# Affective atmospheres of gentrification: wellbeing amid neighbourhood change

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ABSTRACT: The article aims to contribute to the gentrification debate by proposing a conceptual apparatus attuned to the study of how the everyday lived experience of neighbourhood change can have consequences for wellbeing. Accordingly, the concept of affective atmosphere, grounded within the non-representational theory, is proposed to capture nuances' affective impact within shifting socio-material assemblages of local environments. A literature review was conducted to examine the ways in which the concept of affective atmosphere enhances the understanding of how changes in the socio-material configurations of space affect the wellbeing of local communities. The proposed framework captures the affective strain of gentrification as emerging within the specificities of socio-material constellations of local environments. Moreover, the advantage of the proposed framework was identified in its capacity to link particular manifestations of gentrification-related violence to overarching regularities of affective capitalism. The article urges for increased sensitivity to nuances of neighbourhood change, posing a potential threat to wellbeing even at the early stages of gentrification. Due to the decision to prioritise thoroughness of analysis over scale, the limitation of this article is its restrictive scope of research.
KEYWORDS: gentrification, displacement, wellbeing, neighbourhood change, affective atmosphere, non-representational theory, affective capitalism

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Since gentrification was identified as the emerging phenomenon within urban transformations in the 1960s—beginning to restructure the socio-material landscape of deprived, working-class neighbourhoods and displace their original residents (Glass, 1964; Lees et al., 2008)—the process has undergone significant transformations. While in the previous century this was a condition identified mostly in the inner-city neighbourhood of big urban centres (Smith, 1976), now gentrification is more widespread than ever, reconfiguring the urban fabric globally and occurring under varying manifestations, mutating to accommodate itself in disparate, local contexts. The new, accelerating forms of capital reproduction restructure the organisations of consumption (Zukin, 1990), which find their expression in spatial reconfigurations performed by finance-driven gentrification, prompting dispossession and marginalisation on a global scale (Merrifield, 2014). The spread and the heterogeneity of gentrification-related spatial processes in the contemporary urban reality posit the necessity to readjust the methods and the theoretical apparatus of inquiry, fostering a framework more attuned to context-specific nuances and the wellbeing of those affected by neighbourhood change.

To this end, this article proposes to grasp the lived experience of gentrification within the framework of non-representational theory (Anderson, 2009a; Williams, 2020). Accordingly, it strives, to provide a conceptual apparatus best suited to capture the nuances of the affective force of spatial transformations. Although still not commonly applied, non-representational approaches have begun entering the stage of urban and wellbeing studies, acknowledging the pertinence of delving into the everyday specificities of local socio-material compositions of space (Andrews et al., 2014). The concept of the affective atmosphere (Anderson, 2009b)—often invoked within the non-representational approaches (Gandy, 2017)—is proposed as the conceptual tool effectively capturing the nuances of the everyday experience of urban transformations.

This investigation aimed to establish the advantages of the non-representational framework in examining the impact of gentrification-related urban transformations on the wellbeing of local communities. To this end, a literature review was conducted, selecting eleven articles which were analysed to demonstrate (1) the capacity of the proposed theoretical apparatus to identify context-specific micro-structures of neighbourhood change as affecting social dynamics and wellbeing (2) the capacity of non-representational theory to identify context-specific gentrification-related processes as particular manifestations of the overarching regularities of affective capitalism. The restricted scope of inquiry was determined by the decision to prioritise thoroughness of analysis over scale, thus allowing to more accurately investigate the subtleties of neighbourhood change as strongly affecting wellbeing. The first two sections of the article provide the theoretical framework for the investigation. Subsequently, the methodological approach of the research is outlined. The next two sections provide an analysis of the articles included in the review, presenting the identified advantages of the non-representational framework—(1) and (2), respectively—

followed by a conclusion and discussion of findings.

## 2. SHIFTING THE GENTRIFICATION DEBATE

The term 'gentrification' was first used in 1964 by Ruth Glass to describe the rapid process occurring in London, transforming the landscape of working-class neighbourhoods due to property price increases and changes in the local infrastructure leading to the displacement of original lower-income residents to accommodate the middle classes (Glass, 1964, pp. xviii-xix). After the term had been coined, it quickly started to define the framework of analysis for urban change: 'Initial signs of revival during the 1950s intensified in the 1960s, and by the 1970s these had grown into a widespread gentrification movement affecting the majority of the country's older cities' (Smith, 1976, p. 538).

Although this occurred only in the second half of the XX century, gentrification scholars indicate that processes parallel to the newly defined gentrification had pervaded urban transformations earlier than that, pointing to the Haussmanization of Paris in the XIX century (Lees et al., 2008: 5). By the same token, although what now is also identified as 'gentrification' surely resembles the classically defined phenomenon, the process itself has also been mutating, adjusting to the shifting social, economic, and political realities. What was identified as Haussmannization changed its spatiotemporal context to become gentrification—more widespread and following a set of regularities in different contexts—to reach a different stage of its mutation and become what Merrifield coined as neo-Haussmanization, which 'now tears into the whole planetary urban fabric, and fronts the progressive production of core and periphery, of centers of power and wealth as well as spaces of dispossession and marginalisation' (Merrifield, 2014: 10).

New organisations of consumption drive contemporary forms of urban transformations. While the spatial embeddedness of these new forms of social organisation has already been observed in the previous century (Zukin, 1990), now they are continuously being reshaped by reconfigurations of urban space in the process of capital reproduction (Merrifield, 2014, p. 180). A feedback loop can thus be observed between new practices and new spaces of consumption. In virtue of these contingencies, the old urban question formulated by Castells requires revisiting—and, specifically, so does the gentrification question, given its constitutive role in the shaping of urban realities. If the concepts formulated within the classical gentrification theories are to remain in place and face the acceleration of urban transformations head-on, their content and theoretical framing require readjustments.

Classically, the academic inquiry focused on understanding gentrification through the lens of the middle-class gentrifiers (Lees et al., 2008, p. 122; Smith & Williams, 2007, p. 2). Although the focus on the experience of the unprivileged was present early on in the studies on displacement—scholars pointing to the immense strain on mental health resulting from the disruption of attachments to place by forced physical dislocation (Fried, 1968)—the strains on wellbeing resulting from shifting conditions within the neighbourhood were unexplored. This correlation was observed by Mar-

cuse (2007) yet still conceptualised in terms of 'displacement pressure'—or fear of being 'priced out' of the neighbourhood—without due attention paid to other factors potentially impinging upon the wellbeing of local residents. Moreover, the link between displacement and gentrification tended to be undermined (Freeman, 2005), feeding the discourse pursued by media and politicians in the attempt to promote gentrification (Atkinson, 2015, p. 376).

Contemporarily, however, gentrification scholars have already started to act upon the borne responsibility for combatting the exclusionary mainstream discourses, readjusting the conceptual framework to make place for commonly unacknowledged manifestations of urban violence. Davidson (2009), for instance, argues for a phenomenological understanding of displacement, explaining how neighbourhood changes might disturb a sense of 'being in place' without physical dislocation. Atkinson (2015) speaks of symbolic displacement, arguing for a necessity to grasp the 'lived realities' of injustice on the part of marginalised groups, prompted not only by (fear of) being 'priced-out' but also by symbolic changes in the local environment. Building on that, Elliot-Cooper et al. (2020) conceive displacement as *un-homing,* a relationally occurring 'affective, emotional and material *rupture*' (Elliott-Cooper et al., 2020, p. 494; emphasis in original). Although studies are already addressing the experiential dimension of gentrification and pointing towards its stress-inducive impacts (Gibbons, 2019), this issue still remains under-explored (Lees & Robinson, 2021).

In virtue of this, cooperation is required between gentrification studies and the currently pursued re-conceptualisations taking place in the studies on wellbeing. As Sarah Atkinson (2013) argues, economic performance and prosperity ceased to be the main and discrete determinants of wellbeing, studies increasingly focusing on the aspect of subjective assessment. In this framework, going 'beyond the components approach,' wellbeing is understood as 'an effect of mutually constitutive interactions amongst the material, organic and emotional dynamics of places' (Atkinson, 2013, p. 138)—as relational, processual and situated. Moreover, research has identified a close link between place, identity and wellbeing (Jack, 2012), affirming Yi-Fu Tuan's (1977) intuition about the pertinence of place attachment to the fulfilled sense of self and thus pointing towards the constitutive role of environment dynamics in wellbeing development.

The mutually constitutive relationship of place and wellbeing, however, still remains poorly grounded. The necessity of embracing this interconnectedness becomes apparent when grasped through the lens of Löw's (2018, p. 225) definition of space:

> Space is constituted as a synthesis of social goods, other people, and places in imagination, through perception and memories, but also in spacing by means of the physical placement (building, surveying, deploying) of these goods and people at places in relation to other goods and people. (Löw, 2018, p. 225)

There exists, therefore, a visible parallel between the processuality and relationality inherent to both space and wellbeing (Atkinson, 2013). The processual approaches, moreover, manage to shift the gentrification debate towards studies of more subtle manifestations of violence within urban space, emphasising that gentrification and

displacement are 'never a one-off event but a series of attritional micro-events that unfold over time, generating different emotions and mental states for those affected' (Elliott-Copper et al., 2020, p. 502). If these observations are to be grasped in their full dimensionality, the processual unravelling of urban transformations has to be understood as occurring in conjunction with the processual unravelling wellbeing. Nevertheless, studies usually fail to delve into the specificities of such phenomena. Neither Elliott-Cooper et al. (2020) nor Davidson (2009) draw the link between specific material changes in the compositions of the local environment that affect wellbeing. A more thorough empirical analysis and a more specified theoretical apparatus are thus required. To this end, I propose understanding the affective impact of urban change within the non-representational framework (Anderson, 2009a; Williams, 2020), employing the concept of 'affective atmospheres' (Anderson, 2009b).

## 3. NON-REPRESENTATIONAL THEORY AND AFFECTIVE ATMOSPHERES

Non-representational theory entered the stage of human geography when Thrift coined the term in 1996, constituted on the premise that the dynamic yet subtle nuances of everyday life are not receiving due attention within the field (Andrews et al., 2014, pp. 211-212). As a response, non-representational theory provided an apparatus equipped to grasp the entanglements of human and non-human actors coexisting in space (Anderson, 2008, p. 504). Emphasising the role affect—derived from the Deleuzian-Spinozian thought, where it is understood not as an emotion but the capacity of a body to affect and be affected (Krajewski, 2022)—human and non-human matter is shown as entangled in mutually affective relationships with non-material forces, all coexisting in a shifting, processual assemblage. Non-representational theory, therefore, accentuates non-human agency and thus decentres the human subject, emphasizing how material and non-material elements in the environment strongly affect human actors (Williams, 2020). This, however, doesn't mean that the focus is displaced from the human altogether. Instead, it displaces the focus from human subjectivity (Andrews et al., 2014, p. 211), thus enhancing the understanding of human situatedness within a material environment, emphasising embodiment alongside subjectivity.

A concept often invoked by non-representational theory, which captures the spatial dynamics between a plurality of actors, is 'atmosphere'. The concept was incorporated by humanities and social sciences in the 1990s thanks to the German phenomenologist Gernot Böhme. According to him, atmospheres are an 'in-between, by means of which environmental qualities and states are related' (Böhme, 1993, p. 114). Although most authors stick to the stand-alone concept of atmosphere, it is through the explicit connection of affect and atmosphere in the concept of the affective atmosphere (Anderson, 2009b) that the significance of atmosphere by itself gains the most clarity (Krajewski, 2022). The concept captures the capacity of non-material forces to exert influence on the (human) body. Therefore, it prioritises the lived—embodied and subjective—experience in its complexity: 'Affective atmospheres are a class of experience that occur before and alongside the formation of subjectivity, across human and non-human materialities, and in-between subject/object distinctions' (Anderson,

2009b, p. 78). It is because affective atmospheres are sensed that they come into being, and it is because they are sensed that they require attention. The concept thus captures affective relationships which could remain unnoticed—due to their non-representational character (Thibaud, 2015)—yet are acutely sensed and involved in shaping potentially forceful experiences.

The technique of invoking emotional and behavioural responses by affective-atmosphere staging—through deploying a specific arrangement of materialities—has been used widely in architecture and design (Bille et al., 2015; Edensor, 2015; Thibaud, 2015). Nevertheless, little research has been done on the potential threats of staging affective atmospheres in the urban realm. This is crucial for gentrification studies—it points towards how changes in the local environment geared to appeal to some social groups and individuals might pose an affective strain on others, as a produced atmosphere can engender a plurality of varying responses (Edensor, 2012). 'If atmosphere is defined as the external effectuality of social goods and people in their arrangement at places as realised in perception,' Löw argues, 'then the perceiving person always has to be regarded in his or her social context' (Löw, 2016, p. 176). As Degen (2008) argues through her concept of socially embedded aesthetics, different social groups or even different individuals sense the same materialities in various ways as senses are social in character. Therefore, changes in the aesthetics of a neighbourhood which might be appealing to some, can provoke a sense of alienation in others, leading to symbolic displacement (Atkinson, 2015). This is what Degen observed with regard to the regeneration strategy of Castlefield in Manchester: the utilised 'designer heritage aesthetics' attracted tourists while alienating the local communities from their neighbourhood due to perceived inauthenticity. Although aesthetics is a theme present even in classical gentrification studies, they primarily focused on aesthetic preferences of the middle classes (Jager, 2007) or the design of consumer experience (Zukin, 1990), obscuring how these changes affect the everyday lived experience of the marginalised.

Though not as widely used as in other subdisciplines of human geography, studies in health geography have also employed the non-representational framework to enhance the understanding of the entanglements of wellbeing in the production of space. While Atkinson's (2013) processual conceptualisation of wellbeing constitutes an important step in broadening the scope of inquiry, it suffers from a similar insufficiency to the conceptualisations of displacement provided by Elliott et al. (2020) or Atkinson (2015)—it fails to delve into the specific constellation of socio-material elements in space within which wellbeing arises. Accordingly, Andrews et al. (2014, p. 212) urge for health geography 'to take a step further and think about the specificity of such spatial contexts, constitutions and configurations and how they are actively performed,' pointing towards non-representational theory as a remedy to this shortcoming.

## 4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The articles included in the review were selected from the Scopus database, due to the best coverage in the field of social sciences (Norris & Oppenheim, 2007). First, I

searched for records which included the terms "gentrification" and "affective atmosphere". Then, I moved on to a substantive screening phase. Initially, my aim was to solely analyse articles based on empirical research dealing with gentrification-imposed neighbourhood change. While this has remained the main focus, the texts I have encountered during the screening phase of the review prompted me to broaden the inclusion criteria. Limiting the review to only include articles which focus on a single, narrowly defined urban process—that of gentrification—occurring within a spatially-bound territorial unit—a neighbourhood—occurred to me as running counter to the assumptions of the non-representational approach. As Thrift (2004, p. 58) contends, '[affect] is becoming something more akin to the networks of pipes and cables that are of such importance in providing the basic mechanics and root textures of urban life.' Accordingly, I have decided to convey this conception of the urban realm—conceived of as a porous, processual assemblage, rather than a monadic whole composed of stitched, discrete segments—within the composition of the review.

The articles dealing with the impacts of gentrification and regeneration on the local community within a single neighbourhood (Butcher, 2019; Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Linz, 2017; Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021; Yarker, 2018) are complemented by: a more focused, comparative study of two cafes within a gentrifying neighbourhood (Kuruoğlu & Woodward, 2021); an analysis of atmospheric engineering performed by the architecture of commercial spaces (Kindynis, 2021); a study of atmospheres emerging in a neighbourhood under intensive construction (Marotta & Cummings, 2019); a study of the impacts of a city's metropolitan area expansion on a neighbourhood (Paiva, 2016); a study of the impacts of introducing private security policing in a crime-ridden neighbourhood (Mosselson, 2019). Additionally, I have decided to include a theoretical article (Andrews & Duff, 2020) which accurately complements the selected empirical studies by more explicitly emphasising the connection between spatial, territorialised atmospheric production and broader, non-material socioeconomic processes.

In total, eleven articles were selected for the review. Due to the newly emerging character of the subject area and the constantly shifting nature of the urban realities in question, I tried to select research which would be up to date. While the findings could have been enhanced by drawing on examples of rural gentrification as a manifestation of yet another mutation of the process, which initially occurred only in large urban centres, the focus on the urban realm provides the research with a more considerable degree of coherence. The exclusion of cases related to forced evictions and political or environmental crises is due to the focus placed on the everyday life experience of gentrification, aiming to show the capacity of non-representational theory to capture nuances of gradual processes. Although the restrictive total of eleven articles included in the review could be considered a limitation, the decicsion to stop at that count was driven by the attempt to prioritise thoroughness of analysis over scale. The two following sections present an overview of findings, first identifying the advantages of the proposed framework for the study of gentrification in local contexts, then elaborating on how particular manifestations of the process are embedded in a broader processual flow of affective capitalism.

### 5. LOCALLY DEPLOYED AFFECTIVE ATMOSPHERE PRODUCTION

This section will focus on establishing the uses and advantages of the non-representational approach—or *approaches*, if the plurality of influences and applications of non-representational theory is taken into account (Anderson, 2009a)—in tracing the affective dimensions of shifts in the socio-material compositions of the local environments. The section will discuss articles separately and in conjunction, comparing and contrasting the approaches employed to study neighbourhood change, paying attention to how the multidimensionality of affective atmospheres helps to grasp the lived experience of gentrification more thoroughly.

### 5.1. SOCIAL AND MATERIAL TEXTURES: FOCUSED AND COMPARATIVE APPROACHES

In their study gentrification of Hackney in East London, Butcher & Dickens (2016) focus on how marginalised youth experience neighbourhood change. The experienced changes lead to disruption in the attachment to place and an embodied sense of otherness in relation to the newly arrived middle class and creative professionals. This, in turn, breeds affective displacement. The proliferation of newcomers, coupled with the changes within the built environment and sensory landscape, yield new, unfamiliar atmospheres contributing to exclusion—the familiar shops have been renovated and increased prices. At the same time, the streets overflow with new olfactory stimuli, like the smell of coffee from high-end, 'hipster' cafes. Providing a critique of the regeneration of the Byker neighbourhood in Newcastle upon Tyne, Yarker (2018), in turn, doesn't focus on a single social group like Butcher & Dickens but examines the meanings ascribed to urban transformations by lifelong residents as well as newcomers.

Although both studies reach similar conclusions—Yarker (2018) points to the ability of residents to articulate their local identity amidst urban transformation by forming 'tangential attachments,' informed by the affects of personal mental geographies inscribed in place, while Butcher (2019) accentuating the role played by reflexivity in negotiating new identities amidst changes—Yarker's (2018) inquiry, delving not only into the lived experience of original residents but also newcomers, provides deeper insight into the dynamics of gentrification. Attention is paid to the relationship to a place of both social groups, making fuller use of the non-representational approach. This calls for consideration of entanglements between all bodies and sensations in an assemblage (Thrift, 2004). By considering the affective impact of changes within a neighbourhood, it is shown that physical dislocation is not required for displacement to occur. What is more, the indeterminacy of the concept of affect (Thrift, 2004) allows 'affective displacement' a degree of plasticity, letting the content of the concept arise via specific local conditions and transform over time—the sense of estrangement need not arise uniformly or persist continuously to be regarded as an affective result of imposed changes.

However, both neighbourhood-focused approaches have their limits regarding the spatial delimitation of inquiry. Because atmospheres lack definitive boundaries (An-

derson, 2009b), their identification within a bounded spatial dimension will tend to be artificial, overlooking the infectiousness of flows (Andrews & Duff, 2020) which shapes the dynamics within the examined territory. One solution to this is provided by Linz (2017), who, conceiving gentrification in Cincinnati as a spilling phenomenon, compares the transitioning neighbourhood of Walnut Hills as unsuccessfully replicating the process which had taken place in the OTR, already in the late stages of gentrification. She identifies an impasse within Walnut Hills, resulting from an artificial, performative recreating of the vibrant atmosphere engendered in OTR. This is carried out through introducing new aesthetics, incongruent with the local context. New craft-beer pubs and restaurants, which contrast with the deteriorated spaces of the neighbourhood, attract certain groups of clients, simultaneously excluding others, thus creating new visible assemblages of people which reinforce social categories of race and class. Kuruoğlu and Woodward (2021) similarly emphasise the significance of material textures of social spaces. Comparing two cafes in a gentrifying neighbourhood of Copenhagen, they mobilise the concept of affordance—"a relationship between the properties of an object and the capabilities of the agent that determine just how the object could possibly be used" (Ahmed, 2019, p. 59)—to show how the material composition of one cafe fosters an inclusive atmosphere, encouraging sociable interactions between ethnically diverse individuals, while the other, replicating a minimalistic tourist aesthetic and emphasising artisanal coffee preparation as its trade mark, creates an atmosphere which renders local, ethnically diverse residents unwelcome.

Providing a comparison of aesthetic details in both neighbourhoods, Linz (2017) emphasises the contingency of atmospheres upon the relations between social and material elements of the assemblage, showing how similar materialities can yield different affective results. Kuruoğlu and Woodward (2021), in turn, compare two places which employ different material solutions within the context of one neighbourhood. In both cases, the non-representational approach reflects the significance of aesthetics in shaping social dynamics. Moreover, the expanded scope of inquiry, incorporating a comparison of two places, allows the authors to identify more general patterns within the process of gentrification. By zooming in on spatially bounded locations yet conceiving of their specificities in a relational manner, shaped by the dynamics of the entire neighbourhood, Kuruoğlu and Woodward (2021) show how diverse, ethnically inclusive spaces are gradually overtaken by places breeding exclusionary atmospheres through homogenisation (Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021; Yarker, 2018). Linz (2017), in turn, demonstrates how the process occurs on a larger scale, overflowing from one neighbourhood to another. In both cases, the non-representational approach, utilising the framework of atmospheric production in a comparative manner, allows capturing the force and infectiousness of certain atmospheres. This points towards the necessity of paying closer attention to subtle transformations in local environments in light of processes occurring parallelly, thus opening new pathways for more effective ways of combatting displacement (Linz, 2017).

While the studies (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Butcher, 2019; Linz, 2021; Kuruoğlu & Woodward, 2021) make notice of exclusion due to increased prices, it is important

to note that economic unavailability is only one element producing atmospheres of exclusion. Both Linz (2021) and Kuruoğlu & Woodward (2021) demonstrate how social exclusion emerges within an interplay between material—predominantly aesthetic—and social elements of the assemblage, breeding atmospheric affordances which render certain—usually racialised and classed—bodies undesirable in virtue of the specified social groups targeted by the design of place (Ahmed, 2019). As was emphasised by Butcher & Dickens (2016), this type of exclusion potentially contributes to affective displacement as local residents begin embodying the relationally constituted otherness—they come to be perceived as undesirable by those who correspond with the atmospheric affordance of homogenised spaces as well as come to perceive themselves as such. The sense of not belonging, emerging as a by-product of affective atmospheres, is thus embodied (Butcher & Dickens, 2016), leading to a sense of loss—both of material spaces constituent of their neighbourhood life and of identity (Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021). The embodiment of exclusion occurs not only within the bodies of the marginalised, but also within the materiality of the local environment, 'flow states being both inside and outside the body' (Andrews & Duff, 2020, p. 7). The residents are thus forced into a daily performance of embodied otherness, which can be understood as a form of symbolic violence (Kindynis, 2021; Atkinson, 2015). This can gradually impinge upon their wellbeing. As Andrews & Duff (2020, p. 2) argue: 'arising through performative material involvements in these assemblages, wellbeing is registered in bodies, often less-than-fully consciously.' This points towards the necessity of acknowledging the processual and gradual unravelling of conditions within spatial assemblages which lead to wellbeing deterioration, urging for reactions which could alleviate conditions of exclusion at early stages.

## 5.2. SPATIO-TEMPORAL DIFFUSION

While the shift of focus to more nuanced understandings of how displacement is fostered by material and sensory textures of social spaces enhances the understanding of the lived experience of gentrification, the discussed studies focus almost solely on public spaces, obscuring the diffusive character of atmospheres. Although the effects of striving to replicate atmospheres by introducing homogeneous aesthetics were demonstrated (Linz, 2017; Kuruoğlu & Woodward, 2021), thus far, the ability of an atmosphere produced in public spaces to enter the privacy of home hasn't been acknowledged. Coining the concept of collateral atmospheres—'the "other" atmospheres that emerge in the spaces and times beyond produced atmospheres'—Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros (2021) expand the affective framework to show how premium atmospheres produced by the touristification of Lisbon overflow to produce collateral home atmospheres. Here, attention is paid predominantly to noise pollution produced by nightlife entertainment inherent to tourist-designated neighbourhoods. Sensory stimuli unleashed within public spaces crawl into homes and disturb the homely atmospheres residents strive to stage in the privacy of their dwellings. The multifaceted sensory experience enrolled in the production of atmospheres, employing both material textures and sonic stimuli, create flow states which manage to extend from public

space into private spheres. This can have severe consequences for wellbeing because, as has already been argued, the affective impact of atmospheres isn't external to the body. It crawls inside (Andrews & Duff, 2020), transcending the domain of symbolic violence by forcing local communities into a continuous embodied experience of negatively charged affective atmospheres also in the privacy of their homes.

While some of the analysed studies have emphasised that the continuous production of affective atmospheres yields an embodied experience varying across ethnic and class divisions, little attention has been paid to the unequal affective distribution across gender lines. Women tend to experience public space with a heightened affective sensitivity—prone to threat of fear or discomfort (Kern, 2020)—as well as use private space more extensively for the purposes of reproductive labour (Krasny, 2016). The affective impact of collateral atmospheres invading the privacy of dwelling can therefore have disproportionate consequences for the wellbeing of women, which remains unacknowledged by Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros (2021).

The thus far analysed studies have focused either explicitly on gentrifying neighbourhoods (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Butcher, 2019; Linz, 2017), specific places within gentrifying neighbourhoods (Kuruoğlu & Woodward, 2021), or closely related phenomena of regeneration (Yarker, 2018) and touristification (Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021). The similarity of affective mechanisms occurring in such disparate contexts emphasises the point made in previous sections—due to the spread and mutations of gentrification in contemporary urban realities, the approach for its study needs to be updated to account for possible threats to wellbeing that it imposes. In this respect, the advantage of the affective, non-representational framework is its sensitivity to nuance and focus on lived embodied experience, through which the impact of gentrification should be detected and judged. Moreover, this approach manages to capture urban transformations within their specificity without making concessions on relating them to more universal patterns of spatial dynamics.

Reflecting on this, Marotta & Cummings (2019) show how the intensive redevelopment of Portland's Pearl District disrupts everyday routines through sidewalk closures, shifts in transport navigation, and unpleasant sonic by-products of the ongoing construction work. This fosters an atmosphere of anxiety, not only because of daily discomfort, as in the case of the collateral atmospheres of Lisbon's tourist districts (Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021), but also due to uncertainty of the future embodied within the impasse of widespread construction work coupled by threats of gentrification, already ongoing in other parts of the city. Proliferating gentrification, therefore, influences the atmosphere from without, thus highlighting how the relationship between seemingly disparate spatial processes likewise affects the lived experience of urban space. This emphasises not only the lack of spatial boundaries of atmospheric production but also its temporal indeterminacy—material changes disrupt the continuity between past and present, impinging upon attachments to place (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Butcher, 2019; Linz, 2017; Marotta & Cummings, 2019; Yarker, 2018), as well as between present and the future (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Marotta & Cummings, 2019; Paiva, 2016; Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021). Showing how threats of gentrification press upon the present from imaginations of the future, this example

highlights how conceiving of urban change in terms of affective atmospheres allows to explain lived experience with regards to both spatial and temporal dislocation.

As Paiva (2016) shows in his study of the expansion of Lisbon's metropolitan area to the peripheral parish of Ameixoeira, the implementation of a large-scale social housing project and increased car movement—due to the extension of the main highway to the parish—disrupted the daily rhythms of elders due to increased presence of otherness and heightened speed within the local environment. Here, the affective impact is also shown to arise as a result of developments in other parts of the city. Such disruptions yield atmospheres of anxiety, conducive to the deterioration of wellbeing. This is, first of all, due deprivation of emotionally significant elements in urban space, like familiar shops and services (Paiva, 2016, p. 8) and, second of all, due to the projection of the present state of uncertainty onto the future. As Paiva (2016, p. 4) contends, drawing on Husserl's phenomenological conceptualisation of temporal consciousness of the subject—emphasising the point made by Marotta & Cummings (2019)—'the future is already in the present as protention, that is, the anticipation of future events in present experience.' If captured in the non-representational framework, collapsed rhythms in everyday spaces can therefore be shown to disrupt spatial attachments and temporal continuity, both threatening to identity and thus wellbeing.

## 6. GENTRIFICATION AND WELLBEING IN THE CONTEXT OF AFFECTIVE CAPITALISM

The previous section has intentionally omitted two articles (Kindynis, 2021; Mosselson, 2019) which will now serve to illuminate the tension underlying the atmospheric production of gentrification—that between wellbeing and affective capitalism (Andrews & Duff, 2020; Karppi et al., 2016). Massumi forges the link between affect and capitalism as follows: 'The ability of affect to produce an economic effect more swiftly and surely than economics itself means that affect is itself a real condition, an intrinsic variable of the late-capitalist system, as infrastructural as a factory' (as cited in Karppi et al., 2016, p. 2). While Karppi et al. (2016) do not refer to the role of space in the affective production of economic effect, the correlation is evident. As Zukin (1990) has argued, gentrification 'represents a spatially bounded' articulation of new forms of consumption. Taking into account the spatial character of affect—manufactured by various sensory techniques deployed in the environmental atmospheric production (Andrews & Duff, 2020)—gentrification emerges as intricately connected to the affective production of economic effect.

### 6.1. FLOWS OF CAPITAL

The advantage of the non-representational framework as the theoretical apparatus for the study of gentrification is its ability to detect 'different forms and multiple processes of organisation which are interconnected' (Karppi et al., 2016, p. 3). The nuances within the material assemblages of local environments can therefore be linked to broader processes of capital circulation. Although Kuruoğlu and Woodward (2021)

focus on the material textures of two cafes, they acknowledge the proliferation of the identified homogeneous aesthetics as entangled in the global network of business opportunities. Similarly, Yarker (2018) contends that the intentions behind regeneration always extend beyond mere physical transformations: 'It is also about reimagining a bold new future for post-industrial cities and creating a brand image geared towards attracting capital, labour and leisure.' Paiva and Sánchez-Fuarros (2021), in turn, point out how the regeneration of Lisbon's public space has mostly been financed by international real estate investors whose pathway to citizenship was enabled by the state-led Golden Visa programme. Here, a connection is made between international, national and local organisational structures, showing how the local production of affective atmospheres links with the continuous capital flow.

The shift from the economic determinants of gentrification prevalent in the classical debate doesn't, therefore, entail a disinterest in the economic conditions altogether. The non-representational approach doesn't prioritise the economic conditions as deciding about the experience of gentrification—it prioritises the subjective wellbeing as arising within local socio-material conditions and sets it against the context of financial expansion. These observations are also important for contemporary welfare studies. If social welfare is conceptualised as the fulfilment of broadly understood material and non-material needs, then economic prosperity has to be grasped as a significant yet not determining factor within the constitution of social welfare, occurring both at individual and collective level. Establishing a connection between those is crucial as individual wellbeing is established in relation to social welfare at macro level—and vice versa (Baranowski, 2019, p. 9). Wellbeing is thus 'shaped at the broader group or population level by structural relations of power and force' (Andrews & Duff, 2020, p. 6). However, the failure to emphasise the embeddedness of micro-structures within larger assemblages is a pitfall some applications of non-representational theories are facing (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Butcher, 2019). The risk of this oversight is the failure to recognise a particular spatial transformation as yet another manifestation of the same process, thus undermining its gravity.

## 6.2. WELLBEING AS SOCIAL CONTROL

Thus far, the focus has been placed primarily on the deterioration of wellbeing among marginalised social groups. However, understanding social relationships as structured by the flows of affective capitalism reveals dynamics far more complex than those based on a simple binary of inclusion and exclusion. As Andrews & Duff (2020, p. 3) argue, wellbeing constitutes 'a distinctive mode of social and economic governance,' stretching across entire populations. Kindynis (2021) shows how the design of consumer spaces, like shopping malls or nightclubs, deploys techniques defined as persuasion architecture in order to spur compulsive consumption. Here, the instrumental use of aesthetics yields more direct threats than in the case of the unwelcoming atmospheres of the Copenhagen cafe identified by Kuruoğlu and Woodward (2021). As Kindynis (2021, p. 7) argues, the proliferation of staged atmospheres conducive to commodified leisure is a form of social control which cements 'pathological subjec-

tivities characterised by antisocial forms of envy and competitive individualism, and brooding frustration and resentment.' While this point hasn't been made in the studies analysed in the previous section—focusing predominantly on the experience of social groups excluded by consumer spaces (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Butcher, 2019; Kuruoğlu & Woodward, 2021; Linz, 2017; Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021)—the homogenising aesthetics of gentrifying neighbourhoods works within the same logic, albeit often with more subtle manifestations. Apart from fostering atmospheres of exclusion sensed by those whose embodied presence is rendered undesirable by the manufactured assemblage, the atmospheric production of persuasion architecture is also harmful to the wellbeing of those who it lures. As Andrews & Duff (2020, p. 3) argue, the widespread commercialisation of affect hinders other affects which society could benefit from.

Here, it is visible why wellbeing—as Atkinson (2013) has argued—shouldn't be conceptualised in terms of economic prosperity. The possibility of pursuing commercial impulses, enabled by economic prosperity itself, might lead to a depreciation of other affects conducive to a more general flourishing, which wellbeing should be grasped as. Leading to increased individualism, commodified leisure eradicates communal bonds, thus making the distance between social groups included and excluded by public space more profound. Except for the obvious economic polarisation, these dynamics influence affective relationships yielding increasing otherness on the part of the excluded. From these observations follows the pertinence of conceiving the production of affective atmospheres with reference to the subjectivities of both social groups enrolled in the assemblage—a step taken by Yarker (2018) and Kindynis (2021), yet not elaborated on sufficiently. The deterioration of wellbeing resulting from urban transformations is thus not exclusive to marginalised groups—it also extends to those targeted by the design of consumer spaces. This, in turn, reinforces wellbeing deterioration among the marginalised, increasing social polarisation.

## 6.3. SOCIAL CONTROL: BEYOND COERCION

Nevertheless, it is important to note that spatial imposition of control cannot be grasped as one-dimensionally harmful—there is a tension between harm and improvement. For instance, Mosselson (2019) demonstrates how private security policing in Hillbrow, the neighbourhood reporting the highest crime rates in Johannesburg, has not only alleviated the community's wellbeing but was also desired. The atmosphere of regulation produced by the introduction of CCTV cameras and regular street patrolling—yielding subtle rather than coercive methods of control—has significantly decreased anti-social behaviour due to changing attitudes towards the area. As a result of the effective shaping of 'material-affective relations,' social bonds were strengthened, eradicating fear and insecurity permeating the previously crime-ridden district.

Although the study acknowledges the correlation between private investment and the alleviated local circumstances, it fails to connect the particular entanglements of finance-led projects to broader trends in the capitalist exploitation of wellbeing. Here, wellbeing emerges as fully contingent upon 'larger flows of power and capital'

(Andrews & Duff, 2020, p. 6)—its improvement is not an end in itself but a business opportunity environmentally exploited by investment. What is more, it is precisely the lack of coercive force in achieving this effect that has to be put under further scrutiny as a manifestation of the diffusive character of control. This case accurately illustrates the transition from Foucault's society of discipline to Deleuze's society of control (Deleuze, 1992). Its dispersive mechanisms prove extremely efficient under neoliberalism's symptomatic state-phobia (Anderson, 2012), manufacturing a relative consent to the deployed techniques of 'soft' subordination. Urban space thus becomes the medium for the affective production of economic effect, generated by fostering an atmosphere of control, accepted mainly due to lack of coercion in the deployed tactics. Arising environmentally amidst the continuously diffusing affective atmosphere, societal wellbeing—whether improved or deteriorated—becomes a mere by-product of capital's affective expansion.

## 7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The gentrification debate has crossed a significant distance since the classical studies, where strict external criteria for identifying the phenomenon were located in displacement rates and the focus of inquiry was middle-class preferences (Lees et al., 2008). The subjective experience of neighbourhood change on the part of the marginalised groups entered the debate (Atkinson, 2015; Gibbons, 2019; Lees & Robinson, 2021) as the enhancement of the partially ignorant discourse, still, however, partially obscuring the process amidst which the lived experience of gentrification is constituted. A similar trajectory can be traced with regards to wellbeing studies. The conceptualisation of wellbeing in terms of economic prosperity has first shifted to accommodate other components, to later move further beyond the components approach into a more subjective, processual and relational understanding of how wellbeing is constituted (Atkinson, 2013). As counter-intuitive as it may appear, the priority given to subjectivity within both debates has eventually given way to a de-centring of subjectivity as a means of fostering a more complete understanding of how the—in the end—subjective experience arises amidst pre-subjective flow states. By placing affect at the centre of its conceptual framework, non-representational theory captures the subjective experience of wellbeing as directly correlated to gentrification-imposed neighbourhood change in virtue of its embeddedness within the local assemblage of material and non-material elements. Wellbeing thus arises as a constituent part of the affective environment (Andrews et al., 2014; Andrews & Duff, 2020).

Affective atmospheres—applied as the conceptual tool to capture the processual relationality of materialities and non-materialities enrolled in the production of space—capture the dynamics of the experience of gentrification, locating it as arising amidst the changing characteristics of the built environment and the social composition of the neighbourhood. In this framework, the deterioration of wellbeing is conceived as affective displacement (Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Butcher, 2019), fostered by specificities of material textures (Kuruoğlu & Woodward, 2021). These shape social assemblages (Linz, 2017) and thus reconfigure the affordance of a given place, forc-

ing marginalised social groups and individuals into a daily performance of embodied otherness. The dispersive character of affective atmospheres—its production amidst not only material but also olfactory and sonic elements of the environment—allows the scope of inquiry to transcend a bounded territorial unit and look beyond what is immediately observable. Moreover, affective atmospheres not only mutate and diffuse spatially—to foster collateral atmospheres (Paiva & Sánchez-Fuarros, 2021)—but also transcend temporal boundaries to transform the image of the future from the standpoint of the present (Marotta & Cummings, 2019). The non-representational framework, therefore, allows grasping the seemingly insignificant moments of impasse (Linz, 2017; Marotta & Cummings, 2019) or nuances within the early stages of transition. It emphases their significance as enrolled in the process of gentrification and its entanglements with the continuous constitution of wellbeing.

While the sensitivity of the non-representational approach to the nuances of local environments constitutes a significant advantage of the framework, over-emphasising the particularity of local manifestations of gentrification can also be a drawback. Although there is a general agreement on the instrumental, power-inflicted deployment of aesthetics in the spatial production of affect (Thrift, 2004, p. 58), studies tend to obscure the enrollment of local manifestations of affective control in broader regularities of affective capitalism (Andrews & Duff, 2020; Karppi et al., 2016). Indeed, the particular deployments of spatial affective control mobilised in gentrifying and commercial spaces are a part of a more complex affective machine, spilling new channels for spatial capital accumulation. Wellbeing, constituted environmentally, thus becomes the mode of governance within the spatial power-deployment of affective capitalism (Andrews & Duff, 2020), of which gentrification is an input. Within this logic, affect emerges as the tool employed in the process of socio-economic structurisation. Affective engineering towards economic effects produces a politically passive group of consumers, on the one hand, and a marginalised group, on the other, also withdrawn from political engagement due to wellbeing deterioration.

Indeed, affect is a significant backdrop of political tactics. Yet, the redevelopment of the urban landscape is—however substantial—just a node in neoliberalism's larger political project (Anderson, 2012). Drawing a link between the specificities of local processes and the overarching generalities of affective flows mobilised to economic and political ends is, therefore, the responsibility of academic inquiry if the true emancipatory potential is to be released. As Thrift contends, 'the discovery of new means of practicing affect is also the discovery of a whole new means of manipulation by the powerful' (Thrift, 2004, p. 58). While this surely has a dystopian ring to it, delving into the mechanisms of affective engineering also reveals affect's emancipatory element—a moment largely overlooked by the analysed studies. While Kindynis (2021) acknowledges that the control imposed by affective techniques inscribed into the built environment is never fully deterministic, posing a possibility of affective overflow which would undermine the spatially choreographed script, he only notices the dangers of this affective surplus, failing to account for its emancipatory potential. Indeed, instances of such overflows might lead to harmful behaviours.

At the same time, however, what escapes affective control can be utilised to counter

its restrictive impositions—it is also about acknowledging that affect is, in the end, intricately connected to the productive force of life (Anderson, 2012). Its mechanics, intercepted by the powerful to yield a desired economic, political and social effect, can likewise be utilised for political contestation and an affirmation of life in the strive towards fulfilment and wellbeing (Andrews & Duff, 2020). An instance of this are self-organised feminist spaces, providing solidarity aiming to counter the exclusionary atmospheres of gentrifying neighbourhoods (Krasny, 2016). Likewise, acts of physical interventions into the material fabric of the local environment performed by local communities, like graffiti, can be seen as as subversive manifestations of discontent, aiming to materially inscribe counter-hegemonic notions and thus affectively reconfigure the everyday urban landscape (Krajewski, 2013). Atmospheric repression, therefore, doesn't have to yield passivity. It can also urge the marginalised groups to foster their own safe spaces designed to breed affective atmospheres of inclusion and empowerment, or prompt micro-acts of material subversion. It is thus not only about the potential reflexivity or negotiation amidst imposed spatial disruptions (Butcher, 2019; Butcher & Dickens, 2016; Yarker, 2018) but about redirecting the affective flows to ease the locally deployed affective control – an emancipatory potential which can be released if the force of affect is properly grasped in its complexity.

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