

[Human-Plant Entanglement: Thinking with Plants in the Anthropocene](#)

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The human and plant relationship stretches back to the earliest of times, arguably 20,000 years ago when the prehistoric hunter-gatherers had not quite learned to domesticate the wild vegetal species that grew around them. Learning to domesticate the plants for their own use was a decisive moment that changed humans into an agricultural unit and left the promise of a quantum leap in human history. Indeed, for the last twenty millennia, humans and plants have co-evolved in such diverse but intimate ways that the history of one would be unthinkable without the history of the other. Yet, today at a time when our forests are burning, coral reefs are fast disappearing, biodiversity declining or the glaciers melting, humanity seems all the more intent on investigating the origin and ramifications of this *entangled* human-plant evolutionary history. Perhaps, true to the reason why we don't hesitate to discuss the natural history of plant life in sync with the history of the 'Anthropos', is because we humans have already emerged as a new geological 'planetary' force (thanks to human overlordship of nature) that has effaced the long-standing binaries of human and nonhuman, natural and unnatural, leading to an event we like to call the 'Anthropocene'. The Anthropocene epoch provides us the opportunity, at once most prescient and timely, to question and explore the variegated and often contradictory correspondence between the vegetal and human world at a time when human appropriation of plant life has reached a planetary magnitude. On one hand, it has alerted us to the innate dangers of Western dualistic(Cartesian) thinking that conditions our approach to plant bodies as a reified 'Other' to be put to instrumental use, an attitude so heavily reminiscent of the Western imperialist botanical/ environmental practices in the native colonies. On the other hand, our survivalist urgency to stay green in the wake of the Anthropocene has also exposed us to a whole range of cross-disciplinary knowledge about plant life which often lays claims to distinct forms of plant 'agency'

and opens the door to a sort of *symbiotic* human-plant interactions (or intra-actions?) that promise new forms of ethical imagination.

By bringing the critical plant studies into dialogue with the Anthropocene, this volume seeks to explore and extend the breadth and the scope of ‘cross-pollination’ between the two paradigms, to probe how many of the momentous epistemic assumptions made available by the lexicon of the Anthropocene (and its other cognate terms like Capitalocene, Plantationocene, and Chthulucene) inflect the plant studies. But, it also attempts to get to the ‘root’ of at once contradictory and comforting implication of the current turn to the study of plants, amid global environmental crisis, extinction (and other terrestrial upheavals caused by anthropogenic operations), and how that gets played across a broad range of aesthetic, philosophical, political and scientific registers. The editors here seek to substantiate and ‘cultivate’ an ardent belief that attentiveness to plant life can allow our habitual anthropocentric/instrumental assumptions to be invaded by a unique ‘*phyto-centric*’ proposition that sets new ethical imaginary for a human-plant relationship and new ways of conceiving human-plant ‘growing-with’ (Marder).

The following areas may be explored while submitting the abstracts for the volume:

- * Imperialist botanical/environmental practice and the History of Transplanted trees.
- * Bio-Piracy and Genetic Modification of plants.
- * Science studies and politics of human-plant Symbioticism.
- * Human-Plant Symbioticism and new Ethical Imaginaries
- * Plant Intelligence and suspicion of Anthropocentrism.
- * Climate change and ethics of Plant Studies.
- * Plant studies and the question of Global Capitalism.
- * Plant Studies and the question of Bio-politics.

- * Plant Studies and the gap between Academia and Activism
- * Human-plant entanglement and 'Multispecies'(Haraway) speculation.
- * Plants and the idea of Extinction.
- * Plant Studies and Gender Studies.
- * Plant's eye view of the world and the role of the Arts.
- * Becoming plant and the role of Literature.
- * Cinema and the Representations of Plants in the Anthropocene.

To contribute to this volume, please submit a 300-500 word abstract along with a CV (abbreviated would also be fine) by 30 November 2022. Please email MS Word documents to humanplant2022@gmail.com. Kindly don't hesitate to ask any questions you might have.

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