

#### DHARAVI: PLACES AND IDENTITIES

An Exhibition Understanding Different Communities on the Basis of Their Origin, Livelihood and Spatial Organization



COLUMBIA GLOBAL CENTERS | SOUTH ASIA

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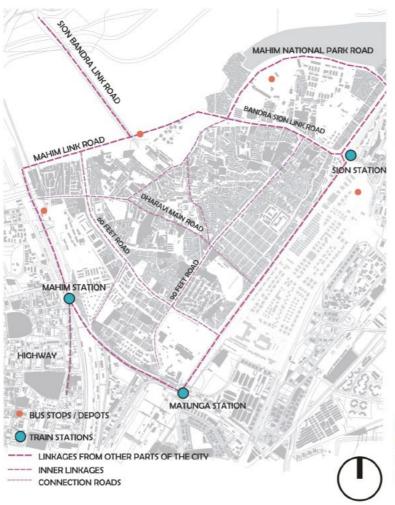


#### **DHARAVI: PLACES & IDENTITIES INTRODUCTION**



**MUMBAI** IS THE MOST POPULOUS CITY IN INDIA AND HAS THE HIGHEST GDP OF ANY CITY IN SOUTH, WEST OR CENTRAL ASIA. THE SEVEN ISLANDS THAT CAME TO CONSTITUTE MUMBAI WERE HOME TO COMMUNITIES OF FISHING COLONIES. ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERIZED THE CITY DURING THE 19TH CENTURY.

DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD MUMBAI GREW TO AN INDUSTRIAL TOWN AND IN THE COURSE OF GLOBALIZATION TO A MEGA CITY WITH ABOUT 20 MILLION INHABITANTS. THE ECONOMIC CAPITAL STILL ATTRACTS TENS OF THOUSANDS PEOPLE EACH YEAR WHO COME IN SEARCH OF WORK FROM ALL DIFFERENT RURAL PARTS OF INDIA. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND HOUSING CONSTRUCTION **CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THE GROWTH OF** POPULATION: NEARLY 50 PERCENT OF MUMBAI'S POPULATION IS HOMELESS OR LIVES IN ILLEGALLY BUILT SLUMS ON URBAN LEFTOVER SPACES. THESE SLUMS HAVE PROPPED UP ALL OVER THE CITY - AND IT IS BELIEVED THAT THERE ARE OVER 2,000 SLUM

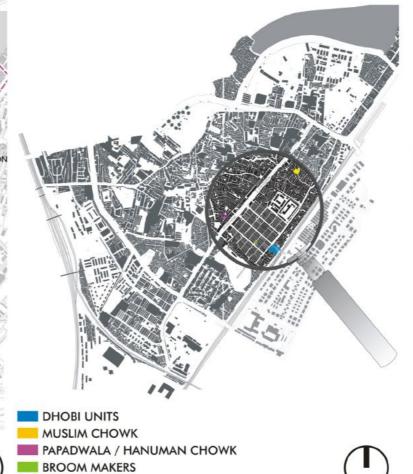


#### INTERMEDIATE NAGAR LEVEL SCALE

showing roads and networks

**DHARAVI**, A CENTRAL AREA WITHIN THE MEGACITY MUMBAI AND ONE OF THE LARGEST INFORMAL SETTLEMENT OF ASIA, CONSISTS OF ABOUT 80 NAGARS (NEIGHBORHOODS). THESE NAGARS ARE BUILT AND DOMINATED BY DIFFERENT ETHNIC **GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES. FROM THEIR** ORIGINAL VILLAGES THE INHABITANTS BROUGHT ALONG SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONS, FOOD HABITS, CLOTHING STYLES AND CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

DHARAVI WAS SET UP BY IMMIGRANTS FROM GUJARAT WHO BUILT THEIR FIRST HOUSES IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY. OVER THE NEXT FEW DECADES IMMIGRANTS CAME FROM ALL PARTS OF INDIA TO WORK IN THE BOOMING TEXTILE INDUSTRY. TODAY, DHARAVI BEARS NO RESEMBLANCE TO THE FISHING VILLAGES IT ONCE WAS. A CITY WITHIN A CITY, ITS ONE UNENDING STRETCH OF NARROW DIRTY LANES, OPEN SEWERS, CRAMPED HUTS AND ALSO HIGHER BUILDINGS ALONG THE MAIN ROADS. **EXTREMELY DENSE AND COMPLEX LIVING AND** WORKING QUARTERS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED



#### **NAGAR LEVEL SCALE**

showing the investigated areas

THE URBAN STRUCTURE IS VERY INTRICATE, AS LIVING AND WORK SPACE ARE ALWAYS **INEXTRICABLY LINKED.** ONLY A MINOR GROUP OF PEOPLE LIVING IN THE SLUM HAVE PROPERTY RIGHTS ON LAND AND HOUSING. MANY PEOPLE WORK AS DAY LABORERS OR DO UNHEALTHY AND **INHUMANE ACTIVITIES.** THE HOUSES ARE **POORLY** LIT AND VENTILATED. PRIVATE TOILETS ARE AN **EXCEPTION RATHER THAN THE RULE, AND PUBLIC** TOILETS ARE IN A DILAPIDATED CONDITION IN MOST CASES. ON AVERAGE, FIFTEEN FAMILIES SHARE A WATER PIPE.

ESTIMATES OF THE SCALE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN DHARAVI CAN ONLY BE GUESSES AT BEST DUE TO SEVERAL ENTERPRISES BEING IN THE SHADOW OF ILLEGIBILITY. AN OFF THE CUT ESTIMATE OF THE REDEVELOPMENT STUDY PUTS THE DAILY TURNOVER AT RS 5 CRORE (500 MILLION) A DAY OR RS 1500-2000 CRORES A YEAR. THE PRESENCE OF INDUSTRY IN THE SETTLEMENT IS SO VIBRANT THAT EVERY SECOND OR THIRD HOUSE SEEMS TO BE THE SITE OF SOME OR THE OTHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.



#### MUSLIM CHOWK

PAPADWALA / HANUMAN CHOWK

#### BROOM MAKERS

#### **QUARTER LEVEL SCALE**

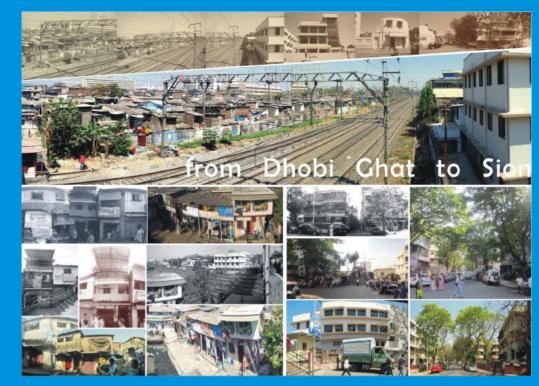
showing the investigated areas

THIS **EXHIBITION** FOCUSES ON UNDERSTANDING DHARAVI - REPUTED AS ONE OF THE LARGEST SLUMS IN ASIA, THROUGH THE LENS OF LIVELIHOODS. WE THUS EXPLORE THE WAY DIFFERENT GROUPS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROCESS OF EVOLVING THE SETTLEMENT, MAP THEIR CURRENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC LOCATIONS AND SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THEIR ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE. STUDIES SHOW THE COHERENCE OF THE SOCIAL, **ECONOMIC AND ARCHITECTONIC CHANGES** DURING THE LAST DECADES, THROUGH THE LENS OF THE INHABITANTS LIVELIHOODS.

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS OF THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS IN THE STRUCTURAL HIERARCHY OF THE URBAN FABRIC, THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN EXPLORED ON DIFFERENT **LEVELS OF SCALE AND ACCURACY.** A SMALLER QUARTER WITHIN EACH NAGAR HAS BEEN SELECTED TO STUDY IT IN DETAIL: ALL BUILDINGS AND **SPACES** OF THIS COHERENT AREA AND ALL INHABITANTS (AS FAR AS POSSIBLE) HAVE BEEN INCLUDED.



## **SHOBI GHAT**

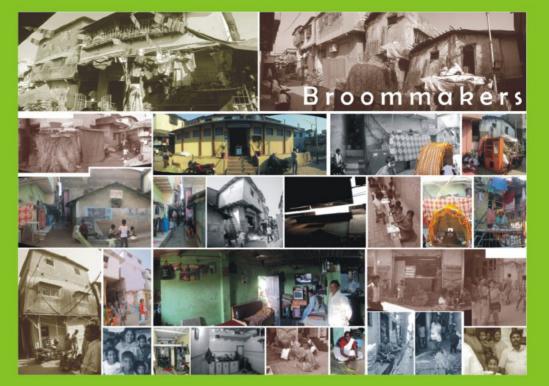


DHARAVI DOES NOT HAVE A TRADITIONAL **DHOBI GHAT** (A PLACE WHERE CLOTHES ARE WASHED, CONSISTS OF CHANNELS OF WATER WITH STONE PLATFORMS). A GROUP FROM ANDHRA PRADESH IDENTIFIED THE **NALA** (**WASTE WATER CHANNEL**) FLOWING ADJOINING THE RAILWAY TRACK AS A POSSIBLE SITE FOR A DHOBI GHAT AND CREATED ONE IN THE 1940S IE BEFORE THE CONSTRUCTION OF TRANSIT CAMP. IT IS SAID THAT THERE WERE 40-50 FAMILIES OF DHOBIS LIVING AROUND THIS AREA TILL ABOUT 10-15 YEARS AGO. TODAY, THERE ARE BARELY 6-7 FAMILIES WHO OPERATE THE DHOBI GHAT IN DHARAVI.

## **APADWALAS**



PAPADS ARE A ROLLED OUT PATTY OF VARIED PULSES WHICH ARE DRIED AND STORED AND ARE A POPULAR SIDE DISH IN SEVERAL PARTS OF INDIA WITH REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN PULSES USED. **HANUMAN CHOWK** IS ONE OF 3-4 CLUSTERS OF HOUSES (AROUND 100-150 WOMEN) WHO MAKE PAPADS IN DHARAVI. LIJJAT AND GANESH ARE THE TWO MOST COMMON NAMES IN THE INDUSTRY WHICH IS ORGANIZED AROUND HOME BASED WORK FOR WOMEN. THE WORK WAS INTRODUCED IN DHARAVI ABOUT 40 YEARS AGO AND THE NUMBER OF WOMEN INVOLVED HAS ONLY INCREASED SINCE THEN.



BROOM MAKERS

THE KUNCHIKARVE COMMUNITY, WHICH COMPRISE THE **BROOM MAKERS** COMMUNITY, IS A NOMADIC TRIBE. THE COMMUNITY MOVED AS DISTINCT GROUPS, SCATTERED IN SEVERAL PARTS OF MAHARASHTRA AND KARNATAKA. THE KUCHIKARVES MADE THEIR HOMES IN THE **SWAMPY AREA OF DHARAVI** WHERE THE CURRENT 90 FEET ROAD IS LOCATED. THEIR HOUSES EARLIER WERE MADE OF **TIN SHEETS**, AND THEY USED TO STOCK MATERIAL AND **PREPARE BROOMS OUTSIDE THEIR HOMES ON THE STREETS**. THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ENGAGED IN BROOM MAKING HAS REDUCED DRASTICALLY OVER THE YEARS DUE TO UNAVAILABILITY OF RAW MATERIAL.



# **MUSLIM CHOWK**

THE **MUSLIM CHOWK** COMPRISES OF A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO ARE UNITED BY FAITH AND NOT REGION. THE MOSQUE IS NOT ONLY A PHYSICAL MEMBER OF THEIR CHOWK BUT A **STRONG SYMBOL OF THEIR COMMUNITY**. RECENTLY RENOVATED TO ACCOMMODATE MORE PEOPLE FOR DAILY PRAYERS, THE MOSQUE IS ONE OF THE TALLEST STRUCTURES SOUTH OF 90 FEET ROAD. HOWEVER, **SANITATION IS POOR** AND **STREET ACCESS TO THE CHOWK IS LIMITED**. OCCUPATIONALLY THEY ARE DIVIDED AS FEW MEMBERS ARE PART OF THE THRIVING LEATHER INDUSTRY, SOME ARE PART OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY WHILE OTHERS HAVE PRIVATE BUSINESSES AND RESTAURANTS TO THEIR NAME.



PAPADWALA CHOWK RECREATED AND THE SCULPTURE SHOWING 'LINKS TO THE VILLAGES'

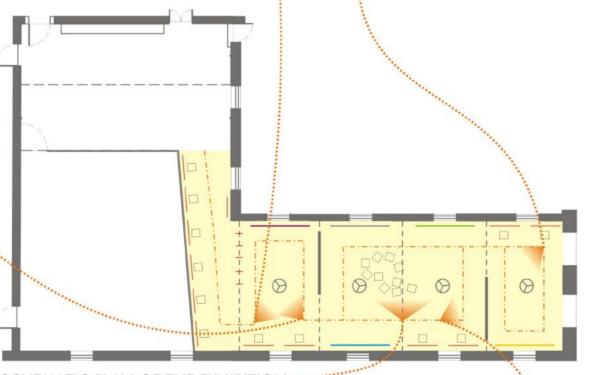


VIEW OF THE GENERAL PANELS ABOUT DHARAVI

### SCHEMATIC PLAN AND WALKTHROUGH IMAGES



(L-R)-GENERAL PANELS ABOUT DHARAVI, THE SOFT PANEL FOR DHOBI GHAT, THE AUDIO VISUAL PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH, SCULPTURE SHOWING 'LINKS TO THE VILLAGES' & BROOM MAKER PANEL



SCHEMATIC PLAN OF THE EXHIBITION



MUSLIM CHOWK RECREATED AND THE SCULPTURE SHOWING 'LINKS TO THE VILLAGES'

PANELS ABOUT DHARAVI (13 NO.S)

DHOBI GHAT PANEL

HANUMAN CHOWK PANEL

BROOM MAKERS LANE PANEL

MUSLIM CHOWK PANEL

**AUDIO VISUAL PRESENTATION** 

SOFT PANELS WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

STEEL RECYCLABLE BOXES USED FOR DISPLAY



SOFT PANEL OF THE BROOM MAKER LANE



AR. MARTINA SPIES ADDRESSING A GROUP OF **STUDENTS** 

STUDENTS INTRIGUED BY THE INFORMATION OF MUSLIM CHOWK



STUDENTS AND VISITORS OBSERVING AND DISCUSSING THE RESEARCH PRESENTED



VIEW OF THE SCULPTURE WHICH SHOWS THE LINKS TO THE VILLAGES



CORRUGATED METAL SHEETS USED TO DISPLAY PHOTOGRAPHS AND PANORAMAS





RESIDENTS OF DHARAVI ARE EXCITED TO FIND REFERENCES OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR DAILY LIVES AS PART OF THE EXHIBITION



REFERENCE MAPS OF DHARAVI SHOWING VARIOUS LAYERS OF URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS



A SHORT AUDIO-VISUAL PRESENTATION GIVING AN OVERVIEW OF THE FOUR CHOWKS



CHILDREN FROM DHARAVI ARE EXCITED AS THEY SPOT THEIR PHOTOS AND OTHER REFERENCES





exhibition, lot to feel it

from exhibition and good

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P.P. HiRAHi Photojournalist

July 10,0

Chaten from Reda

work and the entitibition, weep





It's not like your regular exhibition. There's no colourful 'art' on the walls or people ling with wine glasses, amidst chatter about the artist. As soon as you step int Studio X at Kitab Mahal, you get the feeling that you're being watched. A mind-boggling number of pictures – of men, women, children, houses, maps – adom the otherwise deserted wells of the room. Empty oil canusters, piled one on top of the other line the floors. Objects like jump ropes, rangoli colours, fried snacks, bangles and drawing children rest on top of the canisters. A clothestine hangs above one of the section:

It's easy to guess that the curator, architect-designer Martina Spies, has tried to recreat the mammeth-sized Dharavi with Dharavi: Places and Identities. There's a paintaining amount of detail, maps indicating public spaces at Dharavi, floor plans and a projector showing videos of the residents making brooms. Spies has spent the last two years do in her research on what others deem as Asia's largest 'slam', a word she has an issue with "is in informal settlement where so many communities live and thuive. I've measured such and every house in the area," she says.

She has focused on four distinct communities – Hanuman Chovyk, Dhobi Ghat, Broom Maker Lane and Muslim Chovyk. Apart from the pictures, there are individual boards that trace the development, living vegys sociological mapping (ownership, density, income per day) and problems of the communities with test and pictures. For instance, the Hamuman Chovyk beard explains the lives of the papad-making women who come from Lover tribes while Nuslim Chovyk table about the migrant Nuslim residents who are united by their religious beliefs. Spies table about the residents getting fed up of foreigners who come to the area and but never do any concrete work for their development. She visited the hometowns of several dhobis in Andhan Pandesh and also showed them the exhibition. 1

What separates Spies work from the countless others on Dhamvi is her goal — she's starting her own NGO. Anakrit to help build playgrounds for the children of Dhamvi. It broke my heart to see children playing in the polluted air near the leather tanneries. The settlement has just one small playground, and that's a part of a school, 'she states, adding that she now has strong ties with all the communities. She dedicates the exhibition to the strong residents and says, 'Dhamavi shouldn't be romanticised. It doesn't actually need the help of developers but just creation of hygienic spaces."

and entensine asek leng informative to me as a student. Thank you for this wonderful calubihois.

Eary to undescrand. Very detailed

It was a really good

Martinalegishtful + Important Do hope ideas will be exchanged and then implemented. Enjoyed the presentation! Brinda Somaya

Vary Informative of beautifully executed. Thank you for organizing & putting this together. A true Eyespered.

An Experience through an important "concern space" of the city, mendaport work! Would have to bee something coming up next 1 HO Hay Martine, why a provident and insightful culmination of the toving hardwall invested by you over the last. 13 years. 19 with the planner and architet the life ger ingrired to look at the city

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Beautiful & Intensive Research. Commondable job, very informative soject on blowni repreciate it wrunch Moutine :) - Jayarbres Raman : congratulations | Fairtache Documentation of the in between spaces of Dhavari 2 The importance They have in the liviewoods of many. The presentation format it great! Best - Handin Sampat

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vbhc.com/bhk\_flat\_mumbai - Vaibhav Palghar - Pay 20% & Book

Marti. So much work & Ulwayht, so beautifully port together. I could how Dharavi was brought aline. There's so much to learn about see city we like in. Thank for for time window into Dharain Sharmisha

Thank you for sharing such an insighted work! My vision of Dharavi has definitely changed after this great Exhib. Weath sharing with public authorities too. Tlanks! Jandin

for have shown the ordinal DHARAUI which was unknown to us! Eventhough we are Tumbaikers. On top ? ell a very impressive of pessivative presentation. Got inspired about by your work & it changed our perspective towards here & Charani. Keep Going Martina Make to see your more work n future Coefing i - Widh thi. Muty & Viray Patel

Inspiring & informative great job. Saumya: LIEDE HARTINA! GRATILIERE DIR ZU DER JUPER RESEMPLEA PU EIMEN NOW WICHTIGSTEN THENEW IN DOR TRAIN PLANING - DIJ KUSSION) AUCH GUTE MUSTERED ANG, My dear Martina Ho words to lescribe what you have Mone! Paulour

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9, NAVMIRMAN SOCIETY LED 16 Th AOAD SOUTH COURT WEST SOUTH COURT WEST SOUTH OF THE COURTS WHIGHE PRESCULATION COMPANY 3rd Year Rachana Sansad Givent work, very detailed nd interacting. Expecially level the fact that You all made it so easy for ell of us to go through the whole John well thought installations! ing well displayed material so, Hoping to see cee more

DHARAVI HAS BEEN A BEAUTIFULL MAZE VITH MULTIPLEENTRIES & EXITS, IT UNFOLDS ITSELF TO EACH VISITOR IN ITS OWN WAY. THE WORK EXHIBITED TAKES THROUGH AWHOLE JOURNEY OF DHARAVI ( KRVIA STUDENT) (KRVIA STUDENT)

south from you'll !

Thank you!

constructive.

Vell documented and captures on essence of Phanari bus consider the number and duration of studies based on The same in the past Some new conclusions or insights would have been more Amin

it's great honour for us Dhoraviah! Thank you somet Mortina U have thewed he true follows of Dharavi which will help other effor on deristanding Dhonavi much better, and We. Thorawan also feeling beny much of dhoral transfer or should work and our sment Heantyou there again Sprea mounte Power ground

Thather you is work and any DhaRavi Places and you says andarathank DHARAVI Arvind, Schel Martina.





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very detailed research .. will

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