

MIROSLAV HOLUB (*translation by Ewald Osers*)

Brief reflection on maps

Albert Szent-Gyorgi, who knew a thing or two about maps,
by which life moves somewhere or other,
used to tell this story from the war,
through which history moves somewhere or other:

From a small Hungarian unit in the Alps a young lieutenant
sent out a scouting party into the icy wastes.

At once

it began to snow, it snowed for two days and the party
did not return. The lieutenant was in distress: he had sent
his men to their deaths.

On the third day, however, the scouting party was back.

Where had they been? How had they managed to find their way?

Yes, the men explained, we certainly thought we were
lost and awaited our end. When suddenly one of our lot
found a map in his pocket. We felt reassured.

We made a bivouac, waited for the snow to stop, and then

with the map

found the right direction.

And here we are.

The lieutenant asked to see that remarkable map in order to
study it. It wasn't a map of the Alps
but the Pyrenees.

Goodbye.

