

What is environmental history ?

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Since the beginning, in the 70', the field produced many papers about what is environmental history, its past and future. Now, environmental history being incredibly internationalized and widespread, it's more and more difficult to read the entire publications, especially for young scholars involved recently or coming from a rising area in environmental history. We will propose here, less a programmatic text or a bibliographical state of the art, than a history of environmental history, highlighting complex genealogies, turning points and concepts, from the point of view of a French historian.

This lecture has three main purposes. First of all, raise a genealogy of the environmental history field by analyzing its origins and steps of development. Then, analyze the specific context of the French academic community in term of reception and production of environmental history researches, by revaluing the role that played the Annales School and its inheritance. Finally, offer an analytical panorama of this academic subfield, which has emerged in the US during the 1970's, and developed more recently in France.