

Agricultural Enlightenment: Knowledge, Technology, and Nature, 1750-1840

Peter M. Jones

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Agricultural Enlightenment: Knowledge, Technology, and Nature, 1750-1840 Peter M. Jones Agricultural Enlightenment explores the modernization of the rural economy in Europe through the lens of the Enlightenment. It focuses on the second half of the eighteenth century and emphasises the role of useful knowledge in the process of agrarian change and agricultural development. As such it invites economic historians to respond to the challenge issued by Joel Mokyr to look beyond quantitative data and to take seriously the argument that cultural

factors, broadly understood, may have aided or hindered the evolution of agriculture in the early modern period ('what people knew and believed' had a direct bearing on their economic behaviour [Mokyr, The Enlightened Economy]). Evidence in support of the idea that a readily accessible supply of agricultural knowledge helps to explain the trajectory of the rural economy is drawn from all of the countries of Europe. The book includes two cases studies of rapid rural modernization in Scotland and Denmark where Agricultural Enlightenment was swiftly followed by full-scale Agricultural Revolution.



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