As If Nobody Had Ever Existed

Jošt Franko

As If Nobody Had Ever Existed, a special newsprint publication produced as part of the exhibition *Nicht Fallen,* continues the visual and textual narratives of war-scarred individuals and places, which remain invisible decades after the war. With short texts by Hazira Đafić, a displaced refugee who has lived in the Ježevac refugee village since 1993; Meta Krese, a journalist and photographer; Mirjana Dragosavljević, an art historian; and Andreja Hribernik, the director of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Koroška and the curator of the exhibition.

Nicht Fallen is part of an ongoing interdisciplinary project that has been collecting, chronicling and depicting the communities and landscapes scarred and marginalised by the war in the former Yugoslavia since 2017. Juxtaposed with found objects, the images of daily life raise issues that, although specific to the historical and geographic realities of the region, testify to the universality of recurrent violence and the perpetuation of conflict long after the war has ended.

Hazira Đafić

I went to my birthplace after 30 years.

So I had left it in 1992.
That's when I left.

I don't know how to describe what I saw.

Practically nothing.
Wilderness.
It was all overgrown.

When I came and saw my father's house,
I wished my heart would burst on the spot.

A disaster.

There was nobody there.

I had four brothers,
a sister, a father, a mother,
and now I have nobody.

My father has died,
my mother has died.

One of my brothers,
the one I loved most, has been killed.
In the Tuzla region.

He had struggled to make ends meet.

He'd go to the forest to get wood.
That's how he made a living.

He stepped on a mine
and was killed.

When I went to my village and saw...
What can you see?

Nothing.

Forests.

With all that beauty of the Drina Valley
and its grace, it was all overgrown
into a wilderness.

As if nobody had ever existed.

Meta Krese

Where is our apple tree?

It was a muggy summer afternoon. Three or four years ago, I think it was. I had been in Ježevac, a temporary collective camp near Tuzla, for several days, listening to stories, true wartime stories, told by its female inhabitants, the widows from Srebrenica. I can see for myself how they live today in a settlement that was set up in 1994 as a temporary solution for female refugees and their children. The wooden barracks-like cabins which have been home to at least 60 families for more than two decades, were built in the geometric order in this narrow, dreary glen surrounded by hills. In fact, the hills are hillocks, unscalable because of their steep slopes. They are covered with dark woods. Nonetheless, I head off uphill with Jošt, a photographer and a friend of mine, just to get away, far away from the stories. Suddenly, I can hear a voice: "Do you have any cigarettes?" "No, we don't!" I catch a glimpse of a slender woman among tall trees, lugging a bundle of dry branches behind her. Never mind the cigarettes, we sit down together on a log. The unknown woman takes a cigarette from her pocket and starts talking. This is how I met Hazira Đafić.

Jošt and I keep returning to Ježevac every time we think we are close enough to Tuzla. We may even make a hundred-kilometre detour. Mostly, just to call on Hazira. Hazira, a widow from Srebrenica, has been living with her daughter, son, and her new partner in a wooden cabin since 1994. She has been traumatized by the war and the deaths of her relatives. Her therapy is to tidy up her house maniacally, cultivate the garden and gather firewood. And storytelling. She has no interest in what is happening in the world today, there is simply no room in her memories for this. Her experiences are a source of wisdom that I never get tired of listening to. I see her as a true heroine, while she keeps saying that her life is a total mess. Indeed, she survived the war, she survived the Srebrenica genocide, but the surviving members of her family ended up in various collective centres around Tuzla. Of course, they all wanted to return home to a hamlet just above Potočari, the site of the present-day memorial centre set up to honour the plight of the Bosniaks. As early as 1995, as soon as the war stopped, they set off there. As they approached the ruins that used to be their home, her young sister ran towards the house impatiently. Her father tried to stop her, only to hear a land mine exploding. At the doorstep of their house, Hazira's sister lost both legs. No member of Hazira's extended family ever returned to their home village again.

And then, last year on a gloomy November day, as we were drinking coffee at her place, Hazira said, out of the blue and almost causally: "Let's drive to my home village tomorrow, so I can show you where I'm from." Jošt and I weren't quite sure if she really meant it. Remarkably, she hadn't lost her Bosnian sense of humour, which we witnessed many times. Still, we arrived at Ježevac very early in the morning. She was waiting to meet us outside her house and raring to go. "Jasmina gave me these pills, so I won't throw up in your car," she said, laughing. The two-hour drive, mainly across the territory of the Republika Srpska, seemed to go on forever. Hazira's initial cheerful travelling mood slowly gave way to tension, restlessness, fear. "What if they realize I'm not a Serb," she kept repeating.

Finally, we arrived at Blječevo, her home village that used to be made of more than 100 houses. Today, there are only 11. Hazira jumped out of the car, looked around and ran off heedlessly down the road. People were slowly starting to gather around us.

"I'm Hazira, Hazira," she yells at them.

"Look at the state of you," they say in disbelief.

Hazira, who used to be good looking, is now, not even 50 years of age, a toothless old woman.

"I no longer have a husband, a brother, a father, an uncle..." she tells them.

"We lost them too, all of us," her former neighbours say callously.

She is listening in tears to a friend from her youth, explaining and pointing to the mounds of earth littering the slope: "Hamed Bešić's house used to be here, that was Muje Amidž's house, there was Savra's house, and there at the back, that was Imre's house..."

At some point, Hazira stops him. She is silent for a while, as if she were to ask him something, but can't get it off her chest. Finally, she says, "And where is our apple tree?"

"You mean petrovača"? That's gone too."

Mirjana Dragosavljević

Absences

In a time when the freedom of choice is on more people's lips than ever before, choices are becoming more and more limited. Not only are we alienated from the products of our labour; because of our way of life that keeps pushing us in a race against time we are also alienated from each other and subject to exploitation, all this just to make ends meet, get through the month, live from paycheque to paycheque. While we are trying to keep afloat in the sea of daily multitasking, information, spins and advertising that floods our new sources, forced migration is taking place near and around us, with crowds of people trying to make sense of where they are, what is happening to them, and when this nightmare they are living in will finally end so they can breathe more freely and go on with their lives without the terrible fear for themselves and their loved ones.

While some are on the move this very moment, coming and going, trying to make their way to a dignified life, some other lives can be found on this same map of the former Yugoslavia that have been stuck in forced displacement since the 1990s, indefinitely; lives at a standstill, for whom 'temporary' has become and remained permanent. Stripped of dignity by genocide, countless crimes, ethnic cleansings and other means of destruction, debasement, humiliation and negation of human lives.

In its race for profit and under the pretence of some kind of national freedom (but only for the chosen few), the war industry left behind post-apocalyptic scenes of demolished, shelled houses, buildings, factories, warehouses; it left behind dead bodies, mass graves; it left thousands in a paralysing position and in conditions denying any chance of a decent life, in terms of infrastructure or mentally, psychologically and emotionally. As countless programmes aimed at confronting the past have failed to tackle the policies of victimisation and increasing passivation of dispossessed and traumatised lives, the positions of the perpetrator and the victim that have arisen during the war have only grown more fixed, and the war-era infrastructure of violence has sprouted new forms and carried on its policies to this day. The privatisation of all social assets, new thefts, new appropriations of various shapes and forms are a structural continuum in the endless seemingly chaotic post-war situation. Meanwhile, most of the forcibly displaced are left helpless and disenfranchised.

All those humiliated, deprived, displaced, and accommodated in reception centres have stayed trapped there, forgotten, left with nothing but unkept promises. They have hardly anyone to turn to, to find out who should right their wrongs. Some reception centres from the Yugoslav wars also receive people travelling via the so-called Balkan route; the one in Krnjača, Belgrade, is one of them. This is one of the places where the past, the present and the future all happen simultaneously. The centre is located on the premises of 'Ivan Milutinović', a leading engineering and construction business in the time of Yugoslavia. This was where the company used to produce and distribute building materials and provide specialised services such as water transport, underwater works, ship repair, etc. In 1958, the enterprise built the causeway across Lake Skadar for the Belgrade-Bar railway, in addition to a number of projects in other countries including the Salt Lake reclamation in Kolkata, India. Then, with the economy in tatters, the infrastructure owned by Ivan Milutinović found itself in ruins, as well. This included the large area on the outskirts of Belgrade that is now home to a large number of abandoned, ravaged, unusable buildings, as well as former workers' quarters, which were renovated and turned into a refugee camp during the war in Yugoslavia in the 1990s. As they have nowhere to go, the people displaced during the war still live there. And now with the emergence of the so-called Balkan route, the workers' quarters have been given another function, taking in people travelling along this route. Like countless others such places, this is a place of rest, waiting, uncertainty, worries, hope, but above all a witness to ruined economies, cities, villages, countries, individuals, and entire families.

Forced displacement is an experience that has consequences regardless of the conditions in the new location. Coercion, violence, aggression and threats are just some of the aspects of this process that affect the lives of the displaced through an array of emotions that are very likely to follow them for the rest of their lives: fear, sorrow, anger, pain, nostalgia, etc. These emotions, coupled with the inability to deal with them, can lead, depending on the individual, to various mental or physical states such as depression, anxiety, lethargy, dejection and euphoria. The displaced are often haunted by the feeling of not belonging anywhere because their home was taken away from them, demolished, destroyed, because grief or other obstacles hinder their return to where they began to toddle, learned to speak, first saw the light of day and started developing a sense of themselves and others, and their sense of meaning in life. Many suffer because the daily routines they had been building for decades were suddenly cut short, their lifelong relationships with people and the environment torn apart, leaving them suddenly in a new situation, with no control over it. The process of shifting between temporary collective centres, which gradually became permanent, and the remains of former homes, destroyed, looted, deserted, restored or seized, can be boiled down to desolation, metaphorically as well as, very often, literally.

"Desolation presupposes the absence of a place where one could retire to. There is nowhere to retire to save the remains of houses along the road. House No 3 has no windows, but it does have most of the roof. Bender steps across the ditch separating the house from the road, and onto what used to be the front yard. In some places, grass has grown higher than his knees. Bender thinks of the dangers that could lurk in the high grass. He frantically starts to watch where he is going. The grass keeps him on the surface. Small seeds stick to his trousers. Rain still seems indecisive. Bender pauses, looking for a hole in the wall to take shelter. A door that used to open and close lie in front of the entrance into the house. Bender steps on it, feeling the glass cracking under it. An open door is a sign of welcome. Bender enters the house. He recognises the hallway, even though he has never been here before. From the hallway, a door on the left leads to a room which now looks like a botanical garden run wild. The rambling flora has pushed through the parquet floor, crushing it to fine dust. Bender looks up. Against the scorched beams, clouds are fleeing across the sky at the speed of culprits."[1]

This excerpt from Ovdje neće biti čuda (There Will Be No Miracles Here), a novel by Goran Ferčec in which Bender, the main character, returns to his home town long after the war in Croatia had ended, is where the environment once populated by people but devastated by war meets nature, which makes its way through it, covering and cloaking it to gradually destroy and absorb it. Rather than just a backdrop, this force of nature, an integral part of all our events, is an active participant; rather than a passive observer it is an active presence. Nature provides and takes away, having the power to absorb anything and either allow or ruin the chance of a new beginning.

Forests have always had a special place in the war history. Forests hide people from enemies, they hide enemies; forests hide hospitals, schools, command posts, wartime printing press workshops; they hide graveyards, mass graves; forests are used as hiding spots and ambush sites at the same time; they protect human lives, they take human lives. Many forests used to be human settlements, and many settlements used to be forests. Forests are the main/supporting characters in many Yugoslav war stories, and keep protecting some secrets while revealing others, such as the one about the Srebrenica genocide. Forests have seen it all, harbouring stories about old migration, hiding new migration; forests are where many have found a fleeting safety, forests are where many have been captured, attacked, and many have died. Forests are a symbol of escapism.

Rivers feed us with their fish and give us water to quench the thirst of the soil cracked after summer droughts, so that soil rewards us with a bounty of fruit. Rivers freshen us up in hot summers, and give us peace on their shores. Rivers can also act as administrative borders. There are plenty river stories about the exchange of POWs and goods, about smuggling, about calls from one bank to the other, about making it across while fleeing to safety, but also about bodies being washed up from who knows where, about tombs hidden by rivers during high waters, only to be revealed when they are low, like the reefer vans full of dead bodies of Kosovar Albanians in the Danube.

The symbolism of the sea and holidays aside, the history of colonial routes should be recounted time and time again. As the ongoing protests in the U.S. remind us, Christopher Columbus was not a discoverer, he was a conqueror. Historical maps of the sea trace the routes of violence, enslavement, killings, plunder, rape, burnings, seizures. Today's inhabitants of these same colonised territories follow these same routes, seeking salvation after centuries of exploitation and poverty. According to boat and ship sinking statistics, many stay in the seas forever.

"According to the capitalist ethic, poverty is a state from which an individual or a society is delivered by enterprise. Enterprise is judged by the criterion of Productivity as a value in itself. Hence underdevelopment as a condition of locked, inescapable poverty is inconceivable to capitalism. Yet capitalism holds nearly half the world in that condition. This contradiction between theory and practice is one of the reasons why capitalism and its cultural institutions can no longer explain either itself or the world."[2]

What happens when forests can no longer carry the burden of violence, which has taken place inside, around and above them so persistently for so long? What will the rebellion of rivers look like? How will the sea react? Once we join them in the rebellion, will it be too late? I am certainly not alone in asking myself these questions. Each era has its own ways of announcing apocalypse, each disaster has its own acts of rebellion, every waiting has its price. The price is usually paid by the powerless and the disenfranchised, the dispossessed and the displaced.

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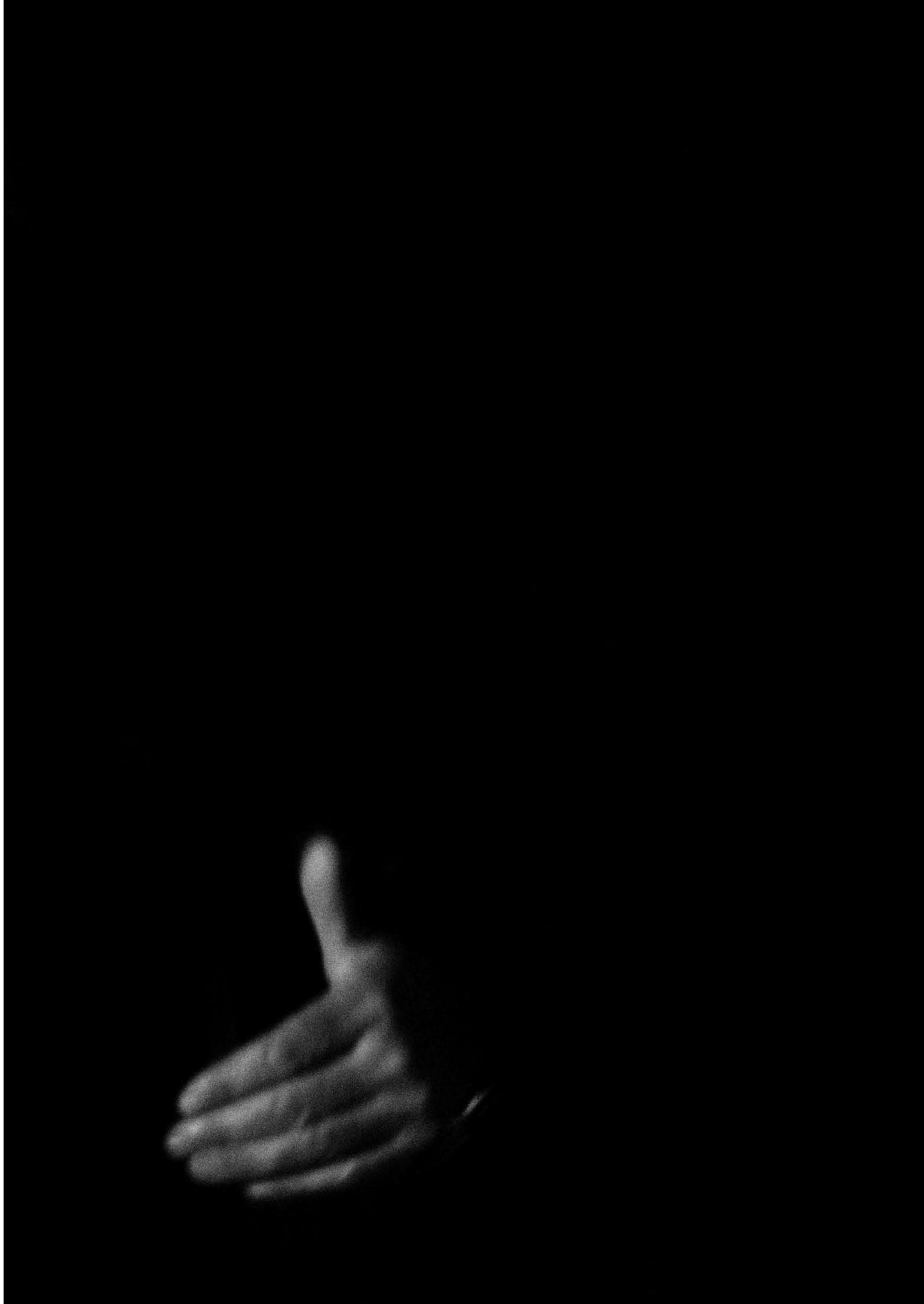
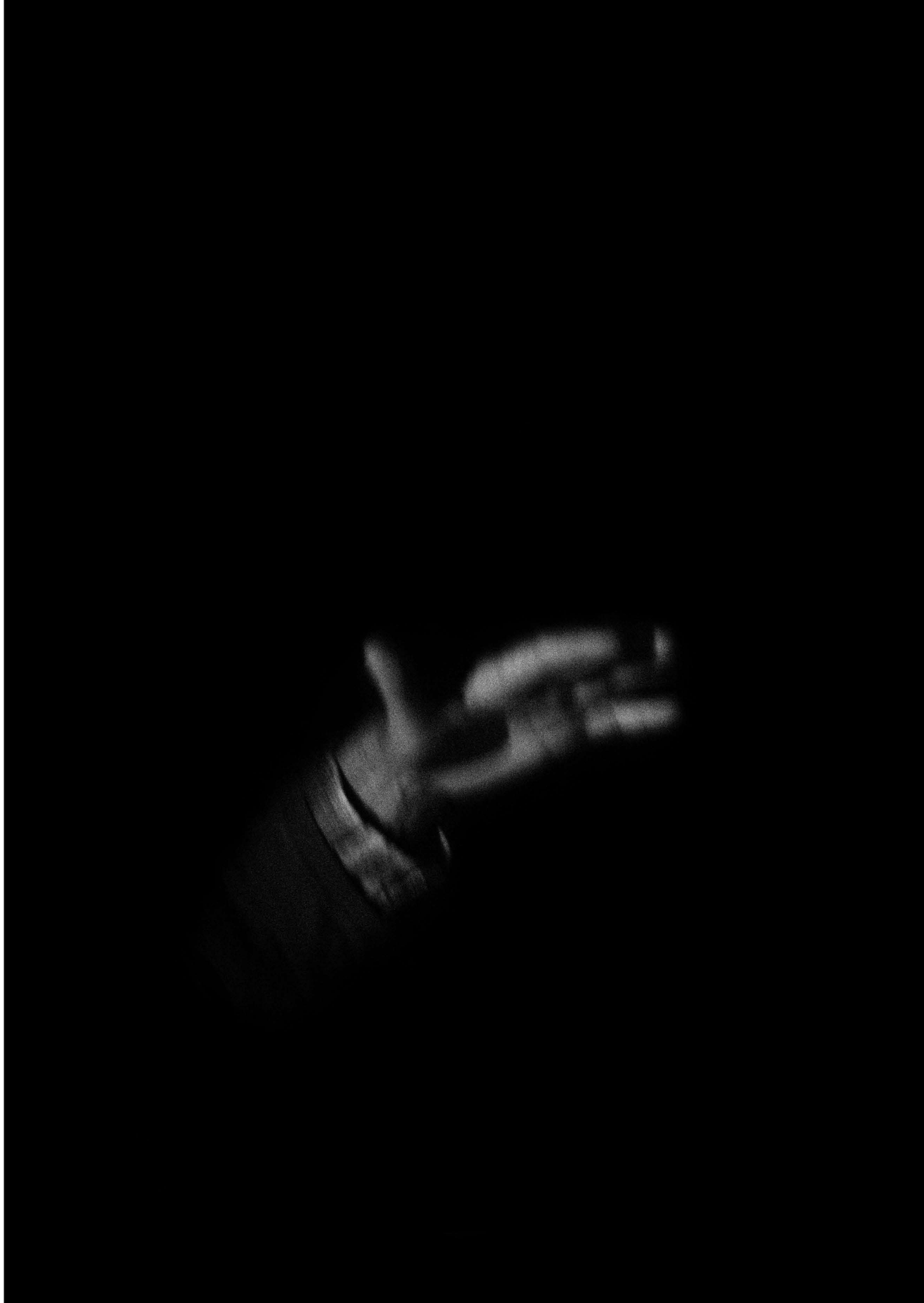
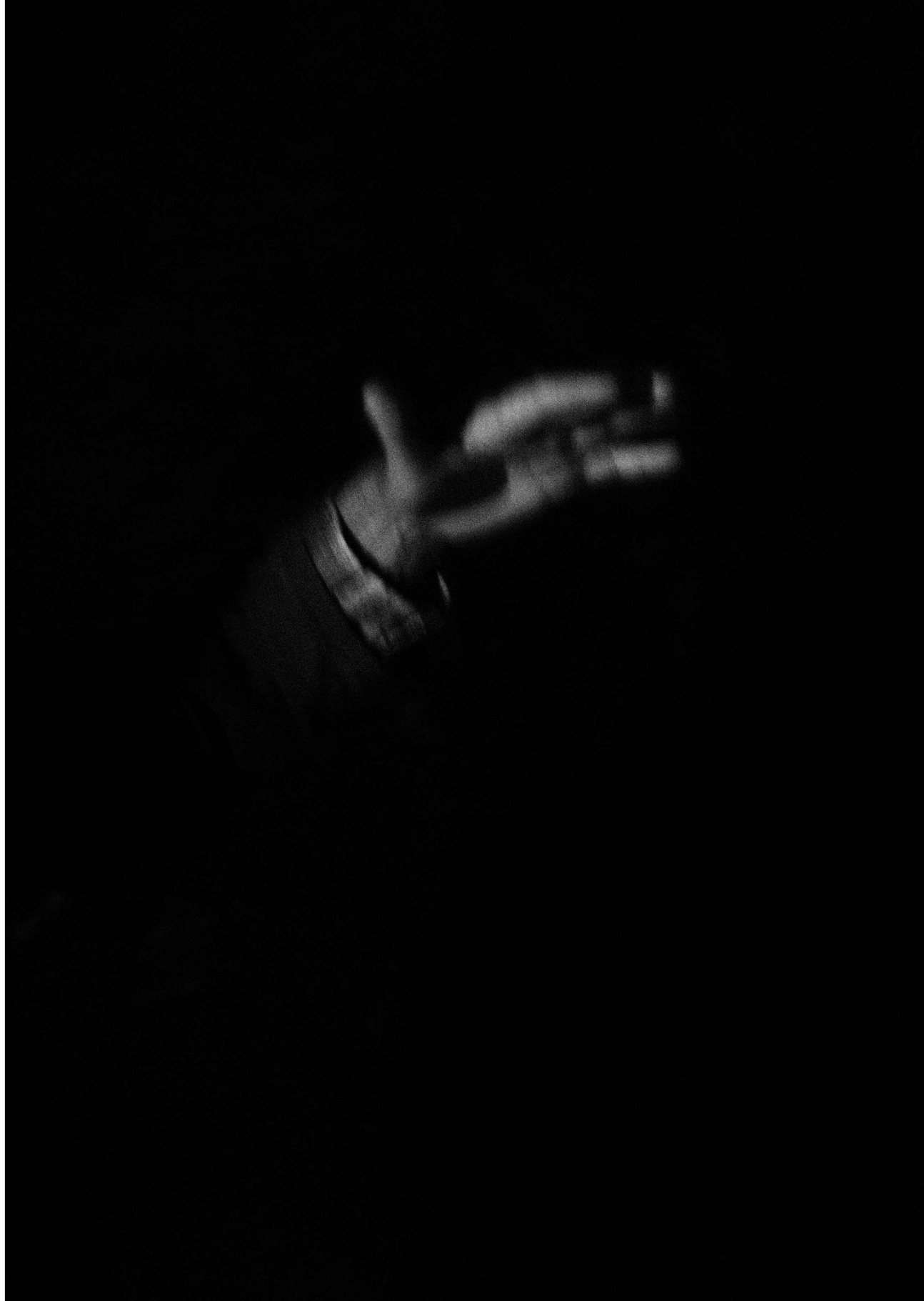
[1] Goran Ferčec, *Ovdje neće biti čuda,* Fraktura, Zaprešić, 2011, p. 104.

[2] John Berger and Jean Mohr (1975), *A Seventh Man: Migrant Workers in Europe,* The Viking Press, New York, p. 26.







Andreja Hribernik

As If Nobody Had Ever Existed

"The fate of European identity as a whole is being played out in Yugoslavia and more generally in the Balkans", states Etienne Balibar in his book from 1999[1], a mere few years after the war ended in the area of the former Yugoslavia.

Before I delve into the main topics of this treatise, which deal with refugees, citizenship, borders, and racism, let me briefly expound on this claim. Balibar continues his argument by pointing to *possible* scenarios for, or courses of the development of Europe, putting forth two extremes. According to him, Europe will recognize in the Balkan situation its own history and undertake to confront it, thus becoming possible; or else it will refuse to come face-to-face with itself, continue to treat the problem as an exterior obstacle, and impose on its citizens an insurmountable interior border, leaving them with no rights, thus reproducing its own *impossibility*.[2] My aim in this treatise is to shed light on a few facts and outline the social situation at large, to bring attention to how it is manifested in the specific environment of the Balkan region, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The key question is: Where is Europe headed? Where is it headed today, 20 years after the book I am referring to in the introduction was written, after five years of struggling with the refugee crisis and the issue of refugees, and after six months of dealing with the novel coronavirus, which has shaken up and called into question our basic rights, especially the right to movement. My considerations about these issues are based on *Nicht Fallen*, an artwork by Jošt Franko focusing on, and bringing face-to-face two principles: being on the move, and being static, at a standstill. The treatise is designed to run in parallel to what the artwork is about, the two narratives occasionally intersecting.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is an in-between country, once located in the heart of Yugoslavia, now to be found between Europe and the Balkans. Still a country in transit in some ways, it has been the main transit country for many arriving from the Middle or Far East, and Africa, since 2015. This is where the status of Bosnia and Herzegovina overlaps with that of refugees, for as you will see below, a refugee is a person also caught in between. There are still camps with simple huts across Bosnia and Herzegovina that received refugees from war zones within the country in the 1990s, which now receive refugees from other countries, those stopped by Europe's borders on their way to Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden... Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is on the periphery of Europe, this does not make it marginal, for it is here that social relations become much clearer, much more straightforward than in European and global financial and economic hubs, where many mechanisms overlap and one is usually too close to recognise them. Defined by Balibar as places where "secular and religious cultures confront one another, where differences in economic prosperity become more pronounced and strained" [3], peripheral zones can serve as a matrix and a tool to lay bare certain processes and relations.

Before we proceed, let me make a brief detour to racism. This issue seems to be crucial for the understanding of social relations in the 20th century and today, and for the understanding of the position of refugees. Drawing on Foucault, the digression will hopefully end on a point that helps clarify some of subjects discussed below. Foucault outlines various forms of power throughout history, defining bio-power as the dominant form in the 20th century. Although it comes after disciplinary power, bio-power is not its successor; in fact, it integrates some of the disciplinary mechanisms. If sovereign power, and the sovereign, had the right to take life or let live, bio-power has the duty to foster life, make live and let die.[4]

[1] Balibar: 11.

[2] From Balibar (2004): 6.

[3] Balibar (2004): 1.

[4] Foucault: 240-242.

According to Foucault, it was the emergence of bio-power that inscribed racism in the mechanisms of the state.[5] Although it had been there since time immemorial, racism started playing an increasingly crucial rule the moment when the mechanisms of bio-power took effect and prevailed (Foucault dates the shift to the late 18th and 19th centuries). If these mechanisms had initially been based on the idea of a binary society of the poor and the rich, the masters and their subjects (in contrast to the medieval three-way structure of nobles, clergy, and peasants), this changed in the early 20th century with state racism. It was then that conflicts and tensions between social classes, which served to disguise race struggle as class struggle, gave way to a situation wherein the state "is no longer an instrument that one race uses against another: the state is, and must be, the protector of the integrity, the superiority, and the purity of the race"[6]. For Foucault, the key moment in this historical development is the shift in which "the theme of racial purity replaces that of race struggle"[7]. With the emergence of the concept of a singular race, this argument is key for the sovereignty of the State to be maintained.[8] In his series of lectures titled *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault also defines what he calls "normalizing society"[9], which combines and applies both disciplinary and regulatory modalities (which have to do with regulation of population as a form of bio-power), exercising its sovereign right to kill through racism. Race, or racism is thus understood by Foucault as "the precondition that makes killing acceptable" in "a normalizing society"[10]. With reference to bio-power as a form of power killing through racism, it is impossible to proceed without mentioning Nazism, where this function is most pronounced. Carl Schmitt notes that in critical situations, the requirement for internal peace compels the state to identify and designate the domestic enemy.[11] This indicates that the enemy can be found within the state borders, whereby various ethnic or religious group, or even the poor or workers can be seen as a threat.[12] For this shift to have been possible, it had to be preceded by a legal shift in the perception of citizenship. After World War I, the state acquired the power to strip its citizens (i.e. previously naturalised individuals) of citizenship after previously granting it if they were deemed to have lost a genuine connection to the state. Although the measure was to apply to a small portion of population, its legal basis was an important precedent that paved the way for mass denaturalisation of the Jewish population in the Nazi Germany, in addition to other groups.[13] Hence Arendt's observations about a correlation between the level of totalitarian control of the state or regime, and the number of people rendered stateless by the same regime.[14] On this note, let me finish this first aside, whose sole purpose was to set the foundation for the explication of the principles of contemporary society.

Refugees and stateless persons are a historical political phenomenon that is now turning into one of the indicators of the failed project of making human rights and democracy universal. Specific cases, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, expose the sheer exclusiveness of the concept of human rights, releasing all the demons of the social system of today. This region is a dark stain on the

[5] Foucault: 254.

[6] Foucault: 81.

[7] Ibid.

[8] In a way, this is perceived to be a reaction of national bourgeois societies to globalisation as a threat to historical cultures and models of social relations in Europe, whereby the traditional figure of the external enemy is being replaced by that of the internal enemy. Balibar (2004): 172.

[9] Normalization is the entirety of ruling techniques that can be used on individual bodies as well as populations, in order to discipline (bodies) or regulate (populations) them. Tarizzo: 44.

[10] Foucault: 256.

[11] Schmitt: 46-47 .

[12] In an extreme form, this is manifested in the Nazi system and its desire to eliminate entire communities: the Romani, Jews, Slavs, etc.

[13] Arendt: 285.

[14] Arendt: 287-288.

edge of Europe, its recent history a reflection of international organisations' failed attempts at influence; it is where the atrocities of Srebrenica, Omarska, and many others were committed, serving as an example of the enforcement of necro-power[15], an extreme form of power manifested through massacre. While combining and incorporating the mechanisms of all the preceding forms, necro-power is, unlike disciplinary and bio-power, not manifested by exerting control over bodies or even populations, at least for the most part; instead, power is exercised over them in an extreme form.[16] For Balibar, these modern forms of racism are not versions of older forms; they are a new phenomenon. What makes European forms of racism specific is their rootedness in two schemata converging with the history of Europe: colonialism and anti-Semitism.[17] Tamas also draws attention to the shift in the perception of nation from a strictly political to an increasingly cultural concept. In this context, citizenship is no longer a result of one's physical position within the borders of a state; it is conditional on one's cultural identity as a sum of linguistic, religious and other aspects. This ultimately allows for the acceptance of discrimination as natural.[18]

So far, we have been describing the functioning of mechanisms without discussing their root causes. The theoretical background outlined above suggests that modern society creates the conditions for certain parts of populations to be treated as inferior. Today, this most notably applies to refugees, migrants, and stateless persons. Unlike class struggle, where racism used binary differences as mentioned above, this is no longer a case of a social conflict; here, parts of populations are simply excluded. In Mbembe's words, this produces an excess of populations that can no longer be exploited by capital but require to be managed by the state.[19] Paradoxically, it is precisely this exclusion of certain groups that is constitutive of modern society or the global capitalist system: by remaining outside the system, the groups represent the system's constitutive exception.[20] Economically speaking, according to Balibar, capital would sooner relinquish exploitation than risk losing its profitability due to collective movements and organised struggle.[21] This indicates a new shift, from a normalizing society based on bio-political mechanisms towards an amalgam of necro-political mechanisms constituting a *society of optimization*[22]. Accordingly, killing no longer necessarily implies physical death (although this is often still the case), but renders these groups of people politically dead. Needless to say, this does not exclude the subsequent physical death, as can be seen from allowing the deaths of many who cross the Mediterranean Sea in inflatable boats or from inhumane conditions in refugee camps, where people are exposed to the elements, lack of food, and violence at the hands of law enforcement bodies. Although biologically alive, refugees can be seen as a textbook example of people who are politically dead. Refugee status is something that exists beyond society. Referred to by Agamben as "homo sacer", this is life beyond a political community, a bare life.[23] The situation in Europe where people are separated into *proper* citizens, who enjoy all the rights arising from citizenship, and *improper* citizens, a category including immigrants, migrants and refugees – especially those from the Middle East and Africa – is labelled by Balibar as a European apartheid[24], as people are subject to special regulation mechanisms and restrictions of movement.

[15] Agamben labels this same phenomenon 'thanatopolitics'. Agamben: 72.

[16] Mbembe: 34.

[17] Balibar (1991): 12.

[18] "The growing de-politicization of the concept of a nation (the shift to cultural definition) leads to acceptance of discrimination as natural." Tamas

[19] Mbembe

[20] "Insofar as they lack any determinate place in the hegemony of the neoliberal global capitalist regime, these refugees can be said to represent the system's constitutive exception, its symptomal truth qua the structural injustice and inequality of the system." Khader: 164.

[21] Balibar (2004): 129.

[22] Tarizzo highlights ethopolitical regime, a phenomenon that is no longer about the normal or the average, which are characteristic of the idea of a normalizing society, but about the optimal and limitless. Tarizzo: 52.

[23] According to Agamben, refugees represent a disquieting element in the modern nation-state system and throw into crisis the original fiction of sovereignty by breaking up the continuity between nativity and nationality. "Bringing to light the difference between birth and nation, the refugee causes the secret presupposition of the political domain – bare life – to appear for an instant within that domain." Agamben: 77.

[24] Balibar traces the emergence of European apartheid to the time of the formation of European citizenship itself. Balibar (2004): 121.

"As if nobody had ever existed," said Hazira, a refugee from around Srebrenica, when she returned to her home village, now deserted, after nearly 30 years. Albeit simple, this sentence captures the full reality of refugees, migrants and marginalised people in modern society, a society that, without killing, directly erases the traces of existence of its non-constitutive populations.[25] The European political community is doing everything in its power to stop refugees from entering the EU. Not only does their presence provide no benefits; it is perceived as a threat. The aim of the new racism is not to exterminate a race, it is to control it.[26]

The basic principle or goal pursued by any form of power is to achieve a balance in society, bring about some sort of homeostasis. Everything that could upset this balance in any way is perceived as dangerous in terms of the existing power relations. In addition to rapid societal and population shifts, the balance can also be disrupted by mass migration with its potential to create imbalances. This is at the core of the problem with the movement of refugees. "... if human movement wasn't a 'crisis', we wouldn't need borders at all,"[27] Lo Presti observes, referring to the increasingly strict control of mobility on state borders. Movement is something that has the potential to escalate and get out of control. In terms of human movement, different forms of power condition different ways of movement and border crossing. As the scope of this treatise does not leave room for a detailed historical analysis of the specific ways in which movement has been conditional on the form of power, we will focus on outlining the main characteristics.

In feudalism, a sovereign power exercised control over its subjects more than it did over its territory, the latter form of control being relatively fragmented and inconsistent. Additionally, as there were many cases of overlapping jurisdiction, the movement of populations was not tightly controlled. It was not until the formation of modern nation states that borders emerged as fairly static, semi-permeable lines of demarcation. At the same time, disciplinary mechanisms came to the fore, bringing with them border control. With industrialisation and the rise of urban centres, the movement of people was associated with the demand for labour. This was the reason behind large migrations either into colonies or into industrialised areas. The political class struggle for workers' rights, which the era is known for, was also the struggle for the right to movement. According to Lewin, political struggles are nearly always struggles over the boundary of the space of free movement.[28] When bio-power arose as the dominant form of power in modern society, movement began to slow down, becoming limited and controlled yet still possible.[29] Then, with the emergence of the mechanisms of necro-power, movement died down almost completely. For the purposes of illustration, one ought only to look at chances for migration today, when the developed world is facing a general labour surplus and its unemployment rates are high. In a situation when migration is no longer economical, nor therefore desired, mechanisms and strategies enter into force to stop and prevent this movement and migration to the largest extent possible. Nowadays, military and police forces slow down and prevent movement by implementing measures such as containment and returning people to their re-

[25] Interestingly, Claire Fontaine claims that there have never been any human rights outside of workers' rights, the ones that had been fought for in productive places, where strikes could actually cause quantifiable economic losses. https://www.textezurkunst.de/articles/claire-fontaine-idea-ourselves/ (Accessed 31 July 2020)

[26] Krašovec: 87.

[27] Lo Presti: 5.

[28] One of the most important goals of domestic and foreign politics is to change the space of movement of a single person or of a group. At the same time it is one of the essential means of reaching a political goal. Political struggles as well as struggles between individuals are nearly always struggles over the boundary of the space of free movement. Lewin, K.: Principles of Topological Psychology, 46–47, in Hollert: 7.

[29] Here, slowing down refers not to the technological progress made in this area – needless to say, movement became quicker in terms of its modes – but to the scope of people with the right to movement and to the ways this migration took place.

spective countries of origin. As a result, refugee centres and both official and unofficial camps have sprung up along migration routes, where – in reference to Agamben[30] – the state of exception is given a permanent spatial arrangement, which as such nevertheless remains outside the normal order. Concentration camps represent the most extreme form of this state of exception. Citing Mbembe, they could be termed death worlds, "new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of living dead"[31]. Comparing concentration camps with refugee camps may seem extreme, and yet both envisage exclusion from society of the people who find themselves there, condemning them to idleness. However, unlike the death camps of World War II, tightly enclosed by insurmountable walls complete with barbed wire, with rigid hierarchies of power between the guards and the prisoners, today's refugee camps are more permeable and mostly unfenced. It seems that this is no longer necessary, for the mechanisms of control and repression now function on other levels, which does not make them less effective. The impression that refugees and migrants are on the move crossing territories is false, created by the media through its rhetoric suggesting continuous movement with phrases such as "refugee waves" or "influx of refugees". The reality is quite the contrary, as Lo Presti finds: indeed, migrants experience many forms of obstacles and hierarchized immobility such as lengthy confinement in prisons and detention centres, as well as torture. This is a much more intermittent and spastic experience than the frictionless one often depicted in the news.[32] Moreover, the image of movement as a flow is inconsistent with the perception of movement today. If in the past, movement was, in fact, associated with the sense of overcoming distances and tracing one's position on a map, new mechanisms of movement have given rise to new ways of visualising movement. This is a paradigmatic shift from visualising movement and territory on maps, to navigation systems serving as tools for crossing territories. Instead of offering at least the illusion of free movement, the rationale of necropolitics produces a "motionless system of navigation"[33]. Rather than on the speed and effectiveness of the means of transport, movement therefore depends on the pace of bureaucracy, a factor invariably linked to political mechanisms. When these are lacking, idleness begins. Hazira is a refugee forever stuck, both metaphorically and literally, after her life was brought to a standstill in the Ježevac refugee camp in 1992.

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Nicht Fallen, the exhibition by Jošt Franko in the Kresija Gallery, creates a narrative arc that grows from a personal, intimate view towards a more universal level, from Hariza's story to what could be anyone's narrative. In the display, the images of the refugee experience are interlaced with memories and projections, revealing "bare life". The immobility of a refugee's life is additionally accentuated with photo sequences, a means generally used to illustrate dynamic movement; here, it makes images appear motionless, as if stuck in endless repetition. The sequence of images ultimately ends in a large photograph foregrounding birds, a frequent motif in the author's works. In combination with images of a refugee's life, birds always make a stark contrast to the refugee's sense of being trapped in a life that is not theirs, and the same effect is achieved here. In this story, however, the author goes even further by not scratching out the birds, making them absent (as he often does), but filling them with colour, making them "artificial", "unreal", placed onto the background from an undefined landscape. Rather than symbolising the lost freedom, these "fake birds" can be interpreted as a phantasm, a shroud over what is not there and has never been there – freedom and movement. This way, by allowing Europe and the world to see their own reflection, the artwork as a whole can be perceived as a warning, for the image it conveys is, symbolically, precisely the image of the impossibility of Europe contemplated by Balibar.[34]

[30] Agamben primarily refers to concentration camps, but this category can also include refugee camps. Agamben: 96.

[31] Mbembe: 40.

[32] Lo Presti: 4.

[33] Lo Presti: 9.

[34] Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulates the right to citizenship as follows: "Everyone has the right to a nationality." This is followed by the second paragraph: "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality." The document was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. This brief reference should stand in striking contrast to UNCHR's statistics, which show that there were 26 million refugees in the world at the end of 2019, of which 4.2 million were asylum seekers, and more than 4 million stateless persons. https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=R1xq (Accessed 20 July 2020)

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Jošt Franko is a visual artist and photographer. His practice is based on interdisciplinary projects exploring migration, workers' rights, and the ignored parallel histories of the communities and individuals living in the region of the former Yugoslavia.

Hazira Đafić fled the village of Blječevo near Srebrenica during the Bosnian war, and has been displaced, living in the Ježevac refugee camp near Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, since 1993. In 2019, she visited her home village for the first time in almost 30 years.

Meta Krese is a Slovenian journalist and photographer focusing mostly on social issues. She is the winner of the 2011 "Writing for Central and Eastern Europe" journalism prize.

Mirjana Dragosavljević is an art historian and curator based in Belgrade. She worked in Grafički kolektiv gallery, and was a member of the curatorial collective Kontekst kolektiv and the Working Group Four Faces of Omarska.

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