

21H968J/STS415J

## NATURE, ENVIRONMENT, AND EMPIRE

Spring 2010  
Wednesday 9-12

Professor Harriet Ritvo

### Subject Description

An exploration of the relationship between the study of natural history, both domestic and exotic, by Europeans and Americans, and exploration and exploitation of the natural world, focusing on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

### Books

The following books (all paperbacks) are available for purchase at the MIT Bookstore and on the internet, as well as in the MIT Library Reserve. Readings not contained in these books will be available on the class website or on reserve.

William Beinart and Lotte Hughes, Environment and Empire (Oxford)  
James Cook, Journals (Penguin)  
Clifton Crais and Pamela Scully, Sara Baartman and the Hottentot Venus (Princeton)  
Charles Darwin, Voyage of the Beagle (Modern Library)  
Mike Davis, Late Victorian Holocausts (Verso)  
Felix Driver and Luciana Martins, Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire (Chicago)  
Richard Grove, Green Imperialism (Cambridge)  
Elinor Melville, Plague of Sheep (Cambridge)  
E. C. Pielou, After the Ice Age (Chicago)  
Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes (Routledge)  
John F. Richards, The Unending Frontier (California)  
Harriet Ritvo, The Platypus and the Mermaid (Harvard)  
Martin Rudwick, Scenes from Deep Time (Chicago)  
Alfred Russel Wallace, The Malay Archipelago (Periplus)

### Assignments

A research paper of at least 25 pages will be due at the end of the semester. A topic proposal will be due in class on February 24 and a progress report will be due in class on April 7. All stages will be presented orally as well as in writing. In addition, each week there will be student introduction of the discussion of the readings.

## Schedule of Classes and Readings

February 3	Introduction
February 10	DARWIN Charles Darwin, <u>Voyage of the Beagle</u> Frank Sulloway, <a href="#">Darwin and his finches: The evolution of a legend</a> , <u>Journal of the History of Biology</u> 1982, 1-53 R. D. Keynes, ed., Charles Darwin's Beagle Diary, esp. 351-64 Nora Barlow, ed., "Darwin's Ornithological Notes," <u>Bulletin of BM(NH)</u> (1963), esp. 260-266
February 17	DEEP TIME Pielou, <u>After the Ice Age</u> , especially 5-38,61-80. 99-101, 107-115, 125-128, 227-312 Rudwick, <u>Scenes from Deep Time</u>
February 24	THE GLOBE UNIFIED Grove, <u>Green Imperialism</u> , especially 1-152, 309-486 Drayton, <u>Nature's Government</u> Richards, <u>Unending Frontier</u> , especially part I, "The Global Context" and part IV, "The World Hunt" Beinart and Hughes, ch. 3, "The Fur Trade in Canada"
March 3	SETTLERS AND ENVIRONMENTS Melville, <u>Plague of Sheep</u> Anderson, <u>Creatures of Empire</u> Beinart and Hughes, ch. 2, "Caribbean Plantations" and ch. 6, "Sheep, Pastures and Demography in Australia" Ritvo, <u>Animal Estate</u> , 243-288
	PAPER PROPOSAL DUE
March 10	NO CLASS [ASEH Annual Meeting]
March 17	CAPTAIN COOK James Cook, <u>Journals</u>
March 24	NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK
March 31	PEOPLE Crais and Scully, <u>Sara Baartman</u> Ritvo, <u>Platypus and Mermaid</u> , chs. 3 and 4

## PAPER PROGRESS REPORTS DUE

- April 7 Field trip to Peabody Museum, Harvard  
Individual conferences
- April 14 REPRESENTATIONS  
Pratt, Imperial Eyes, 15-143  
Felix Driver and Luciana Martins, Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire  
Beinart and Hughes, ch. 13, "Empire and the Visual Representation of Nature"
- April 21 DISEASE  
Mike Davis, Late Victorian Holocausts, Parts I and II  
J. R. McNeill, "Revolutionary Mosquitoes or the Atlantic World: Malaria and Independence in the United States of America," (in Squatriti, ed., Nature's Past)  
Beinart and Hughes, ch.10 "Plague and Urban Environments" and ch. 11 "Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis"
- April 28 ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE  
Wallace, The Malay Archipelago
- May 6 ENVIRONMENT, EMPIRE AND SCIENCE  
Peder Anker, Imperial Ecology, 77-156  
Michael A. Osborne, "Acclimatizing the World: A History of the Paradigmatic Colonial Science," Nature and Empire: Science and the Colonial Enterprise (*Osiris*, 2000), pp. 135-151  
Libby Robin, "Ecology: A Science of Empire?" (in Griffiths and Robin, eds., Ecology and Empire)  
M. Gadgil and R. Guha, This Fissured Land , ch. 4
- May 13 FINAL PRESENTATIONS

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