



THE MATERIALITY OF PLANTS: PLANT- PEOPLE ENTANGLEMENTS.

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Introduction : Materiality

- Archaeology materiality is to “explore relationship between people and objects” (Van der Veen, 2014)
- “material and non-human agency” (Knappett and Malafouris, 2008 and Gosden in 2005)
- Relationships, networks, meshwork instead of on the individual agency of either person or object (Ingold 2007, Knappett 2011 and Robb 2010)
- Humans and animals are featured prominently in scholarship on materiality
- Whereas plants have been forgotten,
- “materiality of plants and their importance in all aspects of human interactions.” (Van der Veen, 2014)



figure 1:unkown (2010)

What do plants want ?

- Plants are an important resource for humans.
- Van der Veen rejects the anthropocentric viewpoint and asks what plant want?.
- Plants want to reproduce!
- Agency of plants and using non-human agency of plants.
- “historic relationship between people and plants” (Van der Veen, 2014)
- Co-evolution is a term used by Biologists but archaeologist prefer terms like entanglement and relationality



figure 2 : unknown (2022)

Embodiment - you are what you eat

- “All food we eat is directly or indirectly derived from plants.” (Van der Veen, 2014)
- Food ingested is embedded and incorporated into the human body.
- plants provide life.
- Plants ingested substances in the body can cause illness.
- chemical signatures from isotopes in bones used by archaeologist
- plants can have addictive and mind - altering properties
- categories of plants : nutritious, remedial, psychoactive and toxic.



figure 3 : Tijana87 (2022)

Investment: seeds as archives

- Emplantment : human have changed plants physical make-up
- plant selection and mutation in the process of crops.
- mutual benefit between plants and humans.
- DNA of plants.
- “the material properties of the plants allow us to unravel the complex interactions between plants, climate and people.” (Van der Veen,2014)



Figure 4 : Unknown (2022)

Praxis: a way of life

- Day to day engagement with plants (Ingold, 1993)
- praxis : means routine/ ritual.
- using farmers as example because they live by the cycle of corps.
- plants are farmers life.



Figure 5 : Neil Palmer (2010)

Entanglement: webs of relationality

- “Meshwork” (Ingold) as a concept.
- “Entanglement (Hodder) uses the term to try and capture the fact that both plant and humans are trapped in a relationship.
- Harlons idea that crops are ‘artefacts’, and humans are dependent on the crop.
- Plants and humans are mutually dependent.

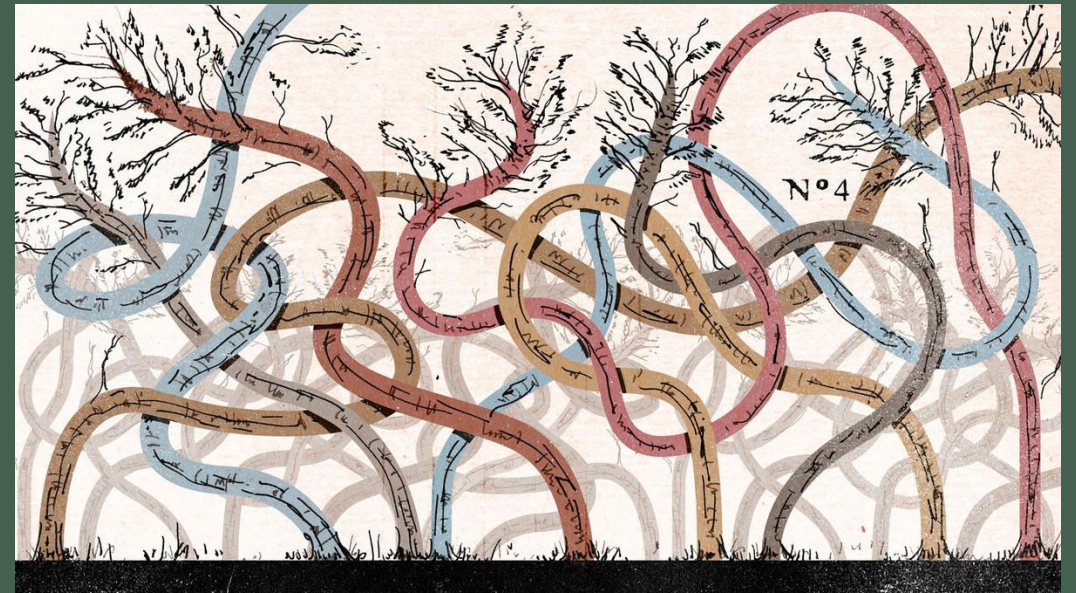


Figure 6 Daniel Horowitz (2021)

Discussion

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