

## BOOK REVIEW

**Crops and Man (2nd edition).** Jack R. Harlan. Madison, Wisconsin: American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, 1992. Pp. xiii, 284. \$34.00. ISBN 0-89118-032-X.

It is a pleasure to see this second edition of Harlan's excellent treatise on crops and their influence on human history. It is more than a text book, but it might serve in many courses in economic botany: it is a philosophical understanding of humans' dependence on the Plant Kingdom. As expressed by the foreword written by two outstanding agronomists: "As Dr. Harlan taught us in the first edition . . . and reinforces in this second edition, crops have shaped the evolution of human societies." And as Harlan himself states: "In the second edition, I have tried to bring various features of crop evolution up-to-date, but something becomes obsolete every day and every year. By the time this version is printed, some statements will be out of date and some views may be reversed. . . . There would be little fascination in science if it were static. For better or worse, I offer this version of *Crops and Man*."

The book is divided into 12 chapters which indicate the wide treatment of the story of plants and human affairs: Prologue—the Golden Age; Views on Agricultural Origin; What is a Crop?; What is a Weed?; Classification of Cultivated Plants; Dynamics of Domestication; Space, Time and Variation; the Near East; Indigenous African Agriculture; the Far East; the Americas; Epilogue—Who's in Charge here? There is a bibliography of relevant titles for each chapter and a detailed subject index.

The publication is in easily readable type, and the price is modest and within the range of student ability to purchase if it is used as a text book. With the increasing interdisciplinary approach to the study of plants and man, this well balanced contribution represents a welcome addition to the complex understanding of man's dependence on the vegetation of the world.

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