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"The War between Amaranth and Soy: Interspecies Resistance to Transgenic Soy Agriculture in Argentina"

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Based on multidisciplinary archives as well as fieldwork and interviews, this article focuses on the intertwined nature of movements of resistance by humans and plants struggling against genetically engineered soy monocultures in Argentina, which we provocatively conceptualize as interspecies resistance. Roundup Ready (RR) soy is genetically engineered to be resistant to the herbicide Roundup, which is intended to eliminate all unwanted plants except for the main crop. In response to the repeated applications of Roundup, however, weeds, of which the most aggressive have been varieties of amaranth, mutated and evolved resistance to the herbicide. We explore how, due to this "biological" resistance of so-called super weeds, human anti-RR-soy activism has picked up, and how both kinds of resistance are interconnected. In exploring human entanglements with RR-soy and super weeds (in particular, amaranth that also has edible varieties), we follow Anna Tsing in asking how different plants mediate particular social arrangements. Moved by on-the-ground realities and inspired by Donna Haraway's provocation that "knowledge is always better from below," we contrast the discourses of agribusiness, mediated by satellite technology from above, with views from below, where other senses join sight, focusing on the struggle for survival of fumigated humans and weeds. In our story, while RR-soy has become a "bright object" of Argentinean agriculture, drawing to its orbit multiple human and nonhuman entities in aggressive pursuit of profits, close to the ground, weeds and the poisoned people rise up as "rogue objects" subverting "the gravitational force" of soy. (Text from authors' abstract)

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