its length, some topics or periods receive little attention. The focus is on the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; much less attention is given to developments during the twentieth century. While it could be argued that periods such as the Weimar Republic or the Third Reich lack decisive turning points in regards to agricultural and environmental developments, this is certainly not true for the 1950s. As several authors acknowledge, the most radical changes occurred during this decade. Also the European context needs to be included, since the agricultural market was the first one to be unified and the European discussion of a feasible farm size ("Grow! Or leave!") had severe implications for the German landscape. This suggests that scholars need a new model for periodizing environmental history, one that emphasizes the 1950s and also focuses on European integration. But as it is, the book is certainly already long enough. This impressive, massive volume fills a niche and leaves room for further research on German environmental history.

Reviewed by ***Gesine Gerhard****, assistant professor of European history at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. Her research focuses on German agricultural history.*

Narrating the Arctic: A Cultural History of Nordic Scientific Practices. Edited by Michael Bravo and Sverker Sörlin. Canton, Mass.: Science History Publications, 2002. ix + 373 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $39.95.

Histories about colonialism in the name of science often have spared the Nordic countries and their endeavors for territorial and cultural expansion. Not anymore. Even though this volume does not include the Norwegian and Finnish point of view, it makes a significant contribution to the understanding of Nordic arctic exploration and territorial expansion. This anthology is unusually well edited and an excellent read. What brings the contributions together is a common methodological focus on the importance of narrative in the culture of scientific practices. Orientalism, as understood by Edward Said, serves as a key reference point in understanding the relation between places of research in the arctic periphery and central academic institutions.

That Denmark once was an eager colonizer of territory and of people may come as a surprise for readers in environmental history. Yet this was very much the case, if we are to believe Michael Harbsmeier's admirable article about Danish ceremonies of possession of Greenland. He argues that historically there is among Danish as well as Eskimo peoples a pattern of recognizing themselves as being asymmetrical parts of an imaginary whole. Building on a rich range of examples, Harbsmeier describes how people in central Copenhagen and faraway Thule came to recognize their differences within the same imperial framework of reasoning.

Equally interesting is Sverker Sörlin's essay about the practice of arctic natural history in Sweden. He shows how important science was in shaping environmental histories for the nation. Louis Agassiz's theory of glacial

movements, for example, became a meta-history serving as a narrative of a country born out of "ice and water" (p. 75). Urban Wråkberg's contribution touches upon the same nation-building topic in his discussion of "The Politics of Naming" in Greenland among scientists, explorers, and Eskimos. He argues that polar science was a tool for territorial occupation, an argument that is further substantiated in Christopher Ries's article about the Danish explorer Lauge Koch's mapping of the northern parts of Greenland. This mapping, Ries convincingly concludes, "carried strong imperial messages" and claims of Danish sovereignty over its colony (p. 228).

The importance of mapping is also central in Michael Bravo's "Measuring Danes and Eskimos," a well-researched account of why the Danish geographer Hans Peder Steensby thought that the Polar Eskimos had an elite potential. This theme continues in Gísli Pálsson's article about the Icelandic geographer Vilhjalmur Stefansson's research on "Blond Eskimos;" his theories about their medieval Norse background and superior heritage had its likely background in his intimate "participant observation" relationship with one of them (p. 290).

The anthology shows how the image of the Arctic as a desolate region of pristine nature for scientists and back-to-nature lovers served as an Oriental contrast to thriving cultures in the capitals of Nordic countries. The arctic environment, the articles indicate, was of key importance to nation-building, cultural identity, notions of masculinity, and scientific discourse. Science served as a key to establish Nordic territorial and economic control of arctic landscapes and inhabitants.

Reviewed by ***Peder Anker,*** *who received his Ph.D. in history of science from Harvard University in 1999. He is currently a research fellow at the Center for Development and the Environment at the University of Oslo, Norway. His latest works include* Imperial Ecology: Environmental Order in the British Empire, 1895-1945 *(Harvard University Press, 2001).*

Muskox Land: Ellesmere Island in the Age of Contact. By Lyle Dick. Calgary, Alta.: University of Calgary Press, 2001. xxv, 615 pp. Illustrations, photographs, maps, notes. Paper $34.95.

Students of mountain flowers learn about Ellesmere Island early in their studies. One plant, the Star-like Saxifrage (*Saxifraga foliolosa*) caught my attention twenty-five years ago, and as I studied it atop a mountain in Maine, I dreamed about seeing it someday at its northern limit of its range—on Ellesmere. Dreams linger, and a decade later I was tromping up the Weasel River valley on Baffin Island in search of the Star-like Saxifrage. Near a monument marking the Arctic Circle, we struck up a conversation with two geologists on their way home from Discovery Bay twelve hundred miles to the north. As we parted, one said "The only thing that stands between you and Ellesmere Island is money and a six-hour flight from Resolute."

Lyle Dick's remarkable book is good homework for anyone with northern inclinations. The author reveals the recent history of human culture on this remote landscape in the context of its geography and climate, beginning with