

# ART IN THE JUNGLE

## ENVISIONING REFUGEES IN THE CALAIS CAMP

by **DEBARATI SANYAL** PROFESSOR OF FRENCH UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Today there are about 4,000 “migrants” amassed in tents on sixteen acres of Calais, living precariously as bulldozers regularly tear them down. Most of these refugees hope to cross into the United Kingdom and its promise of more hospitable conditions. How do we read this borderscape, designated as Calais’s “jungle”? Since World War Two, the “concentrationary” has been a key category for understanding spaces of detention in France. Such spaces are often read in light of a state of exception that strips subjects of rights and exposes them as bare life (as in the emblematic Nazi camp). This talk hopes to nuance the analogy of Calais as camp and its corollary view of the refugee as an apolitical body under biopolitical management. An analysis of experimental films by Sylvain George (*Qu'ils reposent en révolte*, *Les Éclats*) as well as current photography and video will consider strategies of subjectivation, resistance, agency, and solidarity at work within Calais’s jungle.

*Professor Sanyal's research interests include modern and contemporary French literature, postwar intellectual culture, Holocaust studies, transcultural memory studies, and narratives of political asylum. Her most recent book is *Memory and Complicity: Migrations of Holocaust Remembrance* (Fordham University Press, 2015).*

The Department of French & Italian

**DEPARTMENTAL LECTURE SERIES**

FRIDAY,  
**FEB. 19, 2016**  
**4PM**  
HAGSTRUM ROOM

[FrenchandItalian.northwestern.edu](http://FrenchandItalian.northwestern.edu)