

History 3397-03/Course # 37363
Global Environmental History I (to 1800)
Spring 2009 - Dr. Klieman
M/W

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This is a junior-level course designed to introduce you to the major issues and themes of environmental history. It will focus on the earlier periods of human history (before c. 1800 C.E.), and will take a global and comparative approach, analyzing how a variety of societies, states, and empires have interacted with, impacted, and conceptualized the environment over time.

Environmental history is a relatively new and cutting edge field, and this is in a large part due its very interdisciplinary nature. This is reflected in your readings, which are rooted in such diverse fields as archeology, linguistics, ethnography, epidemiology, economic history, garden history, and religious history. Given the broad nature of the topic, as well as the expansive geographical and temporal approach we will take, it is important to note that we will be focusing on and comparing two related aspects of environmental history. One is more abstract, and deals with the history of peoples' ideas about nature; in many cases we will gain such information through an analysis of religious beliefs or ritual practices. The other is more material, in that it will focus on the impact of human beings' actions on the physical environment and the ways that such acts have contributed to major transformations in global human history. Specific events/phenomena that will be addressed are the various inventions of agriculture around the world (the "Neolithic Revolution"), the rise of complex societies and the impact on beliefs about nature as well as beings closely associated with nature (women, Batwa), and most importantly, four great phases of human migration or expansion and their impact on the environment: 1) the Bantu in sub-Saharan Africa; 2) the Arabs/Muslims across the Middle East, North Africa, and India; 3) the Polynesians in the Pacific Ocean Islands; and 4) the Europeans in the Western Hemisphere.

Because the numbers enrolled in the class are very low, we will run it like a reading seminar. This means that you do the readings and come in, once a week, to discuss. I will ask each of you to also lead the discussion at least twice. Undergrads will not be required to do a major research paper in this class, but instead, a midterm, two small papers and a larger paper (15 pages) that compares the ideologies and impacts of the four great human migrations we study. Thus, your main task in the class is to do the readings and really engage the material that is presented. To keep you on this task, it is likely that I will pose quizzes at various points in the semester.

Books Required (4)

- J. Donald Hughes, *An Environmental History of the World: Humankind's Changing Role in the Community of Life*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001
- Kairn Klieman, "*The Pygmies Were Our Compass*": *Bantu and Batwa in the History of West Central Africa, Early Times to c. 1900*. Portsmouth, NH., 2003
- Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Second Edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. Penguin, 1986.

Supplementary Readings: available as E-Reserve on Anderson Library Website
(for complete list of supplementary readings, see last page of the syllabus)

Course Requirements:

Lead discussion on two sets of readings	20%
Short Essays (2, 15% each)	30%
Midterm (take home – spring break?)	20%
Final Paper (take home)	30%

Important Dates:

Feb. 2 last day to drop without receiving a grade or “W”/last day to drop without affecting enrollment cap.

As Fall 2007 students will only be allowed six “W”s in their college career. It is therefore vital that you don’t “shop” around too long for courses and you commit to this or other courses by the 12th day of class.

Last day to drop course with a “W” : April 7

If you attempt to drop after this date you will receive the grade you have earned so far in the class (i.e., D, F, etc)!

Class Regulations:

Attendance and participation is mandatory. Also, you must bring assigned books/articles to class on the days we are to discuss them. It is difficult to analyze/discuss texts if you do not have them with you, and you will not be considered to have participated fully if you don’t have them.

(if we have weekly quizzes/assignments.....) There are no make-ups for weekly quizzes/short answer assignments. If you must miss class and can’t turn one in, do extra credit to make up for it. Do not ask me if you can make them up. Also, I will not accept weekly assignments unless you are in class the day they are due. Don’t drop them off and then leave class. Missed exams only made up if you have a doctors note or formal documentation of other reason for absence.

Do not put papers under my door. They will not be accepted if turned in this way. Only way to turn them in is during class or to administrative assistants in the history office (if you do the latter, make sure they put date/time on paper and sign them).

Papers need to be double-spaced, 12-font, regular margins. Any attempts to mess with this format to “pad” your paper are highly detectable and you will be penalized. Also, do work as instructed.. if paper assignment says 10 pages, do ten pages, not 8 or 9 or even 9 and 1/2. You will be penalized a full grade for this. If you can’t get 10 pages, you haven’t read or taken notes enough. See me in advance if you have a serious problem with this issue, so that I can help.

University Policy on plagiarism will be strictly enforced. The Policy can be found on pages 59-60 of the Undergraduate Studies Catalogue 2005-2007. Violations of this policy go on a permanent record and can ruin any chances for professions/careers and entrance into graduate school. We will discuss what plagiarism is, but see me if there are any questions you run into while doing your assignments..

Respect one another! In discussions and questions/answer sessions, we must create an environment where all students feel free to ask questions, express their views. If this isn’t allowed to happen, destructive myths and stereotypes continue to exist, nothing will be learned. It’s ok to disagree; if you do, state it clearly, and we can go on to a lively, informative, and educational discussion or debate. Avoid personal attacks; avoid the use of racist, sexist, or offensive language. Either of these types of behaviors can shutdown the learning process of individuals, and will not be tolerated in class! If you don’t know what constitutes racist, sexist, offensive languages (many people honestly don’t!) come see the professor in office hours to discuss.

Finally, and most importantly, I encourage you to let me know if you are completely stumped or having problems in this class. I will work with you, no matter what your skill levels, as long as you are willing to put in the effort and time. Please don’t sit silently all semester.

Course Syllabus (Full Citations for Readings on Last Page)

Note: Subject to Change at Professor's Discretion

Week 1 - Intro To Class

Week 2

What is Environmental History?

Hughes, Ch. 1 (pgs.1-11)

Crosby, "The Past and Present of Environmental History"

Why Focus on Environment?

Film: "An Inconvenient Truth" by Al Gore and Davis Guggenheim (2006)

Week 3-

1. Cultural Constructions of Nature: An Exercise in Analysis

-Western Christian/Capitalist Cultures: Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis"

-China: "Reflections on Chinese Traditional Views of Nature"

-Japan: Takeshi Umehara, "The Civilization of the Forest"

-20th Century U.S.: Ralph Lutz, "The Problem with Bambi"

Writing Assignment #1 -

Pick two of these articles and write a 5-7 page essay that discusses how the variant attitudes toward/visions of nature compare. Things to analyze: ways religion treats/views nature, ways different people define humankind's role in/toward nature, differing views on the importance of environmental sustainability. What can explain the differing views?

Pay attention to both culture and historical period in your analysis!

2. Origins: Pangea and "Primal Harmony"

-Crosby, pp. 8-17

-Hughes, ch.2 (pp. 12-29)

-"Hunter-Gatherers: Noble or Savage?" *The Economist*, 12-22-07, p. 129-131 (to be handed out in advance)

Week 4- Old World Inventions of Agriculture/Rise of Complex Societies

In the Fertile Crescent:

-Crosby, pp. 17-40

-Hughes ch.3 "The Great Divorce" (Intro and Sumeria, pp.30-38)

In Africa:

-Ehret, "Culture and Technology in Africa, 9000-3500 B.C.E."

Week 5 - More Early Complex Societies and their Environments/Conceptions of Environments

- Egypt and Tikal
 - Hughes, rest of chapter 3 (pp. 38-51)
- Early Complex Societies: Nature and Women Subordinated?
Excerpts from:
 - Sterns, et. al, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*
 - Lerner, *The Invention of Patriarchy*(these two last readings to be handed out in advance)

Week 6 – Migrations and Frontier Environments I: The Bantu Expansion

- Klieman, read Intro and chapters 1 and 2
- Visuals: Film – “Voices of the Forest” (PBS, 2001)

Week 7- The “Great Divide” in Equatorial Africa

- Klieman chapters 3, 4, 5 and conclusion
- Writing Assignment #2 – 6-8 pages**
(on the impact of bananas and iron in Africa)

Week 8 - Empire and Environmental Degradation in the Mediterranean

- Hughes, Ch. 4 pp 52-66; 73-78 (Athens and Rome)
- Wertime, “The Furnace vs. the Goat: the Pyrotechnologic Industries and Mediterranean Deforestation in Antiquity”
- Hong et al “Greenland ice Evidence fo Hemispheric Lead Pollution Two Millennia Ago by the Greek and Roman Civilizations
- book on metallurgy (kk get)

Week 9 - Spring Break! (Take-Home Midterm?)

Week 10: Migrations and Frontier Environments II: Arabs and Islamic Culture/Agriculture

- McNeill, W. “The Eccentricity of Wheels, or Eurasian Transportation in Historical Perspective”
- Watson, “The Arab Agricultural Revolution and its Diffusion, 700-1100”
- Ozdemir, I. “Toward and Understanding of Environmental Ethics from a Qur’anic Perspective”
- Westcoat, J. “From the Gardens of the Qur’an to the ‘Gardens’ of Lahore.”

Week 11 - Medieval Europe

Hughes ch. 5 (Intro and Florence, 87-93)

Wheelis, M. "Biological Warfare at the 1346 Siege of Caffa"

McNeill, J.R. "Woods and Warfare in World History"

Hughes, J. Donald "Frances of Assisi and the Diversity of Creation"

Week 12- *Migrations and Frontier Environments III: The Polynesians*

-Film: "The Whale Rider" -based on the novel by Witi Ihimaera -----

-Hughes, ch. 5, pg. 93-9

-McNeill, J.R. "Of Rats and Men: A Synoptic History of the Island Pacific"

Week 13 - *Migrations and Frontier Environments IV: The Europeans*

-Crosby: Preface to the New Edition (xv-xx) and page 41-308

Week 14- Sugar: A Plant and its Impact

-Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*

Week 15 – no class, work on Final Paper

List of Additional Readings (on E-Reserve in Library)

Note: These are arranged by the order in which they will be read

Crosby, Alfred. W. "The Past and Present of Environmental History." *American Historical Review*, 100, no. 4 (1995), pp. 1177-1190.

White, Lynn. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science*, New Series, vol. 155, No. 3, pp. 1203-1207.

Hou, Wenhui 1997, "Reflections on Chinese Traditional Views of Nature," *Environmental History* 2:4 (1997), pp. 482-492

Umehara, Takeshi. "The Civilization of the Forest." *New Perspectives Quarterly* 16:2 (1999) pp. 40-48.

Lutts, Ralph H. "The Trouble With Bambi: Walt Disney's Bambi and the American Vision of Nature." *Forest and Conservation History* 36 (October 1992), pp. 160-171.

Ehret, Christopher, "Culture and Technology in Africa, 9000-3500 B.C.E.," chapter 3 of *The Civilizations of Africa: A History to 1800*. Virginia University Press (2002), pp. 59-106.

Excerpts from Sterns, Peter, and Michael Adas, Stuart B.Schwartz, and Marc Jason Gilbert, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2007.

Wertime, Theodore A. "The Furnace vs. The Goat: The Pyrotechnologic Industries and Mediterranean Deforestation in Antiquity." *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 10:4 (Winter 1983), pp. 445-452

Sungmin Hong, Jean-Pierre Candelone, Clair C. Patterson, Claude F. Boutron, "Greenland Ice Evidence of Hemispheric Lead Pollution Two Millennia Ago by Greek and Roman Civilizations." *Science*, New Series, Vol. 265 , no. 5180 (Sep. 23, 1994) pp. 1841-1843.

McNeill, W. "The Eccentricity of Wheels, or Eurasian Transportation in Historical Perspective."

Andrew Watson, "The Arab Agricultural Revolution and its Diffusion, 700-1100". *Journal of Economic History*, 34:1 (1974), 8-35.

Ozdemir, Ibrahim. "Toward and Understanding of Environmental Ethics from a Qur'anic Perspective." In Richard C. Foltz, Frederick M. Denny, and Azizan Baharuddin (eds.) *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* (Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 3-29

Westcoat, James L. Jr. "From the Gardens of the Qur'an to the 'Gardens' of Lahore." In Richard C. Foltz, Frederick M. Denny, and Azizan Baharuddin (eds.) *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* (Harvard University Press, 2003), 511-526.

McNeill, J.R. "Woods and Warfare in World History." *Environmental History* 9:3 (2007)

Wheelis, Mark. "Biological Warfare at the 1346 Siege of Caffa." *Emerging Infectious Diseases* [serial online] 8:9, Sept. 2002.

Hughes, J. Donald. "Francis of Assisi and the Diversity of Creation." *Environmental Ethics* 18:3 (Fall 1996), pp. 311-320.

McNeill, J.R. "Of Rats and Men: A Synoptic Environmental History of the Island Pacific." *Journal of World History*, 5:2 (1994), 299-349.