

Maya. The authors contrast the floods of the Euphrates, which often threatened to destroy settlements yet never could wash the land clean of accumulated salts, and the Nile, which usually did not threaten settlements but regularly eliminated salts, and China's Yellow River, which frequently flooded settlements over vast areas.

The third part discusses farming methods and food preferences in Athens and Rome, "feudal Europe," the early modern British Empire, and the development of scientific farming. The authors describe how Great Britain became the first country to shift from beer to sweet tea and other beverages intended in part to decrease workers' use of alcohol during industrialization. This new sobriety relied on sugar produced by the slave-based Atlantic plantation system. They also provide both familiar and new information on recent technological advances and issues, such as mechanization, hybrid seed, the dependence of modern food production on oil, and other topics.

The book is oriented toward undergraduates in a basic course, even advanced high-school students. Inevitably, it has a few oversimplifications. The argument that foragers were healthier than farmers omits the "broad spectrum revolution" in the early Neolithic, during which foragers desperately sought all kinds of plants and animals they never touched before because of declining food supplies. The subtitle of the book overstates the extent to which it addresses the impact of agriculture on world history. The chapters on specific civilizations each end with a few paragraphs describing how that civilization declined and agriculture's role in that decline. But although most of the book is not very analytical, the Sinclairs do provide an up-to-date and useful popularized guide to basic methods of crop production and food-processing in several different, mostly Western societies. This book would combine well with contrasting studies that focus on social, economic, and political history.

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Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists versus Agribusiness in the Struggle over Biotechnology. By Rachel Schurman and William A. Munro. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 296 pp., \$22.50, paperback, ISBN 978-0-8166-4762-0.

We are now in the third decade of a deep rift over genetically modified organisms (GMOs), principally as used in agriculture. Few technologies have engendered such bitter opposition, and several questions arise: How did we end up with such a rift? What has animated the anti-GMO movement(s), and how have they actually affected GM products? In *Fighting for the Future*

of Food, sociologist Rachel Schurman and political scientist William Munro focus on the origins, tactics, and impacts of anti-GMO movements. They adopt a social perspective, offering a set of social science concepts to make sense of the rift, but the book seems intended for a broader audience than academic social scientists. The writing is mostly clear and clean, albeit with some indulgence in sociological jargon.

The book does many things very well. It situates the emergence of agri-biotech in the era of knowledge-intensive industries, neoliberalism's promotion of competitive innovation, and the advent of new intellectual property regimes. It summarizes the beginnings of recombinant DNA technology and the emergence of corporate life science (especially at Monsanto). Opposition crystallized around two issues: the social/moral/ethical aspects of designing life and the potential impacts on seed diversity and control. Social linkages were crucial in developing momentum, and many early participants were veterans of the environmental movements of the 1970s. Biotech opposition eventually drew on a range of interest groups, an "inchoate sum of multiple, diverse, uncoordinated struggles and organizations" (167).

The book focuses on Europe, the United States, and Africa. In Europe, activists scored key victories on the regulatory front and capitalized on a sympathetic public and press and on Monsanto's ham-handedness. In the United States, activists lost battles over regulation and labeling laws (which industry fought tooth and nail), but counted among their victories the derailment of GM potatoes and wheat. The authors' focus on Africa, where only South Africa has used GM crops significantly and where there has been relatively low-key opposition, instead of India (with its wide use of GM cotton and rich history of effective opposition) will disappoint some readers.

Schurman and Munro see the biotech rift as arising from colliding "lifeworlds"—stocks of culturally transmitted background knowledge and attitudes that naturalize and generate visions of the world (xvii). "Lifeworld," like its cousins "subculture," "worldview," and "habitus," is not a particularly crisp concept, and we are not actually told that much about the nature of the relevant lifeworlds. Are the activists' lifeworlds a manifestation of late Marxism, united by their opposition to late capitalism? Are they Luddite, either in the popular sense of being generally anti-technology or in the more historically accurate sense of being economically threatened by the new technological regime?

But overall, this account of biotech struggles is well informed and convincing. In the end, Schurman and Munro argue, GM crops may be here to stay, but the world of agricultural biotechnology is hardly the world that industry envisioned. Thorny questions remain about the patenting of genes, some markets are still hostile to GM foods and crops, and key funders are scaling back their support and enthusiasm. This story will remain a dynamic

one for years to come, but for now Schurman and Munro have provided a highly useful examination of what has made anti-biotech movements tick.

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Agriculture in World History. By Mark B. Tauger. New York: Routledge, 2011. 192 pp., \$29.95, paperback, ISBN 978-0-415-077387-4.

This concise, useful book is intended as supplementary reading for undergraduate world history survey courses. It fulfills this aim, albeit with some caveats. The core of Tauger's argument lies in his identification of a long historical pattern of the "dual subordination" of farmers: to the vagaries of the environment and to political control of agriculture by civilization's elites (12). Both subordinations were problematic for the farmers upon whose output all of human life has depended since the agricultural revolution. Agriculture deserves a central place in world history; without it, there could be no civilization as we know it. Although Tauger's approach is chronological starting with the origins of agriculture, he also covers each world region in each chapter. Even so, more than two-thirds of the book deals with the development of agriculture since 1500, and the focus is mainly on Europe and North America. The cost of this approach in such a concise volume is that it largely precludes any systematic treatment of crop domestication, diffusion of crops worldwide, and the impact of such technological changes as mechanization, fossil fuel-based fertilizers, and genetic manipulation of plants and animals. Most of this material is embedded in the text, but is too easily ignored.

Some caveats: the contentious, complex arguments over the origins of agriculture are glossed over, hopefully in the interests of space. Students are, however, left with the sense that it was mostly a matter of economics. The remarkable early work of the great Russian plant scientist, Nikolai Vavilov, on domestication goes unmentioned, as does its recognition by Norman Borlaug as one of the foundation stones of the Green Revolution. The Columbian exchange of crops worldwide that followed the European expansions is mentioned only briefly, while the origins of genetic manipulation in the selective breeding of animals in the agricultural revolution of the 1700s is bypassed altogether. The mechanization of agriculture via tractors and other machinery is scarcely mentioned. The Haber-Bosch process is treated as important to the post-1945 world, but its origins in Imperial Germany and its slow worldwide diffusion are absent.

Tauger's work must thus be read as predominantly a worthwhile contribution to the social and environmental history of agriculture, not to the history of agriculture per se. In this it succeeds, in that he shows how farmers