in civility? In what ways does the absence of civility harm society? Asking the question directly and in this way might have led Flammang to consider more explicitly how such concerns are influenced not only by questions about gender, but also by questions of class. Like Bossard's work, questions of class rarely appear in Flammang's analysis. Another reason to ask for more here is that failure to address questions of class means that parts of Flammang's argument may be used by others to do precisely what Flammang argues should not be done: We might argue, for example, that the decline in family meals is a result of the decisions of (some) women to trade domesticity for economic equality or opportunity, or to trade their roles as caregivers for careers. The decline in family meals and in civility is thus partly a consequence of the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and its solution is to reinscribe the role of woman as wife and mother. In this view, the decline in family meals is chiefly the fault of women. Michael Pollan's recent piece in the *New York Review of Books*, some have suggested, advances just this argument.[5]

Flammang is right to insist that gender explains why family foodwork does not get the attention it deserves, and right as well as to caution that a renewed emphasis on the civilizing effects of the family table must not be borne by women alone, but the failure to fully explore other causes and consequences of the decline invites criticism from those who pine for the picture Bossard painted.

In sum, this is an important and provocative book.

—John E. Finn, Wesleyan University

NOTES

1. James H.S. Bossard, "Family Table Talk: An Area for Sociological Study," *American Sociological Review* 8, no.3 (June 1943): 298.

2. www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1200760,00.html#ixzz1A4jkMkG2.

3. See Thomas Lyson, *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food and Community* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2004).

4. See Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place* (New York: Paragon House, 1991).

5. Anna Clark, "The Foodie Indictment of Feminism," Salon.com, 26 May 2010, at www.salon.com/life/broadsheet/2010/05/26/foodies_and_feminism.

The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia

Nick Cullather

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010

xiii + 358 pp. Illustrations. $35.00 (paper)

This book tells "the story of the green revolution [GR], the greatest success in the history of foreign aid since the Marshall Plan" (p. xi). The author's main point is that even though the GR was praised as a "victory for international science and humanitarianism" (p.247), the program's success was often exaggerated by the governments that implemented it. Most of all, the GR failed to improve the lives of the poor peasants it was supposed to be helping. In making his argument, the author uses a wide range of materials, including resources from more than fifteen archives and libraries in four countries.

As a historian, the author traces the origin of U.S. developmentalism to the Great Depression of the 1930s when, with the problem of overproduction of grain and natural disasters, U.S. agricultural policy adopted a global perspective. The underlying principle of the GR—and the goals of U.S. aid programs for agricultural modernization—was to achieve a balance between food production and population growth, which were perceived as the most serious threats to the world in the postwar era. *The Hungry World* shows that the GR was a U.S. response to the expanding influence of communism in Asia and Latin America during the Cold War era. The U.S. government and wealthy donors like the Rockefeller and Ford foundations perceived that the most efficient way to check the spread of communist revolutions was to help countries in those regions produce enough food to feed their growing populations.

The GR began in Mexico, where the Rockefeller Foundation launched the MAP (Mexican Agricultural Program) in 1941. Behind the program were the fear of Mexico's possible turn to communism and its population growth, which would cause migration problems to the United States (p.43). It was through this project in Mexico that the U.S. agronomist Norman Borlaug developed a high-yield dwarf variety of wheat dependent on fertilizer and irrigation. While admitting that the new variety brought increased harvest, the book criticizes the MAP's vision, which avoided asking the crucial question: "how, or even if, improved agriculture translated into an improved society" (p.57).

By looking at the U.S. aid programs for agricultural development in Afghanistan, India, and the Philippines, *The Hungry World* shows how the GR in these countries was "unjustly" praised. The United States built dams in Afghanistan, expecting that they would bring increased agricultural production and thereby weaken Soviet influence in the region. Hastily planned and badly managed both by the U.S. aid organizations and the Afghan government, the dam project proved to be a great failure that caused serious environmental damage and social turmoil. In India, which gained U.S. attention for its size and its juxtaposition

to communist China, the new dwarf variety of wheat was promoted in Punjab in the mid-1960s. While India saw an increased harvest, Cullather reveals certain problems: despite the allegedly increased harvest, India continued to import grain; and social turmoil occurred as the new technology intensified class tensions between large-scale farmers and the majority who tilled smaller lots (pp.241–242). As the author puts it, rural modernization in Asia "seldom meant increasing income or productivity for farmers" (p.124).

In the Philippines, the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos promoted the semidwarf "miracle rice (IR-8)" developed by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), which was funded by the Ford Foundation. The Marcos regime cheated the people and actually exported rice while secretly importing it (p.172). The author argues that the GR was closely related to an oppressive regime (p.244) and explains how the progressive components of earlier agricultural modernization projects such as land reform—redistributing the land to tenant farmers—were lost in the GR. Because the local elite often balked at such structural changes, by the 1960s U.S. agricultural development programs had mostly abandoned land reform (p.107). Cullather further reveals that, due to political pressure by the powerful agricultural sector in the United States (which still dominates American politics), the United States became dependent on its grain exports to the Soviet Union even though it was trying to make the USSR dependent on American grain imports (p.257).

As many experts predict, we will face serious food shortages within the next few decades. Due to climate change and political instability, global food prices have been rising over the last several years. There have been riots—some consider high food prices the impetus for the "Arab Spring." *The Hungry World* questions whether GR-type agricultural modernization can be a sustainable solution to today's food problems. The high-yield varieties of grain proved less successful under conditions of drought or blight; they also contain fewer vitamins (p.230). However, a more fundamental question raised by the GR has to do with the very nature of development, when "poverty, illiteracy, infant mortality, and social strife remained just as prevalent" in countries like India that claimed self-sufficiency in food through the GR (p.254). The author's point that debt-ridden African countries today grow cash crops for export while relying on aid and importation of grain to feed their people is an uncomfortable truth. Thus, in the final chapters of the book, Cullather expresses concerns about politicians and philanthropists like Bill Gates who support the GR-type idea of food production in Africa.

The Hungry World is a well-written book, and its exposé of the other side of the GR is timely. Its brilliant use of historical materials makes the book highly informative and even entertaining. *The Hungry World* would be very useful for teachers and students of development study, anthropology, economics, sociology, political science, political economy, U.S. foreign policy, and modern history. Policymakers and aid workers should read it. If there is anything missing, it is a discussion of the Soviet development programs in Asia during the Cold War, to which the United States was reacting. Although that is not the book's focus, it would have been helpful to understand more fully the USSR's development strategies in Asia.

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Empires of Food: Feast, Famine, and the Rise and Fall of Civilizations
Evan D.G. Fraser and Andrew Rimas
New York: Free Press, 2010
xiii + 302 pp. $27.00 (cloth)

Evan Fraser and Andrew Rimas are intent on alerting us to impending disaster, to the grim future of food and hence of civilization. Cities, they remind us, always depend on agricultural surplus. As cities (and the civilizations or empires of which they are a part) grow, the population outruns the food supply. Famine hits, disease follows in its wake, the civilization collapses. This time around with the climate changing rapidly and the globe more interconnected than ever before, the world faces a disaster on a scale unprecedented in history.

If the story seems familiar, it is. Ever since Thomas Malthus argued in the *Essay on Population* that, because agricultural production increases only arithmetically while population increases geometrically, food shortages would act as a brake on population, the theme has been regularly revisited, each time with a different twist. In the 1960s, for example, neo-Malthusianism was used to justify draconian policies to control population in India and China and to argue for a less meat-intensive diet in the United States. In 2004 Jared Diamond in *Collapse* anticipated Fraser and Rimas's argument that ecological breakdowns precipitate societal collapse.

So what is new in Fraser and Rimas? Chiefly their decision to examine the variety of ways in which food supplies can be compromised, including soil degradation, failure to maintain adequate grain stocks, profit-seeking rather than