

This cultural synthesis was largely in ruins by the late eighteenth century. Air itself was composed of chemical compounds; electricity was an aerial property; meteorites emanated from outer space. Meteorology studied weather only; meteorologists investigated the atmosphere. Enlightenment science was a metropolitan, urban affair. Natural Theology, viewing nature as a manifestation of Divine Order, supported the new scientific ethos of “regularity” and “system.” The Royal Society’s editors substituted tables developed by trained observers, usually from the Royal Navy, for accounts of “meteors.” Jankovic brilliantly describes this epistemological shift, but denies that it manifests scientific progress. For their clerical practitioners, meteor accounts were a valid way of comprehending the aerial world, persisting long after the new synthesis had shown its explanatory power.

The issue of provincialism poses an interesting question for Americanists. America was culturally provincial long after Independence. It never had a network of well-educated Anglican clergy. Did our almanac makers fill that role with their lists of “meteorological” wonders? In any case, old-fashioned “meteors” are every bit as alive and well in your local library as in Hollywood and the Discovery Channel: for each book on weather science, there are several on colliding comets, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, etc.

What can American environmental historians, whose discipline is riddled with Baconian assumptions, glean from Jankovic’s information? Unlike climatology, where the impact of deforestation upon desertification is well known and the human impact upon the Greenhouse Effect and the destruction of the ozone layer haunt our future, weather theory is underdeveloped and weather control a technophilic dream. Everybody still talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.

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Encountering the Past in Nature: Essays in Environmental History. Edited by Timo Myllyntaus and Mikko Saikku. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2000. xix + 166p. Maps, bibliography, notes, index. Cloth \$39.95, paper \$16.95.

Two thirds of Finland is covered by forests. It is therefore no surprise that this fine contribution to environmental history from Finnish historians focuses on woods. The balance of methodological discussions and case studies makes this anthology ideal as an introduction to new students of the field.

Finland is a new nation. It was part of Sweden for nearly 700 years until 1809 when the land was lost at war to Russia, who ruled it until Finnish independence in 1917. The country has since then been in strategic alliances with Germany, the Soviet Union, and now the European Union. It is thus not surprising that the country’s historians turn to the environment as a source of genuine Finnish identity. The forest has in the past been an icon of the independent nation (in the art of

Akseli Gallen-Kallela and Pekka Halonen and in the music of Jean Sibelius), and this anthology reinforces this nation-building agenda.

The many comparisons to American environmental history are apt, and readers of this journal will be familiar with both methodology and material presented in the footnotes. The exemplary introduction by the editors and Timo Myllyntaus's concluding article provide the reader with a clear "how-to" manual for the impatient, as well as a fine discussion of current trends in environmental history. The shared traditions of Finns and Americans, the editors argue, lay in a common frontier rhetoric and oppression of native populations. The focus of more traditional Finnish history has often been the nation's close and difficult relationship with Russia/the Soviet Union, but this does not dominate this volume. Instead we learn, in Aukusti Lehtinen's essay, about Finnish forests in conceptual terms borrowed from the American wilderness debate.

The highlight of the anthology is perhaps Ismo Björn's discussion of the Karelia forests. He argues that there was once an untouched ecosystem that had been damaged by alien flora and fauna, and by humans supplanting the natural economy. Greedy iron-melting, forest-burning industry has caused an environmental disaster of deforestation. When the industry went bust, the lumbermen villages of Karelia soon transformed into safe havens for back-to-nature lovers. He ends with a discussion of the paradox of eco-tourism, namely that a mass exodus of urban dwellers to cozy cottages in the woods may permanently damage the very nature they seek to enjoy. He sets his hopes on summer residents being guardians of nature reserves.

The Finnish government has been involved in forest management abroad to help sustainable development of forests in newly industrialized countries. The volume includes a fine paper by Olavi Luukkanen who discusses the history of this aid and its impact on the tropical forests in Thailand with respect to deforestation and flooding. The volume ends with a well researched article about the decline in Ivory-Billed Woodpeckers in the United States by Mikko Saikku. He argues that this bird is an indicator of the viability of an ecological system, and that its disappearance shows the profound change in the hardwood forest ecosystems due to commercial industrialization and development.

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

Dust: A History of the Small and the Invisible. By Joseph A. Amato. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. Illustrations, bibliography, notes. 250 pp. Cloth \$35.00, paper \$15.95.

The construction of dust as a physical and metaphysical entity from the medieval period to the present is the subject of Joseph Amato's *Dust: A History of the Small and the Invisible*. Primarily a work of synthesis, the book explores the intellectual and cultural history of dust in Western civilization through a roughly chronologi-