

Film review (dharavi:slum for sale)

Sociology



of Affiliation Dharavi: Slum for Sale Directed by Lutz Konermann, Dharavi: Slum for Sale is a film which exposes the behind the scenes happenings for the Dharavi Redevelopment Project. Dharavi is supposedly the largest slum in the world with a population of over 800, 000 people. The film focusses on Mukesh Mehta, a US trained architect, and his ambitious plan to convert Dharavi into a modern metropolis. After returning to India from the U. S., Mehta manages to convince the Indian government of this project that would involve public-private partnership. The project will entail the construction of high-rising buildings of over 20 stories to replace the shanties of this slum dwelling. However, what is evident is that Mehta's vision is misguided as it fails to take into account the real situation of the slum dwellers. His lifestyle is clearly far above the plight of the average person as he arrives in the slum in a Mercedes flanked by his employees.

The film equally focusses on the lifestyle of the slum dwellers through the characters of the tailor, the potter, the young girl, and the social activist living among the slum dwellers. These characters serve to portray the attitude of the slum dwellers over the news of the redevelopment project. For example, the tailor, who has two school-going children, is clearly struggling to meet the demands for his family. However, their life in one way or the other progresses forth. The potter on the other hand is out rightly sceptical over the whole project. The social activist seems to be well informed of the plight of the slum dwellers and thinks the Dharavi Redevelopment project will displace many families. He thus calls for the re-developer to first understand that needs of Dharavi people before rolling out such an ambitious project. Finally is the young girl who remains hopeful of some better life in the future.

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Konermann main idea of the film is to criticize the idea of redeveloping a fully functioning “ metropolis” like Dharavi. While the life in the place is harsh and unimaginable from the point of view of rich people like Mehta, the real people living in the slum in one way or the other find a way to survive. The term “ re-development” also does not sound very well with the director of the film. Re-development can only occur when development is wrong direction. However, since Dharavi is a functional system in its very nature, there is no need to re-develop it. Instead, the government of India should focus on developing Dharavi further. The film also indicates that without the Dharavi slum dwellers Mumbai would not have developed at this rate to become a modern city. This is because the residents of Dharavi are the main source of labour for the city.

In conclusion, the film is great explosion as to why the Dharavi Redevelopment project failed to kick off ever since it was envision. Every person represented in the film seems to have a valid point including those parties that are not directly related to the projects. This notwithstanding, very few of this persons are able to understand the real problems that are likely to occur the moment Dharavi shanties are brought down in favour of high rising buildings. Many people are likely to be displaced with fresh occupants taking over the city.