

**THE POLITICAL ENGAGEMENTS OF FRANCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC  
GOVERNANCE IN MALI**

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**JULY, 2024**

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**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE  
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UNIVERSITY, OTA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.**

**JULY, 2024**

## **ACCEPTANCE**

This is to attest that this dissertation is accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.) in International Relations in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership and Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria.

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## **DECLARATION**

I, **LAWAL, Timothew** declare that this M.Sc. dissertation is based on my study in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership and Development Studies Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State. This project has yet to be submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree. All ideas and views expressed are products of personal research, and all sources of data and scholarly information used in this dissertation are duly acknowledged.

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**Signature and Date**

## **CERTIFICATION**

We certify that this dissertation titled **THE POLITICAL ENGAGEMENTS OF FRANCE IN THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN MALI** is an original research work carried out by **LAWAL, TIMOTHEW (16AH020389)** in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, College of Leadership and Development Studies, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria under the supervision of Dr. Oluwakemi D. Udoh. We have examined and found this work acceptable as part of the requirements for the award of M.Sc. in International Relations.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to God Almighty, who has been faithful to me since the beginning. His unfailing love and grace have brought me this far, and I am eternally grateful for the privilege He has given me.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATT	Amadou Toumani Toure
MUJAO	Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa
AQIM	Al-Qaeda in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FAMa	Malian Armed Forces
MSA	Movement for the Salvation of Azawad
GATIA	Imghad Tuareg Self-Defense Group and Allies
JNIM	Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin
AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission to Mali

## ABSTRACT

France's political engagements in Mali, stemming from historical colonial ties and recent military interventions, have raised questions about their influence on the democratic governance of Mali. Despite efforts to stabilise the region, Mali continues to experience political instability, corruption, and challenges in establishing robust democratic institutions. This study aims to investigate the effect of France's political engagements on Mali's democratic governance. It seeks to understand how French interventions have shaped Mali's electoral processes, political participation, and human rights, and how these engagements have influenced the country's political stability and governance structures. Grounded in dependency theory, the study examines how historical and ongoing economic and political relationships between developed and developing countries perpetuate inequality and dependency. A cross-sectional research design was adopted, focusing on document analysis. This method involved a systematic review of government reports, historical records, media articles, scholarly works and NGO reports to gain comprehensive insights into the historical, political, and social dimensions of France's influence on Mali's governance. The study also included interviews with key stakeholders and experts on Franco-Malian relations. The analysis reveals that France's political engagements, particularly the military intervention in 2013, have had a complex effect on Mali's democratic governance. While the intervention helped to curb immediate security threats, it did not address deep-seated issues such as systemic corruption, weak institutional frameworks, and the lack of accountability. Moreover, the intervention has inadvertently strengthened authoritarian elements within the Malian leadership, thereby undermining democratic processes and exacerbating socio-political divisions. France's political engagements in Mali, while beneficial in addressing short-term security concerns, have not significantly contributed to the enhancement of democratic governance. The persistent influence of France has often undermined Mali's sovereignty and democratic processes, leading to increased political instability and fragmentation. The historical context of neo-colonialism and international clientelism continues to shape the political landscape of Mali. To promote sustainable democratic governance in Mali, it is crucial to minimize foreign interference and focus on strengthening internal political and institutional frameworks. International stakeholders should support initiatives that foster inclusive governance, transparency, and human rights. Malian leaders must prioritise addressing internal divisions and systemic issues to build a more stable and democratic political environment. Enhanced local ownership of governance processes is essential for achieving long-term political stability and development.

***Keywords: Democratic Governance; Political Engagements; Sovereignty; Electoral Processes; Human Rights; Military Intervention; Political Participation; Inclusive Governance.***