Transformation and Production of Urban Spaces in Bamako, Mali

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This paper examines the dominant logic of the "production of space" in Bamako. The concept of "Entraeumlichung" is proposed to describe a significant transformation in the logic of how space is producing and being produced. This paper illustrates this process in "fixed" and "fluid" spaces in Bamako. "Fixed spaces" stands for the built environment and its architecture of residential living, whereas fluid spaces are understood as spaces of movement, which includes traffic infrastructure as well as experiences of moving through the city. Entraeumlichung *as a strategic hypothesis suggests that an ever-growing detachment between subjects and their surroundings guides the process of the production of space in Bamako.*

keywords: Bamako, Lefebvre, space, urban, transportation

Introduction

It was a grey day in January 2012; the Harmathan wind was blowing over the bridge. On the bridge there was nobody walking apart from us and from time to time a car passed by on the newly built street. Actually, the whole bridge was a totally new construction, inaugurated only five months ago by the former president Amadou Toumani Touré. On that day, an expensive grey SUV was speeding over this bridge in Bamako. When it passed, it hit a little piece of cardboard. The driver may not have acknowledged this collision, but this small piece was shaken into the air. It dropped over the guardrail and flew down to the ground in big circles. Under the bridge and on the ground something happened. A dozen of people, mostly women, were collecting big stones for the construction of a mosque. The mosque was right under the middle of the "*Pont de l'Amitié Sino-Malienne*" that has been constructed by the Chinese. Here, the Niger passes the "*Barrage de Sotuba*", which was once constructed by the French. One of the women carrying stones on her head saw this piece of paper falling from heaven and picked it up. She made two pieces out of it, gave one to her colleague for protection and used the other one herself. She put the paper on her head and went on...

This short observation during my research in Bamako was of great importance to me from the moment I recognized it, though it took a lot of work to make sense of it. What does this story have to do with the transformation of urban space in Bamako? There are lots of possible relations to be found in this moment. For example, the construction of the physical infrastructure of Mali's capital city could be traced in the transnational history of shifting-power relations reflected in Bamako's bridges: "*Pont de Martyr*" was planned by French colonialists, the "*Pont Roi Fahd*" was financed by the Saudi Fund for Development in the early 1990s and the third bridge, the "*Pont de l'Amitié Sino-Malienne*" is based upon Chinese support.

My research question is different: how can the transformation of urban space in Bamako be described? A history of bridges – though very interesting – does not seem sufficient to answer such a holistic question, as the transformation process cannot be limited to a certain place. Thus, I abandoned the Pont de l'Amitié Sino-Malienne as an original focal point, and widened my research field to Bamako's urban space in its total. Since 1990 to 2009, the number of inhabitants of Bamako has almost doubled, (United Nations World Population Prospects)[1] and a rapid transformation of the urban space has taken place. But, how to describe this

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[1] In 1990 Bamako had officially one million inhabitants. In 2009 1.8 million people lived in the city. See: http://www.citymayors.com/statistics/urban_growth1.html

transformation? Two major challenges appear: First of all, it is a questionable task to imprison the complexity and fluidity of the production of an urban space in a two-dimensional and static writing. When exploring such a holistic question in an empirical and rough manner, certain details are bound to be lost.

Henry Lefebvre came to help me out in constructing a plausible narrative. In his book *The Production of Space* (1974), Henri Lefebvre tries to find a way to describe what is at work when we speak about space. To him, it becomes evident that space in its multiplicity and fluidity is a socially constructed "product" This work starts off from a relational concept of space and the assumption that it is not just socially produced but also produces the social. Out of this theoretical framework – which shall be detailed in Chapter Two – the final and more precise question arises: how can the dominant logic of the production of space in Bamako be described?

To find that out, I went to Bamako in 2012 and stayed there for three months until Malian soldiers did succeed in overthrowing the government with a Military Coup on the 21st of March 2012. This historical moment led both to dramatic changes in Mali and an involuntary stop in our work and a clear-cut endpoint of the period described in this work. Therefore, this paper refers solely to the period between the Democratic revolution, which put an end to Moussa Traoré's military rule (March 1991) and the moment when the military took over again (March 2012). My methodological approach – discussed in Chapter Three – is exploratory and qualitative in character and based on ethnographic methods of participation.

After the analysis of my data, the findings will be presented in two heuristic dimensions: fixed and fluid spaces. Chapter Four – "Fluid spaces" – focuses the phenomenological-bodily experience of urban space in Bamako. Here, the perception and experience of the urban shall be analysed. The movement and mobility in an urban space are of crux to (everyday) constructions of the "city". Complementary to the preceding chapter, "Fixed Spaces" approaches Bamako's urban space from a more material-structural dimension by looking at the structures of ownership and tenure-ship in housing, new forms and elements in (residential) architecture and the effects of (newly) built environments. This heuristic division is congruent with Lefebvre's triad, which is on the one side phenomenological-idealistic, and on the other side structuralist-materialist.

The descriptions of urban space transformations finally culminate in the concept of "*Entraeumlichung*" (despatialization) that links the empirical descriptions with theory. "*Entrauemlichung*" – a German neologism – signifies a process marked by an ever-growing detachment between subjects from their immediate

surroundings ("*Umwelt*"). This gap can be found in three different dimensions in Bamako. The first of them is a Structural detachment, which may be seen, for example, in the new ownership arrangements in housing. Social detachment is apparent through the growing spatial independence of friend-networks. Lastly, Phenomenological detachment is displayed in the decrease of direct, human experiences of weather conditions due to air-conditioning.

The concept of "*Entraeumlichung*" is a provisional and challenging proposition. I want to use it to foster a discussion about how urban space transformations may be described and what their driving forces and effects may be. One of the major consequences of "*Entraeumlichung*" seems to be the tendency of widening the social gaps. Persons who actively participate in this process get access to a range of opportunities. If "*Entraeumlichung*" can really be translated as the dominant logic in the production of urban space in Bamako this does not by any means mean that space can be neglected – right on the contrary. Perhaps the driver of the SUV on the "*Pont de l'Amitié Sino-Malienne*" may not have recognized the piece of paper he bumped into. Maybe he or she was on the telephone while driving. Still, this piece of paper was blown into the wind and finally picked up.

Theory

Talking about urban space transformation does not make sense without illuminating the theoretical base underlying this research. Therefore, the following chapter will take a closer look at space and (African) urbanity by introducing Henri Lefebvre's theory of "The Production of Space" (2007).

What is space? Two basic models of space exist: on the one side, we find the Euclidean idea of a three dimensional space and, on the other, an understanding of space as relational. The proclaimed "spatial turn" (Döring & Thielmann, 2009) re-appropriates space for the social sciences – a discussion that originated in the revolution of physics by Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. Before that, Newton's conception of space as a three dimensional entity which can be separated from time (Massey, 2007, p. 123; Schroer, 2008, p. 141) dominated the discourse. With Einstein it was shown that time and space are inextricably linked and that space appears as multidimensional relation between physical objects. Consequently, the relational model of space leads to the disappearance of any ultimate and universal standpoint, as the observer is always part of this network of physical objects, looking at things from her/his own perspective.

The Euclidean model of space can be traced in classical philosophy as well: be it René Descarte's space as "*res extensa*" or Immanuel Kant's space as *a-priori*

(Lefebvre, 2007, p. 1 ff.). Beyond classical philosophy, quite a number of contemporary social scientists like Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault and Anthony Giddens have conceived space as an important issue for the social sciences. Their conceptions of space are certainly very interesting. Nevertheless, an integration of their thoughts with Lefebvre's theory goes beyond the scope of this paper, because a challenging discussion about the shared assumptions would be necessary (Crang & Thrift, 2000, p. 208). In my view, Henri Lefebvre's "Production of Space" is not only the most convincing work about space, but also the theoretically most soundly funded and best applicable to Bamako. With Henri Lefebvre's relational concept of space we arrive at an understanding in which space is not only procedural and thus historical, but it is also inextricably linked with the social as the "relations of physical objects" produce society as much as society produces these relations. Space – with Lefebvre – becomes a dialectical social product, which is political in the end (Massey, 2007, p. 121).

From his basic assumption that "(social) space is a (social) product" (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 31) a number of consequences arise: Firstly, physical space cannot be taken as a naturally given starting point. Rather, it is part of the production of space and is seen as the "picture's background" (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 30). Secondly, "Every society […] produces a space, its own space" (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 31). This means that every society and space need to be read in their own histories. This is, in my view, of utmost importance to African Urban Studies, because it allows, on the one hand, the handling of the particularities of every space and city. On the other, it does not exclude the possibility whereby certain particular dynamics are at work in several places at the same time. Thirdly, space produces practices and practices produce space (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 33). This dialectical argument makes that approach very challenging, and is the reason why investigations in (urban) space need to be carried out by sociologists as well as historians, geographers,

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literature scholars and economists. Finally, Lefebvre argues that it is not space it-self that should be of interest, but the process of "the actual production of space" (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 37).

For Lefebvre, this process includes material and idealistic structures and both are embodied in humans. Subjects and their social relations imply relations to space and thus are of crucial importance in the way space is produced and how they are produced in space (Merrifield, 1993, p. 524). For Lefebvre, bodies are the targets for disciplining techniques, but at the same time he sees them as a major source for the subversion of the reproduction of existing power-relations (Lefebvre, 1974, p. 107).

The term "city" in a Lefebvrian approach seems problematic, as it is an ideo-logically burdened term, which evokes Eurocentric narratives about the *polis* as a clear entity (Schmid, 2010, p. 188). In Lefebvre's view we already live in a totally urbanized society (Lefebvre, 1972). This hypothesis may be generalized to Mali only with great caution, if at all. Nevertheless, a rapid transition is taking place in the Malian society, with residential patterns as well as lifestyles becoming more and more urbanized. However, to deny a totally urbanized society in Mali does not exempt from defining what is meant by urban space. Georg Simmel describes the urban space of Berlin of the early 20th century as a dense and heterogeneous space (Simmel, 2008). The heterogeneity and density are certainly aspects well suited to describe urban spaces in Bamako and also help enriching Lefebvre's approach of the city as a site of centrality.

In the production of knowledge about urban space in Africa, some proble-matic perceptions are often reproduced: African cities are frequently described as underdeveloped, informal and post-colonial. Myers offers a very good over-view about themes and their problematics in African urban studies (2010). These themes certainly play a role in the transformation and production of African urban spaces even if they only build knowledge about space. This paper, ba-sed on Lefebvre, addresses none of these aspects and tries to avoid dismissive terminology. Bamako's urban space shall first of all be recognized in its own right. Therefore, the next chapter will illuminate my own methodological pre--conditions and proceedings, being that space is always seen from a specific pers-pective.

Methodology

I arrived in Bamako in early January 2012 with a theory about space and my plan for conducting research. When the ideal became real, numerous changes

to the original plan had to be made. This chapter illustrates the process of data collection and my methods of analysis to finally draw conclusions about the possibilities and constraints of this work.

My original plan to find a number of city inhabitants to make video-shots and interviews was changed after I had abandoned the bridge as focal point. The approach turned instead to a more concentrated work with a group of artists from Bamako. Together with the members of the newly found group *KaYelema*, began a process of working on a film and photo exhibition about the transformation of urban space in Bamako. The film by KaYelema would have been a rich audio--visual material to draw conclusions, but it was never finished due to the "*coup d'État*". On 21st March 2012 a military *coup* under Amadou Sanogo led to dramatic changes in Mali. One minor consequence was also the forced breakdown of our project. Only nine days after the *coup* started in Bamako, I had to leave the country and the work of KaYelema with its participatory methods has not yet been finished. Anyhow, beneath this creative work with KaYelema, I experienced endless discussions and observations in everyday situations. Living in Bamako-Coura, one of Bamako's oldest and most central quarters, had allowed me to experience a very intense everyday life in Bamako.

Drawing on ethnographic methodology, I constantly wrote down observations in a notebook. In this book – with a total of 168 handwritten pages – are memorized passages from conversations, observations about architecture, situations etc. Another major data generator is my photo-camera, which I used to shoot about 2000 photos in three months. These photos are taken from a perspective that is more aesthetic than systematic and thus only used for illustrative purposes in the analysis[2]. Adding to these materials, semi-structured expert-interviews were used in the analysis to triangulate hypothesis, my own observations and third party perceptions. The conscious decision to exclude official sources and archives is made on a pragmatic base and because this work focuses on the contemporary practices in everyday life instead of official narratives about it.

The powerful and unexpected interruption by the "*coup d'État*" makes my empirical material much weaker as the film was not shot. When I returned to Switzerland I only had 168 pages of notes, photos, recorded expert-interviews and all the papers, documents and unfinished plans with KaYelema. In the end, my notebook is my major source, which means writing from my own perspective. As theoretically there is no universal and true standpoint and I was forced to base my analysis on my empirical material, all I can do is to talk from my own

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[2] They were presented more systematically in an independent exhibition in Vienna in March 2013.

perspective, as honest and transparently as possible. Thus, an "epistemology of positionality" is the background behind my strategic hypothesis.

The data analysis itself was a permanent turning in cycles between inductive and deductive approaches. By building categories according to Dey (1993), I drew my ideas from operational fieldwork, employed the software MAXQDA to check them against the data and then re-organized my categories according to empirical (mis-) matches. In this process, the interviews proved to be a powerful corrective element and helped to nuance the argument.

Looking at this process of data collection and analysis, it can be seen that my approach does not claim to be representative. In my view, this empirical lack should be closed with more detailed and precise investigations, but that was not the major goal of my work. I was looking for an answer to the question about the dominant logic of urban space transformations in Bamako – nothing of what lies on the street is ready-made. Another crucial constraint – which does not only apply to this work – is the question about which data to use. In the end everything is again abstract, organized into theoretical terms and descriptions like in the notebook. But isn't the practice of urban space equally structured by perceptions we usually forget or cannot perceive in our "chronology of letters"? Like the five calls of the muezzin every day, the smell of the market and the heat on the street. I tried to integrate these experiences as much as I could, but in the end they are only words on paper.

Fluid Spaces

Urban space does not simply exist: "...space is a practiced place" (DeCerteau as quoted in Magee, 2007, p. 112). This Chapter about "fluid space" looks at the role of mobility in Bamako as a practice of everyday and everybody. This perspective is inspired by a more phenomenological perspective and corresponds to the second set of Lefebvre's triad: conceived space, perceived space and lived space. The next chapter – "fixed spaces" – focuses the material and structural dimensions, which are inherent to built environment. Mobility in Bamako experiences profound changes everyday. Only a little more than one hundred years after the city saw the first automobile on its streets, it is full of cars, "*sotramas*" (buses for public transportation), taxis, motorbikes, pedestrians and a few cyclists.

The number of individual transport means is increasing rapidly: more and more people own cars and motorbikes, so called *motos*. While cars are rather expensive, *motos* are cheaper – prices around 600€ – and therefore very popular. Another means of transportation of great importance are the so-called "*sotra-*

mas" – public busses privately run, which circulate on fixed routes through the city. They reflect Bamako's mono-centrism, i.e. buses all run from stations in the city-centre around the "*marché*" to the outskirts of Bamako. Looking at the prices for transport there is a clear hierarchy of transportation means: Cars and taxis are most expensive, *motos* have moderate prices and *sotramas* are the cheapest way for transportation. This hierarchy in the prices corresponds to a social status attached to the vehicles – presenting one's own status by riding a big car is a common practice in Bamako.

My argument is that the uses of urban space consist of practices in and by which Bamakoise construct their city. The perceptions of Bamako vary, depending on the used means of transportation. Being an outsider, I was fortunate and had the chance to use all means of transportation quite regularly and thus get an impression about the phenomenological differences. Private transport by car and *moto* is much more individualized, not only in the sense that the route can be chosen freely, but also because there are fewer interactions. Walking through Bamako means interaction and communication: you talk to people, you stop at some places and you have to find your way between holes on the ground, street vendors, cars, *motos* and so on. The Bradt travel-guide even goes so far to describe Bamako as "typical African": "Simple things, such as smiling at pas-sers-by, throw-away "*bonjour*" and "*ça va*" and shaking hand are still important in Bamako. Could we say the same thing for London, Paris and New York – or for that matter, Dakar, Abidjan and Lagos? In this way, I suppose, Bamako has remained typically African" (Velton, 2007, p. 1). What should have become clear by now is that the more cars and *motos* become popular, the more the need and possibility for interactions tend to decrease. And speed increases, which allows city users to shrink "their" city to a network of distant places: thanks to invest-ments in transportation networks, distant places in Bamako are linked more eas-ily. These are profound changes leading to new perceptions and use of urban space. Thus, a new logic is evolving, aimed at a maximum mobility in urban space, where the distance between someone's origin and destination is a hin-drance that shall be overcome with maximum speed and minimum disturbances.

A second aspect of changes in mobility is related to the growth of the urban area, which is both result and cause of the increasing traffic in Bamako. Bamako is often stuck in traffic nowadays, while there was not even one traffic light until 1957 (Philippe, 2009, p. 216). Improvements of transport infrastructure – for ex-ample the third bridge over the Niger – foster suburbanization as the dirty and overcrowded city centre becomes less attractive in comparison to the, now more accessible, outskirts of the city. A major step in the improvement of transport

infrastructure was the African Cup of Nations, the CAN 2002. In the preparation for this big event, new "*échangeurs*" and highways were erected (Interview Koné, 8,20-8,50).

One democratic consequence of the augmented mobility is the permanent smog hanging over the city. But more notably, mobility has become a new means for social inclusion / exclusion. Mobility in (individual) transport is often a pre-condition for access to numerous possibilities. This demand for being mobile may be fulfilled by most Bamakoise, but the way this is done differs significantly in what respects speed, comfort and level of interaction.

The different forms people employ for their mobility cause varying constructions of their city: "the city only develops through use" (Njiami as quoted in Magee, 2007, p. 112). Whether one has to walk from Bamako-Coura to Lafiabougou under 40 degrees Celsius or she/he can take an air-conditioned SUV vehicle from Caritas to go to Lafiabougou does make a significant difference.

Fixed spaces

"La modernisation ça s'impose … on n'a pas le choix"[3]

"Modernisation imposes itself, there is no choice" said Hama, a student of the Université de Bamako. What does Hama mean with modernisation and why does this process seem so inevitable? Bamako's urban space, home of approximately 1.8 million people, spreads over a surface of 267 km², around the shores of the Niger-river (Konaté, 2011, p. 104). This area is certainly too big to be included in a detailed discussion. Therefore, I will highlight general tendencies in different quarters, which shall be illuminated by examples. Secondly, the analysis focuses exclusively on trans-formation of built environment in the sector of residential housing. Housing as one particular form of built environment touches upon the everyday of "*quasi*" everybody in Bamako. In contrast, age, race, gender or class open or restrict access to certain forms of built environment, like mosques or shopping malls. Thus, the following chapter deals with the built environment of residencies in Bamako and how these are constantly transformed or, in Hama's words, "modernized".

The city of Bamako is a settlement that experienced an enormous growth in population within a very short period of time. In 1881 French colonialists conquered Bamako. The city had only about 600 to 800 inhabitants then (Philippe,

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[3] Interview, Hama and Amidou, Amidou, 40.00-40.07

2009, p. 49). When Bamako became the official Capital of the Soudan Français this number increased to about 3.480 in 1908 (Philippe, 2009, p. 91). In 1952 the city surpassed the mark of 100.000 inhabitants and, since then, grew steadily through rural-urban migration and inner growth. From 1990 to 2009 the number of Bamakoise almost doubled from 1 million to 1.8 million and, for the period of 2006 to 2020, Bamako is expected to be the sixth fastest growing city worldwide.[4]

These demographic figures go hand in hand with a rapid spatial growth. The French destroyed the original settlement of Bamako when they reorganized the colonial capital in the early 20th century. The first bridge over the Niger, Pont de Martyr, was finished in 1960 and fostered a rapid growth on the south side of the river. Bamako's urban area is relatively huge because of its fast growth in population and mostly low buildings. House construction has usually been a variation of the model of one-storey buildings surrounding a courtyard, in which the "*grande famille*" lives and works. This seems to be typical: "West African house construction has historically focused on walled compounds that surrounded courtyards and contained a variety of structures aimed at different uses" (Freund, 2007, p. 55).

Bamako's overall city structure is mono-centric in its character. Around the old quarters of Bamako – Nozola, Niaréla, Bagadaji, Dravéla and parts of Bamako-Coura – the city grew in concentric circles: "... *quand la ville grandit il y a des coronnes concentriques*" (Interview Philippe, 14.25-14.32). Thus, the Communes I, IV, V, VI, at the fringe of the city, have the biggest increase in population, whereas the Communes II and III in the city centre register only a slight population growth[5].

In this chapter I will discuss four new tendencies in the production of Bamako's built environment: 1) ownership 2) segregation 3) individualization 4) mediatisation. According to Dr. Koné, social scientist at the Université de Bamako, these beginning transformations are profound: "*Donc, franchement, il y a un début de changement, de transformation essentiel*" (Interview Koné 32, 28-32, 48).

The word "*jatigiya*" in Bambara means hospitality and is of great significance in Bamako's urban space and crucial to understand the change of the idea of ownership in Bamako. In conventional house constructions, families share houses around one courtyard joining many generations. If a guest arrives in Bamako it is usual – in the sense of "*jatigiya*" – to offer him a place to stay and, in case he becomes a permanent resident, it is up to the guest to propose how he may contribute his share to the household. This common practice of hospitality is losing its importance (Koné 1,12,14-1,13,40). So does another common practice:

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[4] http://www.citymayors.com/statistics/urban_growth1.html

[5] See http://instat.gov.ml/documentation/bamako.pdf

the ownership of land by the same people who live on it (Philippe 45,05-45,30). Following complex inheritance rules with numerous veto-players, the place where the grandfathers built their house – a symbolically highly significant place – usually passes from generation to generation and is seldom sold or destroyed: "*C'est très, très symbolique – on va pas raser la maison de grand-père*" (Philippe 44,02-44,06). Both practices point towards a logic of ownership that is based on values more complex than the mere calculation of monetary benefits.

Solely economic motivation can be identified with two major actors in Bamako's real estate sector: SEMA-SA and ACI. Beneath the state and private investors, these two companies seem most capable of planning and take on big projects. A new quarter in Bamako – ACI 2000 – reflects the power of these companies. This area was fundamentally restructured after the old airport was closed down, opening new room for reorganization.

Figure 1: Model of house „Libellule" by SEMA-SA

LIBELLULE

Source: http://www.sema-sa.com/pimm.php?rb=picours&pi=5444681322788621_Jw

Today multi-storey buildings for office and flats dominate the quarter of ACI2000 and there is hardly any house with a "typical" courtyard to be found in this quarter. After the restructuration, apartments in the ACI 2000 are now for rent or sale with enormous profits for investors. Buying land here has become far too expensive for an ordinary Bamakois. Tenure-ship security and a clearly cathartic system are installed, but it seems questionable if this development promoted by development agencies hits its target as Bertrand (2004, p. 91) criticizes

the ACI 2000 project: "It became obvious that transparency had lost all meaning at the agency [ACI], and land management was revealed to be a bigger factor than ever of socially excluding the mass of impoverished city dwellers". Other examples of quarters experiencing fundamental restructuration are the suburban quarters Sotuba and Sebenikoro. Here, investors are about to build big settlement schemes, preferably on formerly uninhabited land that is not "burdened" with complicated social rules of ownership. In the quarter Missabougou – on the opposite side of Sotuba, south of the third bridge over the Niger – hardly any activity of construction or renovation can be observed. In Missabougou existed one-storey houses with courtyards before the new bridge was even planned. The value of land can also be observed at Bamako's outskirts. Here, about 10 to 20 km before the city edges are reached, walls that contain nothing surround empty areas. In this economically motivated match of speculation, there is little space left for irregular housing. The need for a place to live becomes a danger for potential revenues. The dominant logic of ownership in Bamako is fundamentally changing towards a more and more economic logic. Land loses its symbolic meaning and becomes a sheer trade good with seducing rates for monetary profit and reliable rights.
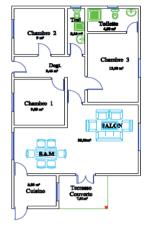
The second point is segregation. New investments – as shown above – lead to large-scale upgrading of certain areas. Even a crude observation shows an absurd segregation: In the Villa Soudanais, a chic hotel at the shore of the Niger, a beautiful garden with a swimming pool is separated from the riverbed of the Niger by a high fence. Inside this garden there are big wooden masks that shall mirror what is "typical" African. Whereas the people who wash their clothes at the Niger are only a few meters away from the fence, they may never see these "authentic" masks behind the fence (note 3rd March 2012).

New architectural forms and norms arising in Bamako lead to new forms of living, which are signified as individualization here. New models for house constructions are oriented towards singles or small families as the image below shows:

The last point of my argument about new tendencies in the built environment of Bamako's "fixed spaces" concerns the interior design of living spaces: mediatisation. Television and computers transform not only the newly erected houses, but also the use of old houses as well. Televisions often become the centre of attention in courtyards and people stay in their houses to use their computers to surf in the Internet. New technologies like Internet and mobile phone have immeasurable impacts, but one consequence is certainly the new possibility to be in contact with others without actually meeting anyone in person.

PLAN TYPE " LIBELLULE MV4 F4 "

VUE en PLAN

I want to point out one common feature of the phenomena of speculation, segregation, individualization and mediatisation: all of them introduce certain interdependence between spatially distanced actions and lower the importance of the immediate surroundings.

Entrauemlichung

This paper aims at proposing an answer to the question of how the dominant logic of the production of space in Bamako can be defined. After having looked at new tendencies in the production of urban space in Bamako, this chapter aims at integrating the different strands by formulating my strategic hypothesis of "*Entraeumlichung*".

"*Entraeumlichung*" signifies a process in which relations of subjects to their immediate surroundings become more contingent and are replaced by spatially more distanced relations. For example, someone living in a house in Sotuba, which has no courtyard but a gate to park the car and an Internet connection will experience his everyday life very differently from an inhabitant of Missanbougou, who goes to work by public transport in "*sotramas*" and whose home is centred around a courtyard, where women cook, children play and clothes are washed by hand.

To avoid misunderstandings, some aspects of "*Entraeumlichung*" have to be defined: "*Entraeumlichung*" is a process with no absolute ends. There is such thing

as total "*Entraeumlichung*", in the sense of absolute absence in space, as also no total "*Verraeumlichung*" as total presence in space. "*Entraeumlichung*" is a process of gradual movement on a scale between "*Entraeumlichung*" and "*Verraeumlichung*". Secondly, the notion of Entraeumlichung is dialectical because space is simultaneously produced and a producer. It is space that fosters "*Entraeumlichung*" and "*Entraeumlichung*" that fosters the production of specific spaces. To be precise, "*Entraeumlichung*" is not the only logic of the production of space to be found in Bamako. My argument is that it has become the dominant logic, in the sense that "*Entraeumlichung*" guides the developments in Bamako more than any other tendency. Finally, "*Entraeumlichung*" is a process firmly based on a concept of relational space, which means that it changes the relations between physical objects. This should not be misunderstood: space is not becoming unimportant in any way.

With this theoretical definition of "*Entraeumlichung*", the use and origin of the word should be more transparent. A translation of "*Entraeumlichung*" into English seems hardly possible: The word-creation "*Entraeumlichung*" derives from the German word *Raum* that has the same roots as the Danish "*rum*" or Norwegian "*rom*". It has different implications than the latin "*spatium*" from which the English word *space* and French *espace* come from (Olwig, 2002). It is probably for that linguistic reason that Anthony Giddens speaks of "embedding" and "disembedding" and not of "spatialization" or "de-spatialization". There are numerous parallels between what is signified here as "*Entraeumlichung*" and what Giddens calls disembedding – but the concepts are not the same. First of all, Gidden's concept originates in the Western European context, while the concept of "*Entraeumlichung*" developed here was found in Bamako. Another reason to distinguish separating "*Entraeumlichung*" from disembedding is the theoretical ground: Giddens separates clearly time and space and his conception of space resembles Euclidean space. "*Entraeumlichung*" is firmly placed in a conception of space as relational and procedural. Finally, Giddens sees disembedding as something he ascribes to post-modern societies in contrast to traditional and modern societies. This reflects an understanding of "History" which is based on an implicit hierarchy. Such a line of thinking shall not be reproduced here. At least Lefebvre – though his writing also originates in a Western European context – explicitly leaves the possibility of examining each space in its own right: "Every society [...] produces a space, its own space" (Lefebvre, 2007, p. 31).

The concept of "*Entraeumlichung*" is of no value if it cannot be linked to observations described in the chapters on "fixed" and "fluid" spaces. Three major aspects of "*Entraeumlichung*" seem to wave the fabric: a re-positioning of social

relations in urban space (1), a change in the bodily-sensual perception of urban space (2) and a structural shift in the production of urban space (3). These correspond to Lefebvre's triad as social practice / perceived space – rearranges the bodily experience of space; representational space / lived space – changes social relations and representations of space / conceived space adjust new structures.

Spatial practices are daily routines of living and movement taking place, the space where everyday and urban reality meet. It is the space we perceive. "*Entraeumlichung*" here means a bodily-sensual detachment of an immediate surrounding. This detachment might happen in well-equipped apartments, where the television is the centre of attention and air-conditioning is used to protect from heat. Or when, whiledriving fast through urban space on a highway, the driver is not able to perceive everyday life around him or her or talk to anybody face-to-face.

In representational space we find a re-arrangement of social relationships. Social relations change in the newly built houses, because there is no need for interaction with neighbours or roommates. In a completely equipped two-room apartment with shower, toilet and kitchen you may not meet a single person. At the same time, new technologies like telephone and Internet allow to keep long distance relations. If people choose their friends due to social proximity rather than spatial proximity, these tendencies of "*Entraeumlichungs*" make social networks more contingent, expanded and exclusive. If a private vehicle and a functioning transport system make mobility even easier, then distanced networks of social relations can be kept all over the city.

Finally, we find the representations of space as a major factor in processes of "*Entraeumlichung*". Conceived spaces, as Lefebvre describes them, are made up of signs and codes that structure the reproduction of social orders. Here we find that the ownership of land is less guided by relating land to social, sacral or historical claims. On the contrary, money and legal rights increasingly become the universal reference, legitimating possession and control of space. Urban space is transformed into a tradable good, in order to be valorised. Therefore, plans about property rights are drawn, the designed architectural models are informed by global architectural discourses and money is invested. New mobility demands make people move fast through urban space – thus time becomes the measure for distance in urban space, shrinking the space in –between to a grey, time--consuming mass.

This short hints for further analysis has shown some dimensions that "*Entraeumlichung*" might have as a dominant logic in the production of urban space in Bamako. The triad – spatial practice, representations of space and repre-

sentational space – that Lefebvre suggests as a heuristic tool for analysis seems to be useful, but should be deeper investigated.

A crucial question, which remained unanswered up to now, is the argument that "*Entraeumlichung*" is the dominant logic of the production of space in Bamako in the period of 1991 to 2012. The end of this period is easily explained: the empirical research stopped with the "*coup d'État*" and, since then, the effects of these events seem too complex and opaque to me to make any claim about them. I set the starting point in 1991 as on the 26th of March 1991 the popular protest led to the overthrow of the military regime of Moussa Traoré and thus started a new period in Mali's history. Some events show the drastic changes. The structural adjustment programs (SAPs) unfolded in the 1990s; in 1990 the Pont Fahd, the second bridge over the Niger, was constructed for keeping traffic afloat; SEMA (Société d'Equipment du Mali) was privatized and is now called SEMA-SA; in 1994 the BCEAO-tower was erected and became a major symbol of the city, illustrating the new power of financial capital; in the late 1990s new information technologies like mobile phone, personal computer and Internet became popular. This short list of examples and new developments show that "*Entraeumlichung*" is a process hard to define with sharp dates as, for instance, the arrival of the railway in 1904 could also be picked as starting date. Nevertheless, it seems convenient to set early 90s as a beginning as, since then "*Entraeumlichung*" not only started, but became dominant in the sense that it worked on many levels in numerous dimensions.

"*Entraeumlichung*" has never been an explicit political program, which makes it even harder to identify its central actors. Part of the international community that pushed the SAPs in Mali is surely a central actor in this process, having fostered the transformation of urban space into a tradable good and potential investment goal. Another powerful actor is a somehow inhuman actor: technology. Here, a combination with Bruno Latour's Actor-Network-Theory seems potentially possible and quite interesting (see e.g. Latour 2005), as crucial incentives for processes of *Entraeumlichung* stem from objects and technologies that function as actors by creating new networks.

Regarding the consequences, two major effects are visible: expansion and exclusion. On the one hand, "*Entraeumlichung*" offers possibilities to establish relations beyond the immediate surroundings of subjects. It allows for rapid transfer of persons, goods and ideas in space. On the other, "*Entraeumlichung*" sharpens the edges as it depends on exclusions. Exclusion is central for "*Entraeumlichung*" as immediate surroundings do not simply disappear but are supplemented. For example, a mobile phone might take one's attention far away. Whereas

some might benefit a lot in the expansion of their possibilities in the process of "*Entraeumlichung*", those who cannot participate are excluded from numerous possibilities. It seems that "*Entraeumlichung*" has a tendency to widen a social gap, depending on the ability to participate in the process.

Conclusion

What can a piece of paper say about Bamako? The story of the cardboard tells us that, within a few moments, rubbish becomes valuable and wanders from the street to someone's head. Space is not simply a fact, but a complex and multi-layered order of objects and subjects in movement. In this paper I tried to describe some features and characteristics in the way urban space in Bamako is produced.

Theoretically based on Henry Lefebvre's work "The Production of Space", I have defined space as a relational space that is simultaneously produced and a producer. The setting of the scene described in the introduction exists because space has been produced, when the Pont de l'Amité Sino-Malienne has been constructed and right under it a mosque is being built. And space produces because the driver of the grey SUV needed to cross the bridge to make his way. If space is relational, than it always depends on the position that one is able to describe. I have tried to demonstrate how much my approach is formed by my own perspective and how my position itself is influenced by others. It was a friend and photographer whom I accompanied to the bridge. Mobility in Bamako is not only concerned with infrastructure, but has fundamental impacts on the perception of the city. This includes mental conceptions, sensual perceptions and bodily experiences. Would the situation on the bridge have changed if the driver of the grey SUV had been a cyclist? The built environment is the concrete background that I try to illustrate in the chapter "Fixed Spaces", by looking at ownership schemes and the architecture of residential buildings in Bamako. Finally, I have introduced a concept that is named "*Entraeumlichung*". The transformations in Bamako's urban space have a common tendency – they all point towards relations that become more distanced and contingent: Social relations can be spread over the whole city thanks to new communication technologies as well as accelerated and individualized mobility. House constructions and ownership become more and more framed in the quantitative reference of money and legal system, which is a significant shift. And, finally, the perception of the immediate surrounding can be controlled and manipulated e.g. by an air-conditioner. "*Entraeumlichung*" describes these readjustments in the production of space. The driver may not have

recognized this piece of paper, but the woman did – "*Entraeumlichung*" sharpens differences, opening and denying possibilities.

The findings presented are based on an explorative, qualitative approach and need a lot of detailed investigation to prove some of the hypothesis. This includes more nuanced historical research to address a serious deficiency in this work: it is based upon a single field research and historical facts had to be extracted from secondary sources. Furthermore, it would be a major asset to do a discourse analysis of archival materials and political and planning documents, as well as newspapers, to discover discursive shifts. On a theoretical level, taking a closer look at technologies and the role of objects, especially in the direction of Burno Latour's Actor-Network-Theory, might enrich this work. Nevertheless, I think the adoption of Lefebvre's work for the context of Bamako may be an important step in employing a theory that is complex and flexible enough to look at African urbanities. I find that one of the major forces of this spatial approach is Lefebvre's power to integrate material as well as ideal dimensions in the analysis of the production of urban space.

Beneath all the problems and possibilities of this paper, numerous fields remain almost unmentioned: It is quite striking that there were only women constructing the mosque under the bridge. A closer look of the role of gender in the production of space is of great importance and in this work almost completely missed. Equally challenging to the approach is the whole question of digital space, which has been left out of a systematic investigation. It is to be expected that digital space continues to gain importance and thus it is desirable to integrate it firmly with the approach of "*Entraeumlichung*" in particular and space in general. Another field of study that has only been pointed at are the different reactions to processes of "*Entraeumlichung*". Certainly, the availability of resources might be the necessary precondition for participation; nevertheless challenges lead to various and creative solutions and conscious choices. This is a field where this research should go deeper. Finally the role of rhythms, which Lefebvre underlines in his writings, has not been recognized accurately. If, for instance, "*Entraeumlichung*" is related to a tendency of acceleration, what does this mean and how does it work? In the end, rhythm analysis does not only have to take into account repeating routines but also singular events: the "*coup d'État*" on the 21st of March 2012 has certainly changed a lot in Bamako. At least, some productions of knowledge as productions of space would have been different. The present research clearly demonstrates this.

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