functioning of Malian political parties and the party system (Chapter 3); the legislature (Chapter 4); and local democratic institutions established following the ambitious decentralisation reforms in the 1990s (Chapter 5).

The thesis reveals that these prominent democratic institutions have not enhanced Malian state legitimacy as expected from their official mandates and in ways predicted by theory. Quite to the contrary, the democratic structure seems to have actually weakened the position of the state vis-à-vis other power poles in Mali's heterarchical context.

Successive elections mobilised only small parts of the population and popular contact with elected officials remained highly restricted. Very basic but influential factors as language, education and religion consolidated the wide divide between the democratic system and the Malian *demos.* Political participation and representation centred on exclusive networks between national political elites, local power brokers and a small minority of citizens. These exclusive patterns of representation connected a few privileged to the state but alienated most citizens from the political centre. Popular frustration with the country's political elites gradually increased. Yet, Malian democratic institutions largely failed to hold an increasingly discredited executive accountable and to channel rising levels of popular discontent. Scratching below the surface of Mali's exemplary transition, the thesis illustrates remarkable institutional and political characteristics of the previous authoritarian era that prevailed under the democratic regime. Power continued to be concentrated in the Malian presidency and a considerable

institutional imbalance between the different branches of government prevailed. One-party or one-coalition dominance in the party system and the near absence of a viable political opposition constituted another clear pattern of continuity that further exacerbated executive dominance. In a context of inaccessible and ineffective official democratic accountability mechanisms, citizens relied on non-state actors beyond – and often in opposition to – the state. The functioning of democratic institutions thus weakened the state and boosted non-state actors. Clearly, democracy did not emerge as the only game in Mali's heterarchical town. In practice, most citizens continued to rely on non-state power poles who legitimised their authority in reference to other sources of legitimacy than the ballot. In addition to influential indigenous, patrimonial and religious sources, this thesis reveals that the ability to protect citizens became another critical source of legitimacy in the context of a deteriorating security situation. Citizens thus rely on multiple actors, both state and non-state, who legitimise their authority in a multidimensional way. In Mali's heterarchical context, political legitimacy is established through the interplay between these different sources of legitimacy. Hence, the analytical perspective shifts from *state legitimacy* to *public legitimacy.*

This thesis thereby contributes to a growing body of literature that demonstrates the need to move beyond state centred institutional blueprints when analysing processes of *public authority* and *public legitimacy* in the context of a heterarchical order.

SAMENVATTING

Dit proefschrift over Mali past binnen een bredere opkomende academische stroming in de politieke wetenschap, geschiedenis, sociologie, antropologie en regiostudies die een institutionele benadering van politieke autoriteit en legitimiteit in Afrika, en vooral de centrale rol die de staat hierbij wordt toegedicht, betwist en nuanceert.

Het eerste deel van de thesis gaat in op de *autoriteit* van de Malinese staat. De klassieke benadering van politieke autoriteit gaat uit van een hiërarchisch staatsmodel. De staat vormt de ultieme politieke autoriteit en staat als het ware boven andere instituties in de samenleving. Alle burgers binnen een nationaal grondgebied zijn gebonden en gehouden aan de autoriteit van de staat. Het geweldsmonopolie vormt één van de belangrijkste pijlers onder deze klassieke op de staat gerichte benadering. Dit onderzoek laat echter zien dat in Mali eerder een 'heterarchisch' staatsmodel tot stand is gekomen. Hierin neemt de staat geen hiërarchisch superieure positie in maar functioneert eerder als een horizontale gelijke van niet-statelijke instituties in de samenleving. De staat is sterk afhankelijk van deze niet-statelijke actoren bij het vervullen van haar publieke kerntaken. Het analytisch perspectief verschuift daarmee van *staatsautoriteit* naar *publieke autoriteit*.

Het proefschrift illustreert dit aan de hand van een historische analyse van publieke dienstverlening op het gebied van veiligheid. Deze studie toont aan dat de Malinese staat steeds afhankelijker werd van niet-statelijke gewapende groepen om veiligheidsdreigingen in noord Mali het hoofd te bieden. Verschillende transnationale smokkel, kidnapping en terreurnetwerken droegen vervolgens bij aan een verschuiving van de machtsbalans in het voordeel van niet-statelijke gewapende groepen. Gestut op dit fragiele fundament, stortte de staatsautoriteit volledig in toen een hernieuwde Tuareg rebellie in 2012 uitbrak. Een alliantie van terreurgroepen, smokkelaars en kleinere gewapende groepen overvleugelde vervolgens deze revolte. In zeer korte tijd verloor de staat de controle over meer dan 2/3e van het Malinese grondgebied tijdens dit *annus horribilis* (Cf. Hoofdstuk 2). In de daaropvolgende periode van vijf jaar, verankerde de heterarchische orde zich alleen maar steviger in Mali ondanks de aanzienlijke internationale steun gericht op het versterken van de Malinese staat. Tegen het einde van 2018 was de autoriteit van de staat grotendeels beperkt tot de urbane centra. De staatsuitgaven bereikten slechts 20% van het nationale grondgebied. Een verscheidenheid aan

non-statelijke actoren, waaronder traditionele en religieuze leiders, milities en zelfverdedigingstroepen consolideerden hun autoriteit in de rurale gebieden (Cf. Hoofdstuk 6).

Het hoofdonderdeel van dit proefschrift richt zich op het functioneren van enkele prominente democratische instituties en hun bijdrage aan het versterken van de *legitimiteit* van de Malinese staat. Na een voorbeeldige transitie in het begin van de jaren '90 van de vorige eeuw, stond Mali lange tijd bekend als een schoolvoorbeeld van democratie op het Afrikaanse continent. In 2012 kreeg het land zelfs bijna het stempel van een volwaardig geconsolideerde democratie volgens de institutionele definitie van Samuel Huntington die is gebaseerd op een tweevoudige electorale transitie van de macht. Maar kort voor de verkiezingen die dit zouden bewerkstelligen greep een groep ontevreden militairen de macht via een staatgreep. De democratie implodeerde in plaats van te consolideren. Malinese burgers verwelkomden de coup en het feit dat de zeer onpopulaire machthebbers waren verdreven. In tegenstelling tot Mali's internationale reputatie, daalde de tevredenheid onder de bevolking over het functioneren van de democratie en de eigen machthebbers al jaren.

Dit onderzoek naar de invloed van de democratie op de legitimiteit van de Malinese staat richtte zich op drie hoofdonderdelen die in de literatuur worden onderscheiden: (1) politieke participatie; (2) representatie; en (3) verantwoording. In theorie garandeert een democratisch systeem de instituties die burgers en hun belangen verbinden aan besluitvormingsprocessen alsook de mechanismen voor noodzakelijke 'checks en balances.' De analyse in dit proefschrift beperkte zich tot de bijdrage van Malinese politieke partijen en het partijsysteem (Hoofdstuk 3); het parlement (Hoofdstuk 4); en lokale democratische instituties opgericht middels de ambitieuze decentralisatie hervormingen (Hoofdstuk 5).

De analyse toont aan dat deze prominente democratische instituties de legitimiteit van de Malinese staat niet hebben versterkt conform hun officiële mandaat, noch volgens de verwachtingen vanuit de theorie. Integendeel, de democratische structuur lijkt eerder de positie van de staat te hebben verzwakt ten opzichte van niet-statelijke actoren in de context van Mali's heterarchische politieke orde.

Opeenvolgende verkiezingen mobiliseerden slechts een zeer beperkt deel van de bevolking en contact tussen burgers en politieke vertegenwoordigers bleef minimaal. Basale maar invloedrijke factoren als taal, opleiding en religie droegen bij aan de grote kloof tussen het democratische systeem de Malinese *demos.* Politieke participatie en representatie waren gebaseerd op exclusieve elitaire banden tussen nationale elites, regionale invloedrijke leiders en een klein aantal burgers. Deze patronen van politieke mobilisatie en vertegenwoordiging verbonden een klein bevoorrecht deel van de bevolking aan de staat maar verwaarloosden de

belangen van de meerderheid. De toenemende frustraties met de politieke leiders werden echter nauwelijks gekanaliseerd door de afstandelijke en ineffectieve democratische kanalen.
Onder de oppervlakte van de voorbeeldige transitie begin jaren 90 van de vorige eeuw, leefden enkele belangrijke institutionele en politieke kenmerken uit het autoritaire verleden voort tijdens het democratische tijdperk. Zo bleef de macht sterk geconcentreerd in handen van de president en was de machtsverhouding binnen de *trias politica* sterk in het voordeel van de uitvoerende macht. De dominantie van één partij of één coalitie in het partijsysteem en de afwezigheid van een noemenswaardige politieke oppositie, hetgeen sterk herinnerde aan de voormalige éénpartijstaat, versterkte de positie van de machthebbers nog meer. In een dergelijke context leunde de bevolking vooral op allerlei niet-statelijke actoren om de in diskrediet geraakte nationale leiders te controleren. Het functioneren van de democratische instellingen had daarmee een averechtse invloed. Het versterkte eerder de niet-statelijke actoren dan de legitimiteit van de staat in de context van Mali's heterarchische politieke orde.

Derhalve ontwikkelde democratie zich in Mali dus zeker niet tot '*the only game in town.*' In de praktijk bleef de meerderheid van de Malinese bevolking primair verbonden aan niet-statelijke actoren die hun autoriteit legitimeerden op een hele andere basis dan middels verkiezingen. Inheemse, patrimoniale en religieuze bronnen bleven zeer invloedrijk. Meer recent kwam de basale capaciteit om bescherming te bieden aan burgers op als belangrijke basis van legitimiteit in een steeds onveiliger wordende context. De Malinese bevolking leunt dus op een grote verscheidenheid aan machthebbers, zowel statelijke als niet-statelijk, die hun macht op basis van sterk verschillende bronnen legitimeren. Het analytisch perspectief verschuift daarmee van *staatslegitimiteit* naar *publiekslegitimiteit.*

Hiermee sluit dit proefschrift aan bij een opkomende stroming in de wetenschappelijke literatuur die een brede benadering voorstaat bij het bestuderen van publieke autoriteit en legitimiteit dan de meer gangbare op de staat gerichte institutionele blauwdrukken.

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This Malian case study joins an expanding body of literature that challenges prevailing state-centred and institutional approaches to both political authority and legitimacy. In contrast with classical representations of the state as the hierarchically supreme institutional locus of political authority in society, a heterarchical political order gradually emerged in Mali. The state increasingly operated as one of the institutions amongst many non-state equals involved in the exercise of public authority and performance of key statehood functions. The first part of this thesis reveals that the Malian state increasingly relied on non-state actors to counter recurrent security threats. The core part of this case study demonstrates that prominent democratic institutions have not enhanced Malian state legitimacy as expected from their official mandates and in ways predicted by theory. Quite to the contrary, the democratic structure seems to have actually weakened the position of the state vis-à-vis non-state power poles in Mali's heterarchical context.

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Front-page image: ® *Militants from the Movement for the Salvation of Azawad (MSA), a Tuareg political and armed movement gather in the desert outside Menaka on March 14, 2020 during the MSA congress.* (Photo by Souleymane Ag Anara / AFP).