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LOVE SONG FOR THE
CONTAMINATED CITY
NUMBER THREE

coyote × lisboa × september

From: Nuno da Luz**To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz**

Dear Coyotes,

I'm writing to you from Tokyo, after Ana and I embarked on her film project *The Voyage Out*, and only now slowly coming back down before making the journey back to Lisbon.

Before I get into detail about what the ideas for our meeting in Lisbon will be, I want to share just a few things about what the show is/was and other important things around it.

Syntax has been painted with lime whitewash and iron oxide – one room in ochre, the other one in red; to host circles of plants and lights that talk with each other: the lights do it in a kind of morse code that is sound activated (a pre-recorded sound piece that we can't hear, i.e. there are no speakers) and the plants – the devil's weeds, *Datura Stramonium* – do it by growing, bearing fruit, releasing seeds, and dying.

Both are clues taken freely from Carlos Castaneda's books on his so-called shaman apprenticeship with the Yaqui *brujo* Don Juan, and you can find his books holding the lamps in place.

I got to read Castaneda a few years ago as a curiosity on California's 60s Anthropology Studies but as we have tried to read through Roy Wagner's *Coyote Anthropology*, I realized more and more how Castaneda is such an important storyteller, a trickster (another coyote in the history of trickery). Ana and I covered some of the Castaneda–Wagner connection during our *no longer innocent or guilty* event in New York, of which I am finally sending you the drawing we did together as a “map” to our presentation. We printed it as a newspaper sheet and there are plenty of copies in Lisbon.

And so, for our coming together starting on September 26th, I propose that the space is used as a common room for working (crafting) for a week. Hence, things might and should move around and new things should be added, brought in, spatially, sonically, invisibly.

For now, I just want to leave you with the truest of coincidences: Sunday, i got to know that the plants at Syntax are sick and dying. Later in the evening at Kita-Senju station, I saw an *ikebana* arrangement combining branches of devil's weeds bearing fruits with yellow daisies, and, as I was taking this photo, an email notification from Clémence appeared on my phone's screen, chaining together this huge “South of the heart”.

This leads me to ask you to bring things to craft together, in the spirit of “ikebana” arrangements, once we're all together in Lisbon.

With warmth from tropical Tokyo,
Nuno

kita-senju_ikebana.jpg

Nature is not a fiction

From: Clémence Seurat

To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Ana Vaz

dear coyotes,
our intense collaboration hacked my brain and mind,
shifted my worldview and shaped me other.
i decided afterwards to experience the “proliferation of multiplicity”
of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro in the new world.
an experience for an organic growing-in-common, a shared nature,
the jungle overwhelmed me – (de)colonized my spirit.
the jungle made me ill, i was infected by its wet and stifling heat,
all the flying and crawling insects.
at night, my dream gave me fever.
as our dear Anna Tsing writes it in her last book,
“we are contaminated by our encounters as they change who we are”.
and it did happen. twice.
Mexico is the country hosting the largest number of agave, an endemic species.
these admirable plants are not just ornamental there
they became different and multiple
and some of them provide delicious traditional drinks.
in Oaxaca, i met an old lady hosting a *pulqueria* in a village.
pulque derives from *aguamiel*, the sap the agave produces.
i was drinking it from the heart of the agave directly,
after it was removed and scratched.
oh, and by the way,
another coincidence:
returning from this trip,
i passed by Ixtlan, the city where don Juan engaged Carlos Castaneda into shamanism.
thinking of don Juan’s teaching,
maybe we should “stop” to describe the world in the terms we are used to.
take care comrades,
and keep tricking magic wherever you are.
besos
c.

jungle.jpg
agave.jpg
mezcal.jpg
ixtlan.jpg

Transplant

From: Ana Vaz

To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat

coyotes,

from the window seat of a slow regional train
traveling north towards the vast and complex
region of Fukushima, I write to you

after almost a month in the South of japan
we now move North

the northerly trail of carbon seems punctuated
by abandoned factories and lotus plantations,
you know the lotus only grows in murky, muddy waters
and are often seen as that which rises from darkness?

here, the lotus really are staying with the trouble
dreaming into forgetfulness and unwilling to depart

what announced itself as an unpredictable and concerning typhoon
has now passed
it seems to sleep, as we travel

our journey is made in true kinship with
some new and old kins:

1.
Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's
The Mushroom at the End of the World
and the following chapters
 Chapter 2. Contamination as Collaboration
 Chapter 4. Working at the Edge

2.
a bottle of pure honey
made from a wonderful
beekeeper and quasi-witch
Kaori-san

3.
extinct fossils from a desert island

4.
other remnants which will join us
when we met again in Lisbon

these elements are some of the seeds which we hope to
transplant with you when our time comes
a kind of compost package

so, i suggest that we begin our
collaboration (as contamination)
by sending over a compost package
made from the remnants of our ongoing ties and entanglements
via the usual post to this address

Syntax
Rua Feio Terenas 23
1170-020 Lisboa
PORTUGAL

these composts shall become our garden
of raw and cooked materials for our ongoing (witch)craft

With mountainous wishes,
ana

sent from the clouds.

Always more than a metaphor

From: Grégoire Benzakin

To: Ana Vaz

Cc: Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat

As a metaphor borrowed from the bio-medical vocabulary, contamination reproduces the same embodied ways that we use to talk about ourselves. Tarnished by the weight of a semantic trajectory in which “the body in becoming” spreads into the world following the european expansion. This “body in becoming” simultaneously becoming object of knowledge and diffusing (its seeds) into other practices and disciplines: anatomy overlapping with law, theology, anthropology, politics and so on... “Body politics” is, and always has been, more than a metaphor. It is the language of the same and articulated rationalist paradigm of control and mastery searching a way to represent itself into the fabric of the body – a language often called Modernity.

G.

Re: coyote × lisboa × september

From: Elida Høeg

To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz

Dear everyone,

On stories from the North: I found some verses from the colonization period of the Sami territories in Norway, called *suola ja noaidi* – *The Thief and the Shaman*. It has the form of an alternating song/poem and speaks of how a shaman tricks a preaching priest (the thief) into believing that he has given up his magic.

This was a common way to maintain Sami autonomy in the North, to ridicule the shaman and Sami practices themselves, in order to calm down the priests from the South who thought these *joiks* were the works of the devil.

I talked to my friend Sarakka Gaup about this text, she is a Sami artist working in the northern territories around Kautokeino. She says the *joik* could have been written today, only that the priest would be a oil well drill, or mining dynamite.

She wants to recite the verses in Sami, and then she will send us the recordings for the common pot.

can't wait to see you!

à très vite,

Elida

Suola_ja_noaidi.mp3

Suola_ja_noaidi_subtitles-eng.pdf

WE ARE ALL TRANSPLANTS EXCEPT THE ONES WHO ARE NOT

From: Tristan Bera

To: Grégoire Benzakin, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz

Oi Comrades,

I don't know where I caught this bloody cold or when I got infected, this morning the fever still hasn't gone down. This altered state of mind made me dream about this mapping exercise we seem to draw, provoking both pleasure and knowledge in me, and, also thinking about the idea of contamination in itself.

You know that I am quite obsessed by Leo Tolstoy at the moment, the one who said that "art is based on infection (so not all infection is art)". Speaking about Donna Haraway alongside with Clémence, I feel clear that "all of my ideas have been introduced to me by friends", should I say "kins", that "thinking is a material that we do with the others", the friends, the living and the dead, that thinking is based on infection (so not all infection is thinking).

I am contaminated by encounters, magical encounters, they change what I am as I make way for others. New directions emerge. Everyone actually carries a long history of contamination and decontamination, should I say colonization and decolonization?

We should keep in mind that the soil can't be kept healthy and that we are all transplants.

Purity is not an option.

I am definitely no longer a modern.

Don't know if I really hope to be better soon...

Anyway take care

Beijoca,

Tristan

img01.jpg

img02.jpg

img03.jpg

img04.jpg

vid01.mp4

Ending your modern self

From: Grégoire Benzakin

To: Tristan Bera

Dear Tristan,

Reading your last words, I am quite worried by your unilateral decision of ending your modern self. Have you not read the Terms of Service before signing? I have some doubts concerning the return policies. Here is the link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faust>

Affectionately,

G.

Re: no longer innocent or guilty

From: Clémence Seurat

To: Nuno da Luz, Ana Vaz

dear ana, dear nuno,

thanks for sharing the mapping of your 8-day-long migration in nyc and carla lonzi's writings.
i connect this idea of "no longer innocent or guilty" to a mexican historical figure i recently discovered,
la malinche. this native *nahua* woman from the mexican gulf is a go-between.
like the coyote, she was a teacher between different worlds and realities.
she serves the colonial conquest as a translator between aztec tribes and the *conquistadores*.
she is known for contributing to the fall of her own civilisation.
– but of course, she wasn't the only agent of this fall, we can't forget the crucial role of epidemics and modern weapons in the european conquest.
she is an ambivalent figure, for sure, a symbol of guilt and melancholia.
la malinche bore the first official "mestizo" child to cortés.
la malinche is similar to the "coyote" woman as depicted in *caliban and the witch*, the highly recommended book of silvia federici about primitive accumulation, the emergence of capitalism, colonialism and female body enclosures.
the *coyote* women were part-*mestiza* and part-indian, whose witchcraft is a mix of many religious, folkloric and magic practices.

je vous embrasse,
clémence

malinche.jpg

transplant

From: Elida Høeg

To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz

chers coyotes,

sorry for the delay! I have been moving South
I live in Catalonia now, making us very Iberian all of a sudden

but I will bring a Norwegian stone from the foot of a mountain called "Mannen" – the man. This mountain started to make sounds a couple of years ago, a murmur, small pebbles rolled down from it, and the people living below got worried. They called for geologists and the state agency of avalanches to come and investigate. They came, listened, did tests, and concluded that the mountain would fall – soon. The people and animals living there had to evacuate. TV and radio stations arrived to put up a live stream. People drove to the foot of the mountain to take photos and see it fall. But the mountain did not fall. The eleven people living there moved back into their homes, the animals too. The live stream blacked out.

After a while, the sounds and the pebbles came back, and the people had to evacuate again. This happened three times last year. And so the people got tired. They wanted to make the mountain fall.

It is the rain that makes Mannen (the mountain) vulnerable. So the people made more rain. They found a lake behind the mountain, and this fall, when the rain is heavy, they will pump up the water from the lake and throw it onto the mountain wall, forcing it to give up and fall down.

The live stream is back so that everyone can see if they, or Mannen, will make it or not.

I will try to send the package with the stone so it makes it to Lisbon before I do
Can't wait to make this brew with you

besos de barcelona,
Elida

<https://www.nrk.no/mr/sja-direkte-fra-mannen-1.12012651>

TELL ME WHICH KIND OF TREE...

From: Tristan Bera**To: Grégoire Benzakin, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz**

Dearests,

While drifting with you through the imported, nonetheless acclimatized, lush vegetation of the Tropical Garden of Belém, one question to myself came up, directly and simultaneously followed by another question to you all. The exquisite place of leisure that represents the garden doesn't reveal, even today, any slight traces of centuries of exploitation from which it is the result. The cruelty of colonial life isn't depicted at all – it reminds me of the filmmaker Steve McQueen's observation as he searched some ancient Southern America plantations turned into touristic sites for significant situations representing slavery. But, instead of finding recurrences of the figure of the slave and its domesticated variants, he only saw the reenactment of the deployment of the Southern life's pleasures (ladies as *Belles*, wealthy architecture and luxurious furniture, profuse vegetation) as if slavery never happened, as if past life was universally pleasant.

So, I wondered "how can I feel good in a colonial tropical garden?" whereas the reverse angle of its biotope conceals such exploitation, misery and transplantation. Maybe the answer should be found in my history: I grew up in the South of France in Nice, which is more or less an urban scale post-colonial touristic tropical garden, where transplanted palm trees are everywhere... When I was a child I always drew palm trees to represent trees... Fucking bloody palm trees... Now I can't stop thinking that I was the big result of a long history of colonialism and transplantation which also leads me to think two paradoxical things:

- 1) Native species don't exist, only transplants
- 2) There are only native species, resilience and transformation, as we/the plants can grow everywhere.

This drives me to my second question. Rather than asking the eternal and boring question "where are you from?", the philosopher Vinciane Despret, whose last research focused on the Dead, prefers to ask "where are your dead buried?" Tell me where your dead are buried and I'll tell you where you are really from.

But in a world of transplants, of becoming-plants, I will turn this question into another one: "which kind of tree did you draw when you were a child?" and I'll tell you which history of colonialism you are the result of, what sort of native and/or transplant you are.

Elida, for you the Belém Tropical Garden is as picturesque as an amusement park – did you draw Christmas pine trees, when you were a child?

Ana, did you draw cacti?

P.S: Speaking of cacti – before being the pope of the *Nouveau Roman*, the French modernist writer Alain Robbe-Grillet was an agronomist. He developed such an obsession for cacti that he was able to speak in Latin with cactologists during hours. His fascination as a specialist went so far that he started a collection of more than five hundred cacti coming from dry countries of South America. He kept them in a glass house in his castle of Normandy. Neither literary critics nor his own wife knew the real roots of his passion and there are only two little mentions of cacti in his work (one in *Les Derniers jours de Corinthe* and the other in *Le Miroir qui revient / Ghosts in the Mirror*, both are fantastic fictional autobiographies). I don't know if

he drew cacti when he was a child. The only hypothesis I can conceive to explain his incomprehensible attraction is that he saw these living organisms as a metaphor for radical writing – Cacti are kind of the most autonomous plants, as they need very little water and resist a very dry and warm environment. I see them as a perfect transplanted Modern body... perhaps in the same way that his prose incorporates modernity. The story has its irony: the cacti got sick and became infested by little bugs. Normandy is far different from Mexico. Alain Robbe-Grillet only managed to save one hundred and thirty-five plants on the five hundred. The leftovers are not in the best state but a botanist from the Garden of Versailles is maintaining them alive by mixing them with other species in his glasshouse...

you know what I mean, it is big, huge for us...

ABRAÇO

x. t.

img05.jpg
img06.jpg
img07.jpg
img08.jpg
img09_PS.jpg
img10_PS.jpg
img11_PS.jpg
img12_PS.jpg
img13_PS.jpg

The two faces of Janus & the paradigm of the Immune Self

From: Grégoire Benzakin

To: Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz

Contamination carries a kind of loss that one could easily name Eden 01. Its opposite side is the “Immune System”. This very Modern and institutionalized system in charge of both protecting us from the Fall and endorsing the responsibility of differentiating the “Self” from the threatening “Other”. The “Self” – as an essential and essentialist concept of Modernity – must be, at all price, defended by control, borders, against any violation, colonization... Now the bio-medical vocabulary of immunology is, in turn, contaminated by the political and military language and its contained violence.

Transplant: “if one needed a self, it was the immune system itself, which became activated when its delicate equilibrium was disturbed” [Tauber, 2000]

should be turned into

“If one needed a self, it was Modernity itself, which became activated when its delicate equilibrium was disturbed”.

G.

Casper Bruun Jensen’s “Two forms of outside: Castaneda, Blanchot, ontology”

From: Nuno da Luz

To: Grégoire Benzakin

Cc: Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz

“But what precisely does the outside designate? What is it outside of and alter to? Is the outside located on the far side of language or cognition? Of intersubjectivity? Or does it designate what is external to sociality and humanity as such? Though contemporary cultural-epistemological anthropology might incline to view the outside specifically as that which lies beyond Western modes of understanding, this is by no means the only possibility.”

“In the context of Castaneda’s shamanic apprenticeship, the ‘practical actions of ordinary life,’ so dear to ethnomethodology, seem neither practical, ordinary, nor, occasionally, as actions at all. Indeed, Castaneda brings the ethnographer into a contact zone with a form of the outside that cannot be understood with reference to practical action or any other form of ‘naturally occurring rationality.’”

“[T]hose who continued to find merits in Castaneda’s writings were largely indifferent to the question of ethnographic validity. (...) [T]he German anthropologist Hans-Peter Duerr argued that the question of ‘whether Castaneda’s experience is actually reality’ has no answer since ‘there is no neutral way of testing what reality is, there is no such thing as an epistemological Switzerland.’”

But what is this outside? Where is it located? How is it accessed? Can it even be written about? Duerr defines the outside in terms of what “civilization” has lost the ability to know. He argues that moderns have increasingly encountered “the things of the other world by inhibiting, repressing and later ‘spiritualizing’ and ‘subjectivizing’ them”. “That which was outside slipped to the inside,” he suggests, “and if on occasion it was unable to deny its original character, it was integrated into subjectivity as being that which was ‘projected’”. Scientists, he further notes, “dismiss the outside even more summarily. They maintain that there is nothing beyond the limit. ... Whoever talks to animals and plants in the wilderness is hallucinating”. Thus, modernity shows “the consequences of a development where the ‘inside’ is separated from the ‘outside’ by an ever more rigid line of defence”.

CarlosCastaneda_2ndRingofPower.jpg
CarlosCastaneda_FireWithin.jpg
CarlosCastaneda_TalesofPower.jpg
CarlosCastaneda_TeachingsofDonJuan.jpg
CarlosCastaneda_JourneytoIxtlan.jpg
CarlosCastaneda_PowerofSilence.jpg

Re: TELL ME WHICH KIND OF TREE...

From: Ana Vaz

To: Tristan Bera

Cc: Grégoire Benzakin, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat

querido tristan,

drawing cacti really is a difficult task,
Yet you are right to presume my favorite tree was cacti!
although i don't know if i have ever managed to draw one as a child
i did not draw cacti, i dreamt cacti

in the dry backlands of Brazil where you know i come from
the most common "native palm trees" are the Buritis
which can only really survive near the flow of riverbeds

in João Guimarães Rosa's *grandes sertões veredas*
when the characters find the buriti, they know there is water
in the oasis, there is also the threat of finding another
and likely another confrontation
the badlands are a land in which survival
really must be negotiated with flair
and some feist

as a child, the Buritis were easy to draw following the steps of Niemeyer and Tarcila do Amaral
only a few sticks would make for a perfectly simple form
standing proudly like any modern utopia upon a deserted landscape
the usual story of modernity, a continuous history of transplantation
of de-rooting to re-assemble in an always distant, greener, better elsewhere

what appetite
has this dynamic monster

would the cacti really be a perfect transplant?
a perfect modern body?
if it were, it would probably be in ruins,
like beheaded busts
which are self-made epitaphs

unlike the resilient cacti
which the dictionary defines as
cactus |ˈkaktəs|
noun (pl. **cacti** [-tī, -tē] or **cactuses**)
a succulent plant with a thick, fleshy stem that typically bears spines, lacks leaves, and has
brilliantly colored flowers. Cacti are native to arid regions of the New World and are cultivated
elsewhere, especially as houseplants.

in that sense, yes i guess you are right
they really are the perfect transplants
cultivated elsewhere and
thriving amidst glasshouses

this makes me think of yet another perfect transplant
the Takonoki, quiet literally, octopus tree
a tree that moves through land and sea and has myriad tentacular legs
they say it can walk on earth with its roots
and swim in the ocean with its light pod
– a plant that transplants itself

when in the Ogasawara islands,
i asked a botanist, who works closely with the Takonoki specimen,
a now native plant species and icon to the Ogasawara islands:
“how do you determine what is a native from what is a non-native species?”
and he answered:
“but well! it is easy to determine what is native from what is non-native,
all have to do is read the book.”

a perfect modern answer

see you on the other side,
ana

Re: Re: TELL ME WHICH KIND OF TREE...

From: Nuno da Luz
To: Ana Vaz
Cc: Tristan Bera

Ana,

As you probably remember from your short stay in Madredeus, I've been getting my head out of Carlos Castaneda's books and foraging the outskirts of Lisbon for Devil's Weed – *Datura Stramonium* – for some weeks now;. Most of the ones I transplanted, have now found their way to Syntax following quite freely Don Juan's indications to Carlos in how to replant the Devil's Weed shoot:

“Now, go to your plants and bring me both. Go first to your old plant and watch carefully the watercourse made by the rain. By now the rain must have carried the seeds far away. Watch the crevices [*zanjitas*] made by the run-off, and from them determine the direction of the flow. Then find the plant that is growing at the farthest point from your plant. All the devil's weed plants that are growing in between are yours. Later, as they seed, you can extend the size of your territory by following the watercourse from each plant along the way.” “The cutting of the root has to be done in the following way: First, select the plant and clear away the dirt around the place where the root joins the stem. Second, repeat exactly the same dance you performed when you replanted the root. Third, cut the stem off, and leave the root in the ground. The final step is to dig out sixteen inches of root. Don't talk or betray any feeling during this act.”

This differs highly from the admonition in a Portuguese Flora, that classifies this same species as a weed subject to statutory control and elimination: “Dig, pull or hoe out plants before seed is set. Seedlings and plants that have not set seed can be added to the compost heap where the toxins will naturally break down. However, plants that have set seed should be consigned to the green waste collection, buried deeply or burnt in order that the seed does not disperse in the garden or persist in the compost heap. Always wear gloves or thoroughly wash hands after handling this plant.”

A few pages before, Don Juan tells Carlos “[T]hat [the] “Devil's Weed” is her temporary name [*su nombre de leche*]. He also says there are other names for the Devil's Weed, but they are not to be used, because the calling of a name is a serious matter, (...).”

And it must be dead serious since it is known by so many names. In English, is also known as: Jimson Weed, Devil's Apple, Thorn Apple, Stinkweed, Malpitte, and Moonflower. And in both our Portugueses it is known as: Castanheiro-do-diabo, Erva-do-diabo, Erva-dos-bruxos, Erva-dos-mágicos, Estramónio, Figueira-brava, Figueira-do-diabo, Figueira-do-inferno, e Trombeta.

Hope u 2 get to talk to the Devil's Weeds soon
Or perhaps like Carlos, we'll remain silent while dancing around them

Abraço da Graça,
Nuno

datura_stramonium01.jpg
datura_stramonium02.jpg

Transplanted Immune System / Beyond the Self

From: Grégoire Benzakin

To: Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz

Following Haraway, Sloterdijk and Esposito, Immune System become a practical apparatus to talk about our current spacetime location. Some will immediately reply that it is the renewal of the very same “Body politic” metaphor, the very same rationalist and self-centered paradigm of control. Quite the opposite in fact. The debates around the late twentieth century immune system – passing from a hierarchical body of the immune self model to a more integrated, complex network of indefinite and infinite actors – lead us to a new figure irrevocably marked by the stain of uncertainty and blurriness. A sybillin figure beyond representation where modern and postmodern categories no longer make sense. This always too complex and controversial hybrid figure forces us, at last, to leave aside the latest holistic theoretical efforts of tired metaphysics and to embrace the immanence of our stories. Once this safety net removed, one can start to look at the “turtles all the way down” and be afraid of the endless height – this will be the time of the tightrope walker, when collaboration and coexistence will be no more matters of ethics but matters of survival.

G.

THROWBACK (#TB #FACTSANDFICTIONS)

From: Tristan Bera

To: Grégoire Benzakin

Olá Grégoire,

After two failed attempts, I finally got this fellowship from the Mainstream Program in Facts and Fictions of the Universidade Eduardo Viveiros de Castro em Nova Iorque, sponsored by Cleargreen Incorporated. This allows me to do these two self-travels combining gender-ethnology of self-exploration and prehistory of the fiction/notion of the Anthropocene – even though they said my project is a bit overrated.

So, I'll leave tomorrow for 1992 for one semester and come back in 2028 to prepare my next travel to 1999. I'm preparing my current self to meet this one.

Btw I don't remember the precise date when the absence of future began... do you? They asked it to me during my oral interview. I was speechless, can't remember.

I'll be reachable only from March 15th, 2029

But we'll see you in the Spring for our gathering

Until then, take care of your current self.

X.

1TB_2TB.jpg

atomic fall

From: Clémence Seurat**To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Ana Vaz**

dear dearest,

i feel it is worthwhile to go back and deep in time in order to learn from ancient thinkers.
recently, an old book (re-)emerged from my library: *de rerum natura* by lucretius [on the nature of things].
here's an extract on the principles of atomism and the *clinamen* theory (i.e. "swerve" in latin).

"When atoms move straight down through the void by their own weight, they deflect a bit in space at a quite uncertain time and in uncertain places, just enough that you could say that their motion has changed. But if they were not in the habit of swerving, they would all fall straight down through the depths of the void, like drops of rain, and no collision would occur, nor would any blow be produced among the atoms. In that case, nature would never have produced anything."

this passage resonates with me, poetically speaking, but it should inspire our (radical) actions politically speaking. *clinamen* would free us from the increasing algorithmic monitoring of our current society, and prevent us from any attempt to capture our behaviors, feelings, and thoughts.

ana, remember, when a few decades ago we were sitting under a tree in lisbon
(doing *the forest is the school*),
and you spoke about revolutions belonging to the past,
may us choose deviance rather.

clinamen leads to trans-formation,
it is the possibility of becoming and the condition to create kinships.
clinamen is a fertile tool to resist the replication of monoculture.

it confirms the uncertain and indeterminate quality of nature
unpredictable and full of events,
impossible to partition, collect, categorize, and bank,
unlike what the modern impulse attempts to do
in natural history museums and seed vaults.

as such,
our trajectories in the world don't leave us undamaged.
no linearity but dis-continuity,
this is what our stories are made of.

yours.

x

Lucretius_DeRerumNatura.jpg
global_seed_vault.jpg

i think it's been an eternity

From: Ana Vaz

To: Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Elida Høeg, Nuno da Luz, Clémence Seurat

2U wherever u are

since the abolishment of the gregorian calendar
a turning point was made
i am trying to gather
the fragments of my memory now dispelled into
the electromagnetic sea bed where i now bathe
in order to speak to you again
Coyote
it has been so long
really it feels like an eternity.

the sky is a gradient of pink and yellow hues
degrading into luminous greys, luminous rays of green
bathing the radioactive fields where we fed from

the sea vibrates with electric waves
waves of consciousness which we now surf
into living memories

catching a good wave means to drift into the rhythm of the sea
in order to stay in the living dream as long as possible

you remember of course cronenberg's *existenz* –
well, if in *existenz* it was your dorsal spine which needed to be plugged
here, it is your whole body, that needs to flow with the waves
like a gestation of living dreams
here, to be plugged is to surf

during those disastrous years which we seemed to see the glimpse of
we were forced to disperse into the high altitudes of the fuji mountains
moving there means *both a cure for and a connection to our old habits and dreams*

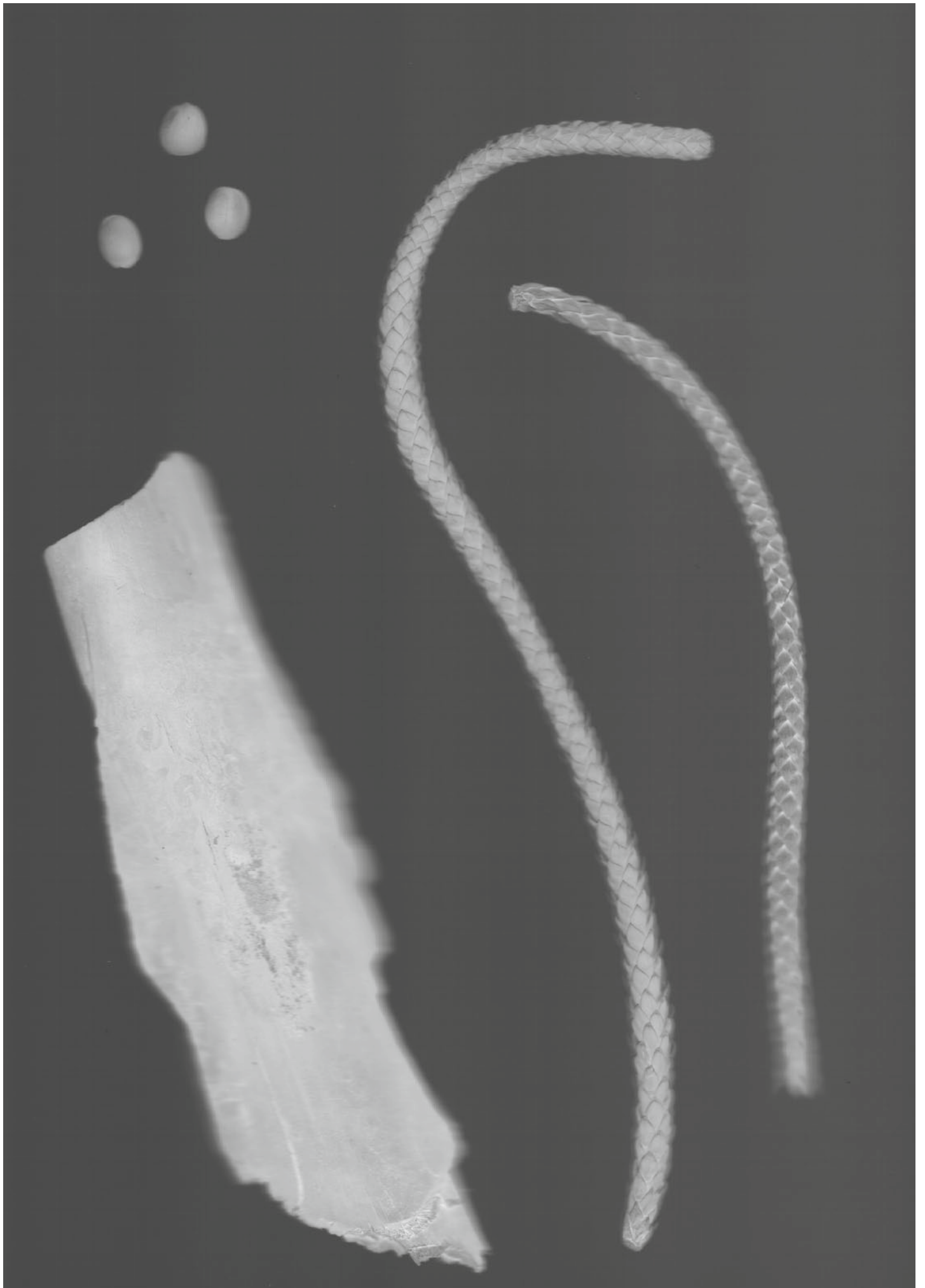
if i try hard to activate the memory inside our memory
i think i can read something along the lines of:
freedom is the negotiation of ghosts on a haunted landscape;
it does not exorcise the haunting but works to survive and negotiate it with flair
i try to stay on, but my thoughts become too orderly
i no longer see you,
as I thought I once did

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Homeland

*But yes, we also love this country
With smut and pipe smoke and street dust
The narrow crack between grey barracks
Where the sun only has one hour
Sometimes we yearn for somewhere else
A meadow with wind and songs
An island with sea and sky, sun and stars,
A forest with the smell of resin*

*But this is the land where we have home
And no one knows our dreams
We love the streets of this land
That we populate in too high numbers
And all the other dreams we must hide
In the depth of our mind somewhere
Because damned be the one
That betrays the street and its kin*



COM-POST

JAPAN

DISPATCH NOTE / CUSTOMS DECLARATION
CP72 税関告知書 CN23 一紙型ラベル
CN23 enclosed.

POSTAL PARCEL



お問い合せ番号
Item Number
CD272171711JP

FROM (依頼主の住所・氏名)
Name: **COYOTE**
Address: **6-30-3, HIGASHI OGU
ARAKAWA-KU
Tokyo JAPAN**

(郵便番号)
Postal Code: **116 0012 JAPAN** (電話番号) **+81 3 5879**
Telephone number **5528**

内容物の詳細記載 (Detailed description of contents)
1 x **BOOK**
8 x **STONES**
2 x **DOCUMENTS**

上記内容物は危険物に該当しないことを確認済みです。
I labelled that contents above are not dangerous goods.

内容物の重量 (Weight)
Net weight: **300** g
Gross weight: **1100** g
Number of pieces: **100**

保険付 (Insured)
 保険付 (Insured)
 未保険 (Not insured)

送り状に返送 (Return to origin immediately)
 送り状に返送 (Return to origin immediately)
 右記の期限の満了後に返送 (Return to sender after... days)

住所変更 (Redirect)
 住所変更 (Redirect)
受取人の次の郵便先に配達 (Deliver to new address)
**MUNO DA LUZ
AV. BICALHES 118, E. 1700-079
LISBOA
Portugal**

TO (受取先の住所・氏名)
Name: **SYNTAX**

Address: **RUA FEIO TERENAS 23**

Postcode: **1170-020** City: **LISBON** (国名) **PORTUGAL**
(電話番号) Telephone number **+351 912325052**

内容物の種類 (Nature of contents)
 書籍 (Books)
 標本 (Commercial sample)
 その他 (Other)

数量 (Number of pieces)
この郵便物は **100** 個入りです。
This piece number is **100**.

総額 (Total value)
Total value **700** Euro
保額 (Insured value) **700** Euro

発送日 (Date mailed)
Date mailed **20160626**

送り状 (Signature of the sender)
Signature of the sender

記入する前に裏面の注意事項をよく読んでください。
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY THE INSTRUCTIONS OVERLEAF BEFORE COMPLETING THIS DISPATCH NOTE.
お届け先の国名については文字で記入してください。
PLEASE WRITE THE COUNTRY OF DESTINATION IN CAPITAL LETTERS.



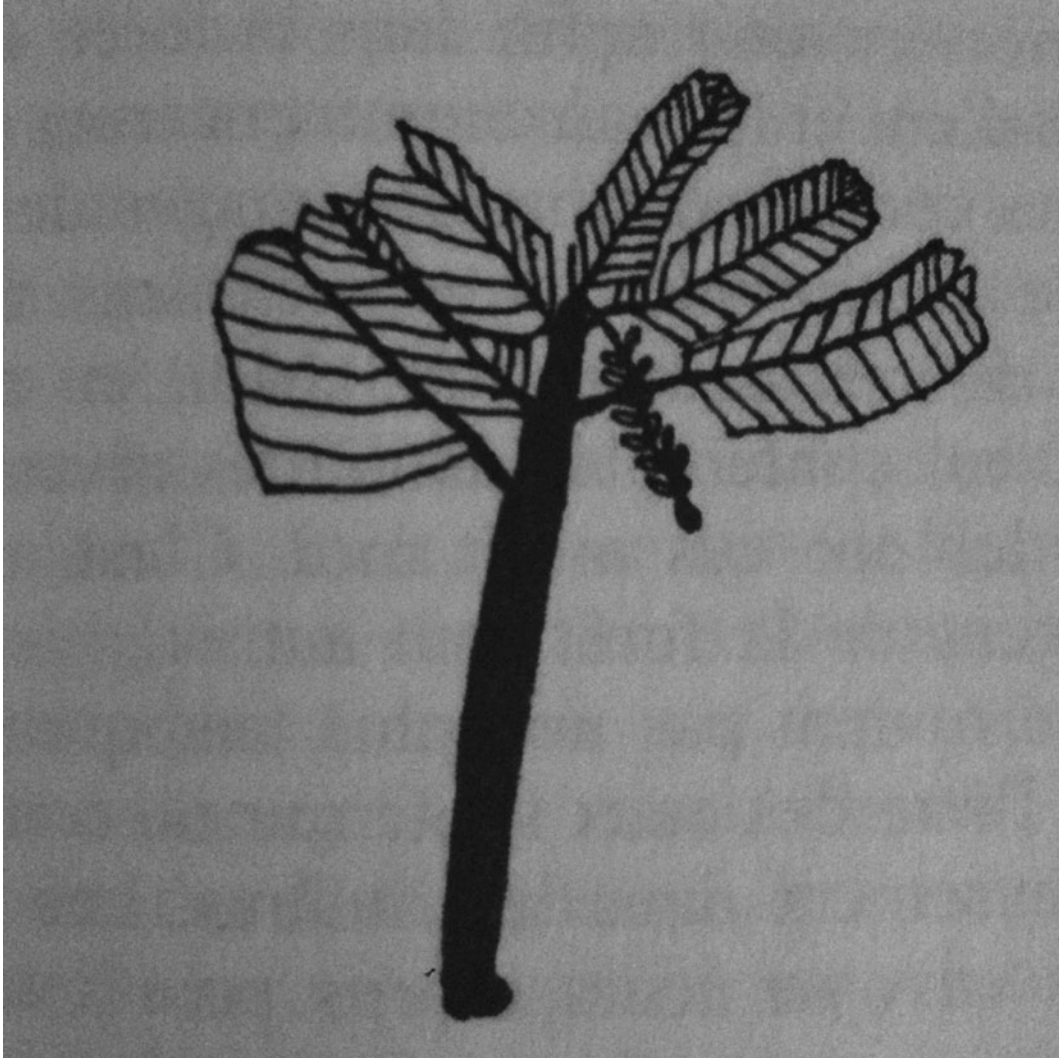
本枠内に強くお書きください。

小笠原 islands









Davi Kopenawa in *The Falling Sky*

COYOTE (Grégoire Benzakin, Tristan Bera, Nuno da Luz, Elida Høeg, Clémence Seurat, Ana Vaz) is a collective with a variable geometry, a cooperation between beings and affects, the crystallization of zones of affinity. They formed in 2015 as a *dérive* and aftermath of their experience at French philosopher Bruno Latour's experimental laboratory in arts and politics at Sciences Po, Paris. Coyote is a cross-disciplinary group concerned with art, ecology, ethnology and political sciences.

