

European Environments to 1650

HIST 394-01

MWF 1:10 pm-2:10 pm

Humanities 214

The natural world had an amazing impact on the civilizations of Europe. This class will give you the chance to explore the connections between society, economy, war, religion, and nature during the classical period, the Middle Ages, and the Early Modern period. We will discuss a range of environments, from the Mediterranean to Scandinavia, and use both primary sources and secondary studies to understand the goals of environmental history. Through readings, discussion, and targeted analytical exercises, we will look at the sources, topics, methods, and arguments of historians in order to understand how scholars reconstruct and understand pre-modern environments. This class will assume a basic understanding of historical methods and approaches, but will not require you to have extensive knowledge of either environmental history or pre-modern history. However, students with some familiarity with either the history of Europe to 1650 or of environmental history or studies are especially encouraged to take the class.

Contacting me:

Office Hours (Old Main 308): Mondays 11-1 and by appointment

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Course Grade:

Component	% of Final Grade	Due Date
Attendance and Participation	20	Weekly
Ancient Bibliography	5	18 February
Ancient Review	10	29 February
Medieval Bibliography	5	24 March
Medieval Review	10	11 April
Early Modern Bibliography	5	28 April
Early Modern Review	10	28 April
Book Review	15	5 May
Final Review Essay	20	12 May, by noon

Grades:

A	100-93	C+	79-77
A-	92-90	C	76-73
B+	89-87	C-	73-70
B	86-83	D	69-65
B-	83-80	NC	65 and below

Attendance and Participation:

Because much of this course will rely on your participation in class discussion and activities, and your evaluation of the readings, you must come to each class prepared. Your attendance and participation in class activities is required, and will compose 20 percent of your final grade. This grade will be based on a combination of your attendance record and in your participation in discussion and any other in-class activities.

Late Work and Absences:

Absences due to university-sponsored events, hospitalization, death in the family, or other emergencies are excused, but must be documented. In such cases, I will allow late work. If you have a scheduled excused absence, papers are still due on time—plan your time accordingly! Otherwise, you will be penalized a letter-grade degree for every day your paper is late. For example, if a paper earns a B, and it is a day late, it will receive a B-.

Required Text:

Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*.

Note: there are two versions of this available. It does not matter which one you purchase.

All other course materials will be made available through online reserves or in class.

Literature Review Project

For the Literature Review Project, you will choose Forests, Water, Climate, or Animals. Over the course of the semester, you will work with this topic, with the goal of understanding the different methods and sources that environmental historians can use to explore that topic for the pre-modern world. There will be several parts to this project, all of which will help you both to evaluate and discuss pre-modern environmental history and to develop and practice research methods and skills.

Annotated Bibliographies:

For each unit (Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern) you will need to produce an annotated bibliography of 5 academic works (books, articles, or book chapters) that have to do with the topic.

Article Reviews:

You will then choose one of the articles or a chapter from one of the books and you will write an evaluation of it. This will be 3-4 pages, and will focus on presenting and evaluating the author's sources, methods, and conclusions.

Book Review:

For this assignment, choose and read in its entirety one of the book-length studies you have identified in your research. You will then review and evaluate the book, explaining the questions asked, sources used, and conclusions drawn by its author. This review should also situate the book within the broader range of sources you have identified—does it fit in with the methods of other authors, or does it do something different? This project will be a preliminary exercise for writing the final Review Essay.

Final Review Essay:

Your final 8-10 page review paper will be due at the end of finals week. In this paper, your goal is to link the articles or chapters you have reviewed to one another by making an argument about the overall range of questions and methods that have been used in the works you have identified over the course of the semester. This paper will combine the efforts of your annotated bibliographies, your article/chapter reviews, and your book review and will build on class discussions of methods and sources.

CLASS SCHEDULE

M 28 Jan Introductions

W 30 Jan What is “Environmental History”?

J. Donald Hughes, “Defining Environmental History” in *What is Environmental History* (Polity Press, 2006).

Donald Worster. “Doing Environmental History.” In *The Ends of the Earth*, ed. Donald Worster, appendix. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

F 1 Feb Raw Materials: Climate Science and Archaeology

M. G. L. Baillie “Marking in Marker Dates: Towards an Archaeology with Historical Precision” *World Archaeology*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Chronologies. (Oct., 1991), 233-43.

Explore NOAA’s introduction to paleoclimatology:

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/paleo/primer.html>

And look at data from different methods:

<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/paleo/paleo.html>

UNIT ONE: THE ANCIENT WORLD

M 4 Feb The Mediterranean World: Introduction

Fernand Braudel, “Seeing the Sea” in *Memory and the Mediterranean* (Vintage Books, 2002), 3-16.

McNeill, “The Deep History of Mediterranean Landscapes” in *Mountains of the Mediterranean World*, 68-102.

W 6 Feb Microclimates in the Mediterranean: Looking Closer

Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, “Four Definite Places” in *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Blackwell, 2000), 53-88.

F 8 Feb Water in the Ancient World: Overview

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, “The Lone and Level Sands,” in *Civilizations: Culture, Ambition, and the Transformation of Nature* (Simon and Schuster, 2001) 173-200.

M 11 Feb Roman Water Control

Readings TBA

W 13 Feb Forests: Reconstructing Ancient Forest Cover

A. T. Grove and Oliver Rackham, "Natural Vegetation in Historic Times" in *The Nature of Mediterranean Europe: An Ecological History* (Yale University Press: 2001), 167-89.

F 15 Feb Tracking Forest Use and Deforestation

J. Donald Hughes; J. V. Thirgood, "Deforestation, Erosion, and Forest Management in Ancient Greece and Rome," *Journal of Forest History*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Apr., 1982), 60-75.

Russell Meiggs, "The Cedars of Lebanon" in *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford University Press: 1982),

M 18 Feb The Roman Villa: Power, Economy and Agriculture

Ancient Bib Due!

W 20 Feb Raw Materials: Cato and Cicero

F 22 Feb Ancient Climate: Natural Disasters and Climate History

Smithsonian Global Volcanism Project, online at
<http://www.volcano.si.edu/world/volcano.cfm?vnum=010102=&volpage=erupt&format=expanded>

Mastrolorenzo G., et. al. "The 472 AD Pollena eruption of Somma-Vesuvius (Italy) and its Environmental Impact at the End of the Roman Empire." *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research*, vol. 113, no. 1 (15 March 2002) 19-36.

M 25 Feb Animals and Empire: Pigs

Michael MacKinnon, "High on the Hog: Linking Zooarchaeological, Literary, and Artistic Data for Pig Breeds in Roman Italy," *American Journal of Archaeology* > Vol. 105, No. 4 (Oct., 2001), 649-73.

Barnish, S. J. B. "Pigs, Plebeians, and Potentates: Rome's Economic Hinterland c. 350-600 A.D." *Papers of the British School at Rome*, vol. LV (1987), 157-85.

W 27 Feb Environment and the Fall of Empires?

J. Donald Hughes, "Environmental Problems as Factors in the Decline of the Greek and Roman Civilizations" in *Pan's Travail: Environmental Problems of the Ancient Greeks and Romans* (181-200).

A. Trevor Hodge "Vitruvius, Lead Pipes and Lead Poisoning," *American Journal of Archaeology* > Vol. 85, No. 4 (Oct., 1981), pp. 486-491

F 29 Feb Opportunities and Challenges of Ancient Environmental History

Ancient Review Due!

UNIT TWO: THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

M 3 Mar Medieval Europe: Overview

Richard Hoffmann, "Chapter 3: Medieval Christendom in God's Creation: Environmental Continuities, Coevolutions, and Changes," in Tamara White et al., *Northern Europe: An Environmental History*, 45-72. Santa Barbara - Denver - Oxford: ABC-Clio, 2005.

W 5 Mar "Mapping" Early Medieval Landscapes:

Della Hooke, excerpt from *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape; the Kingdom of the Hwicce* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985).

Gillian R. Overing and Marijane Osborn, "Mapping *Beowulf*" in *Landscape of Desire: Partial Stories of the Medieval Scandinavian World* (University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

F 7 Mar Power, Landscape, and Ecology: Offa's Dyke

Paolo Squatriti, "Offa's Dyke between Nature and Culture," *Environmental History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan., 2004), 37-56.

M 10 Mar Raw Materials: Anglo-Saxon Poetry, Laws, Charters

W 12 Mar Meet with Librarians

F 14 Mar No class, work on bibliography

Week of 17-21 March SPRING BREAK

M 24 Mar Reconstructing the Medieval Environment: Climate

Medieval Bibliography Due

Michael McCormick, Paul Edward Dutton and Paul A. Mayewski, "Volcanoes and the Climate Forcing of Carolingian Europe, A.D. 750-950", *Speculum*, 82 (2007), 865-95.

W 26 Mar Reconstructing the Medieval Environment: Forests

F 28 Mar Raw Materials: Domesday Book

9) M 31 Mar Animals in the Middle Ages: Art and Culture

Paul Dutton, "Charlemagne, King of Beasts" in *Charlemagne's Mustache and Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age* (Palgrave MacMillan, NY: 2004), 43-68.

Choose one of the animals from <http://bestiary.ca/index.html>
(Please, let's not ALL choose the elephant....)

W 2 April Water Resources in the Middle Ages

Richard C. Hoffmann, "Economic Development and Aquatic Ecosystems in Medieval Europe," *American Historical Review* , 101 (1996), 631-69.

F 4 April Water and Ecology in the Low Countries

Petra J E M van Dam, "Sinking Peat Bogs: Environmental Change in Holland, 1350-1550" *Environmental History*, Jan 2001.

William H. Tebrake, "The Reclamation and Settlement of Rijnland's Peat Bogs," in *Medieval Frontier: Culture and Ecology in Rijnland*, 185-220.

10) M 7 April Natural Disaster in the Middle Ages: The Fourteenth-century Crises

William Chester Jordan, *The Great Famine*, chapter 2, "The Harvest Failures and Animal Murrains."

W 9 April The Black Death: Environmental History Questions

F 11 April Opportunities and Challenges of Medieval Environmental History

Medieval Review Due!

UNIT THREE: EARLY MODERN EUROPE

M 14 April What is Environmental History? Approaches to Historiography

Alfred Crosby, "The Past and Present of Environmental History," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 4. (Oct., 1995), 1177-1189.

Richard White, "American Environmental History: The Development of a New Historical Field," *The Pacific Historical Review* > Vol. 54, No. 3 (Aug., 1985), 297-335.

Richard White, "Afterword-- Environmental History: Watching a Historical Field Mature" in *The Pacific Historical Review* > Vol. 70, No. 1 (Feb., 2001), 103-111.

W 16 April Introduction to Early Modern Europe

F 18 April Understanding the Early Modern Climate

John F. Richards, "Climate and Early Modern World Environmental History" in *The Unending Frontier*, (University of California Press, 2003), 58-88. *Electronic book through MAC library.*

M 21 April The Columbian Exchange

Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*, chapters 1-3.

W 23 April Nature and Empire: Ecological Imperialism

Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange*, chapters 4-6.

F 25 April Reviewing Books

M 28 April Oceans and the Early Modern World

Early Modern Bib AND Review Due!

Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James Robinson, "The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth," *The American Economic Review*, vol. 95, No. 3 (Jun., 2005), 546-79.

W 30 April Oceans and State Power

James D. Tracy, "Herring Wars: The Habsburg Netherlands and the Struggle for Control of the North Sea, ca. 1520-1560," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 24, No. 2 (Summer, 1993), 249-72.

Elizabeth Mancke, "Early Modern Expansion and the Politicization of Oceanic Space" *Geographical Review*, vol. 89, No. 2, Oceans Connect (Apr., 1999), pp. 225-36.

F 2 May Raw Materials: Travelers' Accounts and Ship's Logs

M 5 May Conclusions: Pre-modern Environmental History

Book Review Due

12 May Final Papers Due by noon via email.