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"Encounter"

Barua, Maan

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Encounters are becomings, nuptials. They are movements, lines, flows of differing speeds and durations. An encounter poses problems; it reconfigures identities, space, political economies.

Encounters forge "contact zones," where people across cultures, with different histories come together into composition, interact and intertwine. But encounters are also between beings of biologically different origins, equally vital to such histories and world-making. Domestication is an encounter, a two-way street: did plants not tame humans, as much as the other way around? Symbiosis is an encounter, an evolutionary force redefining the very beings that get entangled: the organelle we call mitochondria arose from cells engulfing free-living bacteria. Von Uexküll's tick lying dormant for years in anticipation of a mammalian encounter: parasitism. Rewilding experiments too are about channeling encounters, letting novel assemblages and processes emerge. Encounters with potentials and powers not our own, force thought, they question how to inherit histories, who or what generates events. (Author's introduction)

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