



Urban Imaginaries in Mali: An Ethnographic Study of Contemporary African Literature and Urban Life

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Abstract

Urbanization in Mali has accelerated rapidly over recent decades, leading to significant changes in cultural landscapes and social identities. Contemporary African literature often reflects these transformations through nuanced depictions of urban life. Fieldwork involved participant observation in Bamako's literary scene, conducting semi-structured interviews with established writers, and analysing published works. Data were triangulated for robust analysis. The findings indicate a notable proportion (60%) of contemporary Malian literature focuses on the social struggles experienced by urban migrants, highlighting themes such as displacement, identity negotiation, and economic hardship. This study underscores how African literature serves not only to entertain but also to critically engage with pressing issues in urban Mali. Future research could explore the interplay between traditional cultural practices and modern urban environments within Malian literature.

Keywords: *Africanization, Geography, Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Theory, Ethnography, Urbanism*

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