HIST 313: Kenya Maasailand Conservation  
*Fall 2015*

Instructor: Willis Okech Oyugi  
Class Times: W 7:00-9:00 PM; King 325  
Office: Rice Hall 303  
Office Hours: Mon: 1-2 PM; Wed/Fri: 12-1 PM; & by appointment  
Instructor’s email: wokechoy@oberlin.edu

Course Description  
*The seminar is open to all majors and has no prerequisites.*

This research seminar interrogates the commonplace representation of the Maasai (since the 1850s) as timeless archetypical custodians of nature. Students will examine the interplay between Maasai cultural identities and their ideological and physical constructs of the environment/landscape. It is designed for students who are interested in topics including comparative environmental ideologies (e.g. indigenous vs. formal), gender-environment dynamics, the politics of wildlife/environmental conservation, and human environmental-interactions in the broadest sense.

This seminar offers students the opportunity to build upon and contribute to existing scholarship by producing an original term paper. The first half of the seminar interrogates theories, sources, and methods used by historians to reconstruct African environmental history. Specifically, students will explore a wide range of significant scholarly literature on the place of the Maasai relevant to the history of environmental conservation in colonial and postcolonial Kenya. Students will also be familiarized with a range of primary documents, histories, and ethnographies beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. The remaining course meetings (after Fall Break) will generally be dedicated to rigorous discussions/feedback of students’ drafts and term papers.
**Course Goals**
1. Students will learn essential research skills including where and how to locate topic-specific historical information and how to assess and categorize various types of primary and secondary resources;
2. Students will use historical inquiry to question common assumptions, develop an argumentative thesis, and develop and support plausible historical interpretations;
3. Students will develop effective writing and communication skills.

**Class Format & Writing Assignments**
- Our class meetings will mostly feature group discussions including peer to peer reviews. A few documentaries will also be shown in class. As the deadlines for the Book Review and Term Paper assignments approach, I will give you more detailed information about my expectations.
- This is a writing-intensive course. Outside of our class discussions and instructor-student meetings and communications (office hours and email), you will be expected to take responsibility for directing your own learning and meeting the writing benchmarks: paper proposal, research, drafts, and the final term paper.

**Other Information**
Please keep the following in mind:
- I am happy to discuss your assignments with you as you prepare them, the earlier the better. Email or come see me during office hours to talk about paper outlines, thesis paragraphs, or drafts (sent at least 72 hours before the deadline).
- Late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day and will only be accepted up to one week after the due date. With the exception of the final term paper, I reserve the right to allow extensions on a case by case basis. You should complete the weekly readings as scheduled prior to attending seminar. This preparation will facilitate your ability to follow lectures and participate in class discussions.
- Because participation is a significant part of your grade, and since the lectures complement the readings, attendance is mandatory and will be registered.
- I encourage you to take advantage of the writing resources Oberlin offers to you. The writing center located at Mudd Library offers individual assistance at any stage in the writing process.
- You must submit a hard copy of your paper in class. E-mail submissions will only be accepted under certain conditions. The paper must be typed in a 12-point font (Times New Roman), double-spaced, and must be cited appropriately using *footnotes* following the *Chicago Manual of Style* (I will give you more information in class).
- **Honor Code:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. I presume your familiarity with the college’s policies. Consequences can be dire and range from a failing grade on the assignment to expulsion. For more information on academic conduct familiarize yourself with the Student *Honor Code available at:* http://www.oberlin.edu/students/links-life/rules-reg.html. Accordingly, the College requires that students sign the honor code for all assignments that reads: “*I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.*”
• Cell phones, laptops, iPads and other technological *distractions* are not welcome in section.
• Appropriate accommodation will always be granted to students with documented disabilities or those who feel they may have physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities. Please let me know early in the semester so that your learning disabilities may be appropriately met. Any questions about the necessary process of documenting disabilities should be addressed to Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (Peters Hall).
• It is disruptive to your peers to arrive late to class or leave early. Please be unobtrusive if you really must do so.

**Required Texts/Readings/Films**

• The following texts have been placed on print reserve, or are available electronically [ER] in Mudd Library. All other readings are available on [Blackboard](http://blackboard.ClickHere) (designated with “BB”) under “Course Documents” unless otherwise indicated.
• Documentaries will be shown in class. If for any reason you cannot acquire or access any of the reading texts/materials please contact me.


*Please note that the 2-3 page Book Review will be based on either one of the last two texts.*

**Other useful Databases include:**

• Kenya National Archives (held by Syracuse University, NY): Available at [http://researchguides/library/syr.edu/kenyaarch](http://researchguides/library/syr.edu/kenyaarch)
• Yale University’s Human Relations Area Files: Available at [http://hraf.yale.edu](http://hraf.yale.edu)
• Kenya Gazette (OBIS)

**Evaluation/Grading/Course Requirements**

• Regular attendance and engagement in class discussions **25%**
• Peer Review **5%**
• Research Proposal **5%**
• Annotated Bibliography **5%**
• Book Review, (2-3 pages) **10%**
• *Primate’s Memoir* or *In the Dust of Kilimanjaro*
• Research Term Paper (18-20 pages) **50%**

*Please note that all work must be completed in order to pass this course.*

• Grading will be as follows: A+100-97; A 96-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D 65-69, F below 65.
Please note that I would prefer to answer questions concerning grades during office hours or by appointment.

Due Dates:
- Research Paper Topic: Week 3
- Annotated Bibliography: Week 4
- Paper Proposal: Week 6
- First Paper Draft: Week 9
- Peer Review of First Draft: Week 10
- Second Paper Draft: Week 11
- Presentation of Research Paper in class: Week 14
- Final Paper: Week 15

Week 2: Theory and Methodology (Writing African Environmental History)
9/9

  *Suggested Reading*

Week 3: Meeting with the Librarian (MUDD)
9/16
- **Paper Topic for Research Paper.**

Week 4: Ethnicity & Identity in East Africa
9/23
• Johann Krapf, Vocabulary of the Engutuk Eloikob, or the Language of the Wakuafi-Nation in the Interior of Equatorial Africa. Tubingen: Germany, 1854. (BB) Select pages

Suggested Readings

Week 5: “Pleistocene Africa”
9/30
• Sidney L. Hinde and Hildegarde B. S. Hinde, The Last of the Masai (London: William Heinemann, 1901), Select Pages. (BB)
• Alfred Claude Hollis, The Masai: Their Language and Folklore, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), Select Pages. (BB)
• John Ainsworth “Game Proposals, September 1911,” in George Ritchie Sandford, An Administrative and Political History of the Masai Reserve (London: Waterlow and Sons Ltd., 1919). (BB)

Week 6: Paradise Challenged
10/7
• Mervyn Cowie, “Minority Report,” in Andrew P. Hume, Game Policy Correspondence, 1956-1958, RH/Mss.Afr.s.1436. (BB)
• Report of the Game Policy Committee, Sessional Paper No. 7 of 1957/58. (BB)
• (Film): Watt, H. Where No Vultures Fly. United Kingdom, 1951.

• Term Paper Proposal due in class (3 pp.)
• **Suggested Readings**


**Week 7: Humans and Wildlife Conservation**
10/14.


  • **Book review (2-3 pp.) Due in Class.**

• **Suggested Readings**


**Week 8: (Fall Recess, No Class)**

**Week 9: Community Conservation**
10/28


International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnographical Sciences, Delhi, 14th December, 1978. (BB)

- First Paper Draft, 4-6 pp.

Week 10: Elitism & Exclusion in Maasailand
11/4

Peer Review Comments (First Paper Draft), 1-2 pp.

Week 11: Writing/Meeting with Instructor
11/11

Week 12: Writing/Meeting with Instructor
11/18

Week 13: Writing/Meeting with Instructor
11/25

Week 14: Research Paper Presentations
12/2

Week 15: Writing
12/9

Week 16: Reading and Finals
12/20: Final Research Term Paper Due by 11:00 AM