# Extended abstract

**Paper title:** Urban Isorhthymia in the Wake of the Consumer Society – towards a discussion of temporal territorialisations and everyday life

**Keywords:** everyday life, retail areas, time, consumption, Consumer society, urban planning, urban design, territorology, rhythmanalysis, theming.

**Abstract:** In terms of time, the western societies have changed from an industrial society of synchronised urban rhythms to a much more heterogeneous society where people live their everyday life following more individual agendas, working atypical hours, etc. This has evoked a lot of new planning initiatives in Europe, however, as the temporal complexities of the everyday life of urban consumers seem to be increasing, the rise of the consumer society has also brought about the territorialisation of large scale retail areas (campus areas, residential areas and office areas) that tend to diminish temporal complexity together with the possibilities of the everyday consumer. The aim of this paper is to investigate and conceptualize the territorialisation of contemporary urban timescapes (from the perspective of the urban consumer and user). This is done through the comparison of two urban areas in Malmö-Lund: the pedestrian precinct of Malmö (transforming from a city center to a retail area) and the University area of Lund (“Kunskapsstråket” a themed urban development project using the idea of the “campus” as strategy for urban development).

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Recent studies have shown that many of the main structural changes of the post-Fordist cities have to do with aspects of time (Mückenberger 2011a, Bonfiglioli 2008). In terms of time, the western societies have changed from an industrial society of synchronised urban rhythms to a much more heterogeneous consumer’s society where people live their everyday life following more individual agendas (Shove et. al. 2009). Non-regulated working hours, privatisation of public services, desynchronisation of operating hours of services and opening hours of shops, increased personal mobilities, greater life expectancy and more leisure time are some of the changes that have put the issue of time high up on the agenda. Time-issues have lately even been associated to a second generation of the Welfare state. Whereas the first generation organized material resources, the second also include the organization of immaterial resources such as time (Mückenberger 2011a:251, Goodin et. al. 2004).

The transformations of time-use and time constraints have evoked a wide range of different planning initiatives in Europe (Belloni 1998, Mareggi 2002, Delfour and Dommergues 2003, Mückenberger 2011a). The urgency of addressing time-issues has also, just recently, also been acknowledged by the Congress of Local and Regional authorities of the Council of Europe as they, in 2010, adopted a recommendation and a resolution about the use of time policies and the right to one’s own time (Mückenberger 2011b).

Unfortunately, however, as the temporary complexities of the everyday life of urban consumers and users seem to be increasing, the rise of the consumer society has also brought about the territorialisation of large scale areas or city districts for one main function (retail areas, campus areas, residential areas and office areas) continuing the isorhythmic evolution brought by modernist zoning and planning, but this time by other means such as theming and branding (Graham & Marvin 2001, Klingmann 2007). As, for example, retail areas keep evolving at an increasingly large scale, both in certain central locations and in the outskirts, the temporal complexity of the urban landscape seems to be diminishing, e.g. leaving large areas empty of life during long hours of the day or the week. If retailisation seems to be the paradigm case of inducing urban isorhythmia, the logic of consumption has spread to other sectors as well (Kärrholm 2009, 2012).

As the development of time policies is well on its way in a lot of European countries, the need of addressing how these issues are, and can be, affected by urban planning, design and form has increased. The discourses on time and urban life have, ever since the early days of time-geography, mainly been seen from the perspective of humans or institutions. Time wealth, *Recht auf eigene zeit*, time scarcity, *droit au temps* (Mückenberger 2011a) are all concepts that high-light temporal aspects from the perspective of the individual, citizen or different sections of the society (gender, class, ethnicity), but that fail to address the role of non-humans in the production of timescapes (Latour 2005). The spatio-temporal transformations and activities of our society need to be tracked not just as set by inhabitants but also from a perspective of architectural and urban design, i.e. the built environment (cf. Van Schaik 2011).

The aim of this article is to investigate the territorialisation and effect on urban consumers of contemporary urban timescapes as produced by both humans and non-humans (Latour 2005, Bennett 2010). This is done through the comparison of two urban processes, in Malmö-Lund: the transformation of the pedestrian precinct of Malmö, transforming from a city center to a retail area (especially during the years 1978-2010, see Kärrholm 2009) and the University area of Lund (“Kunskapsstråket”), a themed urban development project using the idea of the “campus” as a strategy for large-scale urban development, and thus theming a large part of the city under one primary function. Both of these schemes of urban transformations can, from the perspective of the consumer or the citizen, be seen as projects of urban vitalization (as they aim to populate, brand and increase the attraction of these areas), but also as bringing about certain temporal territorialisations risking isorhythmia (Lefebvre 2004), focusing as they are on activities at certain hours of the day, or certain months of the year (conducted by opening hours of the stores, advertisement campaigns, the academic year, etc.). For example, as an urban area, such as a large campus, evolves, it might also come with supporting functions following the same rhythms as academic life (be it lunch restaurants, libraries, cafés, shops, or even bus stations).

The study will focus on these two on-going processes of urban and temporal transformation in the Malmö-Lund region as they have evolved from 1990s until today. The empirical investigation (mainly observational studies, territorial analysis and studies of plans, texts, newspaper archives, etc.) will deal with questions of how different spatio-temporal territorialisations have evolved and been stabilized. Spatio-temporal territorialisations (e.g. as set by bus schedules, lunch hours, school hours, shop opening hours, work hours, etc.), can of course have effects at different scales, and one important task is thus also to analyse and compare how the proliferation and transformation of micro spatio-temporal territorialisations are structured. If urban isorhythmia is evolving, then it is of course important to find means of analysing how it is constituted. This would probably not only depend on the spatio-temporal territorialisations of the area as such, but also on how these are interrelated.

Theoretically the article will expand on the theories of territorology (as e.g. developed in Brighenti 2010 and Kärrholm 2012), conceptualizing aspects of territorial production from a time-space, rather than just spatial perspective. Through the two cases of urban territorialisation in Malmö-Lund (retail and campus area) the article will thus initiate a discussion on the transformation of timescapes, its effect on the urban consumer, and how these timescapes can be seen as produced by both humans and non-humans.

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