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

Vliet, M.T. van

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**Author:** Vliet, M.T. van

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## PROPOSITIONS

### Beyond Institutional Blueprints: Hybrid security provision and democratic practice in Mali

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#### Thesis

1. In Mali, a 'heterarchical' political order, in which the state is just one of the institutions amongst many non-state equals shaping public authority has replaced the postcolonial 'hierarchical' order, in which the state constituted the supreme institutional locus of authority in society.
2. Cross-border dynamics played a major role in reshaping Mali's political order as high-value kidnapping, drugs and weapons smuggling and Jihadist networks boosted opportunities for non-state armed groups to enhance their authority beyond the state.
3. In northern and central Mali, the 'ballot' – or the ability to be elected by people – is giving way to the 'bullet' - or the ability to protect people - as a primary source of authority.
4. The top-down architecture of the Malian peace process has privileged armed groups to the detriment of other prominent stakeholders and ordinary citizens in society. In the absence of a more inclusive approach, peace will remain elusive.
5. The performance of Malian political parties and parliament has weakened more than enhanced state legitimacy in the period between 1992 – 2012.
6. Enabling a larger formal role for religion in the political sphere would improve the anchorage of Malian democracy into society and thereby increase its contribution to state legitimacy.

#### Academic field of the thesis

7. While remaining influential in policy circles, the 'democratic transition paradigm' echoes out-of-date modernisation discourse and should be aborted. Politics are not in transition towards a single end-goal of democratic consolidation. Many are lost in transition. Democratisation is an open-ended process.
8. The prominent patrimonial approach to political authority in Sub-Saharan Africa, based on the exchange of support versus material favours between patrons and groups of clients ("*Patronage*"), needs to be revised. People rely on multiple patrons who legitimise their authority in a multidimensional way by mobilising both material and immaterial resources ("*Patronage Plus*").
9. The fragile state label reflects a broader habit of defining developments across the African continent as deficiencies. It represents the state in terms of what it lacks. A more fruitful analytical perspective focuses on the *history* of statehood practices, rather than studying them in *analogy* to normative standards.
10. Entering into dialogue and negotiations with home grown (labelled) Jihadists should become a prominent part of broader efforts geared towards decreasing intercommunal tensions and promoting stability in Mali and the wider Sahel region.

#### Other subjects

11. The Dutch vaccination strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic is poorly aligned to the core strategic objective of reducing pressure on the Intensive Care Units in the hospitals.
12. Every depression, by definition, is a postnatal depression.