STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVE OF LOSS:

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5:30-7:30 pm
Cabot 702

Lively Ruination in Mill Land Mumbai

Based on fieldwork conducted in the transforming textile mill lands of Mumbai, India, this talk investigates contemporary mill workers’ relationship to employment, embodiment, and spatial habitation. The centrality of textile manufacturing in Mumbai once made employment in the mills meaningful and plentiful work. As mills closed and workers began to lose their jobs, the narrative of deindustrialization emphasized the needs of the unemployed and eclipsed the reality that some individuals continue to work in the mills and emplace themselves in the city through work in the industrial sector. Through the optic of “lively ruination,” the mill land neighborhoods of Central Mumbai become an ethnographic archive of the city: a semi-public space of documents, artifacts, and stories, held by the workers inhabiting these still-breathing but slowly-decaying spaces. In archiving loss, this talk details histories of loss and histories that are lost.