



DRAWING THE MONSOON INTO ECO-CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

Posted on October 31, 2022 by xavigonzalez



Categories: [Archive](#), [Contributors](#), [Data](#), [Densities](#), [Energy and sustainability](#), [Formats](#), [Lindsay Bremner](#), [Monsoon as Method](#), [No Density](#), [Territory and mobility](#), [Topics](#)

Tags: [Air](#), [Architecture](#), [Cartography](#), [Climate change](#), [Data](#), [Drawing tool](#), [Ecological researches](#), [Economics](#), [Extreme environments](#), [Geographical scale](#), [Geography](#), [Geospatial](#), [Gis](#), [Information](#), [Information Technologies](#), [Landscape](#), [Mapping](#), [Nature](#), [New paradigms](#), [Research](#), [Speculative practice](#), [Technology](#), [Telecommunications](#), [Territorial atmospheres](#), [Topography](#), [Watery Territory](#), [Weather](#)

The most powerful stories throughout history have been the ones told with pictures ... we stand little chance of telling a new story if we stick to the old illustrations.

It might seem strange to begin a reflection on drawing the monsoon with a quote from an economics manifesto, but bear with me. The word 'economics' was coined by the Ancient Greek philosopher Xenophon by combining *oikos*, meaning household, with *nomos*, meaning rules or norms. Thus conceptualised as the art of household management, modern economics framed the human household as separate from nature, which was externalised as resource or sink. This idea was graphically represented by the eighteenth-century French economist François Quesnay in his *Tableau économique* (1758), which effectively reduced the economy to the circulation of money between the agricultural classes, artisans and proprietors balanced precariously on a base line labelled 'soil'. But soil, as Tim Ingold reminds us, "far from being uniform, homogenous, and prepared ... is variegated, composite, and undergoes continuous generation." It is not a docile externality to economic circulation, but intimately entangled within it. If, on the other hand, one were to base one's economic imaginary on *oikeios topos*, meaning the relationships between a plant species and its environment (another phrase coined in Ancient Greece, this time by philosopher-botanist Theophrastus), a different economy becomes conceivable. *Oikeios topos*, suggests Jason Moore, imagines an economy based not on society plus nature, but rather of society in nature: in other words, the "messily bundled, interpenetrating, and interdependent relations between human and extra-human natures".

Full content is available only for registered users. Please [login](#) or