

**Genetically modified organisms and genetic engineering in research and therapy**  
**Pascale Piguet and Philippe Poindron**  
**(eds)**

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This is a very interesting book for both the contents and the procedure that lead to its production. In fact, this is the third volume of the series *BioValley Monographs* edited by Philippe Poindron (University of Strasbourg) and Pascale Piguet (University of Basel) and sponsored by the *Conseil Régional d'Alsace*, Endress foundation and BioValley Alsace (the biocluster of the upper Rhine area). This testifies the importance of recognizing (by, for example, decision makers and politicians) the social impact that scientific achievements have on our lives.

I think it is important to stress the merit that should be recognized to the laypeople (for definition, science politicians and decision makers that are usually not *scientists*): having fulfilled their duties by providing all the needed sponsorships to the BioValley network, they insured its successful running, as the papers presented in the volume testify. The foreword presentation of the volume by Philippe Poindron is recalling the impatience and the disappointments that such an enterprise like the BioValley network produced among the

economic, political and academic people that were expecting *results* in a shorter time. Proposing his initial idea at a wider scale, Philippe Poindron suggests to change the name of this series in *European Bioclusters Monographs* with the aim of combining similar efforts and initiatives together to ensure an European scientific innovative potential comparable to the American or Chinese one.

This volume is structured following the necessary connoted political view that such initiative requires and presents the working areas of the participants in the biocluster. In other words, the volume is apparently mixing topics barely related to each other since it spans from gene therapies for cancer treatment to therapeutic strategies for fragile X syndrome; from perspectives in neuromuscular diseases treatments to neurosteroidogenesis in neuroprotection (the Alzheimer disease) just to mention a few. Hot topics regarding genetically modified organisms and genetic engineering approaches and techniques raise interesting debates (that must be approved by the civil society) on their possible use in synthetic biology so that cutting-edge solutions for important unmet human needs (health, environment, economy to mention those in urgent need) can be solved thanks to the help and support of the whole society.

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