In the context of Europe's economic, political and cultural reunification, it is essential to obtain a comparative overview of the state of the environment and changes occurring after World War II both in Western and Eastern Europe. Regardless of the differences in the social order of the Nordic and Baltic countries, a great number of parallels can be drawn in the economic processes that have influenced the environment and the problems that have arisen in the course of these processes. Many environmental changes - pollution of the atmosphere and bodies of water, protection of animate nature and other such aspects - do not recognize national borders and presume political agreements that assure common action, common standards and controls to back up conservational economic activity.

In the introduction of the reviewed book, Hans Aage arrives at the postulate that in the historical and global perspective, similarities between Eastern and Western Europe are more important than differences, thus comparing data from different countries has become an urging necessity.

The objective of this book was to bring together a rich statistical material regarding the economic activity and political actions of the Nordic and Baltic countries reflected in the changes that have taken place in the environment. In order to comprehend the historical background of the problems, a necessary review is made, the actual situation is assessed and future prospects are analyzed. The factual material originating predominantly from the fields of natural, economic and political sciences is presented from a comparative point of view using common methodological fundamentals. Facts and problems are organized according to a common pattern; common sub-themes and key questions form a particular network. We get an overview of the environment of Scandinavia and the Baltic countries, of the environmental policy in both geographic regions, and of the conservation of natural resources and its economic impact. A separate chapter considers possible options for international cooperation to solve environmental problems; among others, the question of waste is raised: limita-

tions regulating the import and export of waste are feasible only in the event of mutual collaboration on both the national and international organization levels, not only as unilateral projects founded on the financial aid from the Nordic countries. This symposium – having a unified structure and being a kind of summarized report from the field of ecological economic geography – has important scientific value in reviving interrupted traditions.

Anthropo-ecology, a thesis postulated in 1924–1925 by the Finnish geographer Johannes Granö, is one of the relevant topics discussed: the transition from the naturalistic treatment of so-called ‘pure’ geography toward interdisciplinary geography that would utilize data from the humanities and social sciences. The subjects of research in anthropo-ecology would be the village, town, city, borough, nation or association of nations as an economic unit and a social whole. Scientists of the Granö school of thought criticized economic-geographical literature that paid little attention to questions of consumption. The level and directions of development of human society cannot be understood on the basis of an empirical description of the exterior characteristics of a settlement. Instead, standards of living must be compared. The geopolitical idea that the Baltic countries and Scandinavia belong to an ecological-geographical whole, Baltoscandia in other words, which in turn is a part of a larger Baltic Sea coastal whole, became the basis of the research of the Lund ecological geography school of thought and of the Estonian geographer Edgar Kant (a student of Granö).

Nations as units of human geography are sub-regions of a larger whole that are comparable through the analysis of the economic progress. Alongside quantitative methods, comparative regional studies are also essential. Here social and cultural particulars are taken into account in ascertaining the local relationships of mankind and his surroundings. Thus the concept of Baltoscandia refers to both an economic-political and a social-cultural region.

Poland and Germany are also located within the Baltic Sea catchment basin. The foundation for the Baltic Sea Council was laid in 1992 at the initiation of Denmark and Germany. Its aim is to strengthen democracy and the economy in the Baltic Sea region, and cooperation in the fields of energy generation, transportation and natural conservation, but also in culture, education and the humanities. That political act is an attempt to restore the natural solidarity of the Baltic Sea regions.

The renewal of the cooperation on a theoretical level – initiated as early as in the 1920s – is also reflected, the integral treatments of the Baltic Sea region and Baltoscandia being considered as the key to it.

The objective of the book is clearly defined and social-cultural problems have been consciously left out of its subject matter. The following ideas are therefore not intended as criticism but rather as its supplement and an extension of the subject.

The ecological-philosophical deductions rendered possible by the plentiful and well-organized database reflect an economic-political tone. Many problems noted by the authors are not comprehensible solely through economic and political analysis. They also require a cultural historical approach, thus the inclusion of social sciences and the humanities. Examples of such problems are fishing in