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Substandard Resettlement: State-Market Interplay and Death Worlds in Mumbai

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Institutional reworking, state-market-civil society synergy and participatory resettlement have created a spectacle for inclusive urban development with much celebrated academic focus on urban's poor's rights, entitlements and citizenship as approached through phenomenal 'deepening of democracy', 'civic governmentality' or 'graduated urban citizenship'. At the South Asia Across the Nordic Region 2019 Conference, I would problematize these conceptualizations through an exploration of the ingrained violence within institutionalization processes and unleashed marginalities in the resettlement colonies located in peripheral, far-flung non-residential urban zones.

I would argue that resettlement regime should be examined as a material manifestation of Bio(Necro)power in the context of postcolonial urban through which the conditions of 'letting live' and 'making die' for the displaced urban poor is simultaneously materialized. Through a case of the state-led epistemic violence at the institutional level and resultant substandard housing conditions, I would attempt to exhibit how the state, through its modalities of planning, policies and practices operationalize substandard resettlement for the displaced urban poor. Insights from an ethnographic exploration of the resettlement process and resultant substandard dwelling conditions expose the death worlds in the urban and the subjectivities of urban poor's everyday struggles with marginalities, socio-economic hardships, vulnerabilities and death in the resettlement colonies.