

Society for Socialist Studies

**empire@the.edge**

Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences

June 5 – 8, 2013, Victoria, BC

<http://www.socialiststudies.ca>

*...proletarian revolutions, (...) constantly criticize themselves, constantly interrupt themselves in their own course, return to the apparently accomplished, in order to begin anew; they deride with cruel thoroughness the half-measures, weaknesses, and paltriness of their first attempts, seem to throw down their opponents only so the latter may draw new strength from the earth and rise before them again more gigantic than ever, recoil constantly from the indefinite colossalness of their own goals – until a situation is created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves call out:  
Hic Rhodus, hic salta!*

*Karl Marx, 18<sup>th</sup> Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

Gone are the days when capitalist triumphalism celebrated cheap credit, computers, and venture capital as the building blocks of a new economy. The empire of capital that was going strong and global after the fall of Soviet communism now is on the edge of collapse, too. Its economy weighed down by piles of bad loans and junk bonds, its politics stuck in unwinnable wars overseas and faced with rising discontent at home, and its natural basis shaken by ecological destruction and climate change. The only reason it hasn't fallen off the cliff is that nobody pushed it. The forces of opposition are disoriented. Some think their imagined communities of nations, races, or religion could shelter them against the hardships inflicted by empire's efforts to preserve its accumulated power and wealth. Others say that another world is possible but avoid naming it. They are weighed down by the failures, horrors, and disappointments that statist socialism had produced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Not surprisingly, political upsurges remain short-lived and fragmented. The crisis of capitalism coincides with a crisis of the left. To get to the edge of a lasting upswing of struggles for progressive change, activists and scholars need to face experiences of the past and turn them into building blocs for an alternative future. Therefore, the Society for Socialist Studies encourages proposals that review and examine:

- socialist experiences of the past
- the state of empire and the forces of opposition
- environmental conflict and crisis
- the economic crisis, the austerity agenda, and forms of resistance
- increasing state repression and popular xenophobia
- visions of and strategies for 21<sup>st</sup> century socialism

More generally, we invite proposals for papers, roundtables, and sessions addressing any aspect of the theme of “empire@the.edge”.

### **Proposals for Roundtables and Sessions**

At this point we are mainly interested in proposals for roundtables and sessions, which will then be posted on our website so that individuals can propose papers to all suggested sessions. Proposals for roundtables should include a list of participants. Unlike sessions they are not open for individual proposals.

Abstracts (maximum of 100 words) for roundtable and session proposals should be submitted before **December 15, 2012**.

### **Proposals for Papers**

You can submit proposals for an individual paper at this point. The Programme Committee will try to find a place for it. Sessions open for individual proposals will be posted to our website as soon as they are accepted by the Programme Committee.

Abstracts (maximum of 100 words) for paper proposals should be submitted before **January 30, 2013**.

Please note: The Society for Socialist Studies is committed to interdisciplinary work. Anyone suggesting a session, roundtable, or paper who is also affiliated with other associations participating in Congress may think about cross-listing their proposals.

Please submit all proposals to: Ingo Schmidt, Programme Committee Chair, [ingos@athabascau.ca](mailto:ingos@athabascau.ca)

The Society for Socialist Studies is an association of progressive academics, students, activists and members of the general public. Formed in 1967, the Society’s purpose is to facilitate and encourage research and analysis with an emphasis on socialist, feminist, anti-racist and ecological points of view. The Society publishes *Socialist Studies/Études socialistes*, a peer-reviewed, open-access, academic journal.