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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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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