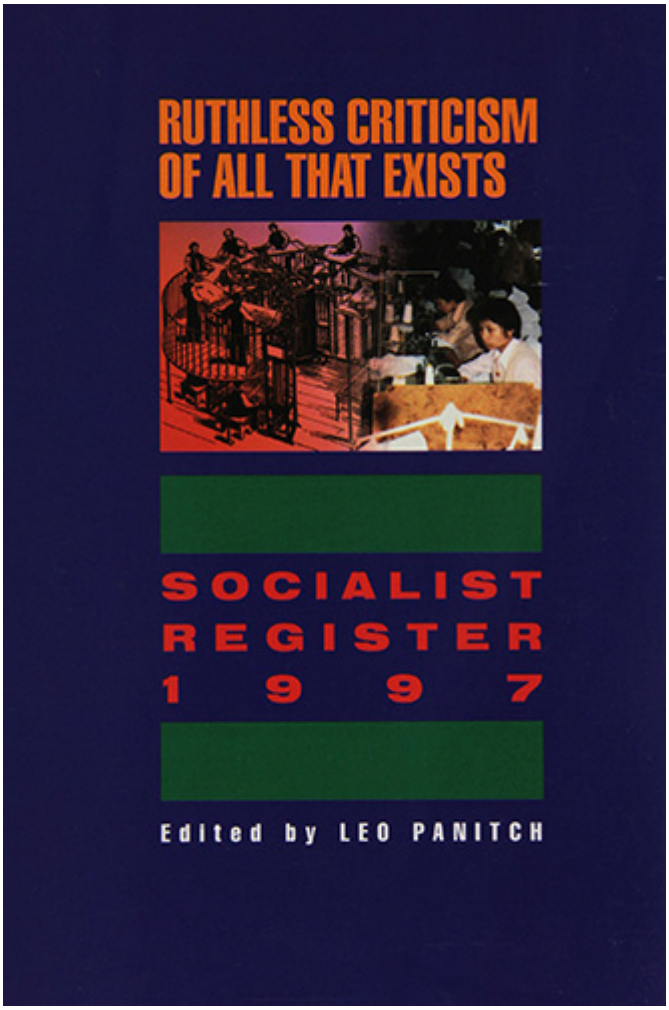
Green Imperialism: Pollution, Penitence, Profits



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Larry Pratt

Wendy Montgomery

Abstract

The following pages attempt to analyze the expansion of the Northern environmental industries and the growing technological and financial rivalry among the leading transnational environmental corporations of Japan, the US and Europe for world market share in the major

sectors and regions. Our interest is in the political economy of green technology diffusion from the advanced centres of capitalism to East Asia, Southeast Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and Latin America: what drives the market for these technologies, and what is the nature of this oligopolistic rivalry in which the capitalist state has such an interest? This is a highly politicised struggle for global market share in which the governments of advanced capitalism - supported by multilateral banks and, in some cases, prominent environmental groups - try to generate demand for environmental technologies by first exporting their laws and administrative capacity to emerging markets. Having exported models of industrial development via free trade and open markets, Western environmental norms are then offered to clean up the excesses of growth, and finally environmental equipment and services are sold to service the regulations. 'Our ability to export environmental technology depends very much on our ability to export environmental legislation', noted a senior German official in June 1995; while a manager with the US Environmental Protection Agency has remarked that 'EPA can create a market for environmental technologies and services overseas by helping other countries develop their regulatory and enforcement capabilities that drive the demand for environmental technology. As will be seen, the push to universalize Northern regulatory norms is abetted by some of the large and influential environmental non-governmental organizations. It is a good question whether the practice promotes the cause of transnational ecology or of transnational capital.

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Author Biography

Wendy Montgomery
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