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Energy as driving force of World History?

Environmental historians try to understand how humans are situated in nature, trying to write history based on the question "how nature bodies forth through a hole in culture" (L. Hazelrigg). Human livelihoods can be viewed as the different socio-ecological niches through which energy provision is secured. But does such a view do justice to power relations and institutions, to arts and warfare, to gender inequality and globalization? No single vantage point on the chaos of the past exists, and an energy-based view cannot explain history as such, but it can shed light on history understood as the transformation of the ways of being-in-nature. Energy, it shall be argued, has been one driving force of history and continues to be one, mediated by technologies transforming the way we use our lands.