

3/9/10

CURRICULUM VITAE  
CHRISTOPHER A. CONTE

**Current Appointments**

*Associate Professor*, History Department, Utah State University, Specializations: African and Environmental History. Tenure home.

*Director of Graduate Studies*, History Department, Utah State University.

*Associate Professor*, Department of Environment and Society, College of Natural Resources, Utah State University.

**Education**

*Doctor of Philosophy*, History; May 1995. Michigan State University, East Lansing Michigan. Dissertation addresses the relationship between production, exchange and ecology in nineteenth and twentieth century Tanzania. Other fields: Geography, Middle Eastern history.

*Master of Arts*, International Affairs; Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, 1987. Interdisciplinary degree with Africa Area Specialty. Sub fields: History, Political Science, Geography.

*Master of Arts*, Linguistics; Ohio University, 1986. Emphasis in Applied Linguistics with certificate in TEFL/TESL.

*Bachelor of Arts*, History; Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania, 1981.

**Relevant Professional Experience**

*Assistant Professor* - History Department, Utah State University. Beginning summer 1995 (Tenure Track). Courses: African, Environmental and World History.

*Visiting Assistant Professor* - History Department, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. Spring Semester 1995. Courses: Introduction to African Societies, Graduate Colloquium in African History.

*Instructor* - History Department, Michigan State University. Academic years 1993-94 and 1994-95. Courses: East African History, 1500–present; African History Survey, 1800–present; African History Survey, Australopithecus–1800; West African History, 1500–1940.

*Instructor* - Center for Integrative Studies, Michigan State University. Fall semester 1992. Taught 3 sections (71 students total) of Michigan State's required general education course, "Introduction to the Arts and Humanities."

*Research Fellow* - I.I.E. Fulbright Tanzania. Sept. 1991 - June 1992. Conducted dissertation research in Dar es Salaam and Lushoto district, Tanzania and Bethel Mission House and Bayreuth University, Germany.

*Teacher Trainer* - WorldTeach Education Project, Kisumu and Luanda, Kenya. July-September 1987. Supervised American teacher trainees, who were learning suitable teaching approaches, methods and techniques in order to teach effectively in Kenyan secondary schools.

*Lecturer* - Ohio Program of Intensive English, Ohio University. August 1986 - June 1987. Taught various components of English language (reading, listening/speaking, composition, etc.) to foreign students preparing for full-time academic study at American universities. Course load of 15 classes per week.

*High School History/English Teacher* - U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer. Narok High School, Narok, Kenya. September 1981 - December 1983. Taught English language and literature, and history at a large government secondary school in the Maasai area of Kenya.

## **Publications**

In Production:

“East Africa’s Coastal Mountains become the Eastern Arc: Biological Science and the Uses of History.” *Bioscience*, in press for April 2010.

In Print

*Book*

*Highland Sanctuary: Environmental History in Tanzania’s Usambara Mountains*. Athens: Ohio University Press, Series in Environment and History, Series Editor, James L.A. Webb, 2004. *Choice Award*, “best academic titles.”

*Articles*

“Imperialism and the Environment.” In Peter Stearns, et al. eds. *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern World*. Oxford University Press, 2008.

“Wild Places or Domesticated Landscapes: Applying the Wilderness Concept to Africa, Asia and Latin America,” In *American Wilderness: A New History*. Edited by Michael Lewis and published by Oxford University Press, 2007.

“Environmental History in Ancient East Africa,” In John McNeill and Shepard Kreech eds. *Encyclopedia of World Environmental History*. New York: Routledge, 2004, pp. 14 – 18.

“Imperial Science, Tropical Ecology and Indigenous History: Tropical Research Stations in Northeastern German East Africa, 1896 – 1914.” In Gregory Blue, Martin Bunton, and Ralph Crozier, eds., *Colonialism and the Modern World: Selected Studies*. Armond, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2002, pp. 234-246.

“Searching for Common Ground: Reconstructing Landscape History in East Africa’s Eastern Arc Mountains.” In *Methods and Approaches in Forest History*. Edited by Mauro Agnoletti and Steven

Anderson, IUFRO Research Series, no. 3, published by CABI publications, Oxford, UK. 2000, pp. 173-188.

“Colonial Science and Ecological Change: Tanzania’s Mlalo Basin, 1888 - 1946.” *Environmental History* 4.2 (1999), pp. 220 - 244.

“The Forest becomes Desert: Forest Use and Environmental Change in Tanzania’s West Usambara Mountains.” *Land Degradation and Development* 10.4 (1999), pp. 289-307.”

"Nature Reorganized: Ecological History in the Plateau Forests of the West Usambara Mountains, c. 1850-1935." in *Custodians of the Land: Environment and Famine in Tanzania*. Edited by James Giblin, Gregory Maddox and Isaria Kimambo, published by James Currey, London, 1995, pp. 96-122.

#### *Essays and Research In Process*

Essay, East Africa’s Coastal Mountains become the Eastern Arc: A Note on the Synthesis of Science and History. *African Journal of Ecology*. Submitted April, 2009.

Sabbatical 2008-09. Pemba: A Global Environmental History. This project asks how people have mitigated environmental uncertainty by managing their ecological relationships. This is an ancient challenge and one that will determine the future under the uncertainty of global environmental transformation. The fragments of history provide important lessons. My aim here is to put together the pieces that remain in human memory and on the landscape.

#### *Book Reviews in Print or Forthcoming*

Grace Carswell. *Cultivating Success in Uganda: Kigezi Farmers and Colonial Policies*. Oxford: James Currey, 2007 *Africa*, Forthcoming

Davis, Diana. *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa*. Ohio University Press Series in Ecology and History. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007. *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 41.2 (2008), 352-53.

Bender Shetler, Jan. *Imagining Serengeti: A History of Landscape Memory in Tanzania from the Earliest Times to the Present*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007. *Journal of African History*, 49.3 (2008), 497-98.

Porter, Philip W. *Challenging Nature: Local Knowledge, Agrosience, and Food Security in Tanga Region, Tanzania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006. *Agricultural History* 82.2 (2008).

Maddox, Gregory. *Sub-Saharan Africa: An Environmental History*. Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2006. *African Studies Review* 50.2 (2007), 270-71.

Börjeson, Lowe. *A History under Siege: Intensive Agriculture in the Mbulu Highlands, Tanzania, 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the Present*. Stockholm Studies in Human Geography 12. Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2004. *Africa* 76.4 (2006), 604-06.

Widgren, Mats. *Islands of Intensive Agriculture*. London: James Currey, 2004. *Azania*, forthcoming.

- William Beinart and Joann McGregor, eds., *Social History of African Environments*. *American Historical Review*, October 2005.
- Dan Brockington, *Fortress Conservation*. London: James Currey Publishers, 2002. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 40.3 (2005), 235-37.
- Francaviglia, Richard. *Believing in Place: A Spiritual Geography of the Great Basin*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2003. *Western Historical Quarterly* XXXVI (2005), 82-83.
- Brad Weiss, *Sacred Trees, Bitter Harvests: Globalizing Coffee in Northwest Tanzania*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003. *Journal of African History* 45.3 (2004), 507-09
- Carolyn Merchant. Merchant, *The Columbia Guide to Environmental History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. *Journal of Politics and the Life Sciences* 22.2 (2003), 75-77.
- Tamara Giles-Vernick. *Cutting the Vines of the Past*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002. *Environmental History* 8.4 (2003), 689-91.
- Joanna Lewis. *Empire State-Building: War and Welfare in Kenya 1925-52*. East African Studies Series. Oxford: James Currey; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000. *African Studies Review* 45.1 (2002), pp. 190-92.
- Donald Crummey. *Land and Society in the Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia: From the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Century*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000. *African Studies Review*, Spring, 2002.
- Chinua Achebe. *Things Fall Apart, the Expanded Edition with notes*. African Writers Series Classics in Context. Oxford and Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1996. H-AfrTeach, January, 1998.
- William Beinart and Peter Coates, *Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995. *Western Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII.2 (1997), pp. 245 - 46.
- James McCann, *People of the Plow: An Agricultural History of Ethiopia, 1800-1990*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995. Published by H-AFRICA@msu.edu, July 1996.
- James L.A. Webb Jr.'s *Desert Frontier: Ecological and Economic Change Along the Western Sahel 1600- 1850.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995. *Environmental History* 1.3 (1996).
- Isaria Kimambo's *Penetration and Protest in Tanzania: The Impact of the World Economy on the Pare 1860-1960*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1991. *African Economic History*. 21 (1993), p. 170-71.

#### *Selected Presentations and Seminars*

- “Historical Landscapes and Violence in East African History.” ASEH Conference, Boise, ID, March, 2008.

- “Literary Studies and Environmental Studies in Africa.” Kansas Symposium sponsored by the Kansas Center for African Studies, March 28, 2008. Invitation.
- “Restoring Landscapes of Violence to a Resilient Condition.” Invited presentation to the University of Florida African Studies Center Weekly Seminar Series. February, 2008.
- Professional Academy for the Teaching of History in Schools, Logan, Utah, June 12, 2007. “Zea Mays: An American Crop in its Global Context.”
- Darfur Awareness Panel, January 23, 2007, Utah State University.
- Workshop on History and Geography in Northern Tanzania, Held in Soni, Tanga Region. Includes a seminar presentation at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, October, 2006.
- “Approaching History from the Ground Up: Nature and History in the Secondary School Classroom.” Presented at the Summer Seminar of the Professional Academy for Teaching History in Schools. June, 2006.
- Society for Human Ecology, Annual Conference, “Creating Wild Places on Domesticated Landscapes: Applying the Wilderness Concept to Africa, Asia and Latin America,” Society for Human Ecology Annual Conference, October 2005, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- American Historical Association, Pacific Coast Branch, Annual Conference, Roundtable Discussion, Theories and Approaches to Undergraduate World History Courses, Global Environmental History, Corvallis, Oregon, August 2005.
- American Society for Environmental History, Annual Conference, Panelist on a Roundtable on Global Environmental History, Houston, March, 2005.
- Weber State University Summer Seminar Series, June 21, 2004. “Environment and History in the Great Basin.”
- Weber State University Summer Seminar Series on the Cold War. June 12, 2003. “Africa in the Cold War Era.”
- Dibner Institute Summer Seminar in the History of Biology, Human Dimensions of Ecological Science, Wood’s Hole Massachusetts, May 2003. Participant (competitive selection process).
- International Conference on the Forest and Environmental History of the British Empire and Commonwealth, University of Sussex, March 2003. Panelist.
- African Mountain Association, Annual Conference. Sponsored by the UNEP. “Whose Sanctuary? Natural and Human History on East Africa’s Highland Landscapes.” Presented in Moshi, Tanzania, August 23, 2002.
- American Society for Environmental History, Annual Conference, “Reconciling the Past: Natural and Human History in East Africa’s Highlands.” Presented in Denver, Colorado, March 21, 2002.

- African Studies Association, Annual Conference, “Imagining an African Landscape: Linking German Science and Conservation Imperatives in Tanzania’s Eastern Arc Mountains.” Presented in Houston, Texas, November 16, 2001
- European Society for Environmental History, Inaugural Conference, “Imagining an African Landscape: Western Science and the Creation of Conservation Imperatives.” Presented at the University of St. Andrews, St. Andrews, Scotland, September 2001.
- The Mid-America Alliance for African Studies, Annual Conference, “Usambara’ Historical Geography: The Landscape in Cultural Reckoning,” presented at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, September 2000.
- Conference on African Environments, “Common Ground.” Presented at St. Anthony’s College, Oxford University, Oxford, U.K., July, 1999. Substantial Revision of paper presented at the International 1998 Union of Forestry Research Organization conference in Florence Italy.
- World History Association Annual Meeting, (Invited panelist). “Imperial Science, Tropical Ecology and Indigenous History: Tropical Research Stations in Northeastern German East Africa, 1896 – 1914.” Presented at the University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, June 1999
- American Society for Environmental History Annual Conference, “From Forest to Desert: Questions of Poverty and Forest Transformation in Tanzania’s Eastern Arc Mountains.” Presented in Tucson, Arizona, , April 1999.
- “Searching for Common Ground: Reconstructing Landscape History in Tanzania’s Eastern Arc Mountains.” Presented to the International Union of Forestry Research Organization and Accademia Italiana di Scienze Forestali’s International Conference on HISTORY AND FOREST RESOURCES, at the Italian Academy of Forest Science, May 1998 Florence, Italy.
- Televised Panel World History Discussion: Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*. University of Utah’s PBS affiliate, June, 1997.
- “Environmental History and Development,” Presentation to African Studies Faculty and Graduate Students, Michigan State University, April 24, 1997
- American Society of Environmental History, Annual Conference, “Reacting to Crisis in Highland East Africa: Colonial Science and Environmental Restoration in Kenya and Tanzania, 1890 - 1960.” Presented in Baltimore, MD, March 1997.
- Environmental Cultures, Historical Perspectives Conference, “‘The Forest has become a Desert.’ Competing Forest Cultures and Environmental Change in Tanzania’s West Usambara Mountains.” Presented April 1996 Victoria, British Columbia.
- African Studies Association, Annual Meeting, “From Maize to Manioc: Ecological Stress and Crisis in the Mlalo Basin, West Usambara Mountains, Tanzania, 1870-1950.” Presented in Boston, MA, 1993.

African Studies Association, Annual Meeting, “Western Science and Environmental Control in German East Africa: The Case of the Usambara Mountains, 1890-1916.” Presented \November 1994, Toronto, Canada.

### **Recent Service**

Directory of Graduate Studies, History Department, Utah State University, 2004 – present.

American Historical Association, Pacific Coast Branch, Program Committee, 2005

Water Task Force, Advisory Committee 2002 - 2006.

Water Task Force, Curriculum Committee for Ph.D. in Water Science.

Committee on Environmental Education. Department of Environment and Society. 2003-04.

American Society for Environmental History, Program Committee Member for 2004 Conference.

President’s Water Initiative Task Force, Representative for College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, Utah State University, Spring 2003.

History of Science and Technology Faculty Search, Committee Chair, History Department, Utah State. Fall/Spring, 2003.

Tanner Symposium Advisory Board, 2001-02, Environmental Writing and Education.

Acting Directory of Graduate Studies, Department of History, Utah State University, Academic Year 1997-98.

### **Language Skills**

*Swahili*: fluent in all aspects of written and spoken language. Knowledge acquired from residence in East Africa; Peace Corps intensive language training, 1989-91 training at Michigan State as a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellow (Title VI); ten months dissertation research in Tanzania during 1991-92 which included extensive interviews conducted in Swahili. Subsequent trips to East Africa in 1996, 1998, 2002, 2006.

*German*: intermediate aural/oral and advanced reading skills. Knowledge gained from one year residence in and several extended visits to Bregenz, Austria and formal classes attended while in residence; a graduate course in reading German at Michigan State; and research stays in Germany.

### **Research Grants and Awards**

American Philosophical Society, General Research Program, July 1998.

Utah State University New Faculty Research Grant, Fall 1998.

Utah State University Faculty Research Grant, Fall 1996.

Michigan State University Dissertation Write-Up Fellowship: spring semester 1993.

I.I.E. Fulbright Dissertation Research Grant: funded dissertation research in Tanzania: Sept.1991-June 1992.

Michigan State University College of Arts and Letters Dissertation Research Fellowship: same period as above.

Michigan State University Department of History Research Award: summer 1991.

Recruitment Fellowship, Department of History, Michigan State University: fall 1988.

United States Department of Education Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, Michigan State University, 1988-1990.

### **Professional Associations**

African Studies Association, Atlanta, GA.

Forest History Society, Durham, NC.

American Society for Environmental History, Newark, NJ.

European Society for Environmental History

Society for Human Ecology

Society for Conservation Biology

### **Contact Information**

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