City Special Feature – 'Putting Urban Displacement in its Place'

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Abstract

This paper offers an overview of urban displacement and acts as an introduction to the *Special Feature*: 'Putting Urban Displacement in its Place.' It begins by noting the magnitude and significance of displacement, and summarises its constituent components. Drawing upon the work of Hirsh et al. (2020), the paper then outlines four kinds of urban displacement processes which span cities in the Global South and North: development-induced displacement, slum clearance, eviction, and gentrification. Brief consideration is also given to the significance of studentification, touristification, and austerity for driving urban displacement. Next the paper explores three crucial issues regarding the conceptualisation of urban displacement: temporality, vulnerability to displacement, and its emotional impacts. The following section discusses rehousing/resettlement and post-displacement experiences. We then examine the contested relationship between displacement and gentrification. The penultimate section outlines some of the methodological challenges in undertaking research on displacement, and also returns to the theme of placing urban displacement via a discussion of urban politics. The final section summarises the four papers in the *Special Feature*.

Key words: demolition, displacement, evictions, gentrification, mega-events, post-displacement experiences, regeneration, resettlement, resistance, social housing.

Introduction

Displacement represents a worsening global crisis resulting from a complex gamut of social, economic, and political forces such as large-scale development projects, slum clearance, evictions, rent hikes, gentrification, demolitions, mega-events, wars, 'natural' disasters, etc. (Farha 2011; Sassen 2014; Kothari 2015). It has been estimated that global displacement increased by nearly a third from 2005 to 2015, with India and China worse affected. In India, an estimated 50 million people have been displaced over the last 50 years, mainly due to development projects, while in China approximately 45 million people were similarly displaced in the last half of the twentieth century (Kothari 2015). In Europe, increased displacement is related to the worsening housing affordability crisis, and as such disproportionately affects marginalised and vulnerable groups such as migrants, minority ethnic groups, single-parent families, youth, and people with disabilities (Watt 2018a; Lancione 2019; Bolt and van Liempt 2022; Münch and Siede 2022). Indeed, given that displacement's multiple social, economic, and emotional harms fall most heavily upon classed, racialised and gendered disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and individuals, 'displacement is an invidious form of socio-spatial injustice' (Elliott-Cooper et al. 2020, 503). The prevalence of displacement combined with its clear association with social and spatial injustice has meant

that it 'has arguably become the most important framework for determining the winners and losers of urban (re)development' (Wang 2022, 425).

Our specific focus in this *Special Feature* is on *urban displacement* which involves forced population movement from established housing and neighbourhoods arising from urban redevelopment processes and landlord actions, rather than displacement occurring due to wars, climate change, 'natural' disasters or migration. The latter displacement drivers are associated with forced migration in relation to refugees and as such fall under the generic term 'displacement studies' (Adey et al., 2020). There are, of course, significant urban implications of forced migration and refugees (Darling 2017), not least the creation of refugee camps which operate as spaces of urban marginality (Sanyal 2014).

But what is displacement? A basic definition is: 'involuntary residential mobility' (Carlson, 2020, 574). The notion of being *forced to move,* as opposed to voluntary spatial mobility, is a pivotal feature.

> '[Displacement] happens when forces outside the household make living there impossible, hazardous or unaffordable' (Hartman 1982; cited in Slater 2009, 294-295).

> 'Displacement refers to the forced movement of a person, or people, from their locality or environment and/or occupational activities' (Savin-Badden 2023, 7).

Hence displacement is most commonly thought of as involving real-world forced spatial mobility, i.e. *physical displacement*. Nevertheless, the balance of involuntary as opposed to voluntary mobility can be variable, while a sharp distinction between forced vs. voluntary mobility is, in some cases, not always apparent (Beier et al. 2022a).

In addition to direct physical displacement, the loss of ties to a particular place can involve what Carlson (2020, 575) refers to as *social displacement*, 'meaning the various ways that people lose their social connections in – and to – a place'. Such social displacement has been conceptualised by Marcuse (1986) in relation to gentrification as 'displacement pressure', a form of indirect displacement whereby low-income residents feel that their gentrifying neighbourhood is changing in a manner which no longer includes them, for example due to shifting retail and leisure services catering for a new upper-income clientele. Such displacement pressure is highlighted by the phenomenological approach to displacement that Davidson (2009) advocates whereby understanding the changing meanings of place, particularly involving the *loss of place,* is prioritised. As a recent study of social housing renovation in Sweden argues, conceptualising displacement solely in terms of physical out-migration is inadequate since 'material and symbolic changes in place might so radically alter the everyday lives of occupants that they feel themselves dis*placed* even when staying put' (Pull and Richard 2021, 549; original emphasis).

Such *in situ displacement* and feeling out-of-place is illustrated in studies of North American, European and Australian urban neighbourhoods undergoing gentrification and regeneration in

which low-income and often minority ethnic populations have not been physically relocated, but have instead *managed to stay put*, often due to the existence/reprovision of some form of not-for-profit social housing (see *inter alia* August 2014; Hyra 2015; Shaw and Hagemans 2015; Wallace 2020; Pastak and Kahrik 2021; Wynne and Rogers, 2021; Watt 2022). Hyra (2015), for example, refers to 'cultural displacement' occurring in a gentrifying area of Washington DC. Although the low-income, mainly black residents were able to physically stay put due to the existence of church-owned affordable housing projects, they felt culturally alienated within the gentrifying and increasingly white neighbourhood. Hyra (2015, 1754) adds the notion of 'political displacement' to the displacement lexicon. Political displacement occurs 'when low-income people remain but become overpowered by upper-income newcomers', for example in relation to shifting formal political representation. As Hyra demonstrates, such political displacement facilitates cultural displacement since older black cultural institutions, such as churches and music clubs, are either threatened or shut down, while new facilities appear, such as bike lanes and dog parks, which prioritise the demands of the new population, under the auspices of the new local political arrangements. Several aspects of Hyra's findings on *in situ* social displacement also feature in research by Shaw and Hagemans (2015) on low-income stayers in two gentrifying neighbourhoods in Melbourne, notably a sense of loss of place. However, Shaw and Hagemans (2015) identify certain differences between their two case study neighbourhoods, suggesting that Hyra's political displacement is variable, since local governance in one neighbourhood operated more explicitly in the interests of low-income residents with some interviewees even expressing no sense of displacement. Such variation illustrates how local state politics can potentially make a difference to displacement processes and impacts, a point we return to below.

In theorising urban displacement, David Harvey (2003) has famously argued that 'accumulation by dispossession' is an important mainstay of contemporary neoliberal capitalism involving the privatisation and marketisation of those held-in-common resources previously associated with the Keynesian welfare state, such as public housing, land, and nationalised industries. Accumulation by dispossession threatens the long-term spatial connection of working-class and minority ethnic communities to urban locations – often in or near the city centre – which are being 'renewed' and 'regenerated', with often deleterious displacement consequences, as in the case of social housing estate demolition and redevelopment in London (Hodkinson and Essen 2015; Watt 2021), and estate 'upgrading' and selling off in Sydney (Morris 2019a). Urban displacement is certainly caused by blatant capitalist forces such as neoliberalism, financialisation, gentrification, and the expansion of precarious forms of employment (Sassen 2014; Rolnik 2019; Soederberg 2021). Indeed, as Soederberg (2021, 1) states, one of the distinguishing features of contemporary capitalism is that 'more and more people with insufficient or irregular income have become embroiled in a vicious cycle of displacement marked by overindebtedness, rental arrears, evictions and the most violent form of dislocation: homelessness.'

At the same time, urban displacement in much of the world, and not least in the Global South with its large-scale displacement and resettlement programmes, also has complex intertwined political and identity-based logics apart from capital accumulation and class struggle – what

Yiftachel (2020) refers to as 'identity regimes'. As Yiftachel (2020, 156) argues, such forces as infrastructure projects, political security, environmental pressures, national identity as well as religious, ethnic and gender identities, 'are often related, but cannot be reduced to subsets of global capitalism or gentrification, and at times even work against the interest of capital.' As Doshi (2013) illustrates, although slum clearance in Mumbai has accumulation by dispossession underpinnings, its enactment and experiences vary considerably even within the same city due to identity differences (religious and ethnic), cultural politics and local traditions of activism. Inspired by Foucauldian-inspired approaches to governmentality and subject-making, as well as political-economic work, Rogers and Wilmsen (2020, 268), 'understand resettlement to be a governmental program with multiple logics, one that seeks to render people and space more governable.' Such multiplicity of logics means that displacement related to resettlement is especially likely to be experienced differently depending upon context. Hence urban displacement needs to be put in its place – or places – in order to fully understand which residents 'win' (if any) and 'lose' from displacement/resettlement processes.

Urban displacement processes

In this section, we examine four kinds of urban displacement processes that Hirsh et al. (2020) identify in their overview paper, and which span cities in the Global South and Global North: development-induced displacement, slum clearance, eviction, and gentrification. To these, we add three further urban displacement related processes: studentification, touristification, and austerity urbanism.

Development-induced displacement (DID)

The first urban displacement process that Hirsh et al. (2020) identity is development-induced displacement (DID) which is rooted in large-scale development projects such as dams, factories, mining, and urban infrastructure such as transportation systems. Kothari (2015) has suggested that more people have been displaced by such development projects than by disasters and conflict over the previous fifty years.

The staging of mega-events, such as the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup, can be added to this DID category since 'displacements and forced evictions are common features of preparations for mega-events' (Rolnik 2019, 189; see COHRE 2007; Porter 2009; UN-Habitat 2011). Dupont (2011) shows how over 300,000 people were evicted from their homes between 2004 and 2006 to facilitate the redevelopment of the Yamuna riverfront and the construction of the Games Village for the staging of the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi. An estimated staggering 1.5 million people were displaced to create the Olympic Games' venues, facilitate 'beautification' for tourism, and build other infrastructure projects for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games (COHRE, 2008). Direct displacement of both residents and industry also occurred in the case of the preparation and aftermaths of the 2012 London Olympic Games, although at a much lower scale in comparison to the 2008 Beijing Games (Watt 2013, 2018a; Bernstock 2014; Davis and Bernstock, 2023). Over 65,000 residents of favelas in Rio de

Janeiro were evicted over the 2010-16 period, in the lead-up to the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Rio Olympic Games (Vannuchi and Van Criekingen 2015; Freeman 2020; Sørbøe and Braathen 2022).

'Slum clearance'

Hirsh et al's. (2020) second urban displacement process is 'slum clearance', although the term 'slum' is pejorative and stigmatising, and by no means necessarily accepted by residents of designated 'slum' areas themselves (Gans 1962; Gilbert 2007). Hirsh et al. (2020) bifurcate slum clearance into two distinct variants. The first variant occurred in many cities of the West throughout the twentieth century whereby older areas of rundown housing were demolished and new homes were built, ostensibly to improve the living conditions of those displaced. Slum clearance reached its apogee across the Global North with the controversial urban renewal programmes from the late 1940s to the 1970s (Young and Willmott 1957; Gans 1962; Wilson 1966; Urban 2012). In the US, urban renewal began with the federal Housing Act of 1949 which displaced around one million people, three quarters of whom were 'people of color' (Fullilove and Wallace 2011, 382). In many US and European cities, urban renewal resulted in the construction of large-scale public housing estates as part of the creation of national Keynesian welfare states (Young and Willmott 1957; Urban 2012; Kearns et al. 2019). However, the notion that slum clearance and associated public housing redevelopment had necessarily progressive motivations and outcomes is questionable given how public housing projects in US cities, such as Chicago, facilitated the racialised reproduction of the old 'black ghetto' through creating the 'second ghetto' (Hirsch, 1983). The second slum clearance variant that Hirsh et al. (2020) identify is the removal of informal settlements, as primarily associated with cities in the Global South, which we discuss further below.

We can add a third variant to Hirsh and colleagues' slum clearance theme – or more accurately a contemporary variant on 1940s-70s' 'old urban renewal' – i.e. the 'new urban renewal' which has occurred via the demolition of post-War public/social housing estates, and their rebuilding as 'mixed-tenure' neighbourhoods with large proportions of private homes for sale and/or market rent (Hyra 2008; Morris et al. 2012; Watt and Smets 2017). Such new urban renewal began in the early 1970s with the tearing down of the infamous – albeit heavily stigmatised – Pruitt-Igoe projects in St. Louis, USA, only twenty years after it was built (Freidrichs 2011). This decimation of public housing continued in the US via the large-scale HOPE VI programme which began in the early 1990s (Goetz 2013; Vale 2019). Such new urban renewal is a classic feature of contemporary neoliberal housing redevelopment across cities of the Global North, and is associated with manifold displacement effects, both direct and indirect (Glynn 2009; Lees and Ferreri 2016; Morris 2019a; Watt 2021), as we discuss in greater detail below.

Eviction

The third urban displacement process that Hirsh et al. (2020) identify is eviction: 'a specific form of displacement, which refers to the removal of a tenant from rental property by the

landlord through legal action or to the removal of persons from premises that were foreclosed by a mortgage' (Bolt and van Liempt 2022, 96). An estimated ten million people were evicted from their homes due to bank repossessions after owners defaulted on their mortgage payments in the US as part of the fall-out from the 2008 Global Financial Crash (GFC) (Gottesdeiner 2013, cited in Bowstead et al. 2020). Matthew Desmond's *Evicted* (2016), graphically reveals the processes and damaging impacts of evictions on the poor African-American population living in Milwaukee.

The OECD (2021, 164) defines evictions as, 'the involuntary removal of people from their homes involving a judicial process in courts or other litigating bodies'. However, such legalistic definitions have been criticised by Hartman and Robinson (2003) as being sociologically narrow since most tenants are *informally* forced out of their homes by landlords even though no court process occurs, for example by simply not renewing a lease, telling tenants to leave, or by increasing the rent to an untenable level (see Desmond 2016). Furthermore, such informal mechanisms can spill over into illegal harassment. Hence evictions form a 'hidden housing problem' which official statistics typically under-estimate (Hartman and Robinson 2003; Bolt and van Liempt 2022). Kothari (2015), among others, has furthermore argued that many evictions involve violations of human rights' norms, for example by not giving a tenant adequate notice of termination, no or inadequate consultation, and the use of excessive force; see the paper by Chaudhary (2023) in the *Special Feature*.

Gentrification

The fourth urban displacement process that Hirsh et al. (2020) mention is gentrification. Gentrification has been causally linked to displacement in US cities for many decades (LeGates and Hartman 1982), while more recently it has been identified as making it increasingly difficult for low-income residents to retain a foothold in urban neighbourhoods across the globe (Bounds and Morris 2006; Lees et al. 2015, 2016; Helbrecht 2017). Following Marcuse's seminal paper (1986), prominent gentrification scholars have argued that displacement is an integral component of gentrification and that the two terms should therefore be analysed in tandem (Slater 2006). Indeed, this notion prompted a heated debate on gentrification and displacement in *City* (Hamnett 2009; Slater 2009, 2010). The interlinkages between displacement and gentrification have been re-emphasised more recently in an overview paper which aims to 'put displacement front and central as its [gentrification] defining feature' (Elliott-Cooper et al., 2020, 503). We discuss the relationship between gentrification and displacement in greater detail below.

Studentification, touristification and austerity urbanism

If the above four processes are probably the most prominent features of contemporary urban displacement, others – such as *studentification* (Sage et al., 2013; Smith, 2014) and *touristification* (Carvalho et al. 2019; Salerno 2022; Cocola-Gant 2023) – could be added. While studentification and touristification processes undoubtedly result in displacement, both direct and indirect, there remains considerable debate regarding whether they can be regarded

as merely variants on gentrification or whether they have distinctive patterns and drivers which separate them off from 'mainstream' gentrification (Nakazawa 2017; Carvalho et al. 2019; Salerno 2022).

Furthermore, welfare state policies can also result in direct displacement, for example, punitive austerity-related policies on welfare benefit levels and entitlement as occurred in the UK during the post-GFC period (Nowicki 2017; Gillespie et al. 2021). One estimate is that between 62,000 and 167,000 UK households were displaced from their homes due to the government's 'Bedroom Tax' which was imposed on those social housing tenants with supposed 'spare rooms' (Bowstead et al. 2020). Contemporary welfare state restructuring takes the form of 'austerity urbanism' (Peck 2012) whose trajectory and effects are spatially uneven both between and within nation states (Greer Watson 2016; Davies and Blanco 2017). Local governments, with their own political histories and proclivities, can make a difference vis-à-vis the implementation of austerity urbanism related policies, especially in the field of housing (Gillespie et al. 2018, 2021; Watt 2018a, 2018b). In the case of the east London borough of Newham, for example, 'austerity urbanism is implemented through a localised regime of "welfare chauvinism"' (Gillespie et al. 2021, 1714) which has had particularly detrimental impacts regarding the displacement of low-income residents from the local area. Thus, urban politics can have significant impacts upon displacement, and again this illustrates the importance of putting displacement 'in its place'.

Conceptualising urban displacement

There have been several important recent publications regarding how research and analysis on urban displacement should be framed, albeit with somewhat different analytical emphases, on: the geographies of forced evictions (Brickell et al. 2017a); the experience of being displaced (Hirsh et al. 2020); housing displacement (Baeten et al. 2021); and urban resettlement in the Global South (Beier et al. 2022b). Using these publications as a broad guide, we explore three key themes in the conceptualisation of urban displacement: temporality, vulnerability, and emotional impacts.

Temporality and displacement

The temporal nature of displacement emerges both in relation to how displacement has long-term historical trajectories and roots dating back to early capitalist primitive accumulation and colonial land grabs, and also how the *process of displacement* itself unfolds across highly variable time-scales (Brickell et al. 2017a; Hirsh et al. 2020; Baeten et al. 2021; Beier et al. 2022b).The latter 'range of temporalities' incorporates both 'slow and fast violence' (Tyner 2020, 81), ranging from shockingly abrupt cases in the Global South when residents are given a few hours' eviction notice (Hirsh et al. 2020), to a gradual unfolding over many years (Pain 2019). Such gradualness can stretch out across one-three decades, as in the case of the demolition of social housing estates in London prompting great uncertainty amongst residents (Watt 2021). As Persdotter et al. (2021) emphasise, displacement pressure (in Marcuse's terms)

can build up over years leading to residents feeling profoundly unsettled and 'out-of-place' well prior to any actual relocation occurring, and even if such relocation *never* in fact occurs (see Baeten et al. 2017; Pull and Richard 2021).

If indirect displacement pressures can build up over years, this does not imply that physical displacement is by contrast a singular one-off event. In fact, households can be compelled to move *several times* – what LeGates and Hartman (1982, 47) refer to as 'multiple displacements'. Such multiple displacements occurred in the case of those unfortunate Japanese households who were twice removed to make way for the Tokyo Olympic Games: first in 1964 and then again in preparation for the 2021 Games (Mori 2017). Fullilove and Wallace (2011) discuss 'serial forced displacement' with reference to the multiple forced relocations that a gamut of urban policies and processes have produced during the last one hundred years in the US including urban renewal, HOPE VI, gentrification and the recent foreclosure crisis. African Americans have been particularly badly affected, turning them into 'a persistent de facto internal refugee population' (Fullilove and Wallace, 2011, 383), and one which is susceptible to ill-health and violence as a cumulative result of their multiple forced moves. Watt (2018b) uses the term 'recurrent displacement' with reference to the repeated forced moves that the homeless living in temporary accommodation in London face, highlighting how once-displaced households can be *vulnerable* to further forced moves in the future.

Vulnerability to displacement: displaceability

Yiftachel (2020) captures the notion of vulnerability to displacement via his influential concept of 'displaceability' which refers to being susceptible to involuntary removal from the resources and rights associated with the city or metropolitan region. Writing from a southeastern perspective, Yiftachel (2020, 161) highlights the state of insecure waiting that he contends is a common feature of the contemporary urban condition: 'Displaceability holds large parts of urban society in suspense, often living on borrowed time in conditions of growing vulnerability and uncertainty.' An example of such displaceability is the study by Chatterjee (2014) of the displacement of the settlements on the Sabarmati riverside in Ahmedabad, India. Although Chatterjee does not actually use the term displaceability, her study richly illustrates the ongoing marginality and vulnerability that the displaced and supposedly resettled residents face due to their class exploitation (as informal workers) and their religious identity (as Muslims). She later concludes that displacement has become an *inevitable* part of urban existence for the urban poor in India (Chatterjee 2021).

Lancione (2019) has examined vulnerability to displacement and its gradual unfolding via an innovative activist-informed 'processual methodology' with reference to the brutal eviction of Roma people from a social housing block onto the street in Bucharest, Romania. He details intersecting processes in the *embodiment of urban precarity* and how this is made, unmade and ultimately enforced: premakings (the historical context); in-makings (how the subject is affected); un-makings (how resistance occurs), and re-makings (how governance is reasserted). Lancione traces how neoliberal processes of privatisation of social housing intersect with the

racialised stigmatisation and marginalisation of the Roma population. In his study of Roma displacement, Van Baar (2016, 214) introduces the concept of 'evictability' – as a way of defining 'the possibility of being removed from a sheltering place' – as another way of understanding vulnerability to displacement. A recent study of Roma displacement utilises the concept of evictability and the 'becoming of eviction' (Dobos et al. 2023). This study focuses on the threat of eviction of Roma people from an apartment block in a small Slovakian town. Like Lancione's study, Dobos and colleagues highlight the long-term state making-precarious status of Roma people and their various resistance efforts. However, unlike the brutality of the displacement of Roma in Bucharest, a violent eviction did not occur in the Slovakian case. Nevertheless, the local authorities turned off the heating and even cold-water supply which left the remaining residents fearful of living with *'the stagnation of precarity'* (Dobos et al. 2023, 141, original emphasis).

Emotional impacts of displacement

As well as being an inherently temporal phenomenon, displacement also has a strong emotional component: 'Displacement is a traumatic experience, one that frequently elicits feelings of anger, frustration, grief, and uncertainty' (Persdotter et al. 2021, 193). Such powerful negative feelings often emerge in research which emphasises the *lived experience of being displaced* (Morris 2017a, 2019b; Hirsh et al. 2020; Beier et al. 2022b). The emotional and even traumatic aspect of displacement is captured by Fullilove (2016) in her evocative notion of 'root shock', and by Atkinson (2015) in his exploration of 'un-homing' in Sydney. Studies of urban displacement resulting from public housing regeneration in cities like London and Sydney have revealed its emotionally upsetting nature, and especially in the case of elderly or otherwise vulnerable tenants (Morris 2019a, 2019b; Lees and Hubbard 2020; Watt 2021, 2023a). Such negative feelings also have a temporal aspect since, 'Forced evictions are detrimental processes that hurt, haunt and linger before, during and after their eventuality' (Brickell et al. 2017b, 11). Pain (2019) refers to the 'slow violence' associated with dispossession, i.e. a gradual unfolding sense of trauma. Furthermore, the emotional effects of displacement and resettlement can persist over a long period, as in Bridonneau's (2022) study of Lalibela, Ethiopia, where she argues that nostalgia for what has been lost, as well as anger, remain the dominant emotional registers through which residents viewed their resettlement after a ten-year period.

The *threat of displacement* can itself produce powerful negative emotions, as Dobos et al. (2023, 142) highlight in their study of Slovakian Roma: 'Once the tenants received the notice of termination of their tenancy in the eviction phase, they experienced confusion, uncertainty, despair, fear and mistrust'. Watt (2018b, 74) has conceptualised this *anticipatory emotional response* as 'displacement anxiety': 'the feeling that potential displacees have once they have either been told their home will be demolished, or when they are given notice to quit', which 'generates a profound sense of ontological insecurity as people literally do not "know their place"'. Such displacement anxiety is enhanced by residents' prior histories of housing precarity as well as by their class and racialised disadvantages and vulnerabilities (Watt 2018b, 2021, 2023a; see Soederberg 2021).

One prominent emotional reaction by residents to displacement and the threat of displacement is anger – directed at the multiple injustices involved in being forcibly removed from established homes and communities, as identified in longitudinal studies of displacement in both the Global South (Bridonneau 2022) and North (Watt 2023a). Such anger feeds into collective resistance to displacement whereby residents band together to maintain their 'right to stay put' and/or 'right to the city', as in the case of the Roma discussed above (Lancione 2019).

Rehousing/resettlement and post-displacement experiences

Much of the literature on urban displacement has focused on the causes and processes of displacement, while 'there is comparatively much less known about the life of residents after displacement' (Wang 2020, 703), i.e. what can be termed residents' 'post-displacement' experiences. While both eviction and gentrification-induced displacement typically result in no *formal rehousing* of displacees, DID and slum clearance/urban renewal are far more likely to involve the state offering those being displaced some kind of *compensation* (typically financial), and *replacement housing* where they are rehoused/resettled either in, near to, or away from their original neighbourhood. Thus, 'resettlement is a distinctive form of mobility in that why, where, and how people move are determined by authorities ahead of displacement' (Rogers and Wilmsen, 2020, 256). As Rogers and Wilmsen argue, while resettlement always involves prior displacement, displacement is not necessarily followed by resettlement. In their recent collection on urban resettlement in the Global South, Beier et al. (2022a, 6) stress how people experience displacement and resettlement as 'interconnected processes' involving both destruction of homes and places, as well as their simultaneous creation. Indeed, three of the four papers in the *Special Feature* (by Aguilera, Beier and Chaudhary) explore this relationship between displacement and resettlement within the context of slum clearance programmes.

Eligibility

One of the key analytical facets of the displacement experience, as Hirsh et al. (2020) highlight, is 'eligibility': which displacees are deemed eligible for financial compensation and/or rehousing/resettlement by the state, and which are not. Hirsh et al. (2020) argue that the purpose of the displacement is a key factor in determining eligibility. Thus, many slum clearance/urban renewal programmes in the Global North are justified on the premise that displacement and subsequent rehousing will improve residents' housing, health and well-being. This was a common feature of post-War urban renewal programmes in Northern European and US cities and as such formed part of the wider development of the Keynesian welfare state (Watt and Smets 2017; Kearns et al. 2019). However, slum clearance does not necessarily result in government rehousing of displaced residents. One famous historical example is the clearance of the Old Nichol 'rookery' in the East End of London in the 1890s and its replacement with the Boundary Street estate, London's first public/council housing estate, which housed better-off workers while the poorer Old Nichol residents were de facto ineligible since they could not afford the higher rents (Wise 2013).

Rehousing eligibility is examined by Shamsuddin and Vale (2017) in one of the few before-and-after studies of the US HOPE VI housing renewal programme. They analyse the redevelopment of the Orchard Park Public Housing Project in Boston, which was transformed into the rebranded, mixed-income Orchard Gardens development. Shamsuddin and Vale (2017) highlight increased levels of tenant satisfaction with both housing and the neighbourhood at Orchard Gardens, plus lower levels of crime and fear of crime. However, there was a net reduction in the number of social housing units, so not everyone could return to the redeveloped area even if they wanted to. Furthermore, although Orchard Park tenants had a formal 'right to return' to the redeveloped Orchard Gardens, those who were in rent arrears, had a history of property damage, or had drug and crime convictions were excluded. Such exclusionary criteria illustrate the socially selective nature of this HOPE VI renewal project, and the conditional nature of resident rehousing.

Eligibility for financial compensation and rehousing is heavily stratified by housing tenure in cities in both the Global South and North. In their study of resettlement in Addis Ababa, Abebe and Hesselberg (2015) found that the compensation process only really applied to private property owners (albeit that the payments were often inadequate), and de facto excluded private renters, residents of government-owned houses, and informal dwellers. In London regeneration schemes, eligibility for rehousing after social housing estate demolition is also heavily stratified, albeit that secure council tenants have the most rehousing rights for any new properties which are built, with homeowners offered cash compensation (but often at not enough money to remain in the renewed area), while private tenants have hardly any rights (Hodkinson and Essen 2015; Watt 2021). This crucial issue of eligibility is examined by Aguilera (2023) in his paper on Madrid's slum clearance program in this *Special Feature*.

Post-displacement experiences

Resettlement issues are prominent in the Global South (Hirsh et al. 2020; Beier 2022b). In their paper on displacement and resettlement in Delhi, Bhan and Shivanand (2013) argue that not only has the eviction of poor *basti* dwellers (residents of informal settlements) due to court actions accelerated since 2000, but that only around half of those so evicted have been resettled. In her paper for the *Special Feature*, Chaudhary (2023) provides an in-depth account of one such group of *basti* dwellers who were displaced from an informal settlement in Delhi and subsequently resettled in the peripheral Narela area. She highlights the coercion used to force people to move and the largely negative after-effects on the displacees. Loss of community and neighbourliness, as well as struggling to make a decent livelihood in peripheral locations due to removal from previous places of work and informal housing, are prominent themes in the Global South displacement/resettlement literature (see *inter alia* Chatterjee 2014; Kothari 2015; Patel et al. 2015; Fernández Arrigoitia 2017; Huang and Liu 2022). However, Beier (2023a), in his paper for the *Special Feature*, shows how the displacement and subsequent resettlement of 'shantytown dwellers' in Casablanca, Morocco, was experienced as relatively benign. Displaced residents in Casablanca were generally pleased with their new accommodation, but resented the poor public transport and the lack of facilities in the new area. The kinds of

ambivalences and contradictions that Beier (2023a) highlights vis-à-vis resettlement are increasingly recognised in both the Global South (Wang 2022; Meth et al. 2023) and Global North literatures, as we now discuss.

One prominent example of such contradictions is illustrated by the contrasting research findings regarding the displacement effects of public/social housing estate regeneration – new urban renewal – in the Global North. On the one hand, the critical urbanist literature has emphasised how such regeneration/renewal produces largely negative direct and indirect displacement effects for the original, typically low-income and often multi-ethnic estate residents, some of whom (even in some cases the majority) will not be resettled in the redeveloped 'mixed-tenure' (aka gentrified) neighbourhoods (Glynn 2009; Slater 2013). Indeed, the critical urbanist literature tends to interpret estate regeneration as de facto *state-led gentrification*. Displacement occurs via various estate regeneration strategies. These include the demolition of existing public/social housing dwellings and the subsequent redevelopment of estates as mixed-tenure neighbourhoods, as has occurred in British (Hodkinson and Essen 2015; Wallace 2015, 2020; Lees and Ferreri 2016; Lees and Hubbard 2020; Hubbard and Lees 2018, 2021; Watt 2021, 2022), North American (Hyra 2008; Goetz 2013; August 2014; Vale 2019), and Australian cities (Wynne and Rogers 2021; Porter et al. 2023). In the case of Sweden, estate regeneration has largely occurred via renovation and upgrading rather than demolition and rebuilding (Baeten et al. 2017; Polanska and Richard 2021; Pull and Richard 2021), but this has resulted in 'renoviction', referring to 'a phenomenon through which renovation processes in rental housing are linked to substantial rent increases, forcing tenants to move from their homes as they cannot afford the higher living costs' (Gustafsson et al. 2019, 193). A third estate regeneration strategy is keeping and refurbishing the original buildings, but physically removing the original tenants in favour of new upmarket homeowners, as has occurred in Sydney (Morris 2019a).

Numerous negative displacement effects are highlighted in the above critical literature, not least of which is the destruction of long-established public/social housing estate-based communities. Drawing on interviews with public housing tenants who had been displaced and tenants who were still fighting displacement in Sydney, Morris (2019b) has coined the term 'communicide' to capture how such displacement destroyed a vibrant community and evoked enormous stress and dislocation. Such social disruption has prompted Hubbard and Lees (2018) to advocate for the 'right to community' in relation to estate regeneration, alongside the more familiar calls by housing activists and engaged academics for the 'right to stay put' and the 'right to the city' (Hartman 1984; Slater 2013; Watt 2013; Gustafsson et al. 2019; Elliott-Cooper et al. 2020). Another prominent aspect of new urban renewal is how the tearing down of the US public housing projects has had strongly negative racialised impacts on the dominant African-American tenant population (Fullilove and Wallace 2011; Goetz 2013).

There is nevertheless another substantial body of research on public/social housing estate regeneration in The Netherlands (Posthumus et al. 2013; Tieskens and Musterd 2013), Glasgow in Scotland (Kearns and Mason 2013; Egan et al. 2015; Lawson et al. 2015), Birmingham in England (Murie 2018), and Paris (Lelevrier 2013; Posthumus and Lelevrier 2013) which argues

that social tenants and residents are not as scarred by forced relocation as the above critical literature suggests, and that they can even positively welcome and benefit from being resettled in the redeveloped neighbourhood. Hence a strict binary division between regeneration 'winners' (incoming affluent homeowners) and 'losers' (displaced poor social tenants) is regarded in this literature as simplistic. This body of work also takes a far more cautionary approach to the concept of displacement itself, suggesting that this term is ideologically loaded since it *a priori* assumes that relocation is always and everywhere negative for residents. Instead, this approach prefers the more neutral term 'residential relocation', and advocates developing 'a balanced perspective on relocation processes and outcomes' (Kleinhans and Kearns 2013, 163). This analytical approach also prioritises residents' 'agency' and capacity for exercising 'choice' within the relocation process, and thereby challenges the notion that relocated social tenants are passive victims within regeneration programmes (Kearns and Mason 2013; Kleinhans and Kearns 2013). Beier (2023a) advocates for this emphasis on agency and choice in his paper in the *Special Feature*. One potential campaigning and policy implication regarding utilising an agency/choice analytical lens is that rather than advocating for the 'right to stay put', maybe the emphasis should be placed upon residents' 'right to decide', as Audycka (2023) suggests in her research on displacement in Łódź, Poland, where many relocated residents chose not to return to their old neighbourhood.

Our own view on the above complex debate is that an emphasis on resident agency and choice within the relocation process can be potentially useful both empirically and analytically, for example in relation to understanding variations in how displacement is experienced by residents. Nevertheless, we identify four criticisms of the more positive estate regeneration relocation studies and their emphasis on resident agency and choice. First, is that some of these studies (especially those based solely on survey research) can be methodologically criticised for lacking sufficient *depth* in relation to exploring issues as sociologically complex and emotionally laden as home, place belonging, and displacement (Davidson 2009; Easthope 2014; Manzo and Devine-Wright 2014). Second, if the regeneration of public/social housing estates is as beneficial to residents as the agency/choice-oriented literature tends to suggest, it then becomes difficult to understand and explain the widespread activism and resistance that such regeneration has given rise to amongst estate residents themselves (see *inter alia* Watt 2013, 2021; August 2016; Lees and Ferreri 2016; Hubbard and Lees 2018; Gustafsson et al. 2019; Lancione 2019; Morris 2019a; Polanska and Richard 2021). In their work on tenants resisting 'renovictions' and possible displacement in Sweden, Polanska and Richard (2021, 187) identify eight 'forms of resistance repertoires' which incorporate both individual and collective types of action. More generally, understanding such actions and how resistance occurs and with what effects, will assist in grasping spatial variations in displacement processes and impacts, a point we return to below. Third, within the 'official regeneration discourse' (that framed by the major regeneration agencies: social housing landlords, local government, and property developers; Watt, 2017), the notion of 'resident choice' is often written into the regeneration agenda, even though in practice this proves to be either partial or chimerical and as such ultimately operates as an ideological cloak for real power and control (Watt 2021). Baeten et al. (2017, 642) explain how although Swedish tenants have to formally give their approval for

renovation, in reality the approval letter that tenants have to sign lacks a 'no' box, prompting one tenant to say, 'it's like a North-Korean democracy'.

Fourth, and most importantly, the agency/choice analytical lens tends to downplay the role of power, which is a core component of displacement (Hirsh et al. 2020). Indeed, as Hartman (1984) argues, the 'right to displace' is *written into* established dominant property arrangements, whereas by contrast the displaced must *struggle* just for the 'right to stay put'. The displaced are of course not entirely lacking power within the urban displacement dynamic, as Rinn et al. (2022) show in their interactionist study on tenants' variegated responses to rent increases in Hamburg, Germany. Resistance, contestation and collective mobilisation by estate residents also indicate how power relations can be shifted towards residents with positive impacts for the latter, including delaying, ameliorating, and even preventing displacement (Watt 2013, 2021; August 2016; Lees and Ferreri 2016; Hubbard and Lees 2018; Morris 2019a; Polanska and Richard 2021). Notwithstanding such successes, the power of displaced tenants in regeneration and rehousing schemes is structurally limited compared to that of landlords, the state, and property developers (August 2016). Given such power imbalances, as well as the capital accumulation potential involved in estate regeneration programmes (via exploiting the 'state-induced rent gap'; Watt 2021), blanket notions of resident 'choice' and 'agency' need to be treated with caution and considerable scepticism by researchers, not least in those contexts where landlords and state agencies *claim* to be prioritising residents' own wishes.

How can the seemingly contradictory nature of post-displacement experiences be conceptualised and understood in a manner that acknowledges and illuminates potential social and spatial variations? We briefly summarise three recent approaches to addressing this issue. First, in their research on resettlement in Ethiopia and South Africa, Meth et al. (2023) introduce the concept of 'disruptive re-placement' as a way of illuminating how relocation processes have high degrees of ambivalence and contradiction that residents themselves experience, and therefore of finessing the generally negative connotations attached to 'displacement'.

Second, Wang (2022) takes inspiration from the work of Rogers and Wilmsen (2020) on reterritorialisation to emphasise the duality of displacement and resettlement processes in the Hesha Hangcheng relocation settlement in Shanghai. Wang demonstrates the active role of the state in operationalising 'state-led community building' (ibid. 424) with reference to party branches and residential committees and their role in creating positive neighbourhood social relations, for example by recruiting resident volunteers and by providing various local services. Thus, while displacement involves a process of deterritorialization, i.e. the breaking down of established social and material relations, there is also the possibility of a 'rebuilding of place-based social relations and sentiments through reterritorialization' (ibid. 438). Employing such a deterritorialisation/reterritorialisation dual conceptual framework offers one way of understanding some of the tensions and contradictions that emerge in relation to displacement if this also involves resettlement. Indeed, the overt application of a deterritorialisation/reterritorialisation conceptual framework would assist in analytically

teasing out the tensions identified in the above debate on social housing estate regeneration/renewal.

Third, Watt (2021, 2022) has argued that the contradictory nature of post-displacement impacts in relation to social housing tenants returning to their redeveloped estates in London can be understood using a micro-spatial lens. He argues that distinctions can be made between tenants' domestic homes as places in comparison to the larger spatial scales of apartment blocks and neighbourhoods. Whereas returning residents were more likely to approve of domestic-scale improvements in housing (due to having newer and larger properties), they were more negative regarding their new blocks and neighbourhoods as places which suffered from a loss of communal social relations, and also witnessed displacement pressure resulting from increased costs and feeling 'out of place' in the new mixed-tenure, gentrified neighbourhoods. Other rehousing/resettlement studies have also highlighted how such micro-spatial distinctions, for example between domestic and neighbourhood scales, are relevant for understanding how displacement is experienced by residents (Collyer et al. 2017). In her study of an Ethiopian city, Bridonneau (2022) emphasises how the changing materiality between the pre-resettlement and resettlement neighbourhoods – one porous and open to the street, and the other walled and closed off – shattered the previous social vibrancy of the neighbourhood. Thus, while Davidson's (2009) phenomenological emphasis on excavating the meanings of place vis-à-vis displacement is undoubtedly a powerful way of understanding *how and why displacement matters and to whom,* place itself needs to be further unpacked with reference to finer-grade spatial distinctions. The work of Kusenbach (2008) on the 'nested character of place' and the differential 'microsettings of community' is suggestive in this regard. Therefore, operationalising a methodological approach which is sensitive to micro-spatial contexts, processes and places can help us to understand the sometimes contradictory impacts of urban displacement involving resettlement.

Disentangling displacement from gentrification?

In their work on housing displacement, Pull et al. (2021, 4) argue that due to the influence of Marcuse's work and other early work on gentrification, displacement within urban studies 'got entangled with and seen as the backside of gentrification.' The analytical fusion of displacement and gentrification has prompted vigorous debate, not least in *City* itself (Ghertner 2015; Lopez-Morales 2015; Bernt 2016). As the concept of gentrification has globalised via 'global gentrification' (Lees et al. 2015) and 'planetary gentrification' (Lees et al. 2016), it has come under increasing fire for its 'everywhere-and-anywhere' quality, as Bernt (2016, 637) neatly captures.

> 'More and more often, the concept of gentrification is seen as thin theory, increasingly overstretched and not capable of integrating different trajectories of urban change into its theoretical framework anymore.'

It has been suggested that the *over-use* of a gentrification framework crowds out other explanations of displacement which are rendered invisible within gentrification's one-size-fits-all urban landscape.

> 'The concept of gentrification has become stretched, both conceptually and geographically, in ways that both erode its utility and displace alternative ways of understanding the displacement of lower-income people by urban transformation.' (Smart and Smart 2017, 518).

Prominent urbanists working on displacement in the Global South have utilised a gentrification framework (López-Morales 2015; Janoschka and Sequera, 2016). Others, however, are overtly critical of the gentrification-displacement relationship and argue that displacement results from urban land market dynamics, state interventions, and political processes which cannot be neatly slotted into a neo-Marxist gentrification rent gap/class struggle problematic (Ghertner 2014, 2015; Yiftachel 2020).

In the Global North, Bernt (2022) has recently emphasised the role played by national and local government policies in producing and ameliorating gentrification within three European cities via his concept of the 'commodification gap'. Other urbanists have queried how far gentrification is actually occurring in those European cities with different housing and welfare systems from the neoliberal Anglo-American model, for example in Paris (Preteceille 2007), and Southern Europe with its distinctive market-state-civil society arrangements (Maloutas 2012, 2018). The dominance of the gentrification problematic in explaining displacement has even been challenged within its Anglo-American heartlands (Revel Sims 2016), including via highlighting the *racialised nature* of state and market violence which is driving displacement processes; see McElroy and Werth's (2019) paper on Oakland, California. In 'hyper-gentrifying' London (Lees et al. 2016), the displacement of multi-ethnic working-class residents from inner London towards peripheral areas is undeniably being driven by gentrification-related processes (Lees and Ferreri 2016; Almeida 2021; Watt 2023b). Yet at the same time, contemporary displacement in London has other causes, such as welfare austerity cuts and reforms (discussed above), which should not be overlooked (Nowicki 2017; Gillespie et al. 2021).

We therefore suggest that displacement can certainly be caused by *other* urban processes apart from gentrification-related neighbourhood change. As such, we have considerable sympathy with Persdotter et al. (2021, 187) when they suggest that the two concepts would benefit from a degree of analytical untangling since 'housing displacement is not always gentrification'. At the same time, we are not advocating throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater since gentrification is undoubtedly a highly useful conceptual framework for examining the causes, processes and impacts of urban displacement.

Methodological challenges and urban politics

One important analytical issue that Persdotter et al. (2021, 190) highlight is the methodological 'difficulties evidencing displacement'. As Atkinson (2000, 163) notes, measuring displacement is like 'measuring the invisible' since the displaced, by definition, have already left their previous neighbourhood. This is a well-known problem, and tying urban displacement down remains a beguiling methodological issue. Furthermore, *not* being counted is too often part of the official discursive repertoire of displacement which means that establishing 'the right to be counted' becomes a key part of political claims-making by the displaced in their struggles for justice, as Routray (2022) shows in Delhi. Other deficits within the official codification of displacement include: how governments and intergovernmental organisations like the UN fail to collect data on different forms of internal displacement (Bowstead et al. 2020); the fact that evictions are hidden and under-counted (Hartman and Robinson 2003; Bolt and van Liempt 2022); the dearth of quantitative data regarding social housing demolition and associated displacement in the UK (Hubbard and Lees 2021); and the problem of 'missing persons' in public housing and resettlement programmes in the Global South (Beier 2023b). Gaining robust quantifiable data on displacement is therefore not easy.

An important paper by Carlson (2020) provides a finely calibrated methodological approach to how both urban displacement and gentrification can be measured and operationalised using survey data from New York City. Carlson operationalises three proxy measures of displacement: first a population approach that measures socio-demographic changes in neighbourhoods; second an individual approach that measures whether a household moves for whatever reasons, and thirdly a motivational approach that not only measures individual mobility but also the reasons why a household moved to gauge whether that move was voluntary or involuntary. The measurement of neighbourhood gentrification is based on an above-average increase of residents with a college degree, plus an increase in real house prices. Carlson's research finds that gentrification is only a significant predictor of neighbourhood displacement when the motivational displacement measure is used. The significance of the motivational nature of physical mobility is highlighted in the paper by Beran and Nuissl on Berlin for the *Special Feature*.

Although quantifying displacement can be problematic, it is important to emphasise how committed urban ethnographers have compiled rich qualitative studies on the process of displacement (Desmond 2016; Lancione 2019; Morris 2019a; Watt 2021), as well as on resettlement (Bridonneau 2022). This methodological approach is reflected in the paper on Delhi by Chaudhary (2023) in the *Special Feature*. In his *Special Feature* paper, Beier (2023a) supplements survey research with in-depth interviews to investigate displacement and resettlement processes in Casablanca. The long-term nature of displacement also offers fertile ground for a 'narrative' approach to understanding displacement, as Butler-Kisber et al. (2023) advocate in their recent collection. This methodological discussion illustrates that urban displacement is not a straightforward phenomenon to research. Nevertheless, and as the four papers in the *Special Feature* richly illustrate, it is a *vital* research area, not least because the *lived experiences* of those who are displaced need to be heard (see Elliott-Cooper et al. 2020).

As Baeten et al. (2021, 8) argue, displacement is on the one hand 'foundational to the way cities are produced and reproduced' in the contemporary world, and yet at the same time it 'plays out differently in different parts of the world, in different times, and in different contexts.' The linkage between social housing estate regeneration and state-led gentrification, discussed above, actually occurs with somewhat different intensities and extensities, even sometimes *within the same city* (Morris 2017b; Hubbard and Lees 2021; Watt, 2021, 2022). For example, the redevelopment of the Heygate estate into the upmarket, rebranded 'Elephant Park' neighbourhood stands out as the "worst-case estate regeneration scenario" (Watt 2022, 1692) in London due to the extreme loss of social housing and associated large-scale tenant displacement involved compared to equivalent regeneration schemes (Watt 2021). Understanding and explaining such spatial variations in urban displacement represents a compelling analytical and methodological challenge for contemporary research.

As highlighted above, urban politics certainly makes a difference since what the local state does, or does not do, can have profound impacts on the scale, form and temporality of displacement in relation to neighbourhoods undergoing gentrification and/or regeneration (Doshi 2013; Shaw and Hagemans 2015; Bernt 2022; Sørbøe and Braathen 2022). Another crucial aspect of urban politics in understanding displacement's spatial and temporal differentiation, which we have only been able to touch upon on here, is how residents are not passive in the face of being forcibly removed from their homes and communities. Instead, they often *resist* such displacement, both actively and passively, as well as individually and collectively (Ferreri 2020; Polanska and Richard 2021). Indeed, Ferreri (2020, 439) identifies an increase in organised resistance regarding displacement such that, 'a politics of radical emplacement has come to the fore in the transnational political arena.' Overt collective resistance to displacement occurs via multiple often highly imaginative strategies and tactics involving housing campaigns, occupations, demonstrations, squatting, physically preventing demolition from occurring, plus legal challenges (see *inter alia* August 2016; Lees and Ferreri 2016; Watt 2021; Brickell et al. 2017a; Casellas and Sala 2017; Gillespie et al. 2018; Hubbard and Lees 2018; Lancione 2019; Ferreri 2020; Polanska and Richard 2021). The emotional dislocations that displacement brings in its wake are therefore generative of new solidarities and identifications that have 'produced a rich historical geography of resistance' (Brickell et al. 2017b, 14), even if such resistance 'is complex and uneven' and even 'risky' as Elliott-Cooper et al. (2020, 501) remind us. This geography of resistance and its spatially uneven efficacy – even within the same city (Sørbøe and Braathen 2022) – adds to the importance of understanding how displacement unfolds with varying trajectories and results across different places and between different groups.

The *Special Feature* hopefully helps to enhance displacement scholarship by highlighting the voices of the displaced and understanding how place and context matter – 'putting urban displacement in its place.' It is also by fully appreciating and acknowledging the complexities and specificities of displacement across a variety of contexts that one can formulate effective, place-specific grassroots and policy challenges to displacement.

Summary of the articles in the Special Feature

The first article by Fabian Beran and Henning Nuissl (2023) examines what motivated private tenants in two inner-city areas of Berlin to physically move. Both areas have been subject to a substantial tightening of the housing market. They argue that an individual's decision to move can be based on several factors and does not necessarily signal displacement. Drawing on the Berlin population register, a sample of 10,000 tenants who had moved out of the two areas between 2013 and 2015 were surveyed. Beran and Nuissl conclude that 15.4% of the 2,028 respondents who returned the questionnaire moved because of displacement factors, with rent increases being the most common reason for being forced to move. In many instances of direct displacement, however, there is not a single independent cause. They conclude that although they did not investigate gentrification per se, the results 'showed that displacement due to different displacement factors that are related to real estate upgrading … is a highly relevant phenomenon in the tight Berlin housing market' (14). The results suggest that the key way to prevent displacement is to cap rents. Beran and Nuissl's paper reveals that deciding to move from an area is a complex decision and is not necessarily related to gentrification. However, they did not capture the income of respondents, and it would be interesting to explore what proportion of low-income tenants had been displaced in Berlin because of rent increases related to gentrification.

The article by Raffael Beier (2023a) focuses on two areas in Casablanca and is based upon extensive mixed methods research. In one area, people had been moved five to seven years previously from a relatively central shantytown to apartment housing in a new town called Nouvelle Lahraouiyine. Er-Rhamna, the other area discussed, is an established shantytown in Casablanca whose residents have been told that they will be moved to a peripheral town at some point, although the timeframe is unclear. Beier's research had two primary aims: first, to establish how residents of Nouvelle Lahraouiyine perceived the move and their post-displacement lives, and second how the Er-Rhamna residents felt about moving to a peripheral town.

A key finding is that almost half of the surveyed residents in Nouvelle Lahraouiyine were satisfied overall with the resettlement project, and that even among those who were critical, the main issue was not resettlement *per se* but rather how it was undertaken and the delay in follow-up investment. There certainly was, however, significant dissatisfaction among some displaced residents with the key problems including lack of transport, insecurity, and the loss of social networks. It is also noteworthy that about 500 of the 6,500 households resisted the displacement to Nouvelle Lahraouiyine, but were eventually forced to move when security forces [sic] destroyed their homes. Beier concludes that residents' perceptions and experiences of displacement will necessarily vary and therefore it is incumbent on researchers to account for such differences. He makes the important point that governments need to take account of heterogeneity and offer residents choice. The possibility of being able to stay in an area would certainly alleviate a great deal of suffering, as in 'slum upgrading' schemes and refurbishment-only estate regeneration programmes.

It is evident that in established shantytowns with long histories, many households provide and receive extensive support, and displacement therefore has the capacity to destroy these reciprocal arrangements with potentially devastating implications. This is very much the stance that Tanya Chaudhary (2023) takes in her paper which examines the displacement of a working-class community from the heart of Delhi to Narela, a peripheral area about forty kilometres from the centre of Delhi. Drawing upon eighty interviews, Chaudhary demonstrates how displacement has been extremely negative for the majority of *basti* residents. They recounted how they felt that they had a sense of place and were in control of their lives in their informal settlement in Delhi, and importantly, there was a sense of community – people knew one another, and expectations were clear. The displacement was violent; homes were destroyed with no warning. In Nerala, many families slept in the open for a lengthy period. Nerala has few amenities, poor public transport, is far from their traditional work-places, has minimal local employment opportunities, and crime is a major issue. Neighbourhood social relations are anomic in the new area and interviewees spoke of being perpetually fearful. Any sense of community was destroyed by the displacement. Chaudhary concludes that rather than linking the displacement to gentrification, policymaking processes in the city are linked to a larger politics of spatial order.

Finally, Thomas Aguilera's (2023) article examines the displacement of people from informal settlements in Madrid that has been produced by clearance and rehousing policies since the 1960s and particularly since the 1990s. Aguilera estimates that around 2,000 families have been rehoused since the beginning of the 1990s, although the same number have been evicted without being offered alternative accommodation. Through the examination of the implementation of these policies using a mixed-methods approach. Aguilera demonstrates how this filtering process has occurred at the crossroad of political, economic, and organizational constraints. He concludes that the eviction process in Madrid has historically had very uneven and ambivalent impacts. A proportion of the evicted informal settlements residents are resettled in public housing with support. Those who are not resettled are shifted to the most marginal areas of the city far from good employment, housing, education and health opportunities and services, particularly in one of the largest informal settlements in Europe that ensures the role of reserve of undesirability where local authorities can hide and confine the most marginal people. The article shows how the dynamics of displacement have to be understood as the result both of policy strategies and failures. Here, displacement has two faces: rehousing and social policies benefitting a segment of those evicted, whilst ensuring that a significant majority continue to be marginally housed.

Although the four articles in the *Special Feature* deal with very different contexts, they underscore the socially disruptive nature of urban displacement, albeit with greater evidence for positive post-displacement resettlement experiences in the Casablanca case. The articles show that displacement often undermines the social connections residents had in the old area. Although conditions are poor, residents can usually rely on their neighbours, their children are able to go to school, employment is available and nearby. Displacement is often accompanied by transport, crime and employment becoming major concerns. In a just city, residents who want to stay in an area they have occupied for decades would be granted the option to stay.

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