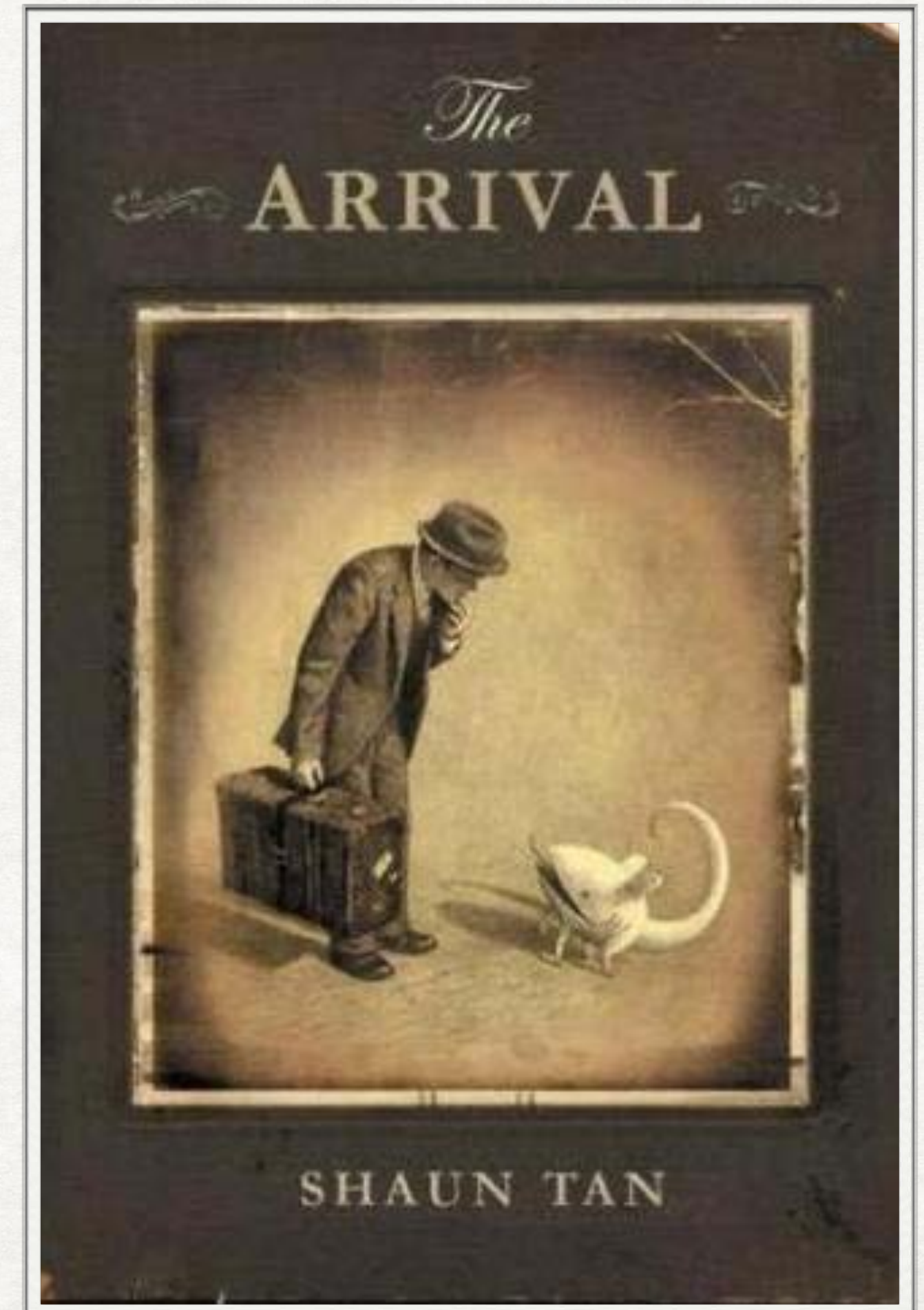




Scattering Journeys, Regenerative Environments: The Material Diasporic Storyworld in Tan's Graphic Novel *The Arrival*

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- ❖ Refugeedom as an **embodied experience**;
- ❖ Refugee narratives from a **material ecocritical perspective**;
- ❖ Ecocritical analysis of multi-award-winning graphic novel *The Arrival* (2006).



REFUGEEEDOM AS AN EMBODIED EXPERIENCE

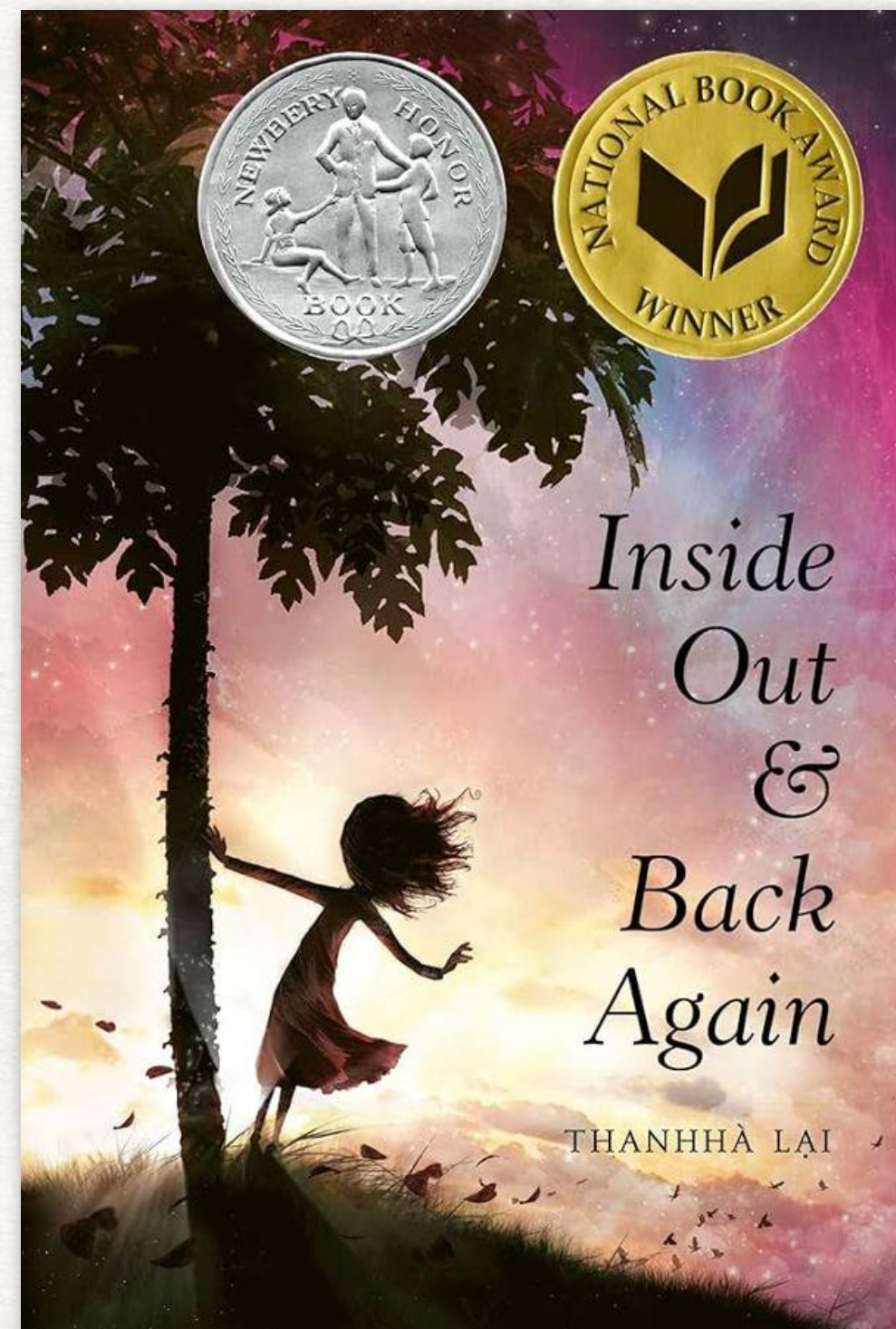
“The XXI century has been the century of the migrant” (Nail 2015: 1).



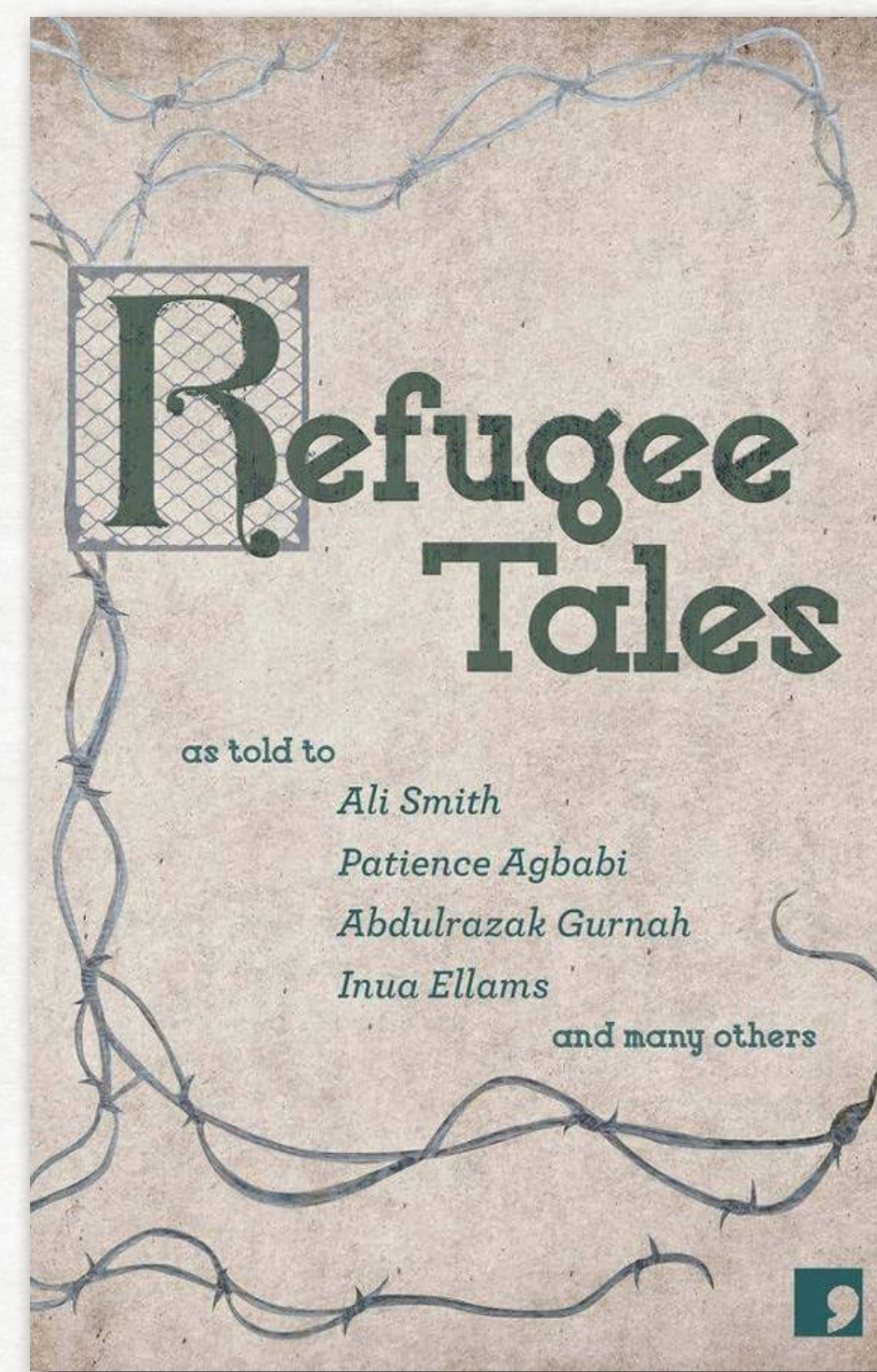
UNHCR/Roger Arnold

Refugees: “[S]omeone who has been forced to flee his or her country due to a **well-founded fear of persecution** for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group” (UNHCR 1951/2025: online).

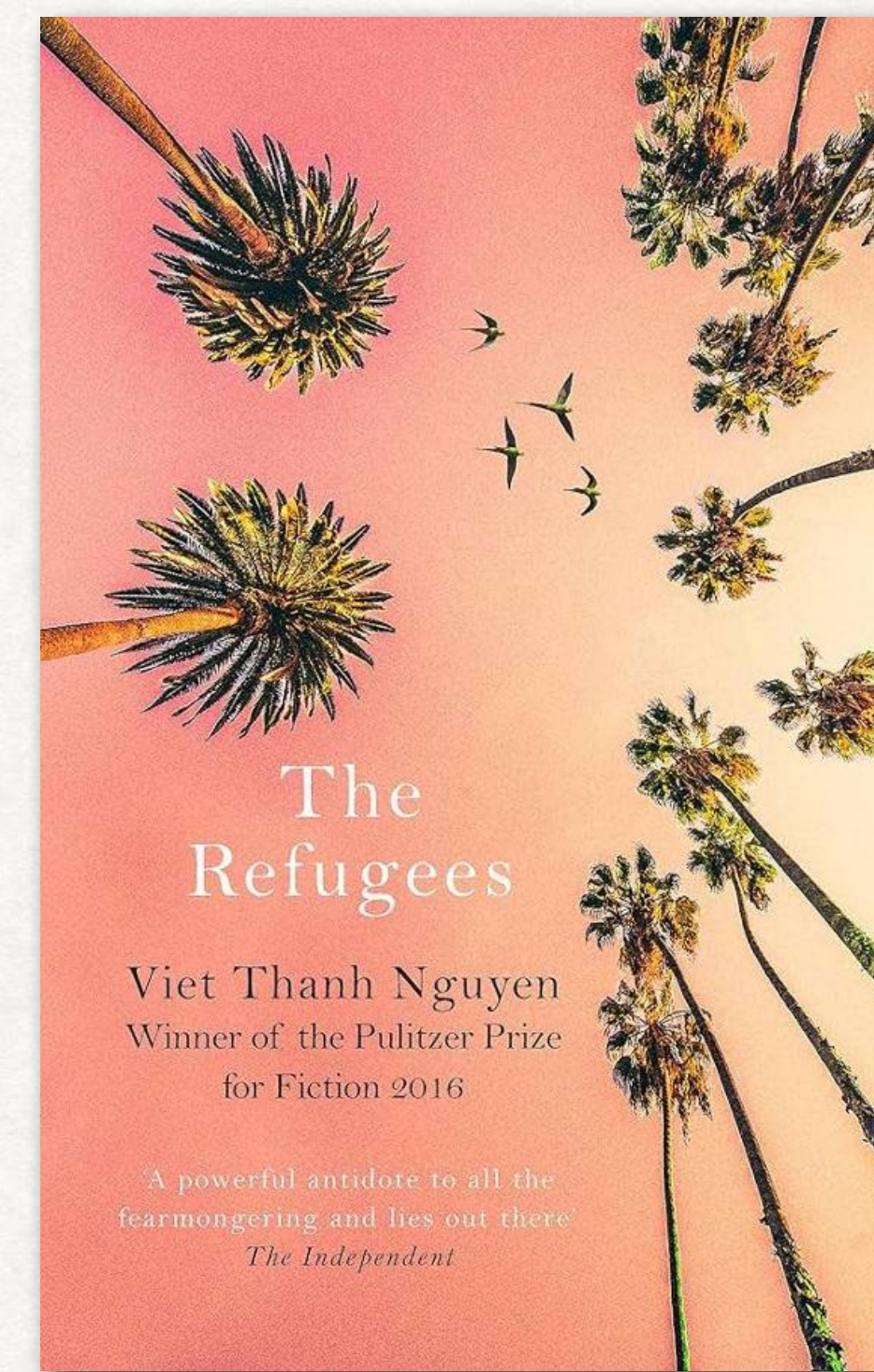
REFUGEEEDOM AS AN EMBODIED EXPERIENCE



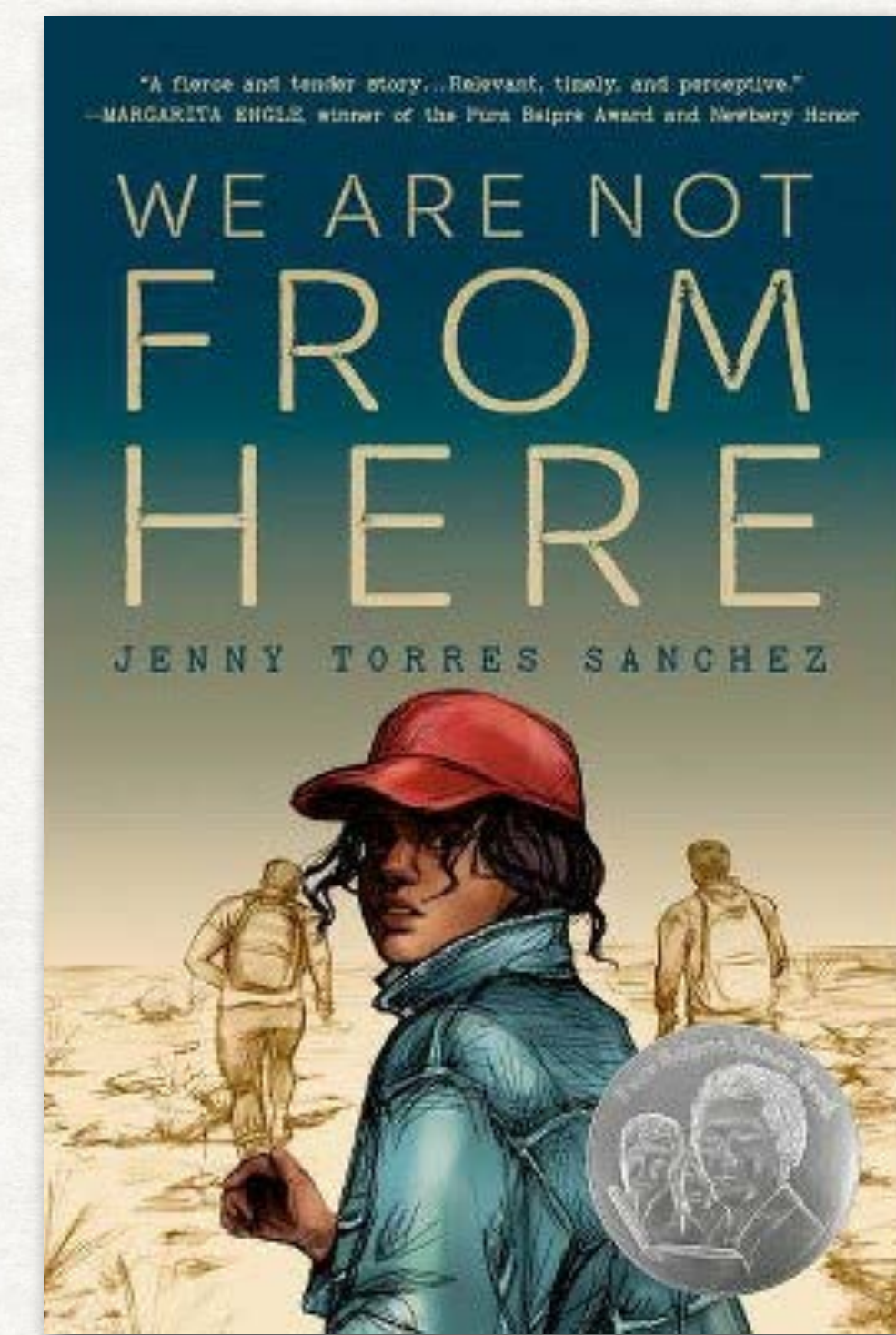
(Lai 2011)



(Smith et al. 2016)



(Thanh Nguyen 2017)

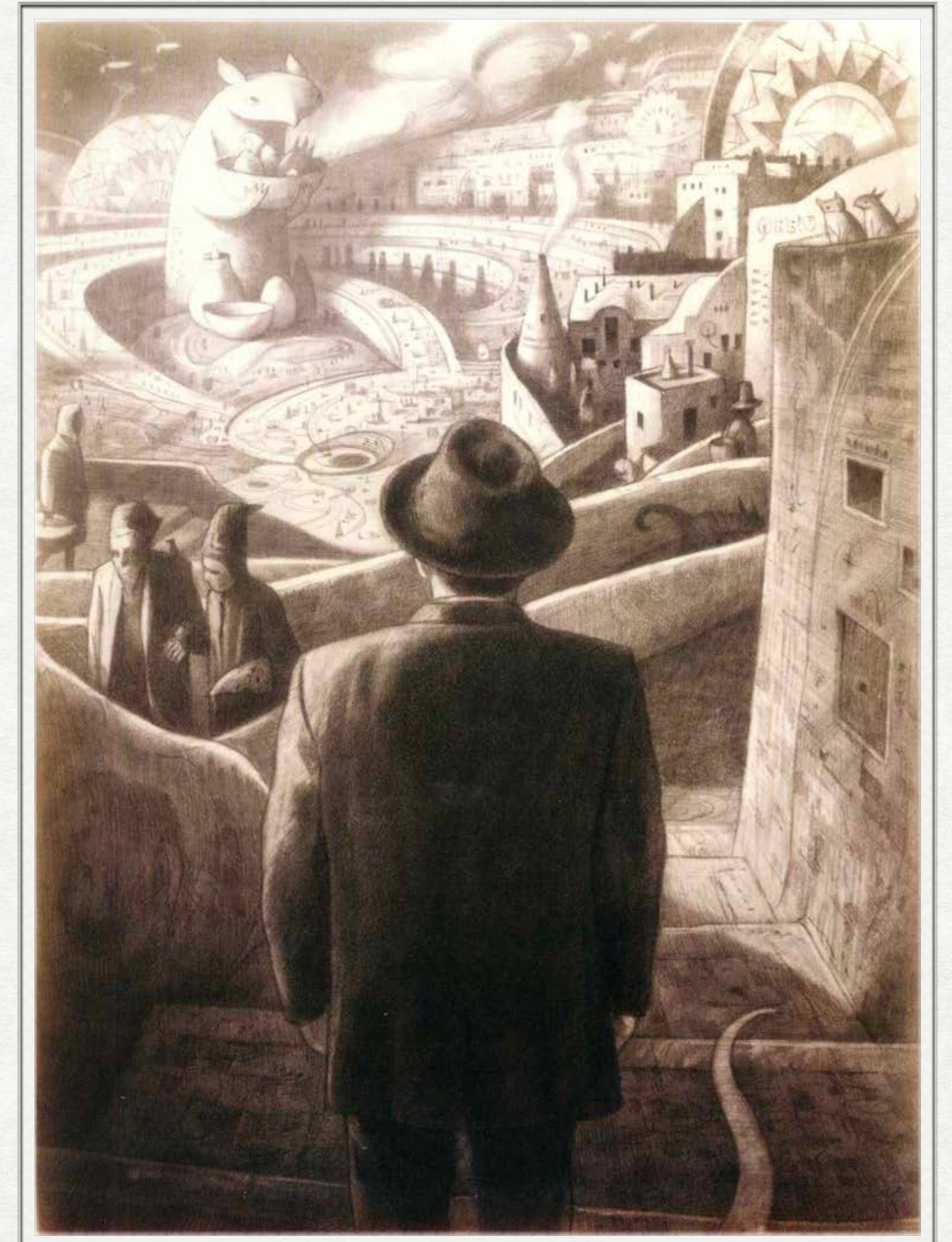


(Torres Sanchez 2020)

Contemporary refugee literature makes it possible to “reconceive, even deconstruct, the discourse of the humanitarian subject, with its exclusionary logic” (Classon Frangos and Ghose 2023: 6).

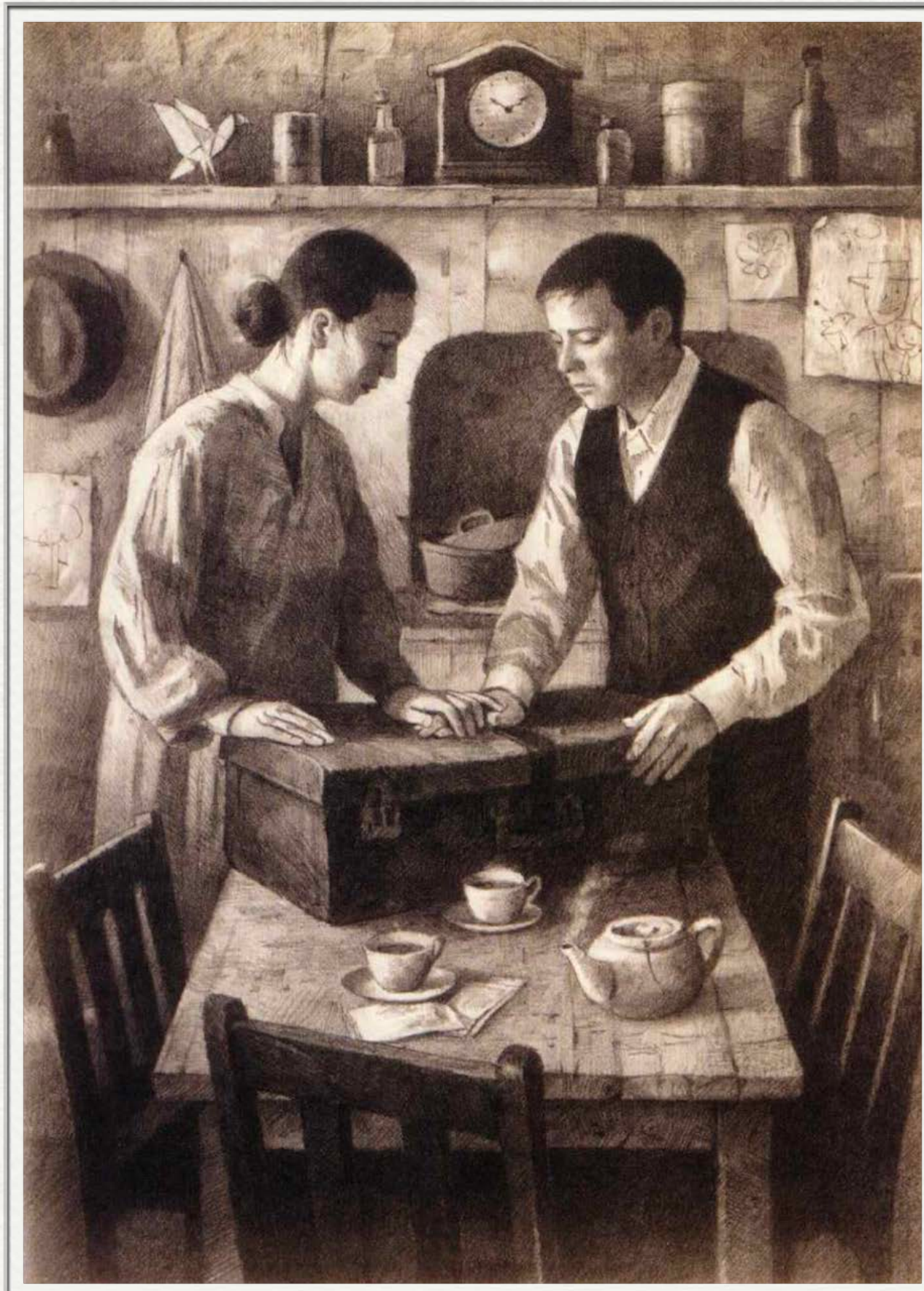
REFUGEE NARRATIVES FROM A MATERIAL ECOCRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

- ❖ Emphasis on relationality and interconnectedness, promoting “greater worldly intimacy [and] an ethic of nonhuman care” (Cohen and Duckert 2015: loc. 112);
- ❖ Challenge hierarchies and redeem diversity;
- ❖ Bring to visibility what has been relegated to the margins;
- ❖ “Environmental agentism” (*ibid.*: loc. 148) in Tan’s diasporic city.

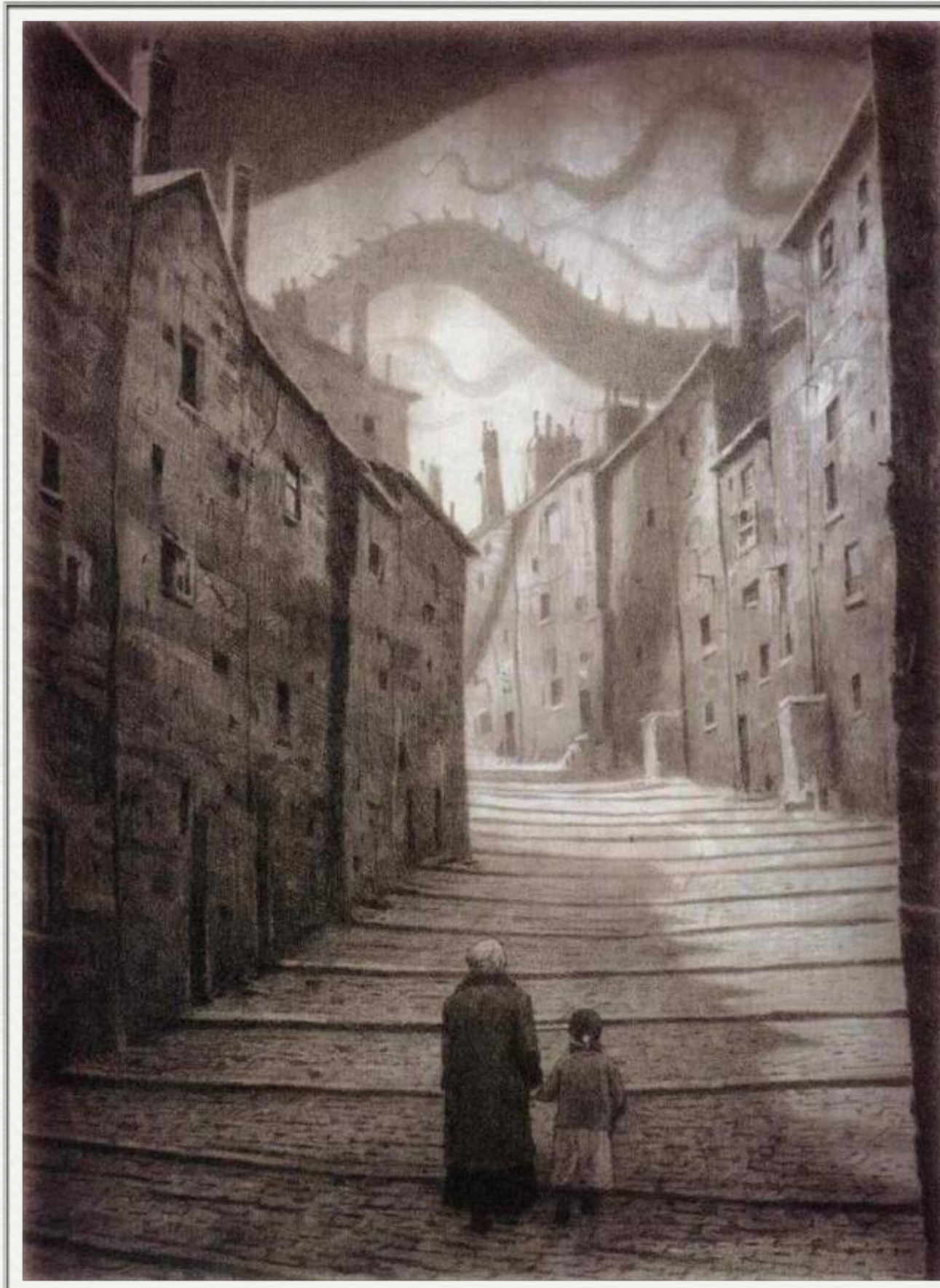


(Tan 2006: 57)

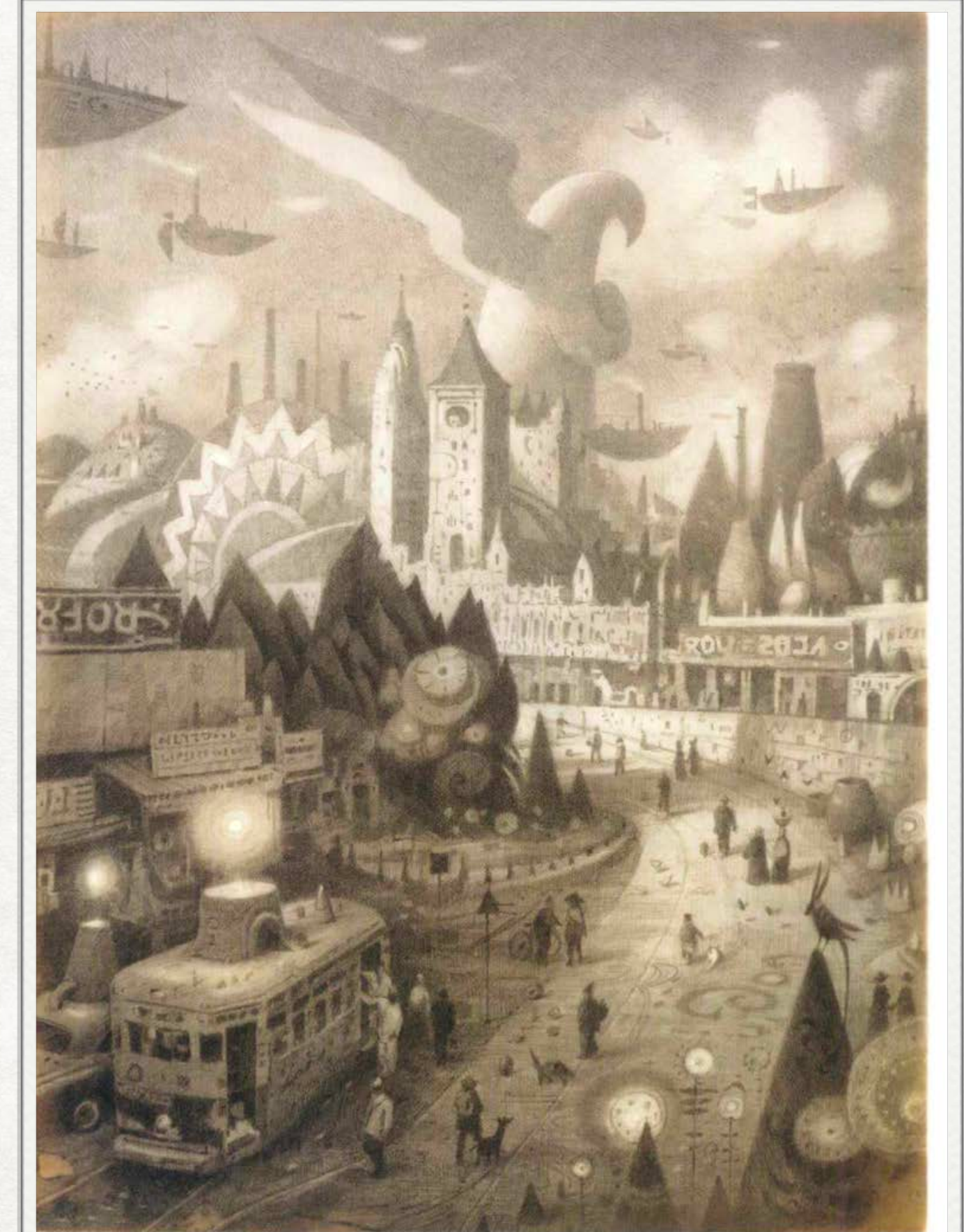
INTRA-ACTING WITH THE FOUR ELEMENTS



(p. 13)



(p. 9)



(p. 113)

AIR

“A shaping presence of aesthetic and environmental imagination” (Iovino and Oppermann 2015: loc. 6604)



(p. 30)



(p. 51)

AIR

“A shaping presence of aesthetic and environmental imagination” (Iovino and Oppermann 2015: loc. 6604)

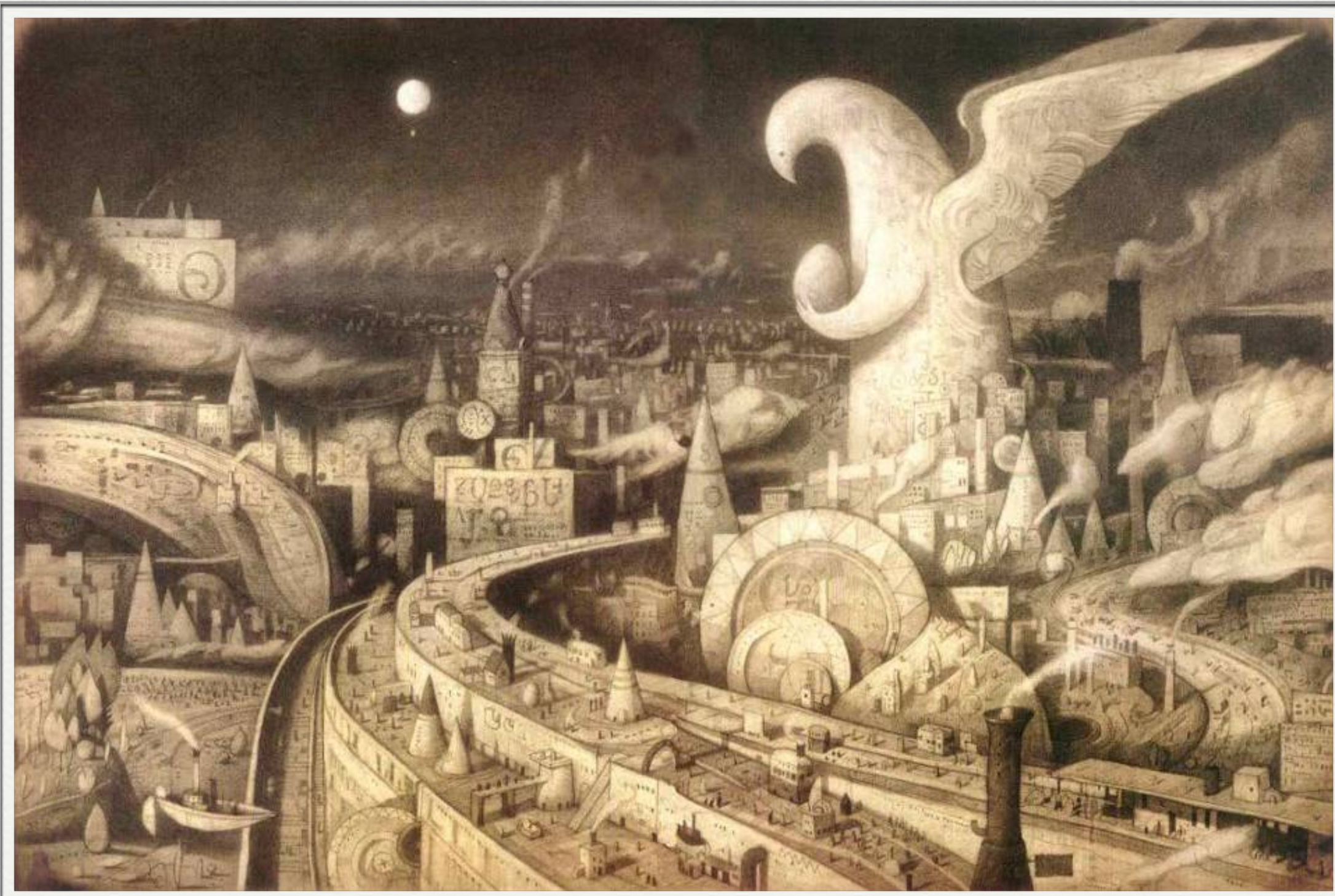


(p. 45)

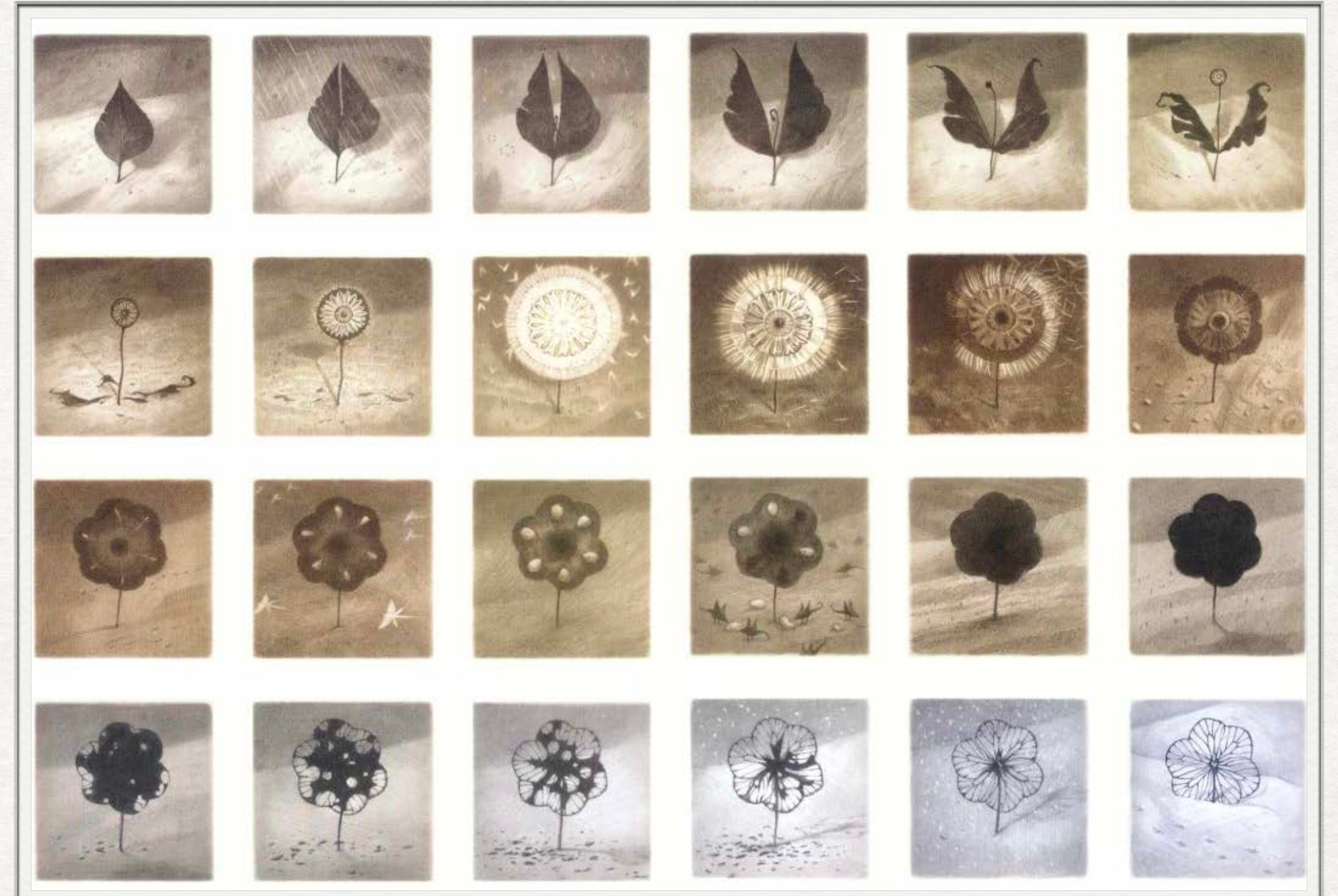


(p. 12)

EARTH



(p. 32)



(p. 101)

EARTH



(p. 108)

FIRE

“Fire moves through metamorphosis” (Harris 2015: 660)



(p. 64)



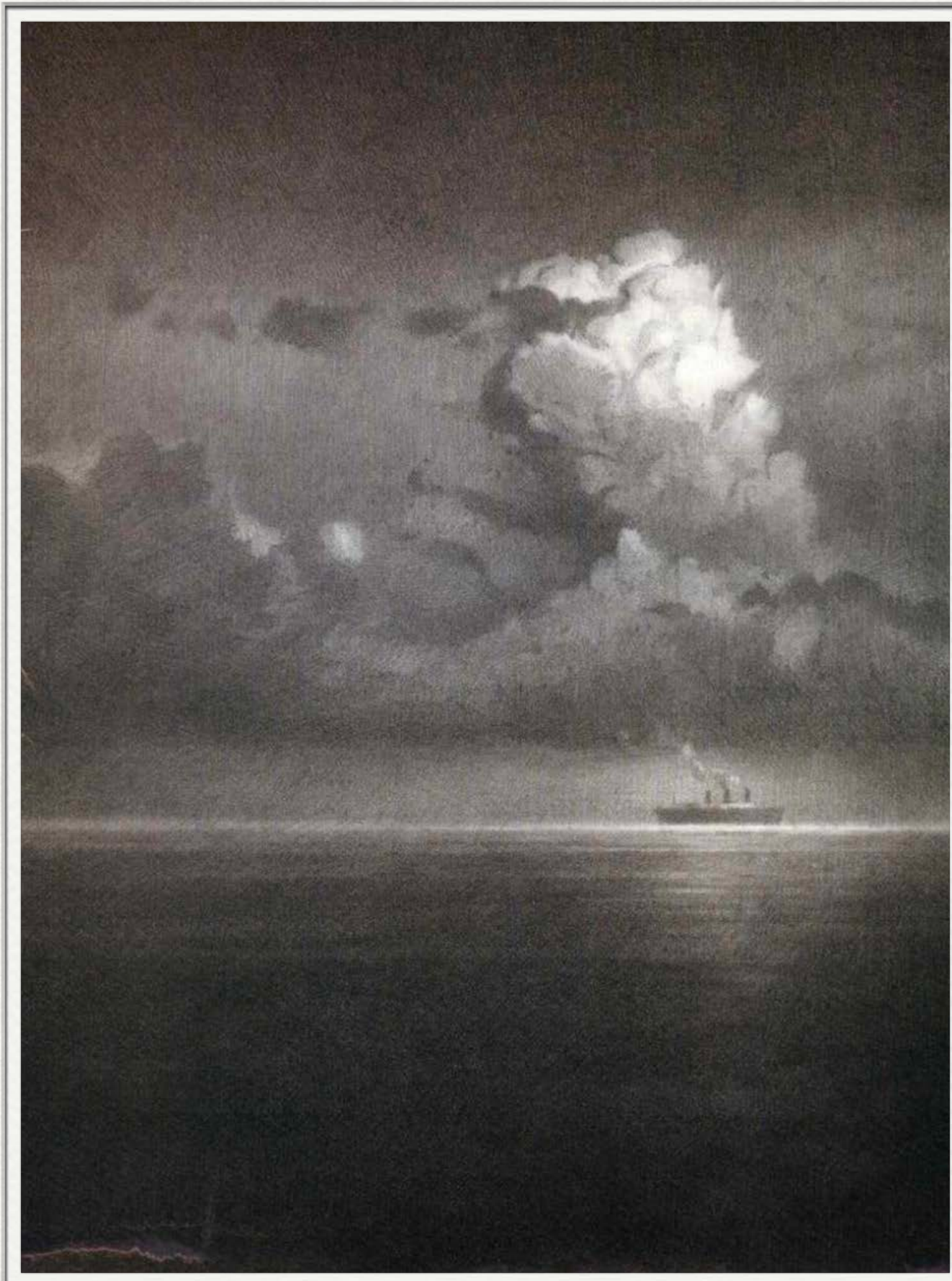
(p. 37)



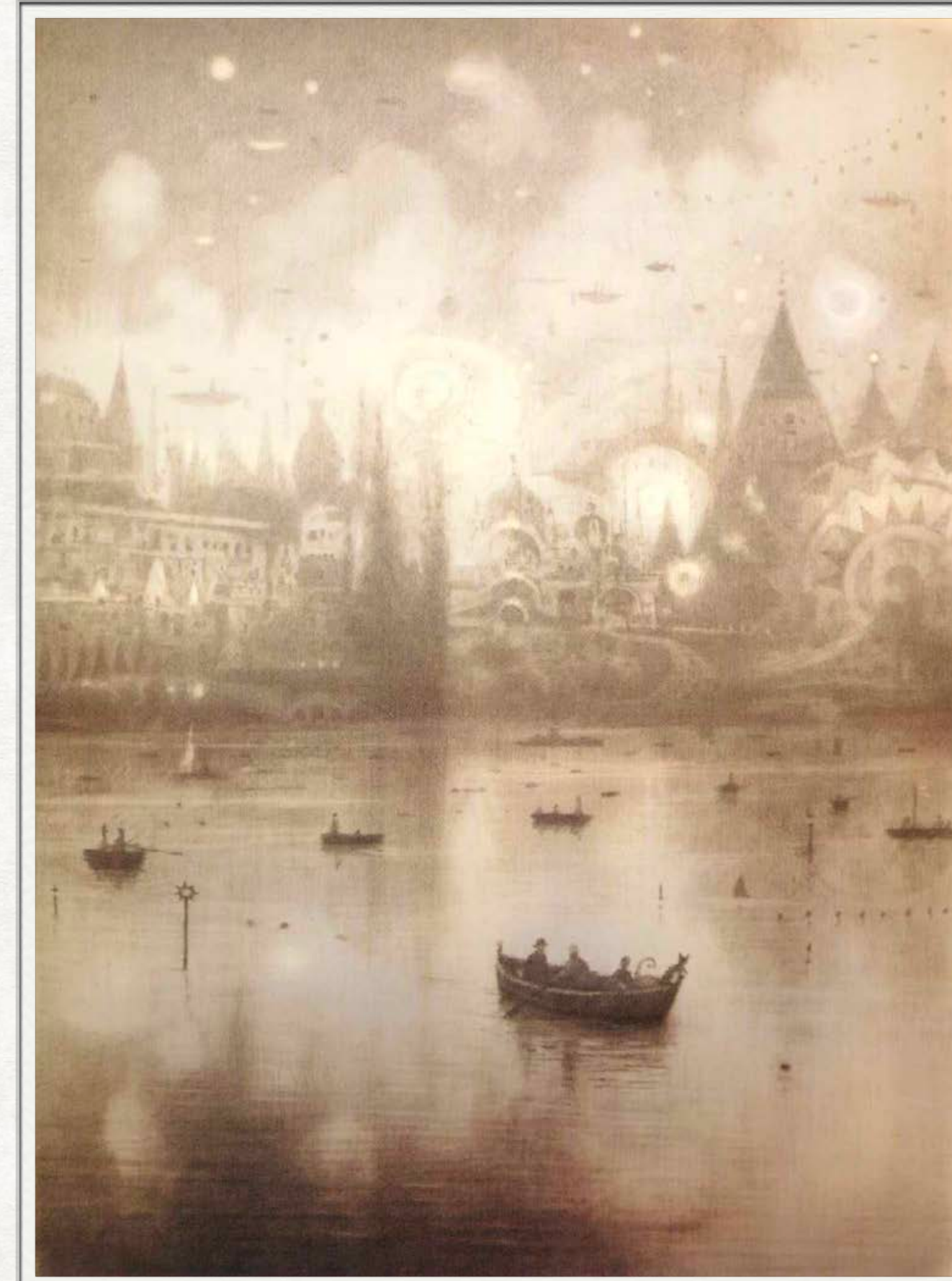
(p. 73)

WATER

Water “reworks boundaries as much as it bounds; it territorializes as much as it deterritorializes” (Duckert 2017: 55).



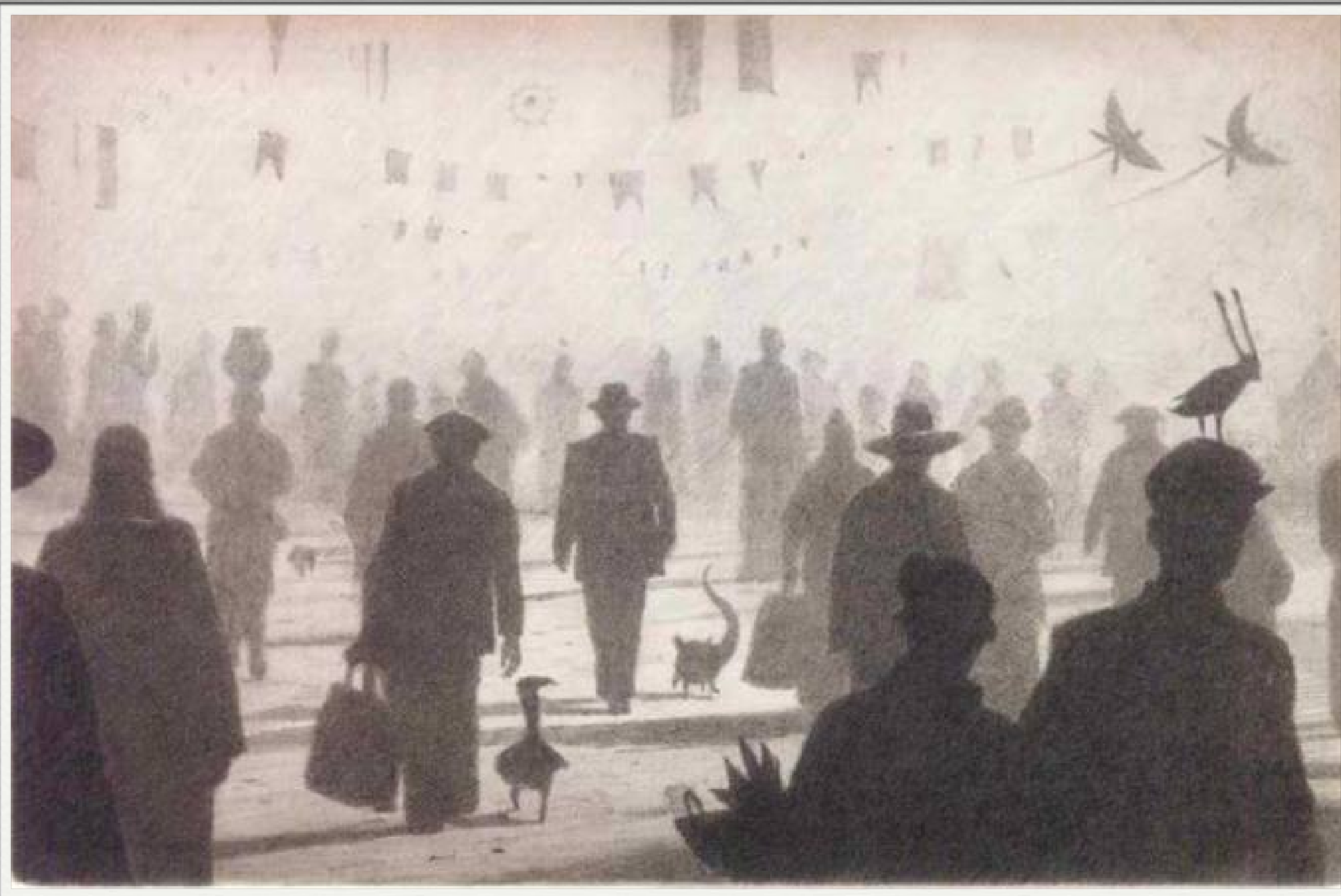
(p. 19)



(p. 70)

NONHUMAN ANIMALS

The human need for metaphorical expression and identification “finds its greatest fulfillment through reference to the animal kingdom” (Lawrence 1993: 301).



(p. 19)



(p. 23)

NONHUMAN ANIMALS

The human need for metaphorical expression and identification “finds its greatest fulfillment through reference to the animal kingdom” (Lawrence 1993: 301).



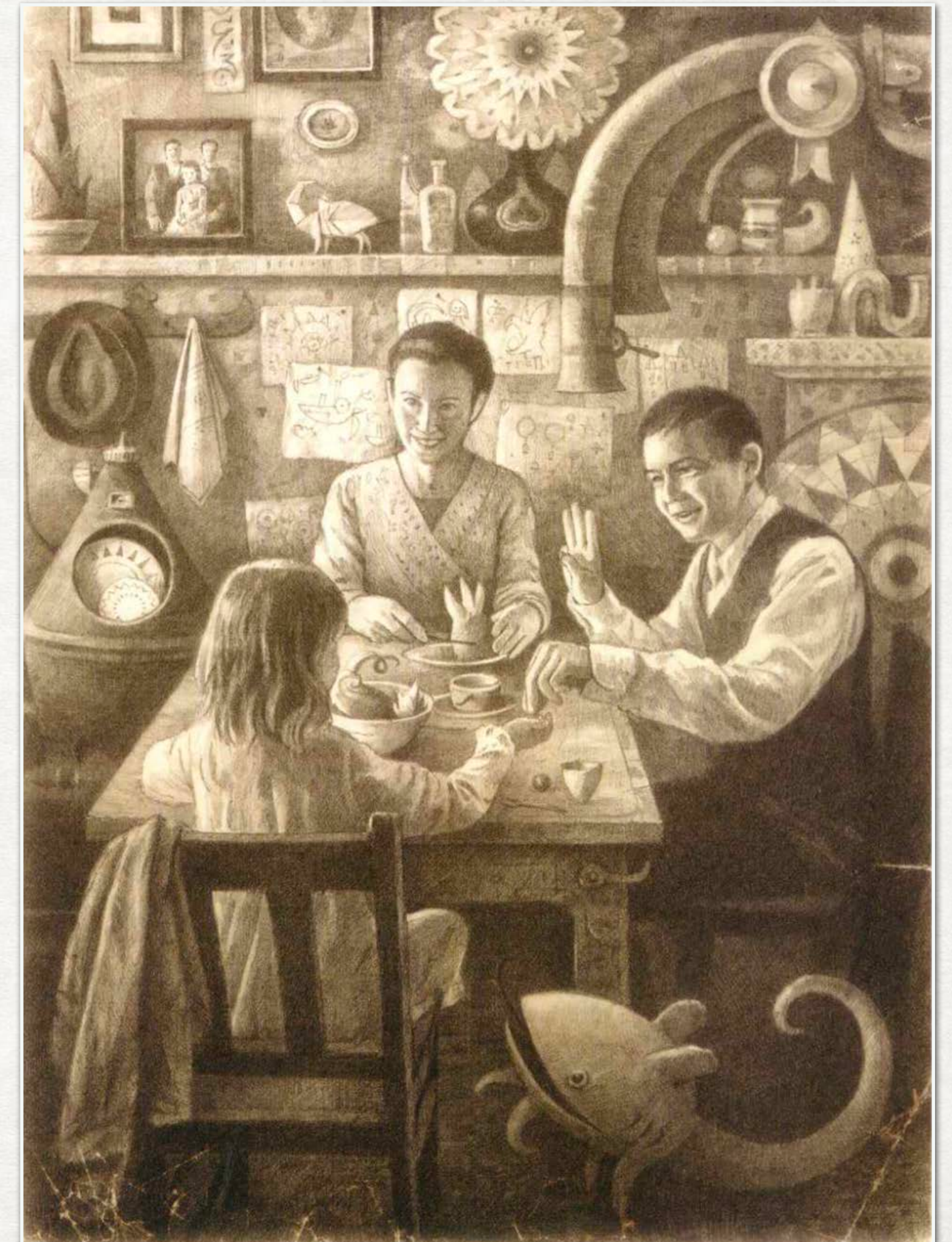
(p. 40)



(p. 76)

CONCLUSION

- ❖ Stories, memories, and meanings are materially inscribed onto physical locations;
- ❖ The diasporic city serves as a “homeplace”, i.e., a “space of care and nurturance in the face of the brutal harsh reality” (hooks 1990: 42);
- ❖ *The Arrival* is an “alter-tale” (Bennett 2001: 8) in which the narrative agents are things, nonhuman beings, places, and elemental forces that, following their relations with human actors and their worlds, produce meanings and shape reality.
- ❖ Refugeeedom as a relational and material practice.



(p. III)

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Thank you!

sofia.cavalcanti@unive.it

sofiacav1@unc.edu

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Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice