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### Future Envisioning of Hybrid Political Order

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#### Abstract

Hybrid political order is a relatively new concept for explaining a state-building reality in some post-conflict states. This phenomenon has evolved consequently due to the emergence of fragile states that hardly function in the international system and did not fit in the classical model of the state. Thus, this paper explores the literature to demonstrate how hybrid political order functions within domestic governance and in the international system. This paper envisions the hybrid political order as a possible alternative for better functioning of the international system suggesting a model based on recognition and legitimacy.

Keywords: *Hybrid political order; recognition; legitimacy; International System*

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#### 1.0 Introduction

##### 1.1. Background of the Study

The phenomenon of the hybrid political order, as a postmodern challenge, has significantly affected the international system and international law. In such an uncertain and volatile international scenario, hybrid political orders are still evolving within given political, security, legal and the international frameworks. In addition, hybrid political orders are not uniform and homogeneous, but hybridity affects each state differently, making each case unique. A group of professors from the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (ACPACS) have introduced the hybrid political order as a new approach in the study of post-conflict states within the international system.

A hybrid political order emerged from the evolution of the concept of a failed state. The transition from a failed state towards a fragile state and consequently hybrid political order is the starting point for a new conceptual (re)thinking (Boege, Brown & Clements, 2009, pp. 19-20). Although the terminology on this subject differs, there is continuity in its diverse usage such as collapsed, failed, falling, fragile and hybrid. Some authors refer to hybrid political order and fragile states as the two sides of the same phenomenon but highlight the positive aspects of the states where the authorities cannot provide security, good governance, and economic growth and deliver basic public services in all or part of the territory. According to some researchers, the term fragility gives a negative and

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pejorative idea because it implies that a State cannot perform its obligations and tasks. Therefore, instead of fragile states terminology, the authors began to use hybrid political order (Boege, Brown & Clements, 2009, p. 13).

In the study of Boege (2008, 2009, 2018), the hybrid political orders concept is a critique of the fragile states and the failure of the state-building theory. This theory offers an ideal homogeneous and standard Weberian model state based on state centrality. On the other hand, hybridity provides a counter-narrative to fragile states and state-building theory under a different approach beyond the classic concept of statehood (Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008, pp. 2-3). In addition, from the emergence of this concept and during the last decade, hybridity and hybrid political orders have received criticism that has served to filter and refine the concept. In hybridity and hybrid political orders, there is a co-existence, an interaction of different elements of governance where formal state institutions coexist with and interact with informal non-state actors or institutions. The state and non-state actors take part in the process of interaction and mutual permeation making porous and blurred boundaries between state and non-state. Hybrid political orders usually emerge in fragile or post-conflict states where the central government is weak and informal actors fill the governance gaps providing security, justice, or basic services to local communities. Hybridity and hybrid political orders are currently concepts more elaborated and sophisticated than before. However, some scholars have criticized the overuse of the hybrid turn and the hybrid political order to explain the states using the peace-building theory (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2016).

Beyond the traditional and negative perspectives on failing states, fragile states, or fragility, the new approach is suitable for the study of the empirical political realities of the countries that emerged from conflicts (Mallet, 2010, pp. 65-66). The scholars who explore the hybrid political orders and the fragile states find a wide cluster of concepts that sometimes force them to restrict the object of study and limit the study to a specific part of the phenomenon. The legitimacy of the government and its legitimate monopoly of using violence were the two classical Weberian keystones which defined a state and its inclusion in the international system. These features have defined the state its sovereignty, and its relations with other states during the last centuries. Moreover, international recognition is a source of legitimation that enables the state functioning in the international arena as a sovereign state. However, new actors in the international system have emerged after the end of the Cold War acting without the classical paradigms of a state. In this post-Westphalia scenario, also called the late Westphalia scenario, first the fragility and then the hybridity of the states constitutes a new phenomenon that needs to be studied.

### 1.2. Research Objectives

This study explores hybrid political orders and their functioning in the international system based on the state-building and international relations theories. Based on the literature review, this study demonstrates how the convergence of the state-building and international relations theories define a hybrid political order. Besides, the functioning of hybrid political orders will be examined through the determinants of legitimacy and international recognition.

This study also examines how the fragile state term has been used in the study of failed state-building processes. Hence, a new approach to the fragile state phenomena must consider the state-building and peacebuilding theories. In addition, hybridity in this study is seen broadly within the social sciences context. Despite its complexity, hybridity is important for the interdisciplinary tackling of a globalized and fluid world (Wallis, Kent & Forsyth, 2018, pp. 1-9). This concept has emerged in the field of international relations theory as a response to the crisis of liberal peace. Hybridity embodies a challenge and an alternative to state-building and peace-building classical theories (Kraushaar and Lambach, 2009, p. 2). Thus, the state-building theory has been strongly grounded on hybridity (Wallis, Kent & Forsyth, 2018, p. 3). That is why this study explores the post-modern model of state, from international relations and classical state-building theories.

Considering the postmodern developments, how hybrid political order, as a different model of sovereignty, without full recognition, can perform in the international system. Hence, the study aims to examine and explore:

1. The relationship between legitimacy and international recognition in a hybrid political order
2. A hybrid political order interaction within the international system.
3. A hybrid political order development in the international system

## 2.0 Reviewing Hybrid Political Order

The methodology for the exploration of the hybrid political order in this study is based on the literature review. This study used a systematic review to identify and analyze relevant sources and to synthesize the information into a coherent and comprehensive summary. Different subjects were embraced such as hybridity, hybrid political orders, legitimacy, recognition, and international relations theories. By examining previous studies, it is possible to establish a solid foundation about the topic and detect gaps in the current knowledge landscape.

The literature review reveals that the hybrid political order concept in the scholarship has evolved significantly. In 2015, for some authors, the hybrid political order concept was shaped and nowadays are more elaborated. The scholars introduced new concepts as a reaction to post-modernity, which signifies fragility and liquidity. Therefore, in contemporary political science, hybridity offers a modern explanation for old problems, mainly related to the failure of the state. Moreover, the literature review shows how the approach to hybrid political orders is usually under the umbrella of state-building and peacebuilding. Thus, this review paper aims to fill this gap in the literature. The hybrid political orders include the hybridity concept, and a transformation of conflict that produces a new type of actors. These states were called collapsed, weak, fragile, and now hybrid (Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008).

The concept of hybrid political order starts with the reconceptualization of the fragile state, focusing on the governance of non-state actors and emerging alternative to state formation (Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008). The hybrid political orders pointed

to the positive side of this alternative discourse of hybridity. The concept of hybrid political orders was discussed and shaped with the contribution of other scholars. Other titles such as “quasi-statehood”, “para-statehood” or “oligopolies of violence” were suggested by scholars but “hybrid political order” is wider in concept (Boege, Brown & Clements, 2009).

The different contributions of scholars about hybridity are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Hybridity Studies

Year	Contribution	Reference
2001	Boundaries to hybridity	Pieterse, 2001
2007	State-building theory under the hybrid political order	Clements, Boege, Brown, Foley & Nolan, 2007
2008	Beyond the concept of fragile state	Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008
2009	The positive side of hybridity	Boege, Brown & Clements, 2009
2009	The hybrid political order as a valid for the governance mechanisms	Khraushaar & Lambach, 2009
2013	Contemporary state-building	Egnell & Halden, 2013
2014	Hybridity forces legitimacy to be re-negotiated and restructured in post-conflict situations.	Boege, 2014
2015	The simultaneity of discourse and practice	Albrecht & Moe, 2015
2018	Hybridity is an alternative narrative to the fragility and fragile states.	Jackson & Albrecht, 2018

Source: The author

Around the hybridity notion, scholars have developed a complete discourse to explain the coexistence of formal and non-formal structures of authority, sets of rules, and logics of power that co-exist, overlap, and interact. However, hybridity is a complex notion not easy to define and explain, being the reason to set boundaries (Pieterse, 2001). If hybridity is the theory, hybrid political order is the application of the theory to the real political world.

The state-building theory should be reconsidered under hybridity and the hybrid political order (Clements, Boege, Brown, Foley & Nolan, 2007). Firstly, these authors give a definition of hybrid political order and the circumstances that led to the emergence of this model. As mentioned earlier, the fragile state or the failed states concepts are scrutinized under the Weberian model of the state as an obstacle to maintaining peace and development and constitute a challenge to the modern state-building theory. Therefore, the review of the literature on hybridity indicated that it is necessary to go beyond the fragile state concept and understand the context that forms a political order in those territories weak or fragile (Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008, pp. 2-6).

Indeed, the recent studies were deeper and enriched the concept with more elements of hybridity. The hybrid political order conforms to an alternative to the liberal model of the state. This hybrid model inaugurates a fresh approach to state-building and state formation where state institutions coexist with non-official institutions with new elements of citizenship and civil society in networks of governance grounded on a territory. The scholars from the Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies started to study the phenomenon of hybrid political orders in the South Pacific post-colonial states of Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu. Then, some scholars have promoted the hybrid political order as a valid model that should be recognized and included in the governance mechanisms as the best tool to understand the local political knowledge to mobilize citizens and generate legitimacy (Khraushaar & Lambach, 2009, p. 1). If hybridity is not a new phenomenon, what makes contemporary state-building different is the extreme conditions of hybridity with more and new ideologies, actors and institutions mixed with the already existing (Egnell & Halden, 2013, p. 3).

### 3.0 Discussion and Analysis

The geopolitical area where hybrid political orders theory is applied is wider than initially. From the first studies on the South Pacific, more studies were done on different states from Africa, India, Kosovo, Lebanon and even Colombia. Scholarship researched the political situation of post-conflict or conflict-affected states under the hybrid political order approach.

Table 2. Hybridity and Geopolitics

Year	Hybridity and Geopolitics	Reference
2007	Somaliland and Puntland	Tadesse, 2007
2008	Melanesia, East Timor	Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008
2008	Vanuatu, Solomon, Bougainville, Tonga, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea	Boege, Brown, Clements & Nolan, 2008
2009	South Pacific states of Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu	Boege, Brown & Clements, 2009
2010	Mozambique	Mallet, 2010
2012	South Pacific states	Boege, 2012
2012	Nigeria	Johnson & Hutchison, 2012
2013	Colombia	Acuña, 2013
2013/2021	Lebanon	Stel & Naude, 2013; Stel, 2021
2015	Solomon Islands	Dinnen & Allen, 2015
2016	North Kivu and Katanga, in the Democratic Republic of Congo	Atanasijevic, 2016
2016/2017	Kosovo	Visoka & Richmond, 2016; Stel & Borgh, 2017
2016	Colombia	González, 2016
2018	Vanuatu, Pacific	Boege, 2018
2019	Fiji	Boege, 2019
2020	India	Wenner, 2020

Source: The author

The hybrid security governance of Somaliland and Puntland has been analyzed by scholars. The role of the political elites in conflict resolution, the indigenous systems of governance and the failure of the international attempts to implement a successful state reconstruction, all features of the hybrid political orders, are observed in these African states (Tadesse, 2007). Each author deepens

the concept, attaching more descriptions to the hybrid political order features like the distinction between hybrid political order as an analytical tool or as a practical tool. If the hybrid political order is used as an analytical tool, mainly is used to understand the post-conflict landscape. On the other hand, as a practical tool, the hybrid political order is used for peace-building engagement (Mallet, 2010, p. 67). Post-colonialism and the decentralization of power led some authors to study Nigeria under the hybrid political order perspective and suggest that even the application of Islamic jurisprudence would provide trust and legitimacy (Johnson & Hutchison, 2012).

Then some studies have examined the role of mining and how it operates in a hybrid political order in terms of interaction between companies and communities in post-conflict states (Boege, Brown & Moe, 2012). Then, some studies have examined the role of entrepreneurship in Lebanon where illegal “taxes” are imposed by hybrid political order governance for accessing electricity (Stel & Naudé, 2013). There is also the expansion of the concept of the hybrid political orders in Colombia (Acuña, 2013; González, 2016). The hybridity in the security governance of Africa is a well-studied topic, where the security sector is a multiplex fusion of different actors and institutions (Bagayoko, 2014). Finally, some authors researched the limited statehood in Solomon Islands, aligned with the hybridity theory, and pointed out the role of the local non-state actors (Dinnen & Allen, 2015).

Some studies referred to hybrid political order through case analysis. In this regard, studies examined the effects of climate change on the displacement, relocation, migration of the population and peacebuilding of the Pacific states (Boege, 2018; Boege, 2019). Then, hybridity is examined in Mali regarding climate change, conflict, poverty, food insecurity, population displacement and contested statehood (Boas & Strazzari, 2020). The interrelation between authority and legitimacy in the context of hybridity in India has been recently explored (Wenner, 2020).

The concept of hybridity has been used widely in social sciences. However, the hybridity and the hybrid political order concepts also have limits. About the limits, some authors offer a guide about how to apply the concept of hybridity in peacebuilding, state building and development, suggesting a new variant, the “critical hybridity”, learning from the critiques (Forsyth, Kent, Dinnen, Wallis & Bose, 2017). More authors indicate the fallacy of the hybridity concept as a theoretical framework for peacebuilding and state-building because falsely dichotomizes between “local” and “international” assortments (Hameiri & Jones, 2017). In addition, some authors go beyond and point out the overuse of the hybrid turn and the hybrid political order notions to explain and understand the situation of some states within the peacebuilding theory (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2016). Moreover, there is an emergence of different concepts that authors introduce as a new model different from hybridity. This new concept bridges the breach between the state-building and the nation-building (Balthasar, 2015).

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

A thorough review and analysis of the existing literature indicate the need to look to the hybrid political order through a wider spectrum of international relations and state-building theories. The approach has been widely used because the hybrid political orders concept is studied based on state-building and peacebuilding but not the international relations theories. This study also provided an idea about the interaction of different theories, international relations, and state-building, to study the hybrid political order phenomena, as phenomena that should consider strongly interdisciplinary approach.

Hence, this study proposes a new model to examine the hybrid political order phenomena. This model seeks the interaction of international relations and state-building theories. The study results in the overlapping of international recognition and legitimacy, whereby their intersection can explain the phenomena of hybrid political orders. As a suggestion for further studies, the conceptual framework created by combining state-building and international relations theories could offer a tool for a more detailed analysis of the hybrid political order phenomena. The model for hybrid political order suggested in this study is generalizable as long as it can provide evidence of its applicability in different contexts, situations or populations. This study suggests that the hybrid political orders become a complex and enduring feature of the international landscape. An understanding of their dynamics and implications will be essential for peace, stability, and development where the hybrid political orders are located.

#### **Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study**

This paper has articulated postmodern challenges in the international system, especially about state sovereignty, recognition, and legitimacy. Thus, the paper has envisioned the role of a hybrid political order in tackling post-conflict states and their integration into the international system. In addition, this paper makes a significant contribution to the field of the hybrid political orders thorough its extensive review of existing literature.

Through its comprehensive literature review, the paper synthesizes key insights and debates surrounding hybrid political order concept, shedding light on their origins, dynamics, and implications. The critical analysis of a wide range of scholarly works, the paper provides a nuanced understanding of the various factors shaping hybridity. One of the central contributions of the paper is its identification of common themes and patterns across case studies in different geographical areas. By examining cases from diverse regions and contexts, the paper highlights challenges such as state fragility institutional resilience and the role of external actors in shaping local governance dynamics.

Finally, this paper provides a valuable resource for policy makers, practitioners and scholars grappling for the complexities of governance in hybrid political settings. Future research about the related field of study can focus on how to deal with post-conflict states that have not yet received full international recognition like the Republic of Kosovo.

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