

# Private security companies and political order in Congo

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A history of extraversion

**Peer Schouten**

*PhD dissertation in Peace and Development Research, School of  
Global Studies, University of Gothenburg*

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*Opponent:*

Rita Abrahamson (Graduate School of Public and International Affairs,  
University of Ottawa)

*Supervisors:*

Maria Stern (School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg)  
Maria Eriksson Baaz (Nordic Africa Institute/ School of Global Studies,  
University of Gothenburg)

*Examining committee:*

Isabell Schierenbeck (School of Global Studies, University of  
Gothenburg)  
Jeppe Strandsbjerg (Department of Business and Politics, Copenhagen  
Business School)  
Koen Vlassenroot (Conflict Research Group, Ghent University)



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# Abstract

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This PhD dissertation explores how private security companies co-constitute political order in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as a case through which broader questions regarding the relationship between security governance and political order can be investigated. The thesis explores the spatial distribution of private security companies in Congo, and investigates their predominant entanglement with internationalized governance processes. Furthermore, it explores how this contemporary instance of the relationship between security governance and political order resonates with and reproduces longer-standing patterns of internationalized political ordering in Congo.

This thesis raises questions around how it may be possible to theorize the relationship between security governance and political order to capture the historical ways in which that relationship has been articulated in Congolese history. Specifically, it asks whether broadening our conception of political order to encompass both security governance and the infrastructural arrangements underpinning modern political order might bring into view durable patterns of political ordering that otherwise remain hidden—patterns of extraversion, where key domestic ordering processes in Congo are reproduced as the properties of international power-relations.

**Keywords:** Belgian colonialism; Congo (Democratic Republic); development organizations; extraversion; infrastructure; international relations; gold mining; power (political); private security companies; state formation