

Mumbai 2008

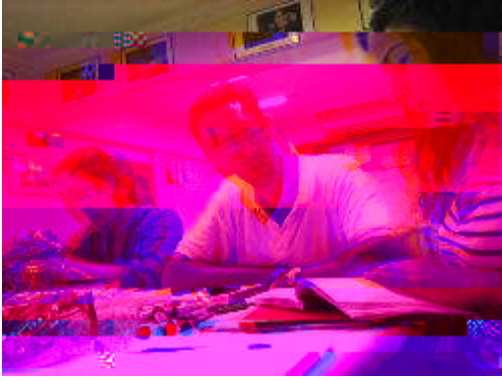
A reflection by Abir Saksouk-Sasso

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During the month of May of 2008, UDP students embarked on a fourteen day fieldtrip to Mumbai, India. Organized in teams of twelve, we worked on two out of three case studies: the first reviewed the relocation of pavement dwellers from their vulnerable locations on pavements to new housing projects in the outer fringe of the city, and the second focused on the relocation of slum dwellers living next to railway tracks due to a major, donor-funded infrastructure project. The exercise targeted community-based organizations, local NGOs, the municipal and State government and state capital (onsite) - 251.0(d) - 1.9(c)4.0(d)4.0(d)252.0(N)3470.87s 13.79 re situation given to each group, as well as emerge with recommendations over how processes, outcomes and outputs could be further improved.

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are the stake of this investigation and their silence or absence, as users of the city, “is indeed a problem - and it is the entire problem” (Lefebvre 1991; 365).

‘Seeing’ Mumbai, eating its food, reading its books, walking its streets and acknowledging our differences vis-à-vis it, we were able to imagine the possibility of an-other relationship between this ‘unfamiliar’ city and ourselves. As such, the fieldtrip set the conditions for further interactions and allowed for more stories to emerge; by highlighting the critical thinking in the process of relocation of slum dwellers, it was the start of new actions, on our part, in any city and any context. In the end, the exercise gave us as participants an understanding of urban change, and prepared us as future planners by enhancing our critical and analytical capacities to respond to such change, always within a general framework of social justice.