



**Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

HSS DEPARTMENT COLLOQUIUM SERIES 2016

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Slums and the Postcolonial Uncanny



Postcoloniality is, at best, a futurity and an ideality, and postcolonial theory is increasingly confronted with the logic of its limits in the face of the asymmetries of power and resources in the postcolonial, global world, the inseparability of neocolonialism from unlimited capitalism and neoliberalism, and the escalation of violence - global, internecine, ethnic, communal, or gender-based - in erstwhile colonies. My paper will engage with critiques of postcolonial studies related to the resurgence of the idea of humanitarianism in world Anglophone literary studies (especially in the fields of human rights scholarship, ecocriticism, and urban studies), which insist upon the visibility, legibility and the transitive affectivity of human rights through embodied and kinaesthetic - not abstractly philosophical or narrowly polemical - critique. Focusing on fiction, cinema, and photography on

the Mumbai slum, it will look for the relevance and applicability of two key characteristics of postcolonial theory - its dialectical synthesis of race and class and its rhetoric of pathos - in the context of "visible but unseen" urban poverty in erstwhile colonies.

4 PM on 4 August 2016 at the HSS Department Seminar Room

All are invited for the seminar and for the tea and light refreshments at 3:45PM