

Ecology Imperialism and the Contradictions of Capitalism

July 20-27, 2005



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Joan Martinez-Alier
Ariel Salleh

Joel Kovel
Alex Demirovic



York University

Founded in 1959, Toronto's York University has achieved an international reputation in teaching, research and scholarship. Now 50,000 students from around the world study full-time or part-time at York University's two campuses. The 600 acre Keele Campus in the northwest area of Toronto is the location of the IPEE Summer School.

Faculty of Environmental Studies

One of the first Environmental Studies faculties to be established in North America, York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES) was created in 1968 to meet the demand for new and more appropriate responses to environmental problems and issues. The Faculty's interdisciplinary approach and extensive research and project work has earned it international recognition. FES offers programs leading to undergraduate, Masters and PhD degrees.

Department of Political Science

York University's Political Science Department has a reputation for research and is noted for its commitment to teaching. Its objective is to expand critical awareness of political problems and to help overcome the barriers that separate politics from social life and the University from the community. The Department of Political Science offers programs leading to undergraduate, Masters and PhD degrees.

Instructors

Joan Martinez-Alier

Environmental Justice and Urban Political Ecology

Joan Martinez-Alier is Full Professor at the Department of Economics and Economic History, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. He is editor of *Ecologia Política*, member of the scientific committee of the European Environment Agency, and president-elect of the International Society for Ecological Economics. He is the author of *The Environmentalism of the Poor*, *Varieties of Environmentalism* (with R. Guha), and *Ecological Economics*.

Do cities produce anything of commensurable value in return for the energy and materials they import, and for the residues they excrete? Are the internal environmental conflicts over these resource flows in cities successfully pushed onwards to larger geographical scales? The more prosperous the city, the more successful it may be at displacing environmental loads, and the more successful also in solving internal environmental conflicts. Social movements against some of the “externalities” produced in cities could push for urban sustainability. Low-income groups, the working class, and people of colour constitute a movement for environmental justice, connecting environmental issues with racial and gender inequality and with poverty. Environmental conflicts in European, Latin American, and Asian cities will be considered.

Joel Kovel

Ecosocialism and Subsistence: Towards an Ecological Marxism

Joel Kovel is Editor-in-Chief of *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, and Professor of Social Studies at Bard College. His most recent book is *The Enemy of Nature*.

It is commonly recognized that the global South is both the object of imperialist exploitation and also the site of a far-lower per capita ecological footprint than the industrial, consumption-ridden North. This latter pattern, normatively addressed by Maria Mies as the “subsistence perspective,” is therefore subject to a certain ambivalence. In this global context, we will reconsider the question of human needs and their production, and to rethink aspects of Marxism in order to overcome its tendency to reinforce the prevailing addiction to “progress” and “growth.” Matters such as the theory of use-value and intrinsic value as qualitative functions, as well as the notion of human ecosystems, will be addressed.

Ariel Salleh

Ecofeminism / Ecosocialism

Ariel Salleh is an editor of *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, a writer and former academic, with activist experience in water, biodiversity, and mining politics. Besides *Ecofeminism as Politics*, she has contributed some 150 articles and talks to the literature on ecology from a gender perspective.

This course module addresses issues of ecosocialism and ecofeminism and considers their implications as an integrative, democratic grassroots praxis in response to neo-liberal economic regimes, masculinist violence, and the deepening ecological crisis. In an era of globalization, what kind of theoretical analysis can bring together strategies for advancing gender, workerist, postcolonial, and ecological concerns, so that one is not advanced at the expense of another? Central to the development of ‘integrative politics’ is an examination of Eurocentric ‘humanity-nature’ relation which have served capitalist patriarchal exploitation, but have also introduced confusion into Leftist debates and thinking about (re)production. Critical perspectives on popular non-socialist varieties of ecopolitics, including rhetorics of sustainable development and ecological modernisation, and utopian standpoints like social and deep ecology will be examined.

Alex Demirovic

Marxism, Critical Theory, and Ecology

Alex Demirovic teaches in political science and sociology and works on critical social theory in the realms of nature, economic development, state, and culture. He has published numerous books and articles on critical theory, state theory, democracy, intellectuals, racism, social movements and ecological politics.

This module will begin discussing how Marxism treats the environmental question. Here we can find some ambivalence with regard to nature: control and domination on the one side (nature as object), and reconciliation with nature and the sustainable melioration of the planet on the other. Critical theory discusses the shortcomings of the Marxist tradition, which perpetuated bourgeois conceptions of nature prevalent since Bacon. The criticisms made by critical theory became important in the 1970s and contributed to a new perspective on nature which has been elaborated since the 1980s. The works of Marx, Adorno/Horkheimer, Marcuse, Schmidt, O'Connor, Lipietz and others will be discussed.

International Political Economy and Ecology Summer School

2005
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Ecology, Imperialism and the Contradictions of Capitalism

Each summer school investigates one salient issue within the field of international political economy and ecology (IPEE). IPEE includes the notion of international and transnational economic relations, and comparative structures of national political economy and ecology. Each session is a challenging exploration of current literature. A prime objective is to bridge the gap between theory and practice, and between ecology and democracy.

Graduate students and interested individuals are invited to apply to the 2005 IPEE Summer School. Graduate students who complete the Summer School receive academic credits for one half-year graduate course - but the School need not be taken for credit. Graduate students at York and other Ontario universities will have the course fee covered through their regular tuition. The fee for all other students or those not seeking academic credit is CDN \$500. Course enrolment is limited.

Deadline for applications is April 22, 2005. For an application form and requirements, please contact the following:

York students in the Faculty of Environmental Studies should contact Peggy McGrath (peggym@yorku.ca) of the Office of Student Academic Services (416-736- 5252 x33254).

York students in the Department of Political Science should contact Jlenya Sarra (jsarra@yorku.ca) of the Graduate Program in Political Science (416-736-5265 x88825).

Other students or interested individuals should contact Liette Gilbert (gilbertl@yorku.ca) or Stefan Kipfer (kipfer@yorku.ca) to make necessary arrangements.

Capitalism, Nature, Socialism Conference

2005

The IPEE Summer School includes mandatory participation in the CNS Anniversary Conference “Ecology, Imperialism and the Contradictions of Capitalism” being held July 22-24, 2005 at York University. Speakers having confirmed their participation are James O'Connor, Maria Mies, Tim Luke, Neil Smith, Noel Castree, Elmar Altvater, Patrick Bond, Giovanna Ricoveri, and Daniel Faber amongst many other local and international participants.