

Learning to Notice and Love in a More-than-human World

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“Writing is a way of training our sensibilities, of working on our ways of living in this world with its other inhabitants, humans and non-humans, perhaps even of making us another body.” (Caeymaex 2019: 43)

Introduction

We live surrounded by life with the most diverse forms and modes of existence; we co-habit with thousands of other creatures beyond the human spectrum, beings to whom we are intimately connected, which we do not see but from whom we receive so much, yet, who we do not honour. This abundance of intertwined beings is a great wealth, an evolutionary legacy that we must recognize, revere. It is urgent that we help to develop an art of living in which noticing the multispecies world and caring for it is at the centre. Cultivating attention to the “things of the world”¹ is probably the greatest intent of education, in that it should nourish recognition and love for this multispecies world in which we live, so that with it, we continue “worlding”.²

We use the word ‘world’ because the concept of nature is often determined as a “system of objects from which we draw information, and not like an animal, a living immensity, a singular abundance of particular beings” (Molder 2007: 81). This way of telling nature, has an effect on the way one pays attention to that world of a “singular abundance of particular beings” (ibid.). It arouses curiosity and puts in motion the awareness that we inhabit a world of a differentiated abundance of particular beings. We need to pay attention to the intelligence of connections (Stengers 2019: 46) and learn to see them happening in this “living immensity”, so that nature appears full of meaning. It is this nature that we want to make present!

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- 1 An expression often used by Michel Serres in his book *Contrat Naturel* (1992). All quotations in languages other than English in the original have been translated by the authors of this chapter.
 - 2 Worlding, in the sense of Donna Haraway, is the capability to produce enriched worlds by becoming-with each other in unexpected collaborations and combinations (Haraway 2016).

Feeling and developing the awareness that we are not alone makes us more involved and happier beings in the process of becoming with these others “definitely others”.³ We generally live without intimate bonds with other-than-humans, in the paradigm of the exceptionalism of human life and the consequent misappropriation of a common space. For the most part, we are deaf and blind in relation to other living beings, excluding them from our homes, schools and cities. We have become depleted and live in a state of impoverishment that we impose on others without realizing what an opportunity it is to live in extended communities with many other beings; to learn from a pepper tree, a blackbird, a river, a frog, a spider, a stone. To learn worlding with them intentionally, delicately and lovingly.

We have dedicated ourselves for many years to finding strategies in order to join different processes of knowing the “things of the world”, hoping to have an effect on the ways we inhabit the earth. In this sense, we have taken inspiration from the anthropologists Anna Tsing and Tim Ingold, the philosophers Donna Haraway and Vinciane Despret, and many others. With them, we learn modes of noticing⁴ and the importance of diving passionately into the lives of other-than-humans. We learn to practice the “becoming with”, in other words, becoming another with other beings, that may ultimately mature the ability to make kin with other-than-humans. We compose with these ideas and practices in dialogue with the “delicate empiricism” (“*zarte Empirie*”)⁵ of Johann W. Goethe.

We have conducted different projects in ecology and education, embodied by these ideas and practices. They were carried out in both semi-natural and urban areas in the south of Portugal. We catch the elegant words of Tim Ingold to explain the aim of these projects:

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- 3 The quote “definitely others” refers to beings from other species, aligned with the French expression “autres très autres” of Vinciane Despret (2018: 13).
 - 4 This practice has been developed in several of Anna Tsing’s writings, particularly in one of her latest books *The Mushroom at the End of the World* (2015). It is a method that aims to mobilize encounters with beings in devastated areas. This encounter is multidimensional, resulting from diverse practices, for example, from musicians to cooks, from biologists to mushroom lovers and from engineers to social scientists. Anna Tsing says in a 2015 interview in Finland conducted by Maija Lassila: “We should start noticing the plants and animals around us too. In fact, there’s a lot we can learn just by paying attention. That’s one of the basic ideas that I’m trying to promote” (Lassila 2017: 28). In educational contexts, this practice produces an awareness of what is present and raises questions about how we got here and where we are going. We transform ourselves and the things of the world in these practices of attention and affection. Writing or any other form of expression takes on a poetic form, translating an art of attention.
 - 5 “Delicate empiricism” is an ethically compromised way of knowing nature, created by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and reclaimed by some current thinkers, such as Isis Brook (2021), Lee Beavington and Heesoon Bai (2018), and so many others. It is a search for empathy and meaning with other-than-human beings. Imagination and intuition are developed and crucial in this method of knowing. In this Goethean approach, the phenomenon/being under attention participates with the learner in this process of knowing. The phenomenon/being is free in its way of existence, and we must learn to attune with it. Isis Brook (2021) states the four stages of this method/process: exact sense perception, exact sensorial imagination, seeing in beholding and being one with the object, and elaborates them. We have been working with this method in many projects (Ilhéu and Valente 2019, 2022; Valente and Ilhéu 2021; Valente et al. 2022).

[...] to forge a different way of thinking about how we come to know things: not through engineering a confrontation between theories in the head and facts on the ground, but rather through corresponding with the things themselves, in the very process of thought. (Ingold 2021: vii)

To rephrase, while still referring to Tim Ingold: “there’s a thinking that joins things up, and a thinking that joins with things” (2021: 13). In these projects, we aim to contribute to a way of thinking that joins with things. We have been training ourselves in the practice of “delicate empiricism” and have joined others, teachers and students, to learn together how to think with the “things of the world”. The brief narratives we have composed, assembling events from two of the latest projects we have worked on – *Being Stream* and *Outgoing project: children, nature and culture in relationship* – bear witness to modes of attention, communication, connection and affection with other-than-humans.

These projects resonate with some educational concerns shared by Isabelle Stengers and Donna Haraway. Stengers raises a crucial question: “What do we have to make today that could possibly be a resource of thought and life for others to come?” (2019: 43). Some answers emerge throughout her book *Résister au Désastre*, where she highlights ecological intelligence in which interdependences are cultivated, instead of dependences, with other-than-humans. To make us feel this sensitive intelligence, she gives the example of collective gardens:

The humans who tend these gardens know that they may argue about an infinite number of things, but during this time the plants are growing, and they know that they have to put themselves in relation with this temporality, the temporality of growth and the care that it implies. If we take it seriously, it will transform us. (Stengers 2019: 44)

It is this sensitive intelligence that she inspires us to cultivate and about which she says it is “our way of belonging to nature” (ibid.).

In an interview, Donna Haraway raises the question: “How can education nurture a radical ontological transfiguration of our relations with each other, with other species, and with the Earth?” (Common Worlds Research Collective 2020). The answer for her relates to the developing of a “culture of sympoiesis” (ibid.), in the sense of learning to make-with others, create-with others in a more-than-human world. These paths of creation culminate with making kin with others from different species.

We give voice here to continuous generative experiences that may produce a culture of sympoiesis. These experiences are expressed through small stories with and between the “things of the world”, definitely a multispecies world.

Three Short Stories

The short stories we present here are forms of correspondence between humans and other-than-humans. The stories highlight intimacies established at various moments and display correspondences between and with the things of the world; trees, children,

streams, students, mosses, educators, birds, researchers, sounds, colours and others are corresponding through direct, sensitive and affective experiences in outdoor places. In these experiences, we treasure their time and continuity and stress their meaning, while stimulating the use of imagination and different languages.

Stories develop the imagination when we write or read them and allow us to approach a situation in its particular way and make it interesting for others. They contain meaning in themselves, allow us to grasp the sense of their importance and develop particular writing styles. A poetic way of narrating events often emerged in the participants' writings, which we have tried to maintain in the construction of the stories we present. We want to contaminate others and worlding with these stories.

The following short stories were composted⁶ and composed from different fragments of writings and utterances by young students, children and early childhood educators. The active voice of each story is corresponding with many other voices, representing, therefore, correspondences between the things of the world. Each short story is followed by a commentary that aims to emphasize some of these correspondences and their importance in the development of a thinking that joins with things.

The first story is framed under the work of a collective of researchers, art teachers, sculptors and students of various ages from Évora's schools and from the University. *Being Stream* was the project this collective has developed over the last two years, with the intention of making-kin with an urban waterway, Torregela stream. A set of outdoor eco-art workshops were developed with Torregela stream, in which different languages were used, including photography, drawing, eco-acoustics, sculpture and writing. The use of these different eco-artistic languages was very important in forging an intimate correspondence between the students and Torregela. The *Being Stream* culminated in an exhibition at the Arts Centre in the city of Évora. This exhibition showcased the ideas, experiences and eco-art works produced during the project, calling for an immersion in the stream and the urgency of caring for it. This project continues to influence others through the practices of the participating teachers, who developed a love for the rivers and streams in distress.

The stories *Becoming with a lemon tree* and *Noticing the other-than-human in the playground* are based on testimonies of early childhood educators who participate in the *Outgoing project –children, nature and culture in relationship*. One of the first challenges of this project was practicing different stages of delicate empiricism, themselves and with their children, as a method of knowing nature and becoming other(s) with others-than-humans. *Becoming with a lemon tree* was composed with the experience of an early childhood educator who was challenged to go noticing and elect a singular non-human

6 In the sense that “in a compost, identities break down and new compositions become possible” (Stengers 2019: 26).

being to dedicate attention to him/her through time in the sense of “go visiting”⁷ of Hannah Arendt (1982).

The story *Noticing the other-than-human in the playground* relates an event with the educator and their children in relationship with an olive tree. So many encounters and discoveries! They were mediated by the educator who had reported the sayings of all the children in this adventure. We composted and composed with all these voices producing an active voice that translates in a rigorous way what happen there. This very short story contains so many precious events!

The *Outgoing project* is being developed by a collective made up of researchers from various institutions and early childhood educators. The practices developed by these educators are shared and discussed at monthly meetings, together with a number of immersion sessions in different contexts.

Being Stream

A new visit to the riverside. Getting up early and going somewhere other than the classroom is something we should all have the chance to experience. It is a different feeling. I loved arriving and seeing everyone delighted to be there, eager to do something different and get to know the stream. As we walked along the stream, we were encouraged to actively observe the events that caught our attention, elements that were calling us. We kept being told: go noticing! And over the course of several visits, we came to understand what this meant. We drew, photographed, wrote and recorded sounds from the stream. The continuous encounters with the stream changed our mindsets and opened us up to new ideas and experiences. So many beings; we saw some, sensed others and observed traces of a few that we would not have identified on our own. We were amazed at the diversity of beings living in those places. We wanted to get to know them. We researched and made watercolours, drawing and painting the shapes and colours of their bodies with our own. As we got closer to the Torregela stream, we grew. We learned to see more and more exuberance, even in a degraded urban stream. This stream may be of little importance to many humans, but it is so important to other beings that live there. Under my feet I see a bag of rubbish, various branches and little plants. I see more rubbish and weeds. Several cigarette butts on the ground. Plastic bottle tops, pieces of glass. I see whitish water. I see various stones, leaves and animals. A large bicycle tyre, clearly in a place it does not belong. I see a hole that looks like a sewer. I see the human signs of those who are not yet friends of the stream. I see tree branches that meet and intertwine, as if to say we also talk to each other. This experience makes me look at these beings differently and imagine multiple forms of communication. It is only now I am starting to notice.

7 “*Think we must!*” wrote Haraway (2016: 67), stressing, with Arendt, the difference between disciplinary knowledge and thought. This is a practice that requires the ability to develop active interest in other beings (Haraway 2016). It involves the whole body, and that multiplies perspectives. The world is very important; without the world there is no thought. Arendt stresses the role of imagination: “To think with an enlarged mentality means that one trains one’s imagination to go visiting” (1982: 43).

The stream shared sounds with us and we shared our favourite music, softly. I felt like the stream. Sitting on this green stone, with the stream in front of me, I hear the sound of the water mingling with that of the birds and the wind. I imagine these sounds in communication. The moss on this rock joins the soft, vivid green of every plant I can see. A tiny web, barely visible, connects two plants. I imagine the web carrying words between the two trees.

The blue and grey sky is present in all our adventures and those of many other beings. It is the home of clouds and road for birds. Soon, it will be a shelter for the stars. That same sky I see in the stream.

(Figure 1a + b:) Learning with Torregela stream. View of a greenish distressed stream site. Photographs by Maria Ilhéu.



(Figure 2:) Panel of the Being Stream exhibition composed by art student drawings. Photographs by Maria Ilhéu.



Commenting...

We are struck by the importance of the experiences which arose outside the classroom, in direct connection with an urban stream. We emphasize the students' joy in experimenting, in learning to connect with the world, a world they are beginning to perceive as plural, in learning to see and listen, in feeling such a wide range of emotions! We further emphasize, according to William James (cited by Drumm 2023: 231–232), the becoming aware that “the smallest thing is always exuberant, overwhelming and impressive”. As expressed in many of the participants' testimonies, these direct and sensitive experiences are an opportunity we should all have.

Diving passionately into the lives of beings who are other-than-humans implies different ways of knowing the world, as Tsing (2010) and Ingold (2021) propose, undoing the hierarchical practice of knowing and fuelling a thinking that joins with things. These learning processes are uncommon in educational contexts, but it is important to make them present. We learn from Tsing (2010, 2015) the importance of paying attention to degraded areas. It is not a question of contemplating a landscape that we deplore but of learning to understand what is happening there, to pay attention to beings who do not give up on these places, which are indicators of possible collaborative resurgences. The testimonies we collected echo this. So, from all our composting, the feeling grows; “I felt like a stream”.

Correspondences are very present through forms of communication that participants imagined between different beings; reaching this point was a great achievement. We highlight the sensitivity in the correspondence between the active voice and the stream; “the stream shared sounds with us and we shared our favourite music, softly”.

Becoming with a Lemon Tree

It had been raining throughout that December afternoon. I stared at my lemon tree through the glass window and saw how the top branches were shaking in the wind. His inner part was a sheltering place for two tiny birds. There he stood, firm and proud to be as such. By looking at him, I felt at peace and a huge desire to seek refuge under his branches as well. On another day, in the early afternoon, when a few rays of sunshine were peeking out in shame, I seemed to be called by the lemon tree. He remained serene, thus, conveying serenity upon me. He was accompanied by his ‘children’, the lemons, as well as the cobwebs and other tiny beings. Neither the dogs barking in the distance, nor any other noises breaking the silence seemed to affect him. We spent some time together; I spoke to him and he listened to me. Sometime later, on a different day, we occasionally came across each other; as I made my way to the patio so as to feel the sun, I looked down. There you were, also catching some sun with your highest branches dancing in the breeze. I looked at them and the way they had grown and become intertwined, the ants as they walked on you. Each time we met, I noticed things I had never noticed before. It is March now and as we meet again, I cannot help but feel closer to you. Sometimes, just like today, as I make my way to do something else, it unexpectedly feels as if you are calling me and I cannot but approach you, look at you, touch you and feel you. And what about you, how do you feel towards me?

(Figure 3:) View of the lemon tree in the patio. Drawing by an art student



Commenting...

In this story, there is an attentive and poetic description of a teacher's successive encounters with a lemon tree and with much that is related to it, producing new encounters, multiplying sensations and discoveries. There is a dance of giving and receiving attention that stems from time dedicated to the intimacy of a loving correspondence between two beings. There is a closeness, an appearance between the human subject and the lemon tree subject, and a bond is woven. This intimacy, this becoming with, implies time. In that time, there are sensations, perceptions and affections. At some point, there is a change

in the perception of the lemon tree that is evident in the writing; the lemon tree goes from being narrated to participating in communication. These gestures are processes of exteriority and interiority, in so far as they involve the lemon tree and the human being. One and the other acquire other possible existences; they mutually transform each other. The question that appears at the end of the story “And what about you, how do you feel towards me?” emerged later in our discussions with her. Now she recognizes a world where others-than-humans have their own interests and intimacies. At this point, she is experiencing the world with a sensitivity that is approaching Vinciane Despret and colleagues in their ability to attune with other beings:

A world where plants existed without emotional life would not be the same world, it would be diminished, uninteresting, devitalized. The fallow deer and the insects that live with them know this. For them, this affective mode makes all the difference. And it can make a difference to us too. This question is not merely theoretical, it relates directly to our ways of inhabiting the world, and the intimacy of the relationships we can hope to weave with it. (Despret et al. 2023: 197)

This short story also shows us how the early childhood educator incorporated the first stages of delicate empiricism; active attention and a sense of admiration for the others, establishing an intimate relationship, getting closer to the others in becoming and maintaining a correspondence with them. This correspondence lasted several months.

Noticing the Other-than-human Life in the Playground

It is so nice to touch this tree. I caress her and she tickles me. I am going to climb up her. I notice a hole in her. I am going to climb up her. I notice a hollow on the tree. I look through. Many tiny animals seem to live in there. They are black. Oh, I can see a monster! It must be a black spider; I can see her foot moving. It is not a monster at all, it is a spider! How has she made her way in? Look! There are quite a few animals inside; the trees are big, and they have become a home to spiders, leaves, soil, wooden sticks. I cannot see everything that goes on deep inside, it is too dark, and the spider seems too strong! She is standing right at the entrance! In the lower part of the trunk there is another hole; it must have been through there that the spider made her way into the tree, that must be a tunnel, it starts down here all the way up there! There are many more holes; this tree is magic; there might live quite a few more animals in it. I touch her and feel her embrace.

(Figure 4a + b:) *Child with olive tree in the playground. Photograph by Susana Alves de Sousa. Olive tree trunk. Drawing by an art student.*



Commenting...

After some work with kindergarten teachers in the exercise of delicate empiricism, their attention to the elements of nature has developed and a sensitivity has been established which has allowed them to see more in the world and be worlding with her children. This early childhood educator confessed that she had never paid attention to the olive tree standing in the playground, for endless years, waiting to be visited by her and the children. And then, it happened! She developed an interest in natural beings with the practice of delicate empiricism. On the day they went for a visit, she stimulated the children to pay attention to this being. So much surprise, so much curiosity, so much interest, so much attention; it was the children who 'taught' her to see more, to speculate, to imagine, to touch, go worlding with the tree and all its inhabitants.

What do we give to the things of the world that give so much to us? This is a question that the philosopher Michel Serres inspires us to ask constantly (1992). And the answers keep coming.

A small caress in exchange for a tickle, what a charming reciprocity!

Epilogue

The short stories tell of the ways in which we have been becoming with so many others; streams, trees, ants, spiders, the sky, birds, sounds, stones, water, little bubbles in the water, whitish water, and many others. We remember how the younger ones were perplexed by those little bubbles that appeared in the water. They wanted to know everything about them, how they were formed, and we remember how happy they were to learn that it was air, air that is also crucial for aquatic beings. By being by the stream, noticing what was actually happening there, they become aware that those little bubbles emerged more vis-

ibly when the speed of the water flow increased, in a change of level or around the outline of a rock. Trees are seen as shelter for other beings in two of the stories. In one, the early childhood educator feels the need to find shelter in the lemon tree herself, and she does in a way, in the serenity it communicates to her. This story takes place at the beginning of the *Outgoing project* mentioned above. It results from the challenge of developing initial practices of delicate empiricism with beings other-than-humans, in which all of us, educators and researchers, took part. Many trees were chosen by different early childhood educators. We chose to include the story of the relationship with the lemon tree because it explicitly shows a transformation in the way the educator corresponds with the lemon tree over time. In the other story, the educator also experienced moments of delicate empiricism, and that made her discover so many resources to be in relationship with children in a more-than-human world. Together, educator and children, discover other ways of relating to the “things of the world”, and, consequently, they became closer to the trees in the courtyard, similar to the olive tree that is mentioned in that story. It is so touching to find the attention and affection and even a certain reciprocity that is subtly enunciated in this story in the corporality of the contact, when the tree returns tickles in exchange for the child’s petting.

Over the years of working together on the two projects mentioned here, we tried to acquire some of the qualities of the beings to which we related, becoming others. We sensed this ability in some instances, such as in the statement: “I felt like a stream.” Another example occurs in the story of the lemon tree; the early childhood educator wants to be sheltered by the tree, as other beings are. We imagine that her desire may be transformed towards the awareness that she is and may be a shelter for other beings.

We incorporate qualities from others when we learn from others to be others; becoming with. In the continuity of projects, we are transformed. It is remarkable how human correspondence with other beings almost always takes on a certain poetic and affective form, and this was very visible in the writings of the participants in the *Being Stream* project. They have begun to perceive a world that was not present previously in their lives, and this perception is translated into a particular form of writing that surprises the participants themselves.

The quasi-poetic mode of writing is also evident in other experiences that mobilize attention to the things of the world. An example is narrated in a text which resulted from another project we developed with a group of art students designed and carried out to promote delicate encounters with a variety of trees in the city of Évora, Portugal. Each student chose an individual tree and spent time visiting it, drawing it, photographing it and approaching it with active involvement and curiosity. In these experiences, the kinship between the students and the trees was a significant achievement, as described in this testimony from one of the art student of this project:

One day I felt the sensation of being observed, I hadn’t realized that the book was urging me to read it, to listen, and understand it. In fact, while this strange book was in my garden every day, nestled in a humble corner, I didn’t realize that its language was different from mine, that it could speak through the simple sound of the leaves turning in the breeze, that those pages were formed by the many years of the trunk, and that

the words were not to be read, but to be listened to. (Art student cited by Valente et al. 2022: 127)

Another example of how intimacies between humans and trees may be revealed in the process of writing comes from an experience led by the municipality of Melbourne in Australia, in the mapping of every tree in the city with a unique ID number. Residents were challenged to participate and report the tree's conditions, but then something extraordinary happened. Instead of identifying a tree in need of attention and emailing the council to get it done, people began sending personal messages to the trees; love letters, existential queries and sometimes bad puns.⁸ The fact that the municipality made this request was, in a way, an incentive to go and notice the world of trees. The messages sent to the trees revealed a surprising world of intimacy between humans and trees. Some of them express a subject-subject relationship, with an intended reciprocity, as is the case with this letter addressed to a nettle tree in the city:

Dear Nettle, I just moved in three months ago and I'm very glad that I can talk to you through this system. I live in the first floor and I can actually see you through my window! I'm having trouble sleeping at night because of the noise of cars and ambulances at night, hope you're not suffering that much and are able to have a good sleep. Thank you for blocking the noises from the street and wish the birds don't do harm to you. Pleasant to meet you and have a nice day! Cheers! (Citizen cited by Burin 2018)

The sender of this letter establishes a correspondence with the tree in front of their house; he/she can see the tree from their bedroom window. He/she gently recognizes the tree's presence and its role in reducing urban noise and, in return, gives the attention of care; he/she worries about the tree.

Trees and other plants provide not only shelter and food for other beings but also enjoyment and entertainment. We learn so much by paying attention to these diverse modes of connection, and we delight in them. In the quote from the art student, metaphor and imagination give us the value and intimacy she sees in the relationship between the passing air and the tree. Countless narratives tell us about these connections, some of them non-functional.⁹

Learning to become another with others, is the maximum dimension of delicate empiricism, containing participatory and transformative dimensions. This method of approaching nature is enriched by many other contemporaneous methods and ideas, particularly those of philosophers, anthropologists and biologists, among others. Learning to become another is present in the story of *Being Stream*, which is the result of continuous work over several years. This becoming another takes place in a long process of attunement, an expression highly valued by Goethe and other romantics. In this process, we become ethically responsible for the other. Donna Haraway makes the idea of responsibility clear by breaking down the word and recreating it: "response-ability" (2016). The

8 See also <<http://melbourneurbanforestvisual.com.au/#issues>, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33560182>> [accessed 15 September 2024].

9 See the story of the bee and the orchid by Myers and Hustak (2020), the story of the Arab birds by Despret (2019) and the cosmopolitan events under our feet by Tsing (2010).

ability to create responses is part of a context of kinship, love and the will to live together in a multispecies world.

Attunement requires a description of the other, sensations, the exercise of imagination, communication, time, and sharing ways of relating, knowing and reknowing. It complements many ways of knowing. Attunement goes through several stages, takes time and includes paying attention. It includes training in correspondence in order to carry out becoming with. The brief stories presented here are the beginning of the process of attunement. They represent various stages in this learning process, all of which begin and continue with go noticing! We also find the importance of attunement in Anna Tsing. In particular, when she tells about her experience with matsutake mushrooms, in which attunement is achieved when a form of love, commitment and care sets in. When she finds a matsutake mushroom and learns to smell it, it enters her life; “now we live together and live with each other in a way that didn't exist before” (Shin and Zeiske 2021¹⁰). However, before the mushroom enters her world of life, Tsing went through the encounter with the matsutake mushroom in degraded landscapes and with different forms of knowledge and thought, where love for these beings was present. Now she shares her joy with humans, through writing; a joy of indeterminate encounters with another species, encounters that give one so much.

The stories presented here were constructed from the spoken and written contributions of the human protagonists in these projects. They were composted and composed many times under ‘this’ olive tree¹¹ that keeps intruding on us, with its shadows, its movements; diverts us but also feeds and inspires us. We exchange matter through breathing, we exchange microbes and love. Becoming with this tree is also part of these stories.

We experienced glittering moments together and learnt how to make so many glittering moments grow, even when one of the participants was a degraded stream.

Go noticing we must! Making kin we must!

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10 Part of the conversation between Sarah Shin to Anna Tsing contained in the online book *Carrier Bag Fiction*, edited by Sarah Shin and Mathias Zeiske.

11 The writing of this text, with our hands, our choices and hesitations, our dialogues and decisions, often took place next to an olive tree, “this olive tree”.

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