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"Three Dimensions of Environmental History"

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Historians are sometimes accused of being light on theory, and environmental historians have not escaped this criticism, sometimes deserved. This essay maintains that environmental historians should increasingly investigate theoretical aspects of their subject, and encourages more prevalent reasoned discourse between multiple viewpoints. The essay does not set forth a theoretical structure, but explores three dimensions that may help to plan such a structure. The first dimension, concerning the subject of the field, is the culture-nature continuum. The second dimension is concerned with method, and lies along the continuum between history and science. The third dimension is one of scale and considers time and space as coordinates of definition. There are obviously other dimensions to explore. These reflections are offered tentatively, in hopes that this piece may serve as an opening to an interesting discussion among colleagues.

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