

Just Politics?

Postcolonial Ecocriticism between Imagination and Occupation

11th ASNEL Summer School/Summer School of the New Literatures in English
at the University of Potsdam, 2-6 September 2013

Date and place: 2-6 September 2013, University of Potsdam

Deadline for applications: 15 May 2013

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<http://justpoliticspotsdam2013.wordpress.com>

“Green growth”, “ecological footprint”, “north-south divide”, “Euro crisis”, “Occupy Wall Street”, “Fukushima”, “buen vivir” – there are many terms floating around in public consciousness these days that seem to be of general importance for future-oriented world politics on the one hand, but only remotely linked – if at all – on the other. But as a matter of fact there are some very important common denominators shared between conservation and environmental politics, anti-globalisation and global justice movements and theories of alternative measurements of social welfare: Among these are the criticism of neoliberalism and corporatism, an orientation towards sustainable politics and democracy, the aim of protecting the environment and attempts to imagine a world that is based on ideas of justice, equality, and the possibility of a good life – not only for a certain percentage of people, but for everybody.

The two main domains of interest in which most critical questions around the terms above are posed are economic and ecological politics. Consequently, building upon the ideas of postcolonial ecocriticism in literary studies that emerged in recent years, this summer school aims at an interdisciplinary study of postcolonial literatures and cultures with an economic and ecological focus (Eco-Ecocriticism). The idea is not only to discuss what meaning (new) ecology and economy in a postcolonial context could have and what critical forms of literary and cultural studies have contributed to the political or theoretical discourse in recent years. It also tries to fathom the (utopian or dystopian) potential of scenarios outlined, performed, brought forward in today’s global and local cultural practices.

You will be able to attend a series of lectures, one seminars of your choice and various workshops and discussion groups. We will invite you to examine narratives of the hierarchical relation of human societies to other human communities and the anthropocentric separation of culture and nature. We will talk about how dominantly political terms like sustainability, growth (and its limits), equality, crisis, globalisation or justice are taken up in cultural production. Finally, we are interested in their interrelation, what kind of past(s), present(s) and future(s) are imagined and what the difference between the representation and judgment of bottom-up grassroots and top-down international politics might be.

The general objective is the creation of a platform for prolific exchange and discussion that goes beyond the summer school itself and should help us as young scholars and early stage researchers to shape and sharpen our research profiles and fields of academic interest.

ECTS Credits

You can earn 3, 5 or 6 ECTS Credits. Please indicate in your application whether you would like to receive credit points for attending the summer school.

Costs

Participation in the summer school including course material and accommodation will cost 80,-€, without accommodation 70,-€.

Applications

We explicitly invite B.A., M.A. as well as PhD students who are interested in ecological and economic politics and criticism, their representation in postcolonial cultural production and possible solutions and new perspectives developed through transcultural exchange. There will be a variety of seminars and workshops offered during the week. Some preparatory reading will be necessary in advance, but we will provide details about that at later stage.

If you want to participate in the summer school, please send a letter of application to justpolitics2013@gmail.com in which you indicate what your specific interest in the topic is and how far you have proceeded in your studies (1 page).