

# The Place Attachment of Residents Displaced by Urban Redevelopment Projects in Shanghai

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*This paper studies the place attachment of Shanghai residents who have been displaced by redevelopment projects. The objective is to present the condition of the displaced residents and to add another easily ignored dimension to the study of China's phenomenal urban transformation. The first author conducted in-depth interviews during summer 2004 and 2005. Thematic analysis was employed to understand the dynamics of the every-*

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day life experiences of these displaced residents. The findings show that the place attachment of displaced Shanghai residents is strongly connected with the generalized social environment and personal emotions generated through the constant bargaining in their everyday lives. In an environment of urban redevelopment in post-socialist China, bargaining place attachment is built on people's bargain with their social environment. "Bargaining" has become not only their negotiation strategy, but also the way they are attached to place—Shanghai. Moreover, bargaining place attachment legitimates the idea that place detachment is indispensable in the redevelopment of urban China.

**KEYWORDS:** displaced residents; place attachment; urban redevelopment; Shanghai; China.

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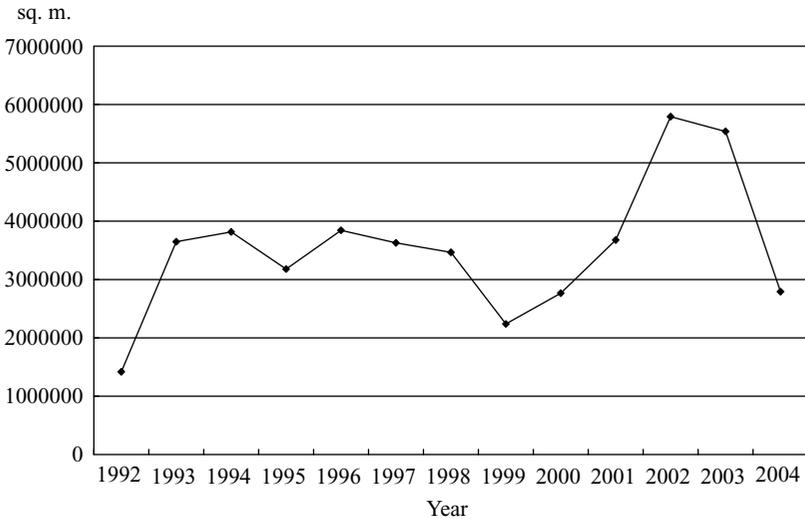
"One world, one dream" was the slogan of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. However, for some Beijing residents, the Games were not a dream but a nightmare. According to the Geneva-based nongovernmental organization, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), up to 1.5 million people were due to be evicted to make way for the event.<sup>1</sup> But Beijing is not unique. Demolitions and evictions have been a significant part of urban life in China over the past two decades. According to a report published by the World Bank, in the 1980s, 8.5 million people in China were forced to move as a result of public planning, including urban redevelopment.<sup>2</sup> The pace of urban redevelopment accelerated after 1992, as the Chinese government declared its aim of building a socialist market economy and massive amounts of foreign investment flowed into China. In Shanghai, the pace of demolition stayed at a very high level in subsequent years (see figure 1).

Demolition due to urban redevelopment has been the cause of serious social problems. According to the State Bureau for Letters and Calls

<sup>1</sup>"Olympics—Beijing Says 15,000 Relocated for Games," *Reuters*, February 19, 2008, <http://in.reuters.com/article/worldOfSport/idINIndia-32032020080219> (accessed October 10, 2008).

<sup>2</sup>World Bank, *Involuntary Resettlement Sourcebook: Planning and Implementation in Development Projects* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2004).

**Figure 1**  
**Floor Area of Housing Demolished in Shanghai**



**Source:** Unpublished document, Shanghai Municipal Housing, Land and Resource Administration Bureau, 2005.

(國家信訪辦, the petitioning bureau), more than 60 percent of the appeals it dealt with in 2002 and 2003 were related to labor insurance, urban displacement, and the seizing of land by local officials.<sup>3</sup> The same source also revealed that since 2001, the number of residents who had called to voice their displeasure had increased significantly. Between 2001 and 2002, the number of displaced residents increased by 65 percent, and it further increased by nearly 50 percent in 2003.

In June 2004, the State Council introduced a regulation to control the scale of demolition in cities and towns and to strengthen controls on demolition activities. This document shed light on the predicament of displaced residents in several ways. First, it showed that demolition tends to be con-

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<sup>3</sup>Xinhua Net, "Zhongguo zaoyu xinfang hongfeng, xin lingdaoren mianlin feichang kaoyan" (New leadership in China faces ordeal due to large number of letters and calls for petitions), *Zhongguowang* (China Net), December 8, 2003, <http://big5.china.com.cn/chinese/2003/Dec/457238.htm> (accessed July 18, 2007).

ducted without adequate compensation or rehousing. Second, it was clear that local governments were misusing their powers. Furthermore, many demolition companies have torn down buildings illegally, seriously impacting on residents' rights and interests.<sup>4</sup> This has led to a large number of collective appeals. These accounts clearly demonstrate that displaced residents have to live with a great deal of anxiety and apprehension.

While there is a growing literature on urban redevelopment in China,<sup>5</sup> relatively few studies have looked at the people evicted to make way for redevelopment projects. Rarely have the experiences and emotions of displaced residents in urban China been subjected to scholarly inquiry. However, some classic studies produced in the West have highlighted the social dimensions, including class, social relationships, and feelings beyond the "scientific" and "rational" dimensions.<sup>6</sup> More specifically, these

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<sup>4</sup>PRC State Council, "Guowuyuan bangongting guanyu kongzhi chengzhen fangwu chaiqian guimo yange chaiqian guanli de tongzhi" (Notification on street management measures regarding demolition of housing in cities and towns as stipulated by the General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China), 2004, <http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/PI-c/586146.htm> (accessed June 23, 2007).

<sup>5</sup>Yao Libin and Zhao Lingling, "Dui shichang jingji tiaojian xia jiucheng gaizao de zai renshi" (Re-examining urban reconstruction under the market economy), *Chengshi wenti* (City planning problems) (Beijing), no. 2 (2000): 39-42; Ye Dongjiang, "Jiucheng gaizao zhong yinfade shehui gongping wenti" (Social equity issues surrounding urban reconstruction), *Chengxiang jianshe* (Urban and Rural Construction) (Beijing), no. 4 (2003): 65-66; Fan Wenbing, *Shanghai li nong de baohu yu gengxin* (The conservation and renewal of lilong housing in Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004); Zhang Li, "Forced from Home: Property Rights, Civic Activism, and the Politics of Relocation in China," *Urban Anthropology* 33, no. 2-4 (Summer-Winter 2004): 247-81; Shenjing He and Fulong Wu, "Property-led Redevelopment in Post-reform China: A Case Study of Xintiandi Redevelopment Project in Shanghai," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 27, no. 1 (February 2005): 1-23; Fulong Wu and Shenjing He, "Changes in Traditional Urban Areas and Impacts of Urban Redevelopment: A Case Study of Three Neighbourhoods in Nanjing, China," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 96, no. 1 (February 2005): 75-95; Yiping Fang, "Residential Satisfaction, Moving Intention and Moving Behaviours: A Study of Redeveloped Neighbourhoods in Inner-City Beijing," *Housing Studies* 21, no. 5 (September 2006): 671-94; Shenjing He and Fulong Wu, "Socio-spatial Impacts of Property-led Redevelopment on China's Urban Neighbourhoods," *Cities* 24, no. 3 (2007): 194-208; Si-ming Li and Yu-Ling Song, "Displacement, Housing Conditions and Residential Satisfaction: An Analysis of Shanghai Residents," *Environment and Planning A* 41 (2009): 1090-108.

<sup>6</sup>Herbert J. Gans, "The Human Implications of Current Redevelopment and Relocation," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 25, no. 1 (1959): 15-26; Marc Fried and Peggy Gleicher, "Some Sources of Residential Satisfaction in an Urban Slum," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 27, no. 4 (1961): 305-15.

studies have evaluated the legitimacy of redevelopment and relocation planning and placed emphasis on embeddedness and interaction between feelings and physical space. Even so, in most of these studies, the social environment was reduced or simplified into social class, which lacks the dimension of "enabling" and the distinctive culture of the place. To provide a richer account of the displacement experience, the present study seeks to understand the changes in place attachment that occurred among the displaced residents during the process of relocation and the strategies and tactics that have been adopted in response to these changes. The enabling of displaced residents when they interacted with the social environment has been emphasized. In the following section, we elaborate the concept of place attachment. Then, we discuss the research methodology employed. Next, we present the main corpus of the research findings. In particular, based on the in-depth and follow-up interviews with residents displaced by redevelopment projects that the first author conducted in Shanghai, we try to unravel the everyday experiences of displaced residents during the relocation process and elaborate the issue of change in place attachment.

### **The Place Attachment Approach**

Many geographers have made use of the concept of "sense of place" to explore people's experience of and feelings toward their everyday environment.<sup>7</sup> Alongside the "sense of place" as the "center" and "pivot" of humanistic geography, geographers have also examined local sentiments and emotional experiences associated with a particular place. In this connection, a number of authors have formulated concepts such as community attachment, identity, and satisfaction.<sup>8</sup> Sense of place, place identity, and

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<sup>7</sup>Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

<sup>8</sup>David M. Hummon, "Community Attachment: Local, Sentiment and Sense of Place," in *Place Attachment*, ed. Irwin Altman and Setha M. Low (London: Plenum, 1992), 253-78.

place attachment are all concerned with the emotional experiences of individuals in a specific place, with no precise conceptual boundaries between them. Some authors have suggested that the term "place attachment" is more encompassing; the term implies both functional and emotional dependence as indicated by the relationship between people and the place.<sup>9</sup> However, some authors have shown that these terms have the drawback of being too ambiguous and do not allow us to differentiate attachment from other closely-related concepts.

Having reviewed several hundred empirical and theoretical studies of place attachment published over the last forty years in the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* and *Environment and Behavior*, Lewicka concluded that, despite increased mobility and the process of globalization, place continues to be an object of strong attachment.<sup>10</sup> While acknowledging the tripartite model of place attachment that includes "person," "place," and "process,"<sup>11</sup> she finds that the place attachment literature has placed much more emphasis on the person at the expense of place, and that it has largely ignored processes, the mechanisms through which place attachment develops,<sup>12</sup> thus inhibiting the development of a theory of place attachment. According to Scannell and Gifford, the process of place attachment includes affect (happiness, pride, love), cognition (memory, knowledge, schemas, meaning), and behavior (proximity-maintaining, reconstruction of place). They suggest that "place attachment" studies should be process-oriented, and should aim at elucidating processes through which people form their meaningful relationships with places. The aim of this research

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.; Richard Schreyer, G. Jacob and Robert White, "Environmental Meaning as a Determinant of Spatial Behavior in Recreation," in *Proceedings of the Applied Geography Conferences*, Vol. 4, ed. J. Frazier and B. Epstein (1981), 294-300; Daniel R. Williams et al., "Beyond the Commodity Metaphor: Examining Emotional and Symbolic Attachment to Place," *Leisure Science* 14, no. 1 (1992): 29-46.

<sup>10</sup>Maria Lewicka, "Place Attachment: How Far Have We Come in the Last 40 Years?" *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 31, no. 3 (September 2011): 207-30.

<sup>11</sup>Leila Scannell and Robert Gifford, "Defining Place Attachment: A Tripartite Organizing Framework," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 30, no. 1 (March 2011): 1-10.

<sup>12</sup>Lewicka, "Place Attachment," 222.

is to shed light on the process of place attachment among displaced residents who had been relocated.<sup>13</sup> Further evidence that attachment to a place is grounded in emotion comes from the literature on displacement, such as the classic study on the effects of displacement in the West End of Boston. This research concluded that attachment is primarily based on affect, even though it is a negative emotion because an individual with a strong bond to home is reluctant to leave it.<sup>14</sup> In the opinion of some authors, being away from home aids the development of meaning of place. The foregoing discussions based on environmental psychology encourage us to draw our theories from the phenomenological tradition, including research by the humanistic geographer Seamon, whose idea of time-space routines constitutes the basis of sense of place.<sup>15</sup>

However, in the 1980s, some authors insisted that there was a need to reconceptualize sense of place in a way that goes beyond the original focus on the experiences and emotion of the place.<sup>16</sup> Pred criticized the practice of humanistic geography in the 1970s for ignoring the power of the social environment in discussing sense of place.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Hummon indicated that residents' position in society and their perceptions of their community substantially shaped their satisfaction with the local area. In short, the above-cited authors have suggested that social environment is a significant

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<sup>13</sup>Scannell and Gifford, "Defining Place Attachment," 1-10.

<sup>14</sup>Marc Fried, "Grieving for a Lost Home," in *The Urban Condition: People and Policy in the Metropolis*, ed. Leonard Duhl (New York: Basic Books 1963), 151-71.

<sup>15</sup>David Seamon, "Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines and Place-Ballets," in *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, ed. Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 148-65.

<sup>16</sup>Allan Pred, *Place, Practice and Structure: Social and Spatial Transformation in Southern Sweden, 1750-1850* (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble, 1986); Doreen Massey, "A Global Sense of Place," in *Space, Place and Gender*, ed. Doreen Massey (Cambridge: Polity 1994), 146-56; David Butz and John Eyles, "Reconceptualizing Senses of Place: Social Relations, Ideology and Ecology," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 79, no. 1 (April 1997): 1-25; M. Carmen Hidalgo and Bernardo Hernandez, "Place Attachment: Conceptual and Empirical Questions," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 21, no. 3 (September 2001): 273-81; Shmuel Shamai and Zinaida Ilatov, "Measuring Sense of Place: Methodological Aspects," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 96, no. 5 (December 2004): 467-76.

<sup>17</sup>Pred, *Place, Practice and Structure*.

factor affecting the attachment of people to a certain place.<sup>18</sup> Other authors have pointed out that sense of place or place attachment interacts with the social and physical environment. Butz and Eyles have identified three core components of sense of place—the social, ideological, and ecological. Sense of place is constructed out of one's social and ecological condition which is influenced by ideology and then transformed or reproduced.<sup>19</sup> Pollini provides an integrated analytical framework for studying place attachment or socio-territorial belonging. For Pollini, attachment is part of socio-territorial belonging. However, place attachment, in Pollini's view, is dynamic and tends to gain an emotional character within the system of social interaction.<sup>20</sup>

In sum, various factors shape the dynamics and diverse elements of place attachment. Authors have suggested the significance of process, including happiness, pride, and love, in place attachment, and they highlight the interaction between the social and physical environment and emotion, which creates the dynamics but not the rooted aspect of place attachment beyond passive individuals. This paper explores the process of place attachment through interaction of the social environment and the physical environment, as well as individuals' emotions, and develops a theoretical idea that will fit the present condition of displaced residents and add another easily-ignored dimension to the study of China's urban transformation.

### Research Method

In this paper, we use the narrative analysis approach in an effort to understand the dynamics of place attachment of displaced residents in

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<sup>18</sup>David M. Hummon, "Community Attachment: Local, Sentiment and Sense of Place," in *Place Attachment*, ed. Irwin Altman and Setha M. Low (London: Plenum, 1992), 253-78.

<sup>19</sup>Butz and Eyles, "Reconceptualizing Senses of Place," 1-25.

<sup>20</sup>Gabriele Pollini, "Elements of a Theory of Place Attachment and Socio-territorial Belonging," *International Review of Sociology* 15, no. 3 (November 2005): 497-515.

Shanghai.<sup>21</sup> There are several typologies within narrative analysis, and the one we have adopted is thematic analysis.<sup>22</sup> We use this method to analyze transcripts from recorded interviews. By sorting items of interest into proto-themes, and organizing items relating to common thematic elements as reported in the interviews into categories, themes begin to emerge. Through multi-examination, the themes are collected and the story line is developed by formulating theme statements.<sup>23</sup> Eventually, the story line, which is composed of several themes, will reveal the entire condition of the displaced residents. In other words, by analyzing the narratives of displaced residents in Shanghai, we use the individual's experiences of place as a lens through which we can discern the entire social environment.

Shanghai, the financial capital of China since the days of the Treaty Ports, owes its prestige and glamour to its complex history and institutions. The location of our research is inner-city Shanghai. According to the *Comprehensive Plan of Shanghai 2010* (上海市總體規劃 2010), the "inner city" is the area roughly bounded by the Outer Ring Road. Around 40.5 million square meters of housing was demolished in the area between 1995 and 2003, accounting for 14 percent of the total land area of the inner city. For more than a decade, Shanghai has been one big construction site.<sup>24</sup> For this study, ten interviewees were identified by a process of snowball sampling (see table 1). Recruiting respondents using the snowball technique enables the interviewer to establish rapport and trust, which is essential to in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews based on an ethnographic approach were conducted during the first author's fieldwork in 2004 and 2005. In order to cover a diverse range of subjects, she interviewed displaced residents in different situations and at different stages of demolition.

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<sup>21</sup>Narrative analysis is a methodology for understanding and analyzing the way people create meaning for their lives through narratives.

<sup>22</sup>Elliot G. Mishler, "Models of Narrative Analysis: A Typology," *Journal of Narrative and Life History* 5, no. 2 (June 1995): 87-123.

<sup>23</sup>Jodi Aronson, "A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis," *The Qualitative Report* 2, no. 1 (1994), <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/BackIssues/QR2-1/aronson.html> (accessed April 27, 2012).

<sup>24</sup>See *Shanghai tongji nianjian*, 2004 (Shanghai Statistical Yearbook, 2004), <http://www.stats-sh.gov.cn/data/toTjnj.xhtml?y=2004> (accessed June 23, 2007).

**Table 1**  
**Profile of Informants**

Social Economic Status of Interviewee	Location		Displacement date/Relocated to Current Housing	Form of Compensation	Type of Land Use after Housing Demolition	Area/person (m <sup>2</sup> /person)	Amount of Compensation	Price of New and Permanent Homes
	Previous Housing	New and Permanent Homes						
M. Miao Male, 48 years old, married. He had a daughter who was a university graduate who had just started her career. He worked in a private company.	Luwan District, Ruijin Rd.	Pudong District, Jinqiao	2003/8 2005.3	Money	Commercial buildings for sale	87/4	37	55
Ms. Chen Female, 26 years old, married. She works in a building company managed by her father, as an accountant. After demolition, she and her husband moved to housing provided by her mother's work unit (danwei). She offered the housing she received as compensation to her parents-in-law.	Zhabei District, Huwen Rd.	Zhabei District, Changzhong Rd.	2003.10 2004	Relocated with housing	Landscape at the exit of subway	143	—	—
M. Hong Female, 52 years old, married. She had a son, aged 24. She was forced to relocate to Jiangxi due to state policy when she had just graduated from high school. She then came back to Shanghai after 30 years. Her <i>hukou</i> - residence permit - enabled her to return to Shanghai after she retired. She worked from home in 2004. Since 2005, she has worked in a supermarket managed by her sister.	Zhabei District, Huwen Rd.	Zhabei District, Shoni'an Cun Rd.	2003.10 2004.10	Relocated with housing	Landscape at the exit of subway	143	—	—

Table 1 (Continued)

Social/Economic Status of Interviewee	Location		Displacement date/ Relocated to Current Housing	Form of Compensation	Type of Land Use after Housing Demolition	Area/person (m <sup>2</sup> /person)	Amount of Compensation	Price of New and Permanent Homes
	Previous Housing	New and Permanent Homes						
M. Ma Female, 40 years old, married. She had a daughter who was studying at junior high school at the time of the interview. She was head of a branch of a housing agency in 2004, but was laid off (zhiqiang) in 2005 because the agency closed down.	Nanshi District	Nanshi District	2002/20028	Money	Commercial buildings for sale	183	17	15
M. Chang Male, 31 years old, unmarried. He was a train attendant on the Shanghai-Beijing line. He lived with his 72-year-old mother.	Zhabei District	Zhabei District	2003/10/20048	Relocated with housing	Landscaping at the exit of subway	202	-	-
M. Wang Female, 56 years old, married. She had a daughter who was teaching in a foreign languages school after graduating from university. Ms. Wang worked in a foreign company as an accountant. After she retired, she became a part-time accountancy consultant in the same company. She currently lives with her husband and daughter.	Changning District, Loushangan Rd	Putuo District, Chang-zhengzhen	2002/4/20038	Money	Subway extension works	553	32	33

Table 1 (Continued)

	Social Economic Status of Interviewee	Location	Displacement date/Relocated to Current Housing	Form of Compensation	Type of Land Use after Housing Demolition	Area/person		Amount of Compensation	Price of New and Permanent Homes
						Previous Housing	New and Permanent Homes		
M: N	Male, 45 years old, married. He had a 16 year-old son studying in an automobile vocational school. After he and his wife were laid off (weigang), he stayed at the same work unit under a new labor contract, and his wife began working at a supermarket. They work 3 days a week.	Nanshi District Rudong District Xinpu Rd.	2002.2/ 2002.9	Money	Commercial buildings for sale	17/	934	18.2	tenant
M: Wu	Male, 42 years old, married. He had an eleven year-old son. He had worked for the municipal government. He then inherited the family property and began a grocery store with his wife. They lived above the grocery store, which was an old house in the lane.	Hongkou District	2002.11/no information	Not relocated (still in the process of xunfang)		-6/3	-	Unfinished negotiation	Unfinished negotiation
M: Q	Male, 46 years old, married. He had a son who was studying at junior high school at the time of the interview. He worked in a state raw materials factory as a cadre. He planned to work there until retirement. He lived with his wife and son.	Nanshi District Jingnan New Town	2001.8/ 2001.12	Money	Commercial buildings for sale	359	603	15.3	21.1
M: Zheng	Male, 48 years old. He had an eight year-old daughter. He lived with his daughter and 78 year-old mother. He divorced just after his daughter was born. He made a living selling newspapers at a wharf. His family was classified as an "especially difficult household" and they received relief payments each month from the city government.	Nanshi District	2002.2/ 2003.1	Relocated with housing	Commercial buildings for sale	236	843	-	-

The reasons for demolition may include municipal works, commercial housing development, or the reconstruction of old districts. The ways that relocation is carried out (on-site or off-site) also vary. Lastly, the interviewees are at different stages of relocation, some having been relocated three to four years previously and others still in the process of bargaining with the relocation company. In line with the ethnographic method, formal interviews and informal conversations were conducted in a variety of places, such as homes, workplaces, and restaurants. Tape-recordings of the conversations were made, and pertinent information was written down. This allowed the interviewer to understand the emotions and experiences of displaced residents and the interviewees to give voice to their assessments of the relocation and adaptation process. Like other qualitative studies, we acknowledge the limitations of the sampling procedures and the size of the sample. However, we do not intend to generalize on displaced populations from the findings, but to acquire a nuanced understanding of displaced residents and their circumstances that reflects the complexities of their experiences. As one geographer has remarked, "The aim of an interview is not to be representative (a common but mistaken criticism of this technique) but to understand how individual people experience and make sense of their own lives." The different relocation flows of the interviewees are presented in figure 2. All the interviewees were born in Shanghai and identified themselves as natives of Shanghai.

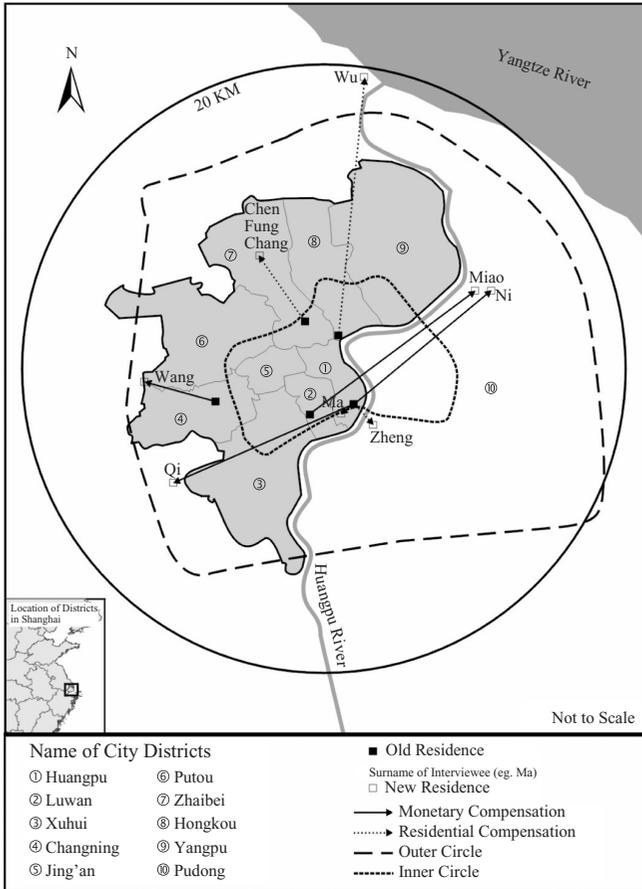
### **Everyday Life Experiences in the Process of Resettlement**

From the in-depth interviews, we find that the relocation process involves a battle for compensation for leaving the city center and then obtaining affordable housing in the suburbs. Three possible themes derived from the thematic analysis are presented below.

#### *Ambivalence about Leaving One's Old Home*

Most of the interviewees who have moved out of the inner city to the periphery outside of the Outer Ring Road as part of the process of gentri-

**Figure 2**  
**Relocation Distance and Distribution of Informations**



fiction expressed ambivalence about the relocation process (figure 2). We use the case of Ms. Ma (pseudonym, see appendix and figure 2, same below for other informants) as an example. After getting married in the 1990s to a taxi driver, Ms. Ma lived in Nanshi District (南市區) (Huangpu District [黃浦區] in 2000). In 2000, a developer submitted plans to build a mall on the land where Ms. Ma's home was located. As a result, her family was expected to move out in 2002. She tried for a few months to reach a deal by

negotiating with the relocation committee. At the same time, her neighborhood was progressively demolished by the developer, although she and her family still lived there. Even though they felt strong resentment toward the relocation committee, they had no choice but to move out.

As the head of a branch of an estate agency in Shanghai, the forty-year-old woman was in a better situation to handle the displacement than most other people. This was because she had superior knowledge of properties in the area. As a dual-income couple with savings, she and her husband bought a second-hand, forty-five-square-meter apartment with two bedrooms and a living room close to their former home, with full property rights. She was tired of living in the dilapidated inner-city housing. Nevertheless, she was ambivalent about the displacement. According to Ms. Ma's discourse, there was a big gap between her expectation of getting "back to the original place" and the reality. She could not achieve her dream because the estate developer had not followed government policy on relocation, which stipulated that developers had to sell their commercial housing units to displaced residents at a discount. Displaced residents, however, usually had no alternative but to take the compensation offered by the developers.

Ambivalence also characterized the experience of Ms. Wang, a retired employee of an accountancy office who moved out of her home in Changning District (長寧區) at the end of August 2002. She and her family rented an apartment in Jiangqiao (江橋)<sup>25</sup> for one year on a temporary basis, then moved to an apartment in Putuo District (普陀區) in the inner city<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Jiangqiao (江橋) is outside the Outer Ring Road (see figure 2) in Jiading District (嘉定), and it is part of the area that belongs to the inner city today but belonged to the county area in 1996.

<sup>26</sup>Although the city's administrative divisions have been changed many times since 1949, Shanghainese consider that places inside the Inner Ring Road are the "real" city of Shanghai. Everywhere else is "the countryside." The Ring Road has become the boundary which differentiates living space and social identity. The idea is significant, and according to the current saying, "Those who live inside the Inner Ring Road (內環) speak foreign languages, those who live between the Inner and the Outer ring roads (外環) speak Mandarin, and those who live outside of the Outer Ring Road speak Shanghainese." In the present study, the terms "city" and "countryside" denote not only the center and the periphery respectively, but carry connotations of "us" (Shanghai natives) and "them" (country bumpkins) (see figure 2).

in August 2003. Their new home is on the border of Putuo and Jiading districts (嘉定區). For Ms. Wang, living in the inner city was very important, because it implied that she was still a Shanghai native, a status symbol perhaps, instead of being a country bumpkin living outside of Shanghai.

Ms. Wang's relocation was caused by municipal works. According to her, citizens had to cooperate so that the municipal government's public project could be completed. Nevertheless, she was still ambivalent about moving, exhibiting a mixture of rational thinking and frustration during the relocation process. A new place would definitely be an improvement on her old one, but she was unwilling to leave a home which was so conveniently located and to which she was accustomed. With the transition from the allocation of housing to marketization, citizens in urban China are getting used to a process of stratification according to economic ability that gives them a corresponding social identity. Ms. Wang decided to move because she considered herself the kind of person who would "win by losing less," although she experienced contradictory emotions during the whole process of relocation. The transformation of economic institutions as demonstrated by the establishment of a housing market has gradually detached people from their places.

Mr. Ni seldom went back to Huangpu District in Puxi (浦西, the west bank of the Huangpu River, 黃浦江) after moving to Pudong District (浦東) in 2002. He had been born in Huangpu District and had never left the place until his family was evicted. He was unemployed and was nostalgic about the era of Mao Zedong, when there was not the same gap between rich and poor as there is today. In those days, displaced residents would be housed in makeshift shanties in their home district. Although he missed the convenience of living in his old home in Puxi, which he had inherited from his forefathers, he seldom returned because the bus fare was expensive for him and all his old neighbors had moved away. According to his discourse, he lived a life of calculating, regretting his lack of economic means and missing the good old days when he was close to his neighbors. Mr. Ni's ambivalence was based on both time and space and was the result of the rapid transformation brought about by marketization.

The displaced residents whose stories have been reported above were ambivalent about leaving their old homes. From the point of view of their physical environment, their old neighborhoods may have been dilapidated, but they provided them with abundant social networks, an acceptable identity, and a necessary sanctuary, and they were located more centrally than their new homes. Their place attachment consisted of love, pride, memory, and practical functions. However, the displaced residents had to face new social and space differentiation based on their economic resources and the sensitivity of dynamic information in the circumstances of rapid economic transformation in urban China. In the end, they were reluctant to move due to their attachment to their old neighborhoods. Although they faced many practical limitations when they were in the process of relocation, and they tended to swing back and forth between memories of their old homes and visions of the future, they never gave up trying to negotiate with the social environment which seemed to impose limits on them.

*Limited Alternatives or Favorable Turn of Events*

The case of Mr. Miao, an employee in a private enterprise, presents a different scenario. He realized from the very beginning of the relocation process that the amount of compensation available was negotiable. However, he also faced time constraints imposed by the relocation committee, and he had to adopt a strategy of delaying and prolonging the process in order to maximize the amount of compensation he received. The strategy he adopted was to play hide-and-seek with the relocation committee. He firmly believed that time was on the residents' side, because the developers needed to get the job done quickly to reduce the cost of construction. The compensation settlement process depended on each individual's ability to bargain. Yet when Mr. Miao eventually left his old home, he was astounded by the property prices in the new area. In the end, he moved to comparatively remote Pudong District with limited financial means, and hoped that in a few years time Pudong would become the new city center. A change of place attachment was the strategy that enabled Mr. Miao to accept the unchangeable fact of his present situation.

The case of Mr. Chang, a train attendant, is also illustrative. We inquired whether he had found it "difficult to change his lifestyle." Despite recounting the negative aspects of where he used to live—a filthy environment and a neighborhood that was so close-knit that there was little privacy, Mr. Chang still remembered the convenience of his old place even though he had tried to change his schedule for going shopping and what he did in his free time.

However, when the question of "accepting compensation" arose, the conversation gradually shifted to the process of relocation. For Mr. Chang, "staying in his original place" would have been the perfect arrangement, although he could put up with his new home, as it was better than his previous one. When negotiating compensation for relocation, Mr. Chang believed that residents who "accepted the deal on offer" did not suffer as seriously from extortionate property prices as those who stalled and tried to negotiate with the developer.

A further example is that of Mr. Qi, who left Nanshi District, where he had lived for forty years, and moved to Jing'an New Town (靜安新城) in Minhang District (閔行區), outside the Inner Ring Road. His current new home in a six-storey apartment block was built in 1996 on land acquired from local peasants. Even though he had lived in his current home for four years, he still felt unhappy about his relocation. Mr. Qi's experience of negotiation with the relocation committee could be summarized in two words: "unreasonable compensation." Mr. Qi told them that he would not be able to buy his current house unless his compensation was increased by 100,000 RMB (about US\$13,060). Eventually, he relented and made up the difference out of his own savings. His savings were therefore severely depleted and it was going to take him years to recoup his losses. While discussing the "unreasonable compensation," Mr. Qi said that he was unlucky to have been born in the early days of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Like most forty to fifty-year-olds in urban China, Mr. Qi had experienced a break in his schooling, been sent down to the countryside (下放), and been laid off by his work unit (下崗). Now, he had been forced to relocate due to urban redevelopment. He firmly believed that his generation had been sacrificed for the development of China. Relocation was simply the fate of his generation.

In contrast to the individuals involved in the above cases, all of whom faced limitations in the current situation during their relocation, Mrs. Hong, Ms. Chen, and Mr. Zheng presented different discourses regarding the limitations they faced in relocation. The relocation strategy of Mrs. Hong, a "young intellectual returnee" (知青) from the interior province of Jiangxi (江西), may be described as one of "using the identity of a young intellectual returnee as social capital to win her final negotiation." Eight years previously, Mrs. Hong had moved into her sister's home in Shanghai, which was part of a relocation project, and obtained Shanghai residency (*hukou*, 戶口) which allowed her family to be considered as displaced residents. Regarding her experiences during relocation, Mrs. Hong developed the discourse of it being a "favorable chance that enabled her to make a profit." She bought a two-bedroom apartment in Zhabei District (閘北區), between the Inner and Outer ring roads, before relocation, because she had learned the "rules of the game" of relocation from family members who connected to the Bureau of Construction. Therefore, she was able to gain more time and space during the negotiation. Eventually, she moved to the two-bedroom apartment on the edge of the Outer Ring Road that she had been given as compensation for relocation and has rented out the apartment she bought herself.

Ms. Chen, a staff member in a real estate company that was involved in arranging relocation, developed discourses similar to those of Mrs. Hong. Because of her dual status, i.e., being an evictee and also working for the developer, she presented a discourse of "displaced residents are the ultimate winners in relocation." She said that she used to live in a fourteen-square-meter home with four *hukou*. Her family, however, obtained compensation in the form of two one-bedroom apartments with full property rights (114 square meters in total). Therefore, Ms. Chen developed discourses such as "the municipal government acts legitimately and rationally during relocation" and "the municipal government has a thankless task," despite the fact that she has fond memories of her old home, which was "central and convenient and relations with the neighbors were good." In short, Mrs. Hong and Ms. Chen used their privileged positions to deconstruct the limitations they faced in relocation. However, in China, being

poor sometimes gives one an edge over those in a more privileged position. Mr. Zheng's family was designated "an especially difficult household," since he adopted an alternative strategy to break out of the limitations he faced in relocation. In his conversation, he adopted a discourse of "acting shamelessly in order to allow my family to survive." He and his daughter each received a monthly allowance of 290 RMB from the municipal government. Mr. Zheng readily accepted relocation without any negotiation. His family was offered an undecorated apartment without internal fixtures and without full property rights, and he was required to pay a monthly rent of 170 RMB. However, Mr. Zheng did not pay any rent for the initial six months. When the staff of the housing committee demanded he pay his rent, Mr. Zheng told them that he could not afford it. Even when the rent was reduced to 90 RMB, Mr. Zheng still did not pay, and the committee stopped demanding rent from him. In Mr. Zheng's opinion, there is nothing shameful about not paying the government because anything you pay to the government is always snatched by some private individual. Mr. Zheng has no idea of the market price of his apartment, but he knows that he does not need to pay any rent for it. Although Pudong, where he lives, is a long way from the inner city, it is near his place of work.

For these displaced residents, relocation is an irreversible fact. They adopted different strategies to modify their attachment to their old homes in a way that allowed them to accept their fate. Some of them struggled for a place attachment comprising convenience of location, a close relationship with neighbors, and the status symbol of being Shanghainese. On the one hand, they tried to break out of the limitations of their social environment, on the other hand, they remained bound by these limitations which were re-evoked by the idea of obedience to the sovereign authority left over from the era of orthodox socialism. Eventually, they tried to convince themselves that they must accept what was on offer by producing complex discourses related to exchanging place attachment for a better life in the future. For those who had relatively plentiful supplies of social capital, place attachment fluctuated according to the opportunities they were given to create wealth during the process of relocation. No matter what their status was, place attachment had become an instrument that provided them with

solace. Nevertheless, compared with relocation before 1992, when displaced residents were relocated elsewhere in the original city center, they never doubted that they had been excluded from the "center" of Shanghai.

*New Home in the City Center of the Future with Constant Resistance on the Periphery*

Several informants presented the discourse of "the inner city belongs to the Shanghainese" during the relocation project. First, let us consider the case of Mr. Miao, who experienced several relocations as the city expanded. Each time, he felt he had been moved further away from the city center. In his most recent relocation experience, Mr. Miao moved to the Jinqiao (金橋) area of Pudong District, a place he considered to be on the boundary between the "countryside" and the "city." The area is located between the Outer and Inner ring roads and it was under the jurisdiction of the county government until 1996 when it was incorporated into the Shanghai inner city area. However, for Mr. Miao, it was still a place where only country bumpkins would live, outside the inner city of Shanghai.

But one year later, Mr. Miao was talking about his new home as being in "the inner city of the future." He referred to his past experiences of relocation and changed his definition of "countryside" and "city." When he was a child, the area where his house is located was surrounded by graves and weeds, but it later became a "golden area," attracting large amounts of investment. Likewise, property prices in the newly built Pudong financial district (浦東金融貿易特區) are now as high as those on Nanjing Road, the old downtown of Shanghai, even though Pudong was farmland not so long ago. From his experiences, Mr. Miao believes that Shanghai will gradually spread out into the "countryside." Therefore, he predicts that what is now "countryside" will be the inner city of the future.

The sentiments of Ms. Wang are similar. Although she believes that the inner city of Shanghai comprises primarily the neighborhoods along Nanjing Road (南京路) and Xujiahui (徐家匯), she clings on to the hope that her current home, which is on the fringe of the Outer Ring Road, will be part of the inner city of the future. She thinks a city should not have only one center. She firmly believes that each district has its own center in

Shanghai. For Ms. Wang, the inner city is not strictly delineated in space.

The concepts of city/countryside and center/periphery have been gradually transformed due to past and present city planning. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, Shanghai has created the blueprint for a cosmopolitan city.<sup>27</sup> It has successfully attracted global capital and transnational elites. The blueprint and the chance to participate in the city's development are important incentives to settle in Shanghai. For some displaced residents, their place attachment to the city center is a matter of constant compromise between their past experiences of living there and their present condition; it enables them to reconfigure their place attachment to their new place of residence on the periphery and the municipal government to accomplish its urban redevelopment projects. Their place attachment has been gradually transformed gradually from one of hesitation to one of approving of the periphery.

However, Mr. Wu, a "nail house" (釘子戶) defender, the term for someone who struggles against giving up his property to a developer, refused to capitulate to the reproduction of place attachment driven by the urban growth machine.<sup>28</sup> For him, the "injustice" of relocation deprived him of his housing and his work. His family was faced with forced relocation in October 2005 after he had negotiated with the relocation committee for three years. He received compensation in the form of an apartment in Paoshan District (寶山區) outside of the Outer Ring Road that was inaccessible by public transportation at that time. In Mr. Wu's opinion, this was not a place for Shanghai natives but only for country bumpkins. His discourse was that "the involvement of the municipal government has damaged residents' rights and interests, but allowed developers to make huge profits," and he insisted that he would not compromise with the municipal government but would petition to the higher authority in Beijing

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<sup>27</sup>Zhou Zhenhua and Chen Wei, eds., *Xietiao fazhan quanmian tisheng chengshi gongneng: 2005 nian Shanghai jingji fazhan lanpishu* (The 2005 Shanghai economic development blue papers: meditating developmental efforts to improve the function of the city) (Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2005).

<sup>28</sup>John R. Logan and Harvey Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1987), chap. 3.

(上訪, *shangfang*). Mr. Wu's place attachment is rooted in his original place and this has made him resist resettlement on the periphery rather than led him to reproduce his place attachment to a place which he believes is not for Shanghainese.

The above three themes reflect the dimensions of feelings, strategies, and settlement associated with the process of relocation, and all of them involve calculations of profit and loss within the limits of the social environment. This research has shown that relocation is more than a linear process of place attachment that includes affect, cognition, and behavior; it is also a matter of constant bargaining with the social environment and the original place attachment. For displaced residents, a new social and space differentiation as a result of the transformation brought about by marketization sets the limitations on relocation. However, real life calculations drive them to adopt strategies to deconstruct the limitations. Because of the extremely uncertain social environment and their power to negotiate during the process of relocation, "bargaining" has become a complex issue for the residents. It brings with it feeling of ambivalence, strategies used to deconstruct the limitations, and the condition of settlement during the process of relocation, and eventually allows them to construct a distinctive place (de)attachment.

### **Summary and Conclusion: Bargaining Place Attachment**

This study mainly employs sensitive microlevel research to examine the experiences of displaced residents in the process of resettlement. Three themes have been identified through thematic analysis: "ambivalence about leaving one's old home," "limited alternatives or favorable turn of events," and a "new home in the city center of the future with constant resistance on the periphery." These themes help us to understand the process of relocation based on social and economic transformation which has advanced the reproduction of place attachment.

Through constant bargaining during the process of relocation, the place attachment of the displaced residents wavered between remembering

the past and considering what the future will hold for them. They want to support their country's development, and they know they have to move as a direct consequence of this. Although their old homes in the inner city provided them with abundant social networks, an acceptable identity, and a necessary sanctuary, they understood that relocation is an irreversible fact. They each adopted a different strategy for modifying their attachment to their old home that allowed them to accept their relocation. Nevertheless, their lives were disturbed by the complex process of negotiating compensation with the relocation committee. They made sure they were not at home when members of the relocation committee visited them to discuss compensation. In order to gain the upper hand in the negotiations, the displaced residents commonly adopted a tactic which they call "bargaining for more money by using time." There was obvious disagreement between the displaced residents and the relocation committee. Ultimately, the residents were the losers, because they were always indignant about the inadequate amount of compensation they were offered and were ambivalent about leaving their old localities. When they sought temporary accommodations while waiting to move to their new homes, they found that they were being forced to move to the "countryside." Having experienced social and spatial differentiation resulting from changes in their economic circumstances, displaced residents had no choice but to learn to accept their new localities. The process of negotiating compensation exposed them to the rules of the market. To deconstruct the limitations of their social environment, they bargained with the relocation committee which is actually on the side of the developer, the municipal government, and the state. However, they were forever evoking the orthodox socialist culture which dominated their lives for so long, and which made them withdraw from negotiation. In the meantime, they bargained with cultural conformity and social belonging during the process.

After moving to their new homes, they tried to adapt their lifestyles and their imagination of location. Nevertheless, it was difficult for them to forget the good old days in the inner city. Their thoughts wandered back and forth over the pros and cons of their current residence. Having lived in Shanghai for many years, and having witnessed the development of the

city, they believed their imagination of location would be modified. The "countryside" where they currently live will soon become the inner city of Shanghai. From being Shanghai natives who live outside the Outer Ring Road, they will return to being Shanghai natives living in the city center once again. "Being Shanghai natives" and "living in the city center" are the fundamental things that connect them to Shanghai. They bargained repeatedly with their identities and place participation, and reproduced a new place attachment which is indispensable to the development of urban housing in China.

The above analysis illustrates that relocation is a dynamic process in the reproduction of place attachment through constant bargaining. Therefore, we denominate it as bargaining place attachment. The bargaining place attachment of Shanghai's displaced residents is interconnected with such factors as the generalized social environment and the emotions of the individual. With regard to place attachment (in their experiences), the residents usually adopt the concept of interaction to describe the relationship between the social environment and the individual's emotions. Interaction, in the form of bargaining, is vividly depicted in this study. For Shanghai's displaced residents, involved in post-socialist China's urban redevelopment, "bargaining place attachment" is built on the bargain between cultural conformity, social belonging, identities, and place participation. "Bargaining" has become not only their strategy of negotiation, but their way of being attached to or detached from the place—Shanghai. Moreover, bargaining place attachment grants legitimacy to the fact that place detachment is indispensable in the redevelopment of urban China. When moving to a new place, Shanghai's displaced residents bargain repeatedly, and try to make themselves believe that they have never left the "center" of Shanghai. Therefore, bargaining place attachment allows the achievement of urban redevelopment. Bargaining place attachment has been practiced by residents in other redevelopment projects in urban China. While the recent literature on place attachment has focused either on the elements of affect, cognition, and behavior, or interaction with cultural conformity, social belonging, and identity, this study uses the concept of "bargaining" as a substitute for linear elements and "interaction" to make up

for elements that have been ignored in representing place attachment, i.e., the way that people living in a substandard environment were using their limited resources and relevant strategies to bargain with policies, institutions, conventional cultural values, identities, and imagination of location. In this study, place attachment has been transformed by government decrees and propaganda employed in the process of bargaining to the extent that the displaced residents, while struggling to uphold their rights, still believe that they can benefit from government policies designed to achieve a bright future for their city. Consequently, relocation does not destroy place attachment, but instead allows the reinvention of place attachment in the process of bargaining.

In urban China, the experiences and feelings of displaced residents during the process of relocation have so far received little attention in scholarly inquiry. Compared with studies which have demonstrated that the satisfaction levels of displaced residents are higher than those of other people (such as voluntary movers, stayers, and migrants),<sup>29</sup> the present study has presented findings which are more nuanced than those that use a positivist approach or works focusing on classes, social relationships, and feelings.<sup>30</sup> Through this study, we have discovered how the dynamics and diversity of the place attachment of displaced residents have been constituted as "bargaining place attachment" during the process of relocation. Perhaps the most significant findings of the present study are that displaced residents are enabled, and second, that they experience distinctive limitations when they interact with the social environment.

It is more than a decade since the marketization of housing began in urban China, and urban dwellers today have a clear and strong idea of the market and tend to convert the use value of their homes into exchange value when they face relocation. However, the orthodox culture of obedience to

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<sup>29</sup>Fulong Wu, "Intra-urban Residential Relocation in Shanghai: Modes and Stratification," *Environment and Planning A* 36, no. 1 (2004): 7-25; Li and Song, "Displacement, Housing Conditions and Residential Satisfaction," 1090-108.

<sup>30</sup>Gans, "The Human Implications," 15-26; Fried and Gleicher, "Some Sources of Residential Satisfaction," 305-15.

authority is rooted in the displaced residents' minds, and has been utilized by the urban growth machine which imposes limitations on the social environment. When a deep-seated socialist culture meets a shaky idea of the market, the enabling of displaced residents during the process of relocation is relegated to bargaining. In the present study, we have devised the concept of "bargaining place attachment" to describe what happens as a result of urban redevelopment projects in Shanghai, and we highlight the significance of the cultural sphere in relocation in urban China. Urban redevelopment projects are essential tasks for municipal government in China. We wonder if the place attachment of displaced residents will change as people become more conscious of their property rights under the Property Rights Law of 2007. Alternative solutions that would ameliorate the conflict between people and place should be studied in the future.

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