



beyond



The plate

The man himself would not talk about the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of 'the plate' (because he had indeed paid good and legitimate money for it), nor would he do any talk for that matter,

At length they saw a man coming (namely Paul), of a small stature with meeting eyebrows, shaved head, bow-legged, strongly built, hollow-eyed, with a large crooked nose;

other than the steady trance of prayers or prophecies (or maybe bed-time stories?, sometimes he would mumble in a rather childish tone).

he was full of grace, for sometimes he appeared as a man, sometimes he had the countenance of an angel.

It was one other survivor among the miserable folk that would bring some clarity: 'the plate', as he referred to it, was 'imprinted' onto the man's back during his passage through Karakoon al-Sheikh, one of Assad's secret prisons, functioning beneath the tomb of Sheikh Hassan al-Maarouf in Damascus.

They had five loaves, with some herbs and water, and they solaced each other in reflections upon the holy works of Christ. Then said Thecla to Paul, If you be pleased with it, I will follow you wherever you go.

I am not an artist!, the artist would repeat (so we were told) countless times while doing his piece of work, I am just a Tiger, and that was not why everyone seemed to fear him, but more likely because the rumor circulated that the artist learned to kill and draw long time ago, during the Yugoslav wars.

He replied to her, Persons are now much given to fornication, and you being handsome, I am afraid you might meet with greater temptation than the former one, and would not withstand it, but be overcome.

'The plate' had a genre scene placed in a park, with ancient houses and temples in the background, some with minarets, some with onion-shaped towers. Along the rim run six cartouches with flowers and architectural elements, and then a mark depicting a crown and a laurel, an anchor in laurel wreath, and below:

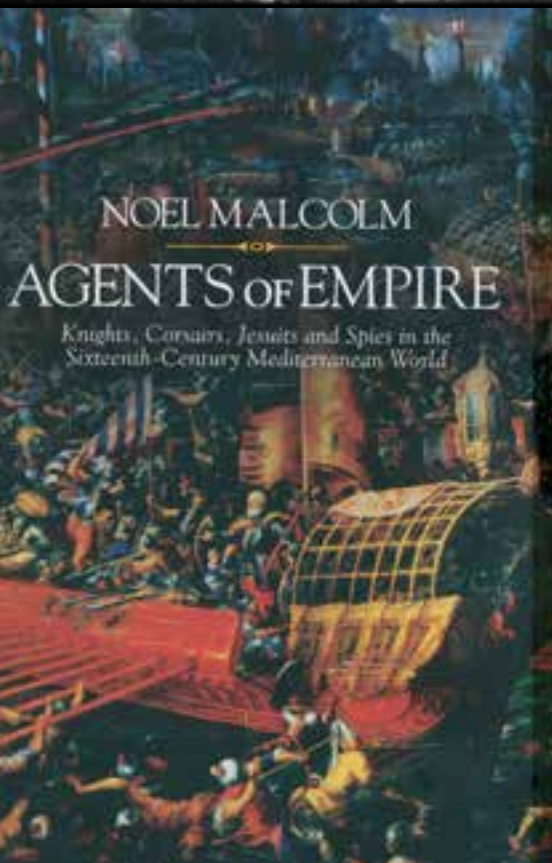




'SYRIA'.

The whole was finely tattooed in rose. The artist supposedly told his prisoner, Your passport they will confiscate, but this tattoo they will welcome, and you'll be crossing to peace and paradise, tell them

Lijah



The virgin

Allegedly, and confirmation of this beyond any doubt will come only if and when the girl can speak again, the smugglers took her one at a time,
So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night.

after her father came to accept the suggestion from chief of the smugglers that 'Virgins are for martyrs, redemption is for believers'.

Thus the one did not come near the other all night.

She had no documents, and when asked for one, the only thing she produced was a dirtied postcard from Mar Taqla Greek Orthodox monastery in Ma'alula, an ancient Syrian Christian town. Proof of her true origins and ordeal, though, were impossible to assert by her or anyone else,

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. 'The waters were divided'.

The postcard bears only a handwritten word, likely alluding to a verse from the Bible, 'Exodus', and a post stamp from Antioch.

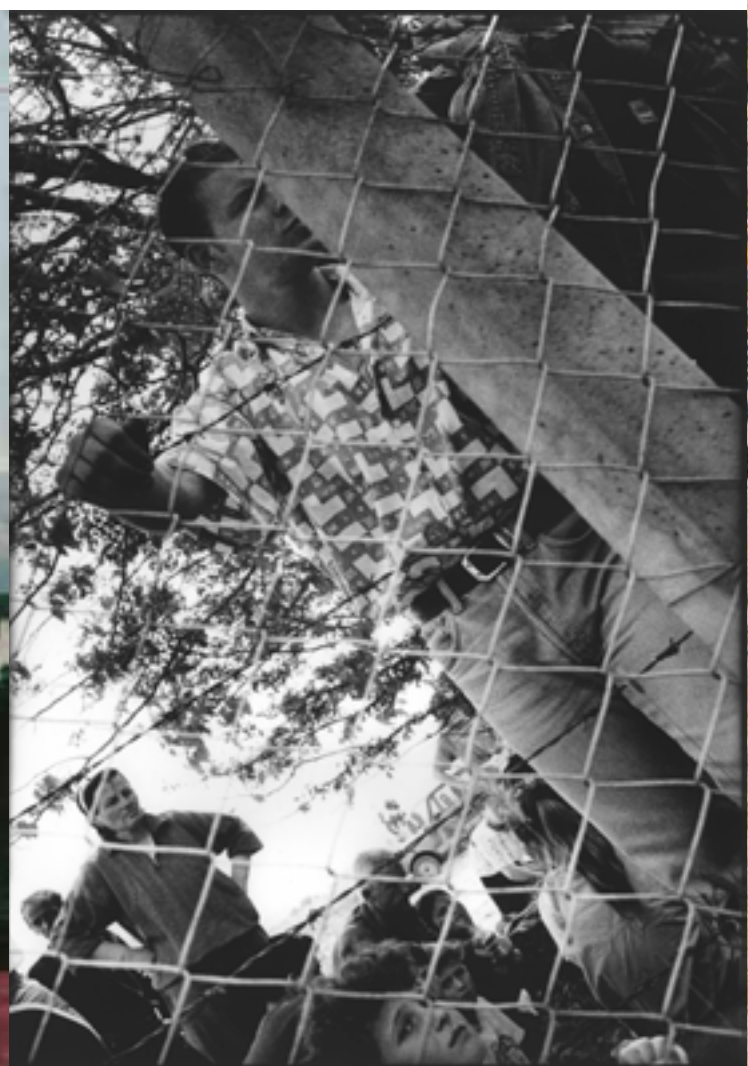
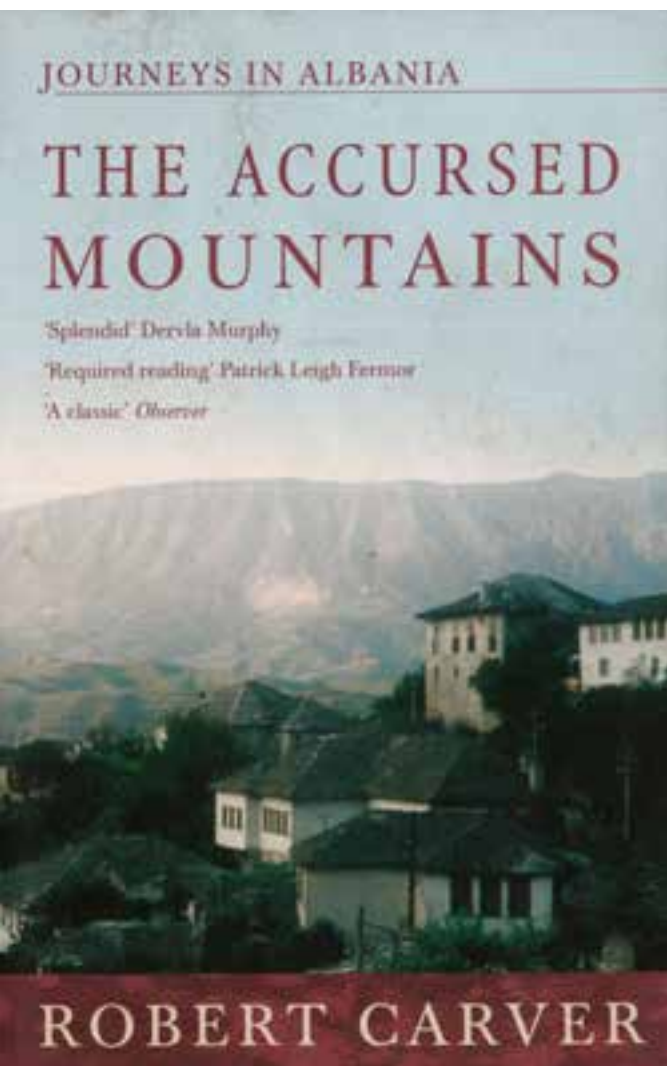
and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left...

Allegedly, her father also survived the rough crossing. A man was brought before the girl for her to identify, but she wouldn't recognize him. As for him, he would

only: 'Chillander', repeat, 'Chillander'.

only repeat: 'Chillander! Chillander!'











To escape: a verb that brings to mind action, movement, speed, breathlessness. Yet, a great part of escaping is waiting, and perhaps it is this long stretch of waiting which is too unbearable on the body.

Escape also brings to mind night and the protection of darkness. But here they are in daylight; all too visible.

Life, noisily, goes on. Mothers breastfeed their babies to stop them from crying, children find ways to laugh in the minutiae of the earth, a stone, a snail, a tree to play hide and seek with; men and women chatter, argue, go silent, then sing: a song from their childhood, a tune that makes them feel like they know who they really are. At nightfall, timid fires lend the sky a comforting glow and summon the thought of lost bright cities. People kiss their loved ones and make promises to their children; they say goodnight with an unspoken hope for tomorrow.

**Tomorrow,
today will be
yesterday**







Dorothea Gräfin Razumovskya

Chaos Jugoslawien

Historische Ursachen
Hintergründe · Perspektiven

Serie Piper





ERTRUNKKE
IN IDEE VATE

Handwritten text in German, appearing to be a page from a notebook or journal. The text is dense and somewhat illegible due to the handwriting and lighting. It seems to be a reflection or a philosophical piece.

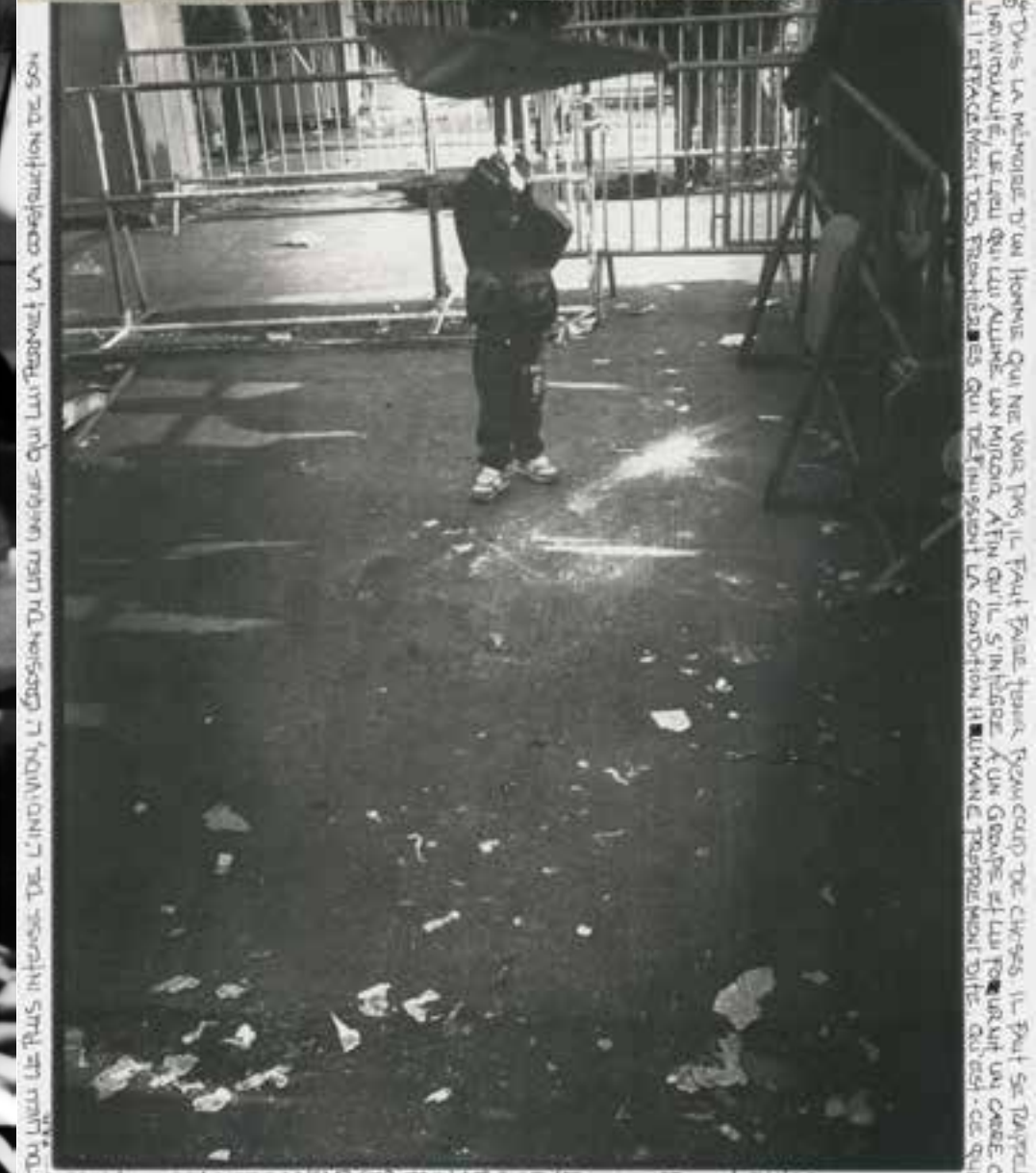








EN MAI 1999, À BELGRADE, SOUS LES TRIPS ASSÉS DE L'OTAN, NOVAK RAZINOVIC M'A DIT QUE LES BOMBES ET LES MISSILES ÉTAIENT EN TRAIN D'ANNÉANTIR SA VILLE. « JE PASSE DES NUITS SANS DORMIR, JE ME SENS CONSTAMMENT NERVEUX ET FATI QUÉ. POUR IMAGINER LES RUÉS DE BELGRADE, IL FAUT UNE GRANDE CONCENTRATION, MAIS, EN CE MOMENT, JE N'Y ARRIVE PAS. LA GUERRE DEUX À DEUX EFFACE MA CARTE, EXACTEMENT COMME UNE GOMME. » UNE LUMIÈRE RÉCONFORTANTE ENTRAIT PAR LA FENÊTRE DE BUREAU, MAIS NOVAK RECONNAISSAIT CE PEU-TOUJOURS NON À SA LUMIÈRE, MAIS À SA TEMPÉRATURE. NOVAK EST AVÉLIGÉ.



« DANS LA MÉMOIRE D'UN HOMME QUI NE VOIT PAS LE FAUT FAIRE, POUR COMPTER LES CHANGES, IL FAUT SE TAQUER LES PAYS, ENVOYER UN LEU QUI LES ALLUME, UN MORCEAU, AFIN QU'IL S'INFLAME. A UN GROSSE ET LA FORMER UN CRÊPE OÙ IL EN LI L'ÉTRANGEMENT DES FROISSURES, QUI DÉFRUENT LA CONDICTION ET HUMAIN É POSSIBLEMENT D'ÊTRE, OÙ EST, C'EST QUE QU'ON A LEUR DISTRACTION OU ENCORE, DANS LA PIRE DES CAS, À LEUR JE S'EN FIANCER. »

« UN PAYS PAS CHANGER D'UN AUTRE CÔTÉ » LA GUERRE EST UNE SÉRIE DE PARCOURS LA GUERRE EST À LA LIMITE, UN PROCESSUS GRADUEL, D'UN SÉRIE À LA DERNIÈRE LIQUEUR DES HUMAINS SAISON POUR ÊTRE ASSIMILÉE À LA SIGNIFIE LA DERNIÈRE LIQUEUR DES HUMAINS SAISON POUR ÊTRE ASSIMILÉE À LA SÉRIE TOTALE DE RÉFLEXIONS, C'EST À DIRE À LA CONFISSION DES COORDONNÉES OÙ A LEUR DISTRACTION OU ENCORE, DANS LA PIRE DES CAS, À LEUR JE S'EN FIANCER. »

DU PAYS LE PAYS INTENSE DE L'INDIVIDU, L'ÉMISSION DU LEU UNIQUE QUI LUI PERMET LA CONSTRUCTION DE SON



Think of landscape. Think of how elements come to be attached to one another, how it's impossible to separate the road from the field, the field from the tree, the tree from the water, the water from the sky. We cannot attribute natural features to the lines we design just as we cannot attribute natural causes to those dying as they try to cross them.

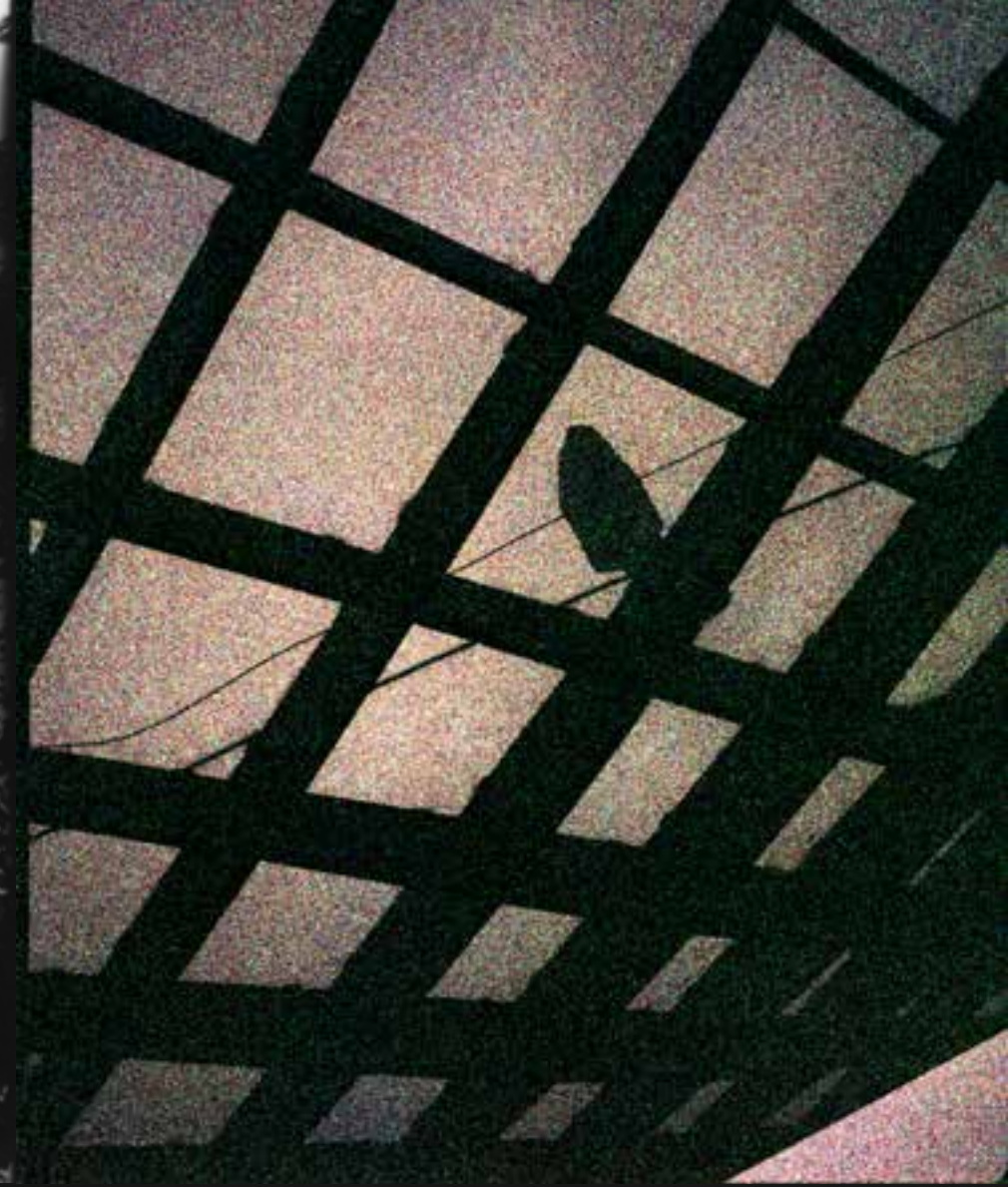
Every person has a story. Not just a story, but a beautiful, moving, intelligible story. A story with potential to be added to a universal canon. There is no one story that is better than another. The fault lies with the ones telling it, nurturing its way into the world. The task of the storyteller before a crowd – a crowd desperate to be heard – is impossible. One is bound to fail, like a doctor who gives up on one to save another.

A man waves – for example that one man, there, with the sulking child beside him – and we can't know if he is calling for attention or if, on the contrary, he is tired of looking for attention and would like to be able to choose silence.

Think again of landscape and think of the togetherness of crowds. That swell of people, with its seemingly incomprehensible organic rules, is impressive but not unfamiliar. The collectiveness of fear, of survival, and the most acceptable inertia, is only too familiar. We've seen before how people can be horded and the ones who break from the horde, irretrievably lost.

Soon, what we see daily – the new, the news – will be a memory. It won't stop hurting because it's a memory, not for the ones who lived it. For us, watchers, it will be history, told in a certain way, with the forgiving distance of generations.

Movies will be made, actors, directors, eloquent public figures will make speeches about how civilisation won't let violence, despair or pure indifference happen again. We'll be driven again by the unshakable intuition that our children will be better than we are.



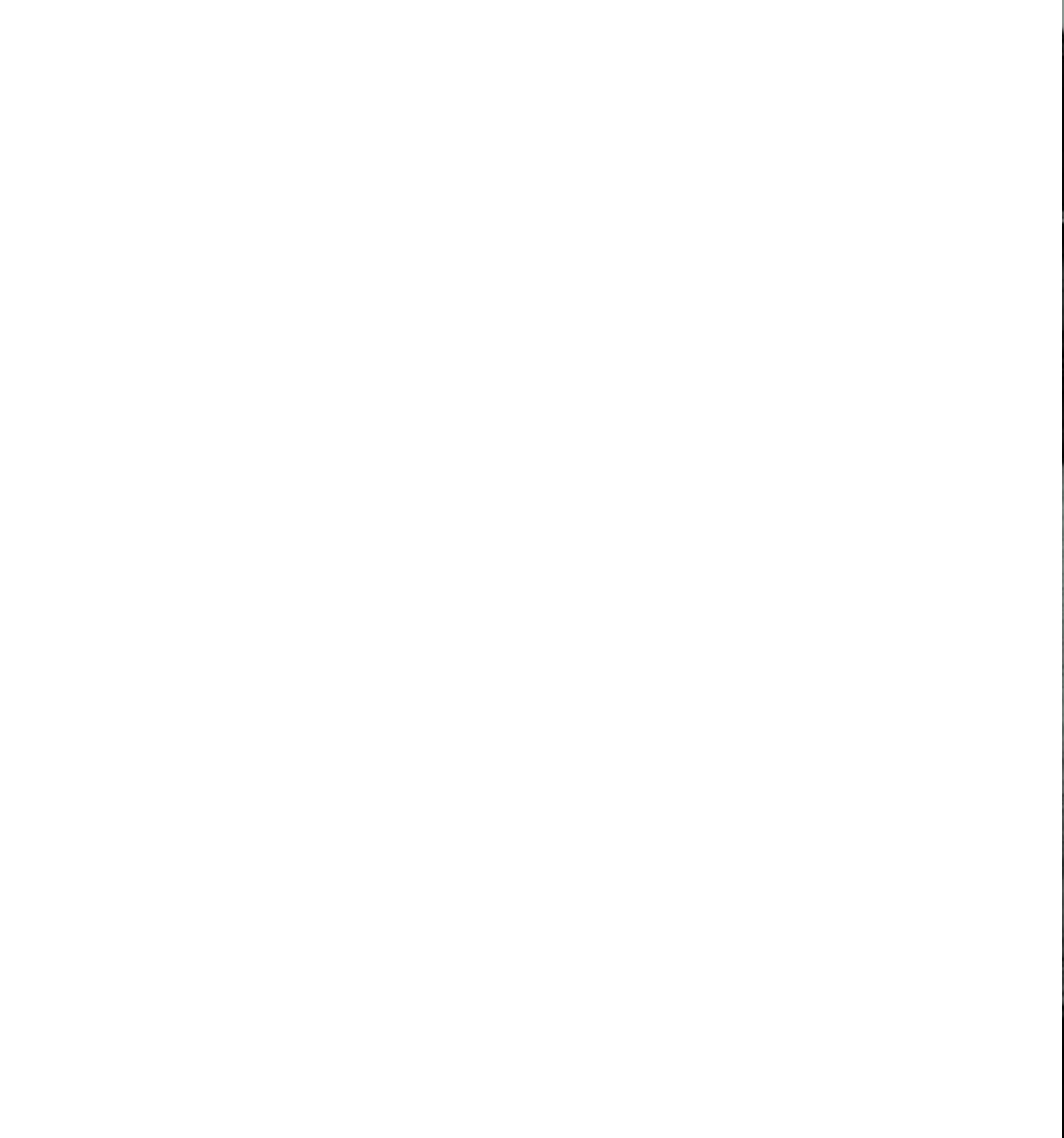


I observe my hands closely, thinking of how so many other women are, at this precise moment, observing their own hands. I observe them closely for signs of aging, spots, marks, rough bits of skin – I look for proof of a loss of strength. (I have always failed to observe what remains the same – the lines of the palm – since, for very private reasons, I’ve always been skeptical about what our bodies predispose us to.)

Every woman who closely observes her hands knows that everything she does – every job well done, every child born, every man loved, every person cared for, every bag carried filled with essential belongings, every gesture made – will show in her hands.

It has been said that, even to cross to the other side of life – that is, death – you must pay. It has been said that not even hell is entirely free. Someone will collect something from you, if not a fee, maybe a word or a sign. Maybe a sacrifice.









"Future" is a borderless word. Everyone knows that. I know that. "Future" is a word by nature open to interpretation, its existence depends on imagination. But once you are at risk and are trapped in uncontrollable events, the future becomes a clear, well-defined objective. It's very much alive then.

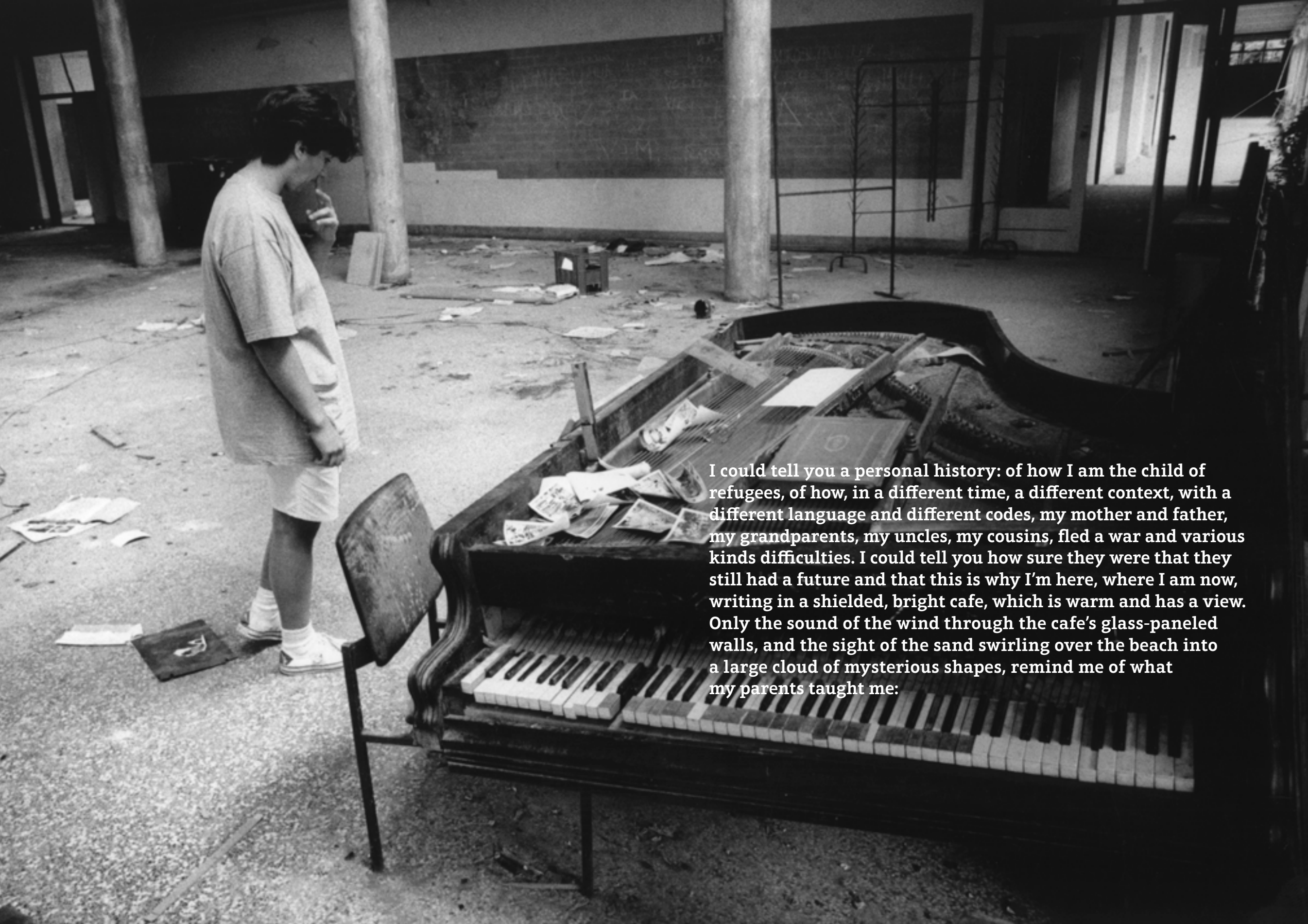




Peter Handke
Eine winterliche Reise
zu den Flüssen
Donau, Save, Morawa
und Drina
oder
Gerechtigkeit
für Serbien

Suhrkamp





I could tell you a personal history: of how I am the child of refugees, of how, in a different time, a different context, with a different language and different codes, my mother and father, my grandparents, my uncles, my cousins, fled a war and various kinds difficulties. I could tell you how sure they were that they still had a future and that this is why I'm here, where I am now, writing in a shielded, bright cafe, which is warm and has a view. Only the sound of the wind through the cafe's glass-paneled walls, and the sight of the sand swirling over the beach into a large cloud of mysterious shapes, remind me of what my parents taught me:



A newspaper report says 64 refugees from two war-torn countries arrived this morning. They arrived just before dawn, when light smooths out the sharp borders of things and people alike. The pictures show tired faces, but their expressions have not been emptied – on the contrary, they seem full of meaning, they seem to talk. They also seem to look, at least as much as they are looked at. They arrived at a discreet airport and were transferred to other means of transport that would take them to several parts of the country.

that nothing can be taken for granted,
that anything can change at any moment.



That tomorrow I might need you.

Or you.



Or you.

Borders and Beyond

Wolf Böwig
photos, diaries

**The plate
The virgin**

Pedro Rosa Mendes
In italic: (1) The Acts of Paul and Thecla, translated probably
by Jeremiah Jones (1693–1724); and (2), from Exodus, 14:20/21.

Tomorrow, today will be yesterday

Thoughts on crossing borders
Susana Moreira Marques

April 2016
© Wolf Böwig

Layout: Christoph Ermisch
Bookbinder: Inka Biedermann

borders and

