Introduction: "Where are they flocking from?"

> The figure of the immigrant is part of the very intellectual mechanism that holds us – as postcolonial Europeans, black and white, indeterminate and classifiable – hostage.[1]

In the post-*Brexit*, twenty-first century Europe that is busy building razor fences and new walls, and turns refugees seeking entry to Europe's fortress into a vast but classifiable mass of "immigrants" who are driving Europe and its reluctant European neighbour – Britain – to a "breaking point",[2] it is useful to reflect on Gilroy's concluding remarks to *After Empire.* In his attempt to shift the critical privileging of the figure of the migrant as an all-enveloping backdrop against which we often seek to understand our postcolonial present and explain the contemporary attitudes to strangers and newcomers, Gilroy rightly suggests there is a need to focus on working through the legacy of empire: racism and its historical transmutations. Because if we are to transcend Europe's colonial legacy, which usually only surfaces in the form of imperialist nostalgia, and develop a progressive critique of the present, he reminds us of the ways in which imperial attitudes shaped the multicultural realities of post-imperial Europe even before the immigrants arrived. These attitudes continue to affect those that arrive today precisely because, as Gilroy writes, "postcolonial people" are usually seen only as "*unwanted aliens* without any substantive historical, political or cultural connections to the collective life of their fellow subjects".[3] As he notes in his 2006 lecture, "even if today's unwanted incomers - from Brazil or Eastern Europe - are not actually postcolonials, they may still carry all the ambivalence of the vanished empire with them".[4] The publication of *After Empire* in 2004 coincided with another European unification in the twenty-first century. The enlargement of the European Union with ten new member states, mostly ex-communist and Eastern European, resulted in their citizens' subsequent arrival *en masse* in Britain and two other Western European countries, Ireland and Sweden, that did not immediately introduce transitional work restrictions and regulatory restraints that would limit one of the EU's four freedoms - free movement of people - to its new members. What kind of "new" Europe did these apparently emancipatory processes create? Did the then Labour government initially keep the promise of "equal European citizenship" by waiving the restriction of free movement, when "all other member states "from 'old' Europe immediately imposed labor restrictions on free circulation for citizens from 'new' Europe"?[5] Or was this seemingly benevolent gesture of

the British government (we know that Tony Blair was a great advocate for EU enlargement) simply a smokescreen for gaining a cheap labour force that was ready to come voluntarily to the British shores? On the other hand, did the accession to the EU for its new members finally mark the end of their long "return to Europe" (read a smooth acceptance of capitalism) that began with the transitional moment of 1989? As those of us who still belong to what Serbian writer Dragan Velikić describes as lesser, or "B-Europe",[6] were "listening to the wind of change"[7] this celebratory moment of European unification only reminded us of our place in the EU waiting room. Because soon the wind was blowing in a less friendly direction, carrying with it the EU-enlargement-fatigue-to-come and stirring all kinds of anxieties about the new members.

If the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of Eastern European borders after 1989 have resulted in a heightened awareness of the region and its citizens, it is the presence of the New Europeans in Britain that has made an impact on public consciousness. Recently, there has been a rise in the number of fictional, drama and film representations of what is now referred to as "New Europe"; that is, the reconfiguration of Europe after 1989, the EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007, and the lifting of work restrictions for the citizens of Romania and Bulgaria in January 2014.[8] This book seeks to examine the representations of New Europeans in the light of these changes. I use the terms "New Europe" and "New Europeans" throughout this volume to refer to the countries and citizens that recently became part of the EU, and I use them interchangeably with the term "Eastern Europe" and "Eastern Europeans" to signify rather loosely both a Western construction that has a long and well-documented history and an imagined community of Eastern Europeans with a shared, but not necessarily identical, experience of communism "at home" and otherness in the West in the wake of post-communist, post-EU enlargement migrations. Of course, both terms have had highly contradictory meanings. Historically and conceptually, the variations such as Eastern/South-eastern Europe, East/Central Europe, the Balkans and Western Balkans, and the recent construction "New Europe", are all notoriously shifting signifiers. Whether "we" were in or outside the EU, "we" were soon to become "Eastern Europeans" again.

During and after the recent British referendum on EU membership, Eastern Europeans became unwanted aliens in a more open and hostile way. When I began

researching this volume in 2008 at the time of the rising popularity of UKIP, hardly a week would pass without hearing about those who are still often lumped together under the generalizing and reductive rubric of "Eastern European" in the British media and the press. For example, "Eastern Europeans" were unashamedly camping at the 7/7 memorial in Hyde Park, and the *Daily Mail* and other tabloids would continue to produce almost a daily dosage of similar headlines. Sifting through his own collection of stereotypes, Tim Dowling notes in 2007 how "Eastern Europeans" are also "eating our swans, stealing our unwanted clothes and offering bad service in 'our' restaurants". [9] It came as no surprise then that Boston in Lincolnshire, dubbed as "the most Eastern European town in the UK" in the populist press, had the UK's highest Brexit vote and that their presence indeed reached the unbearable breaking point.[10] Of course, many reports have looked at the relationship between the vote for Brexit and migration, and with mixed findings. The received opinion (on the left) is that areas with a larger immigrant population were more likely to vote remain. But as the Rowntree report indicates, it is more comples than this and it is areas with a suddenly increased immigrant population that were slightly more likely to vote to leave.

The idea of Europe and the EU has also been significantly modified after the Brexit vote. The Conservative politician Michael Gove commented during his Leave campaign that if Britain voted to remain in the EU, it would be "voting to be hostages locked in the back of the car driven headlong toward deeper EU integration".[11] There is, of course, much to be said about the space that is opened up between Gove's call for Britain to "liberate" itself from the EU and the EU's integration of its new members presented as "coming back to Europe", and I can only make here a quick, precipitous leap. While Britain has voted to "take the country back" and no longer be the EU's hostage, or as some commentators have suggested, the people hit hardest by austerity have pulled a brake on the EU as a revolt against the political elites and decades-long economic devastation, it still remains hostage to the figure of the immigrant that Gilroy writes about, whether that figure materializes as the "Eastern European immigrant" or something else.

The word "hostage" has an interesting history. The word comes from Latin *hospes* meaning guest, or host, but is also close to *hostis* meaning stranger, or enemy. Dejan Lukić registers these competing meanings and explains how "on one hand a host is a person who receives guests (the hospitable aspect of hostaging); on the other, a host is also a person

who has been invaded by a pathogenic organism (the immunological aspect)”.[12] From c30 B.C. onwards, the word acquires negative connotations moving towards ‘enemy’ and ‘army’ (from the plural *hostes*, enemies). The root common to both *hospes* and *hostis* is *hos*-, meaning either shelter, refugee or food. According to some etymologists, the word “hostage” possibly also originates from old French *ostage* meaning lodging, shelter, or dwelling.[13] This shift from guest to enemy, from offering food and shelter to sheltering oneself against the enemy, is fascinating. It opens up a whole new realm for rethinking otherness and our capacity today to offer (and refuse) hospitality to those who are still seen as “strangers” or “enemies” to the “European” way of life. It is useful to pause here and revisit some of the philosophical reflections on hospitality. Maurice Blanchot, who wrote extensively on the question of the Other as a question of ethics, writes in *The Infinite Conversation* how “hospitality consists less in nourishing the guest than in restoring in him a taste for food by recalling him to the level of need, to a life where one can say and stand hearing said, ‘*And now, let us not forget to eat*’”.[14] In a similar way, Julia Kristeva evokes the language of food and shelter in her description of the encounter between host and guest. The section is from her seminal book *Strangers to Ourselves* and deserves to be quoted at length:

> The meeting often begins with a food fest: bread, salt and wine. A meal, a nutritive communion. The one confesses he is a famished baby, the other welcomes the greedy child; for an instant, they merge within the hospitality ritual. […] A miracle of flesh and thought, the *banquet of hospitality is the foreigners’ utopia – the cosmopolitanism of a moment, the brotherhood of guests who soothe and forget their differences*, the banquet is outside of time. It imagines itself eternal in the intoxication of those who are *nevertheless aware of its temporary frailty*. [15] (my italics)

This disturbing passage, with its intimations of possible violence, starkly sums up how the relationship between guest and host is built upon an uneven encounter. It can be easily applied to so many recent conflicts in European history or to Europe’s depressing response to the current refugee crisis.

Ryszard Kapuściński examines various conceptions of the Other in European history since the Classical period to the present day. In earlier formulations, as Kapuściński illustrates through his reference to the Greek historian Herodotus's 2,500 year old distinction between Greek (European) and *barbaros* (non-Greek/European, barbarian, foreign), the Other is not described with fear or hatred.[16] Despite this, Kapuściński reminds us, the Other as a European invention has always been part of a Hegelian dialectic – the inference that the self and the Other are connected and formed in relation to each other – which is inherent in the very distinction between the European versus the non-European. From the end of the Middle Ages and coinciding with European colonial expansion (to slightly over-simplify this huge historical sweep) the humanity of the Other is seriously compromised. According to Enrique Dussel, during this time Europe also emerges as an identity, a "unified ego exploring, conquering, colonizing an alterity". [17] He/she becomes racialised - a naked savage, a cannibal, or a pagan versus the civilized, white, Christian European. The Other is conquered and enslaved, and this negative treatment and genocidal practice towards the Other would culminate in the Holocaust. During the Enlightenment, Kapuściński writes, "at least there were attempts to recognize that the monstrous Other is a human being too as evident in the much worshipped triad of "liberty, fraternity, equality". The Other is similar to "us" but not quite – think, for example, of the idea of the "the noble savage" or a "Christianized slave" – yet the image of the Other as a bearer of cultural and racial features and beliefs persists to the present day.[18]

To be classifiable as "Eastern European" makes one Other and not quite European. For there is, indeed, today a "Europe A" and a "Europe B" even after the end of communist Europe. As Larry Wolff writes in *Inventing Eastern Europe*, "the iron curtain is gone, and yet the shadow persists".[19] Since the late 1990s several important studies have explored the invention of Eastern Europe and the Balkans as a result of the Western gaze. The titles of the most significant publications in this area including Wolff's contribution, Maria Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* (1997), Vesna Goldsworthy's *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (1998) and, more recently, Nataša Kovačević's *Narrating Post/communism: Colonial Discourse and Europe's Borderline Civilization* (2008), clearly demonstrate their indebtedness to postcolonial studies and the Orientalist interpretative frameworks pioneered by Edward Said. These studies and critical approaches

are an important part of my own scholarly lineage and it is clear from my introductory notes that *Imagining New Europe* attempts to thread the same affiliative path and contribute to the existing scholarship on the representations of Eastern Europe. However, while the studies listed above have examined Western constructions of Eastern Europe through postcolonial notions of in-betweenness, marginality and otherness, their main focus (Wolff, Goldsworthy, Todorova) was on locating the discourse of "Other Europe" during the Enlightenment and how the perceptions of the Balkans specifically (and Eastern Europe, more broadly) as backward, semi-civilized and not-quite-European have persisted during the Cold War period and the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. Expansions of the EU in the 21st century have brought in a renewed interest in "Other Europe" by contemporary writers, filmmakers and the media. To date, no singular text seeks to evaluate the representations of "New/Eastern Europeans" in contemporary literature and culture in the light of these recent migratory movements and changes. It is my hope that *Imagining New Europe,* with its critical deconstruction of Eastern European migrants in British and Eastern European texts, would thus revitalise the study of Balkanist discourse, initiated by Goldsworthy, Todorova and Wolff in the 1990s. Another aim of this volume is to further our understanding of contemporary anxieties over intra-European migration, race, identity, and their intersections with politics as represented in multiple contemporary cultural texts.

Balkanism as a term, or Eastern Europe as a postcolonial space, still remains relatively unknown or absent from Anglophone postcolonial studies, despite recent contributions by predominantly Eastern European scholars to repair the gap.[20] In his article "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique", David Chioni Moore examines both "the silence of postcolonial studies today on the subject of the former Soviet sphere" as well as the failure of "native" scholars to engage with post-Soviet postcoloniality, which is, of course, complex and diverse just like the postcolonial world that was colonized by Western European powers.[21] Ella Shohat, in her seminal 1992 article "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial", examines how major postcolonial theorists have been reluctant to engage with the so-called Second-World which is usually mentioned only in passing. This reluctance is also registered in recent work. In his opening article for the the special issue of *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* dedicated to the intersections between postcolonialism and post-communism, Neil Lazarus begins by noting his reservation with

regards to supervising potential PhD dissertations on contemporary post-communist literature using postcolonial theory. Interestingly, he makes a casual error by lumping together the students who contacted him over the years as belonging to "one or another of the former Soviet bloc countries – Lithuania, say, or Poland, Croatia, Hungary" (note the odd one out).[22] The category "Eastern Europe" keeps haunting the present and emerging in different forms.

There have been numerous studies and articles in the last couple of decades that looked at the legacy of other empires in the region, such as the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian, beside the effects of the Soviet domination post-1989 and 1991, as well as those being primarily concerned with the invention of Eastern Europe as a result of the Western gaze. Starting from an epistemological question of how "we" come to know about the Balkans and Eastern Europe, the first stage of this scholarly debate began with a revisionist history of Western representations of the Balkans and Eastern Europe, reaching as far back as the Western European Enlightenment. This provided a contextual background for when, how and why the subsequent body of knowledge about Eastern Europe emerged and it examines how Western perceptions have consolidated the image of Eastern Europe in such persistently negative terms to the present day. In a similar manner, Roberto Dainotto has examined the "defective Europeanness of the south" - the countries recently known by the resoundingly ugly acronym PIGS, which, as Dominguez explains, has been used to refer "to the 'porcine' economies of Portugal, Ireland, Greece, and Spain".[23] Of course, the use of postcolonial frameworks for the Eastern European context has always been under scrutiny.

In her influential study, Todorova rightly points out that, because of their non-colonial status, the Balkans (and Eastern Europe) have been left "out of the sphere of interest of the postcolonial critique".[24] Todorova insists on a clear distinction between orientalist and Balkanist discourse. As she asserts, the Balkans, "semicolonial [and] semicivilized", "have always evoked the image of a bridge or a crossroads […] between East and West" (16, 15). Unlike the feminization of the Orient, the Balkans have been "devoid of the mystery of exoticism", and traditionally gendered as male (14). By examining the effects of the Ottoman imperial legacy in the Balkans, Todorova points out that during the Europeanization of the Balkans in the 19th and 20th centuries (13), "the construction of

several Balkan self-identities were invariably erected against an ‘oriental’ other” (20). The result of this process, as Bjelić and Savić explain in *Balkan as Metaphor,* is that “while Gandhi and the Hindu internalized Orientalized stereotypes to resist their colonial identifications, […] in the Balkans, […] people subverted their own identities by orientalising one another”.[25] This form of “subjectivational practice” finds its embodiment politically in the phenomenon of “nesting Orientalism” (Bakić-Hayden) and culturally in Alexander Kiossev’s notion of “self-colonizing” cultures.[26] Thus Serbian writer Vladimir Arsenijević notes how the “Yugoslavian brand of racism was always directed at those who were on the next rung down geographically and economically”, and particularly at Kosovo Albanians who were at the very bottom.[27] The legacy of nesting orientalism is also repeated in “the discourse of Central Europe as a redeemable Eastern Europe and […] the Balkans as irredeemable, extreme, and problematic Eastern Europe”.[28] Indeed, the claims to racial/cultural closeness to Europe are increasingly emphasized in the post-communist period, as Nataša Kovačević notes: “thus, Romanians invoke their Latin origin, the Polish their Catholicism, etc.”[29] By using identity markers such as Latin origins and Catholicism, these nations align themselves culturally with the West in their self-imagining (and consequently distance themselves from their less “worthy” neighbours).

I draw on these insights in my exploration of Eastern European (self)-identification and the ways in which integration of ex-communist states into the EU is represented as a seamless and natural development without which, as Perry Anderson ironically observes, “Eastern Europe would never have reached the safe harbour of democracy”.[30] With reference to Boris Buden’s brilliant evocation of Robinson Crusoe as an appropriate paradigm for the new man of post-communist transition, I look at how Eastern European migration is predominantly represented as an individualistic, money-making pursuit in a range of fictions and films that I examine. My general argument is that contemporary Eastern Europeans remain knowable only through certain stereotypes and as quite specific economic migrants – builders, plumbers, agricultural and factory workers, nannies. Their own agency consists only in the act of migrating because of economic reasons, but their journey of self-advancement and development is constantly thwarted by not being capitalist (there are rare instances) enough or European enough. They can only mimic the capitalist

ideal, as the protagonist of Rose Tremain's novel *The Road Home* does by opening a successful Western-inspired restaurant in his home village.

I also draw on recent critiques of post-communist transitions as a "return to Europe" and blind acceptance of neoliberal restructuring of society and integration into the capitalist economy. I am in agreement with critics such as Nataša Kovačević, and with Igor Štiks and Srećko Horvat who draw attention to the neo-colonial character of these changes. In their recent collection of essays, aptly titled *Welcome to the Desert of Post-socialism*, Štiks and Horvat emphasize that "the narrative of integration of the former socialist European countries into the Western core actually hides a monumental neo-colonial transformation of this region into a dependent semi-periphery".[31] And from that desert, as Andaluna Borcila, explains, re-appropriating a familiar Balkanist trope of ruined and neglected sites in need of Western investment, modernization and intervention, Eastern Europe becomes "a spectacle of capitalism emerging out of the ruins of communism, at once a disaster site and a site in potential recovery".[32] The narrative of Eastern Europe as constantly lagging behind and being in a state of "eternal transitional predicament" inflects a range of contemporary Western representations.[33]

While the existing studies of Eastern Europe primarily focus on examining Western representations and stereotypes, this book also discusses Eastern European self-imagining in order to elucidate the forms of cultural racism Eastern Europeans are faced with in the "West". I also consider the rarely examined issue of the relationship between the Eastern European desire to belong to (Western) Europe and racism in Eastern Europe. By shining a light on Eastern European racism, my intention is also to try and avoid the familiar scholarly trap of presenting the subaltern Eastern European as virtuous and always the victim, but never the victimiser. Madina Tlostanova notes that "the post socialist people have acquired the problematic human status they occupy today not through race but through a poorly representable semi-alterity", they have also acquired the uneasy, and often problematic, "intersections with other Others" in the post-communist, and I add, Western metropolitan space.[34] As it will become clear in the subsequent pages, I am trying resolve here a number of contradictions and my aim is to offer a more complex view of these representations.

So far I have been referring to the Balkans and Eastern Europe separately as a way of acknowledging the developments in the field. However, as Borcila notes, many scholars "engage with these categories interchangeably […] for a number of interrelated reasons, including (most notably): that the mapping and borders of Eastern Europe and the Balkans shift, and the discourses on and the representations of both overlap, have embedded Orientalist inflection".[35] I, too, find Balkanism flexible as a category and this is useful when examining the Othering of Eastern Europeans in contemporary literature and culture. Despite the fact that Bulgarians and Poles, for example, are far apart from each other on the geographical map, they can all be subsumed under the category "Eastern European". Reflecting on the publication of *Imagining the Balkans*, some fifteen years ago, Todorova acknowledges that Balkanism has a number of different incarnations and writes that even though Balkanism has shifted, in the sense that it no "longer serves power politics", it is "still, encountered abundantly in journalism and fiction".[36] Unfortunately, Balkanist stereotypes, while different from the 18th and 19th century incarnations, still continue to shape the representations of Eastern Europeans in recent fiction and film as I show in Chapters 1 and 2. Looking at the points of convergence and difference between Eastern Europe and the Balkans in terms of historical legacy, Todorova also notes that "geographically, Eastern Europe", as a larger concept, encompasses the Balkans, yet in a politico-historical sense it actually divided the region during the Cold War".[37] Scholars such as Andrew Hammond have examined Cold-war representations of Eastern Europe in British fiction and I argue that, together with Balkanist discourse, the effects of the mental mapping of the Cold War continue to shape the perceptions of post-communist migrants.[38] As Tanja Petrović notes in her examination of the political discourse of the European Union towards the Western Balkans, "old patterns of otherness in Europe reproduced through orientalist and Balkanist discourses have not disappeared with the arrival of new patterns introduced by the ideology of Europeanism".[39] Indeed, there has been a proliferation of new forms of Othering in the post-communist and post-EU accession period. While Balkanism alone, as developed by Todorova and other critics, may be helpful for exploring the issues of representation and stereotyping, the "transformations" of ex-communist countries into "European" ones and the attendant forms of neo-colonial subordination and inequality, are worth considering in the light of recent critiques of post-communist

transition to capitalism and in terms of a "return to Europe". In his excellent book *Eurosis*, Mitja Velikonja draws on Homi Bhabha's concept of colonial mimicry by which the colonizer encourages the colonized to copy or 'mimic' aspects of the colonizing culture, producing subjects who are almost the same, but not quite, to show how "the initiation of a group that undergoes transition involves the furnishing of proof that it deserves unification and advancement to a 'higher' status", as evident in the lengthy and often complicated incorporation and implementation the EU's *acquis communautaire* by candidate countries. As Velikonja further explains, "the exclusivity of Europe rests on the despondent mentality of us, the late-comers, and the air of triumph of this Europe thrives on the sense of remoteness, backwardness and smallness in those who are about to join it".[40] So an intersectional post-communist and postcolonial approach, as Cristina Sandru also advocates, will help to explain "the persistence of certain modes of thinking in the West in relation to the 'new members' of the European family".[41]

Along similar lines Todorova reminds us that Eastern Europe has been conspicuously absent from the visions and conceptions of Europe. It has always been a marked category, while the "rest of Europe" is almost never "represented by the commensurate categories of 'North-eastern Europe', 'West-central Europe or even 'Western Europe'".[42] Using a familiar postcolonial "writing back" perspective and ironic forms of mimicry/mockery, Dragan Velikić provides a reflective gaze on Europe from "Other" Europe:

> The term "Europe" seems to be free of any negative connotation. Europe is a place where a high standard of living has been achieved. It is a place of peace and order. The poor cousins on the outskirts of Europe certainly see it this way. For years they have prepared to enter a unified Europe. And Europe imagines the outskirts gazing at it with a certain look in their eyes. And it wants the outskirts to confirm this look as their own.[43]

I examine how contemporary British/Western European authors largely perpetuate this dominant gaze in their representation of Eastern European migrants (using the character of a naïve and poor but hardworking migrant) as well as how Eastern European writers "look back" and negotiate transition and EU integration. Of course, what is also urgent is a more detailed study of the emergent "local" Eastern European fictions and films about transition but this would deserve a new project altogether.[44] As Pucherova and Gafrik note, "the West European economic presence on the post-communist region (with the willing participation

of the hosts) could also be considered a form of *neo*-colonialism in which the human and natural resources of the region are exploited to benefit the investor's country".[45] The documentary *Czech Dream* that I analyze in Chapter 3 is an excellent example of the ways in which post-communist sites and minds are being transformed by consumerism, and in this case, the arrival of a large British supermarket and its made-up competitor. As an example of that local response, the film offers a powerful critique of the "unconditional surrender to neoliberalism".[46]

Auto/bio/critical Interlude

At the beginning of my final year undergraduate module on European Literature and Film I always ask my students to perform a simple exercise. The module focuses on literary and film responses to post-1945 European history, running from the Second World War, through to the Cold War and the 1989 revolutions to the events of the post-Cold War period, including the Yugoslav Wars and the expansion of the European Union. It is necessarily biased towards Eastern European writing and film. I ask the students to write down their answers individually to the following questions - "What is Europe? What do you usually associate with the words "Europe/European?" - which we then share with the whole group.[47] We revisit the answers at the end of the module. The examples and answers are - just as my students are - predominantly British, if not always fully "Western European". It is a useful deconstructive exercise for opening up a discussion of what Europe and, indeed, European literature is, and it helps to expose the ways in which "unmarked categories retain power as the standard against which the rest must be positioned" and often excluded from.[48] For as Todorova argues, the same processes are at work in the very idea of "the European Union, primarily an economic unit but with growing political and cultural ambitions, which symbolically appropriated the name of the larger geographic region: Europe".[49] I am informed by the important work of Balkanist scholars as I seek to disentangle the interplay of contradictory discourses: Western/British writers and filmmakers' representation of New Europeans and the ways in which Eastern Europeans narrate their (un)belonging to Europe in the post-communist, post-EU accession period.[50]

In the context of EU integration, Todorova declares in her 2011 essay "Re-Imagining the Balkans", perhaps prematurely, that "Eastern Europe will soon disappear as a category," but that "attitudes will be more difficult and slow to change".[51] As I will demonstrate throughout this volume, these attitudes have not disappeared and in the wake of post-communist migrations and the Brexit vote, we are witnessing a resurgence of the category "Eastern Europe". She begins the first edition of *Imagining the Balkans* (1997) with a paraphrase of the opening line of *The Communist Manifesto*: "A spectre is haunting Western culture – the spectre of the Balkans".[52] In the 21st century, a similar spectre is haunting Western Europe and Britain – the spectre of the Eastern European migrant. Nowhere is this more illustrative than in the exchange between the former Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the pensioner Gillian Duffy during the 2010 election Campaign. This story is probably better remembered as the bigot-gate scandal – in terms of Brown's gaffe when he called Duffy a bigoted woman while his microphone was still on – rather than by the question she asked Brown – "all these Eastern Europeans what are coming in, where are they flocking from?"[53] And where from, indeed? From an unknown and unknowable place lacking precise geographical boundaries - the imaginary place called "Eastern Europe". Coincidentally, the pensioner was from Rochdale where 20 Eastern European "slaves" were rescued from a picture framing factory in 2014.[54] Apart from a few lonely Eastern European voices who found Duffy's question offensive, this statement has not been given much attention in public or academic circles. But it is symptomatic of the changing conditions between "hosts" and "guests" in contemporary Britain and of the dangers of classifying a whole group of people through demeaning and generalizing categories no matter how benign Duffy's question might have been. But isn't the answer to her question already contained within itself? Those that are flocking in have been marked as "Eastern Europeans" and at the same time, their specificity and, one may add, humanity, has been erased. In the end, it is the host who has the power to ask (and answer) the question.

Just before the British referendum on EU membership, Duffy made another TV appearance in May 2016. The BBC *Newsnight* team caught up with Duffy to find out how she was planning to vote. It came as no surprise that she was resolutely anti-EU. Among other things, she expressed concerns about "losing our English identity" and made a couple of other strong statements: "We'll never get England back to how it was. But I love being

English and I don't want to be a European."[55] Get England back to the days of imperial glory? Can one be both English and European? Does the "guest" have the right to ask these questions? While not trying to brush over rising levels of poverty and social inequalities in Britain today, it seems that a parochial and exclusive sense of Englishness lay dormant under the "weight" of political correctness for so long and was ready to burst open. Because Duffy's original question to Gordon Brown has not been addressed, it is not difficult to explain the surge in racist attacks against Eastern Europeans after the Brexit vote. Indeed, the lines between "host" and "guest" have been blurred even further, because even Western Europeans and "ethnic" Brits were not immune from xenophobic taunts and attacks.[56] The answer to Duffy's question could equally not be found in a redeemable counter-narrative of a "good" Eastern European worker who pays taxes and contributes to Britain because this leaves the capitalist structures that have brought the economic migrant in the first place intact. One of the main arguments of the Remain campaign was to represent European migrants as useful contributors to the British economy. It was predominantly focused on the benefits of the single market. Expressions of shame after Brexit from many leftist middle-class voters and commentators, who specifically expressed shame for being British in the immediate atmosphere of the re-legitimization of racism after the referendum, have not led to deeper and more radical critiques of the present, such as those elaborated with an activist's passion in Wendy Brown's essay 'Resisting Left Melancholy' and Robert Spencer's recent 'The Politics of Imperial Nostalgia'.[57] As I show in Chapter 4, cosmopolitan allegiances and progressive reassessments of Britain's attitude towards its 21st century newcomers have largely come, and perhaps not surprisingly, from a few Black British writers and commentators. In other words, both the outbursts of shame and the resurfacing of imperial nostalgia post-Brexit should be placed in the context of an historical understanding of empire.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* Sara Ahmed examines expressions of national shame in the context of Australian politics and how shame becomes "not only a model of recognition of injustices committed towards others, but also a form of nation building".[58] As someone who witnessed the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, I am always allergic (and alert) to any forms of nation building. She looks at what happens when the nation is "'failing' a multicultural ideal" and the normative white subject "admits to 'being'

shamed".[59] One could argue that expressions of shame on social media and in the public after the Brexit vote helped to restore a sense of national pride and a vision of Britain as more open and inclusive – as they did help to heal the rift in the very sense of belonging to Europe: "we", the British, are Europeans too – but in what kind of Europe? Where were the expressions of liberal shame when Duffy was commenting on the presence of Eastern Europeans in 2010 in a clearly negative way? Of course the context was different, but why was Europe, in all its entirety and diversity, not defended then? As Ahmed remarks, "the work of shame troubles and is troubling, exposing some wounds, at the same time as it conceals others".[60]

Gilroy's analysis of Britain's "postimperial melancholia" – its melancholic attachment to past imperial greatness and its present ambivalent relation towards strangers and otherness is, I think, more useful for unpacking what is condensed in Gillian Duffy's anxieties over migration and Englishness. Gilroy draws on the work of German psychoanalysts – the Mitscherlichs – and their examination of the inability of post-war German society to confront its Nazi past in the years after the war, in order to diagnose Britain's inability to work through the loss of its empire. This inability has often resulted in "the illusion that Britain has been or can be disconnected from its imperial past".[61] Gilroy argues that the attachments to past greatness have not been worked through and residual elements linger or are transformed into new forms of racism. I draw on his insights in my examination of the ambivalent responses to Eastern European migration to Britain since the EU enlargement in the Conclusion.

So Duffy's question remains unanswered but it usefully sets up a number of tonal notes that anticipate the direction of this book. One is the changing conditions of cultural visibility in postcolonial Britain and Europe. For example, while non-white migrants were treated with hostility in post-war Britain, Poles were seen as no threat. However, post-communist Poles are now a visible and audible presence in 21st-century Britain and Europe and are conceived as a threat, particularly in right-wing discourses in which a migrant is always a racialized category. Eastern Europeans are now, to borrow Tlostanova's coinage, the "hyper-visible invisibles".[62] As I have discussed elsewhere, the practices of visibility may also operate on bodies perceived as unmarked by the visible (i.e. white) or assumed to be marked only by "audible" differences.[63] That is, it is often assumed that Eastern

Europeans are recognized only when they start speaking their own language, by their accents or by their “unpronounceable” names. In this regard, Etienne Balibar’s notion of “racism without race” or cultural racism is particularly relevant for examining contemporary forms of racialization of Eastern Europeans in the West, as I show in Chapters 1 and 2.[64]

This book pulls together a wide range of contemporary fictional, media and film representations of Eastern Europeans that deal with the experience of post-1989 and post-2004 Eastern European migrants in Britain and Europe. These are texts that signal the emerging contact zones between Eastern European migrants, former postcolonial ‘migrants’[65] and black Britons, and the ways in which Eastern European writers problematize the experiences of migration and post-communist transitions to capitalism. There is a point to be made here about the choice of texts and the place from which one writes. My main focus is on contemporary British texts and films, and the representations of New Europeans/Eastern Europeans therein, for the obvious reason that so few British-based scholars have meaningfully engaged with them. I am concerned specifically with the recurring New European figures in these narratives, such as Polish builders, economic migrants, waitresses and *au pairs*, and to what extent these contemporary representations have been shaped by older, but nevertheless persistent, forms of negative stereotyping, or Balkanist discourse. As a scholar who also works on Black British literature, my archive consists of multiple and, at times, disparate elements. I am interested in new alliances between “old” and “new” migrants, the potential for solidarity between black Britons and New Europeans/Eastern Europeans and how far this extends in both fiction and non-fiction. Perceptions of Eastern Europe in Black European and African writing is an exciting and emerging area of study focusing predominantly on Cold War and post-Cold War representations but almost no attention has been paid to these perceptions in Black British writing.[66] Of course, Eastern Europe has had a long history of “writing back” to stereotypical representations so it would be difficult – and in fact impossible – to exclude these voices from any analyses of recent Eastern European migration in fiction. I am aware of the limitations of this book in my privileging of British representations and of Eastern European writers who write or have been translated into English (Dubravka Ugrešić, Kapka Kassabova, Miroslav Penkov, A M Bakalar). I was, for example, unable to examine

Londynczycy (2008), a TV series in Polish about Polish migrants in London, because it did not have English subtitles.[67] It is my hope that by developing a reading framework around a limited range of texts, this volume opens up a horizon for making new sources of comparison and analysis of Eastern European migration in cultural texts that are in languages other than English, and for thinking more broadly about social and political changes in the expanded Europe of the 21st century.

In writing this book I have tried to avoid the role of the native informant. Because each migrant story is different, and my current position as a privileged Eastern European scholar based in UK academia who also holds British citizenship is certainly different from Slawomir who once brought my supermarket delivery, as the text message informed me, or from Bulgarian men and women at the café Nero kiosk at Gatwick Airport who deliver (fake?) smiles with coffee, or from Eastern European workers who have picked and packed salad leaves sold by Tesco. However, recent British fiction and film overwhelmingly "speak for" Eastern Europeans as this menial workforce. Their frequent recurrence in these works as builders, fruit pickers, nannies and waitresses, for example, makes them recognizable largely as stock characters. They usually speak in broken English and are primarily focused on making money in the West – indeed, their aspirations rarely extend beyond this. Gayatri Spivak and other theorists have pointed out that the position of the native informant is fraught with political and ethical problems, some of which I try to address in Chapter 5 on Dubravka Ugrešić and her position as a doubly inscribed figure – as an "authentic observer" of post-communist transitions and her reluctance to take on this role and "speak for" Eastern Europeans. I explore the possibilities of "speaking for" the Eastern European migrant worker in these literary and cultural texts without performing epistemic violence.

At the same time, however, I have found it difficult not to reflect on the ways in which my life before coming to Britain has been shaped by certain ideas of Europe and to what extent my youth and childhood had been culturally aligned with the West. The autobiographical examples are too many to be included here, but I remember how my father encouraged me from a very young age to migrate to the West, less because he saw the West as some cultural ideal, more because he believed that I would find a better life "there" than in the post-war, internationally-sanctioned and intensely nationalist, homophobic and

suffocating Serbia of the late 1990s. I remember how excited we had been at the arrival of Western consumer goods in our town in the winter of 1989 when my father and I bought our first CD player and a CD by the Belgian electronic band *Technotronic*. Indeed, "the glittering Euroamerican MTV-and-Coca-Cola beast" appeared then quite benevolent and appealing.[68] Moving fast-forward, I also recall when a young American lecturer, during my undergraduate studies in Belgrade in the late 1990s, asked all of us why we wanted to study English Language and Literature, how none of us possessed the vocabulary nor the ability or awareness to articulate how and why it became a global language – the answer that I now know she desperately wanted to hear. She was obviously well-versed in postcolonial history and theory, subjects that were completely unavailable to us through mainstream education.[69] While I never considered myself either "not-quite European" or "European", just as Vesna Goldsworthy asks a rhetorical question "Am I Balkan?" in the preface to *Inventing Ruritania,* I also try to make sense of this imposed identification "Eastern European" in the moments when I am interpellated as such, or asked where I am from. Most recently, just days before the Brexit vote, I was asked by a white taxi driver in Brighton if I will ever go back to "my country". As a 14 year old, I was aware that the EU Schengen system was our Berlin wall and I still vividly remember the swelling queue of weary and humiliated faces for visa applications outside the German Consulate where I, too, waited, to get a visa to visit my mother and was refused many times.

I have sometimes used this personal experience to reject some dominant representations as well as to remember how we were all hostages to certain ideas of the Other. In my secondary school class, there were two Roma boys, Darko and Robert, that no one wanted to sit with, so they either sat together or by themselves. That they were different from our otherwise "white" class, together with an Adventist boy and a refugee boy from Croatia, was an implied lesson of our already disintegrating communist education. Together with our teacher, who "naturally" promoted, facilitated and encouraged the segregation of the two Roma boys from the rest of the class, we "white" kids, were actively complicit in their exclusion. I still vividly remember their boyish faces. It is the memory of this racist injustice, which is only a drop in the ocean of so many cultural and other racisms, the absence of an apology at all levels, and the continued racial discrimination of Roma people in (Eastern) Europe, that keeps haunting me and reminds me that for every Other in the

West - for every Other that "we" theorize in the "West" - there are countless Others "at home".

Theorizing Post-communist Eastern Europe on the move

So far post-communism/post-socialism has been primarily an object of study within the social and political sciences and has only recently been taken up by literary critics and cultural and media studies scholars. Alongside earlier studies of Eastern Europe that were predominantly postcolonial in their approach and deeply influenced by the Orientalist model, such as Vesna Goldsworthy's exploration of the performative aspects of the textual colonization of the Balkans in English literature since the 18th century, recent volumes and edited collections, in addition to numerous journal articles, continue to make new interventions in the field. These productive "creative transpositions" of postcolonial theory as a "globally flexible discourse that can be used to analyze a variety of regions",[70] combined with post-communist approaches, have produced compelling readings of a wide range of literary, media and cultural texts and conditions, such as Andaluna Borcila's *American Representations of Post-Communism: Television, Travel Sites, and Post-Cold War Narratives* (2014), David Williams' *Writing Post-communism* (2013), *Post-communist Nostalgia* (2010) edited by Maria Todorova and Zsuzsa Gille, and Noemi Marin's *After the Fall: Rhetoric in the Aftermath of Dissent in Post-communist Times* (2007). *Imagining New Europe* aims to contribute to this growing body of work by exploring how the experiences of migration and post-communist transitions to capitalism are represented in both British and Eastern European literary and cultural texts. More specifically, I am interested in the ways in which "post-communist economic migrancy to the West creates a new form of colonial relations which reinforce the international division of labour and appropriation benefitting First World countries at the expense of Third World, and now, former Second World post-communist societies".[71]

Cristina Sandru's monograph *Worlds Apart?: A Postcolonial Reading of Post-1945 East-Central European Culture* (2012) and Nataša Kovačević's *Narrating Post/Communism: Colonial Discourse and Europe's Borderline Civilization* (2008) have explored the relation of the Eastern European problematic to postcolonial critical practice

in an attempt to: 1. identify some of the thematic concerns that the literatures of the "Second" and the "Third" World share in their resistance to imperial domination (Sandru); and 2. examine literary texts by anti-communist dissidents and exiles that are haunted by the desire to belong to the West (Kovačević). The aim of *Imagining New Europe* is to put these critical frameworks into practice while analysing texts, films and media images. So I hope this volume will perform two functions – 1. to unmask the blind spots in postcolonial criticism - the discipline's persistent omission of the Eastern European problematic under the monolithic idea of Europe, which has often been synonymous with the West, with its analysis of Othering of New Europeans in contemporary British texts, films and media; and 2. to attend to the question of race in post-communist cultures.

Kovačević's account of post-communist Eastern Europe as a neo-colonial terrain offers a timely and succinct analysis of post-1989 transitions to liberal capitalism and what has popularly been termed "the return to Europe". As Kovačević notes, "certain Eastern European states are only begrudgingly discussed as postcolonial even in terms of its [sic] Soviet, Austro-Hungarian or Ottoman imperial legacies (or the legacy of German rule in Poland)".[72] This can be partly explained by the fact that a "European", "white", post-socialist entity cannot be comfortably framed within a postcolonial framework, particularly when this is based on a Marxist-derived critique of global neo-colonial capitalism. Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius adds another dimension to the potential overlap between postcolonialism and post-communism, asking provocatively "whether the 'post' in post-communism could be the same as 'post' in postcolonial; or, more disturbingly, [whether] Communism [is] really reducible to colonialism, as the populist Cold War dogma would have it". She asserts that "the ideological construction of the racialised colonial Other and the 'undeservingly white' East European (br)Other in the dominant western discourses reveal too many points in common to be ignored". [73] Clearly the diverse histories of communist rule in different Eastern European countries cannot be lumped into a single totalitarian discourse, as I show in my own consideration of these methodological parallels.[74] The term post-communism, like postcolonialism, and indeed, the alignment of communism with colonialism in a neat simplification, tends to homogenize into a single category cultural experiences that may be very different. Yet the intersections between post-communism/post-socialism and postcolonialism are numerous and diverse, and for

Sharad Chari and Katherine Verdery, this intersectional analysis or what they call "thinking between the posts" opens up a space for "thinking critically about colonial relationships together with market and democratic transitions" as well as the "ongoing effects of Cold War representations and processes".[75] It also enables a critical perspective on the process of transition, which as Sandru notes, "has brought with it a cocktail of accelerated marketization, commodification, and integration in the global circuit of capital; this, coupled with a large supply of cheap labor and the very postcolonial phenomenon of economic migration to the affluent metropolis (from brain-drain to the siphoning off of skilled labour), has turned the region into the capitalist West's proximate 'Third World'".[76] Contrary to liberating and celebratory claims about transition, Horvat and Štiks provide in their introduction a similar dire list of "the devastating consequences of the "transition" to capitalism, such as general impoverishment, huge public and private indebtedness facilitated by a flow of foreign credit, widespread deindustrialization, social degradation, depopulation through diminished life expectancy and emigration, and general unemployment".[77] So post-communist 'economic' migrations must be analyzed in the light of these complex and at times contrary forces and issues. Alongside post-communist societies stuck in a "seemingly endless transition to liberal democracy and neoliberal economy" (2), there is an endless supply of cheap labour, an image that Ken Loach zooms in on in the final scene of *It's A Free World* that I examine in the next chapter.

Similarly, in what is probably the most comprehensive critical discussion of post-communism to date, Croatian cultural critic Boris Buden traces the preponderance of development discourses from the West in the aftermath of the so-called post-communist transitions to democracy. As he writes in his appropriately titled essay "Children of Postcommunism", "those who proved their political maturity in the so-called 'democratic revolutions' of 1989–90 have become thereafter, overnight, children".[78] Buden rightly examines the consequences of this infantilization of post-communist societies in the context of modernity. With reference to Kant's famous formulation of the Enlightenment as a flight from immaturity to maturity, as well as to one of the well-known myths of modernity – "the analogy between the historical development of humanity and the growing up of a child" – Buden writes ironically how civil society "in the East European societies liberated from communism […] is still 'in diapers', […] which is the reason it has to be

first educated, trained, developed, got going".[79] Even Jűrgen Habermas, as Buden notes in another essay, described the 1989 revolutions as "the catching up revolution", which reinforces old stereotypes of Eastern Europe as a space of belated modernity.[80] Today, Buden notes, Eastern Europe "resembles a landscape of historical ruins that is inhabited only by children, immature people unable to organize their lives democratically without guidance from another".[81] Yet, as Kovačević reminds from the vantage point of a post-Cold War globalized world, in post-communist Eastern Europe there is a "generally favorable attitude to the ideal of European civilization and an almost fatalistic consensus that the current model of western social development is the way to go (post-communist transitions are necessarily difficult and may take centuries, but it is worth it because prosperity – and acceptance by the world community – awaits us)". Kovačević modulates and extends the concept of "nesting Orientalisms" in order to chip away the idea of "the European Union as an occasionally bumpy and antagonistic, but ultimately benevolent, equality-oriented and multicultural enterprise", and draws much-needed attention to the "the attempts of various Eastern European peoples to market themselves as civilized, developed, tolerant, or multicultural enough to be geo-graphed as European, as well as in their internalization of the stigma of inferiority". But rather than basing her argument on the study of Western narratives, Kovačević examines a number of dissident and post-communist literary narratives "which are haunted by these same discourses".[82] This (re-)claiming of belonging to Europe, or "eagerness of Eastern and Central Europeans to become part of 'the West'" is rarely given sufficient critical attention and presents a major departure from the postcolonial project and its critique of Eurocentrism.[83] Quoting David Chioni Moore, Neil Lazarus notes that this "odd competition to be at Europe's geographic center", and a positive conception of and identification with Europe, not only homogenizes both categories but prevents any progressive critique of Eurocentrism and the capitalist system from emerging.[84] Yet, the aforementioned studies have done precisely that. The competition to be at Europe's centre is neither odd nor surprising but can be explained through an internalization of Eurocentrism in Eastern Europe - a positive view of Europe/the West - as well as through colonial mimicry. A 'reformed' capitalist Eastern Europe is now almost the same as the West but not quite. Of course, there is a worrying Russo-centrism, particularly in countries such as Serbia, but this is another topic altogether.

Through its comparative analysis of British and Eastern European texts, *Imagining New Europe* offers a long overdue critical engagement with this discourse of "the return to Europe" as well as with the various "self-colonizing" practices in Eastern Europe. While a majority of the British texts and films (with the exception of Ken Loach's film) that I examine participate in reproducing transition as a natural "incorporation into the global capitalist system of western liberal democracy", I also show how Eastern European texts resist the allure of apparently emancipatory and idealized discourses of transition to capitalism.[85] As Michael D Kennedy writes in *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism,* "transition is more than restructuring inequality"; it is "a culture of power with its own contradictions, repressions and unrealized potential".[86]

The first chapters are dedicated to Western representations. Chapter 1 examines how Eastern European migrants have been represented in recent films, TV programs and newspaper articles. In addition to examining how these representations tell us more about cultural anxieties in Britain and Europe than about Eastern Europe itself, the chapter will also discuss how this imaginary construction continues to assume a life of its own in the news media and beyond. This chapter will then move on to consider issues about representation and the 'right-on' Eastern European subject by looking at TV programmes *The Poles are Coming* (2008), *The Great British Romanian Invasion* (2014), *Britain's Hardest Workers: Inside the Low-Wage Economy* (2016), and examples from recent film production about Eastern European migrants that move beyond the familiar caricatures and open up a space for engaging with multiple forms of exploitation. The main focus will be on the following films: *It's a Free World* (dir. Ken Loach, 2007), *Once* (John Carney, 2007), *Eastern Promises* (dir. David Cronenberg, 2007), *Gypo* (dir. Jan Dunn, 2005), *Lilya 4-Ever* (dir, Lukas Moodysson, 2002) and *Somers Town* (dir. Shane Meadows, 2008).

Chapter 2 looks at the depiction of Eastern European migrants in contemporary British fiction. Authors as diverse as Martin Amis (*House of Meetings*, 2006), Nicolas Shakespeare (*Snowleg*, 2004), Ian McEwan (*The Innocent*, 1990 and *Black Dogs*, 1992), and even JK Rowling in her *Harry Potter* novels,[87] have engaged with Eastern Europe in manifold ways, but recent changes in Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the recent expansion of the EU have provided new material for British writers. With particular reference to Rose Tremain's Orange fiction prize winning novel *The Road Home*, Marina

Lewycka's *Two Caravans* (2007), John Lanchester's *Capital* (2012), Julian Barnes' short story "East Wind" (2010), Polly Courtney's *Poles Apart* (2008) and Laurie Graham's *Life According to Lubka*, this chapter offers an examination of the complexities of Eastern European subalternity and poses some of the following questions: can the New European migrant speak in these works or are they spoken for? Is Lewycka, a British novelist of Ukrainian origin, better placed to speak for the Eastern European worker than, for example, Tremain who did extensive research for her novel by talking to "Polish women workers on a Suffolk farm"?[88] Even through these novels offer more varied representations than those from the Cold War period – the communist spy becomes here a hardworking migrant – it will be argued, as suggested earlier, that the New European migrant is still a stock character in these works. Finally, chapter 2 will critically examine the portrayal of New Europeans as either highly sexualized or masculinized characters.

Who will then speak then for the New European migrant? I turn next to the work of Eastern European writers, In particular, the writings of Dubravka Ugrešić (*The Ministry of Pain*, *Baba Yaga Laid an Egg* and her essays), Kapka Kassabova (*Street without a Name*), Miroslav Penkov (*East of the West*) and A M Bakalar (*Madame Mephisto*), David Cerny's controversial *Entropa* installation (2009) and the film *Czech Dream* (dir. Klusak/Remunda, 2004). Chapter 3 examines how the New Europeans deconstruct contemporary structures of the Othering of Eastern Europe. The main focus is on the literary production of Eastern European migrant writers, but these other examples will be brought in to illustrate the diverse practices of 'writing back' to the stereotypical representations of Eastern Europe (some of which may be more successful than others). This chapter will also identify some of the shared concerns as well differences in what will be termed first generation (the work of Ugrešić, for example, who migrated in the 1990s during the Yugoslav war) and second generation post-communist migrant writing (the work of younger writers, such as Kassabova and Bakalar, who matured around the time the Berlin Wall came down). In particular, I shall discuss first and second generations' engagement with memory, home and their different attitudes to representing what has been lost in the experience of post-communist transitions to capitalism. Then the analysis will turn to the ways in which these writings call upon post-communist Eastern Europeans not only to unite in a struggle against neoliberal capitalism, but also against forms of cultural

racialization that welcome them on their arrival in Western cities. This will naturally lead to the next chapter where different forms of alliances will be discussed.

Chapter 4 focuses on Eastern Europe in Contemporary Black British Writing. Recently, Diran Adebayo has called for new coalitions between Pole, black Briton and Romany, and suggested that ”us black Britons, with our newer, particular take on citizenship, should have much to offer here that's useful to new others, or old ones remaking themselves” (2008). In this chapter I examine the emerging contact zones between Eastern European migrants, former postcolonial 'migrants' and black Britons, focusing on the plays by Mike Phillips, *You Think You Know Me but You Don't* (2005) and Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Let There Be Love* (2010), Caryl Phillips's novel *In The Falling Snow* (2010), Andrea Levy's short story "Loose Change" (2014), Gary Younge's programme *Eastern Europeans in Brexitland* (*BBC*, 2016) and Meera Syal's monologue for the *Guardian*'s Brexit Shorts "Just a T-shirt" (2017). While African American writers, such as Langston Hughes in his memoir *I Wonder as I Wander* (1956), have already given us some much needed glimpses into the experiences of black travellers in Eastern Europe, this new interest by Black British writers in migration from Eastern Europe has not been the subject of serious study so far. But while Adebayo's statement offers much hope, Chapter 4 will argue that these new alliances remain unpredictable, tense and precarious and cannot be based only on the alignment of uncommon strangeness. The transformative potential of these new alliances is also marred by the rarely discussed and continuing legacy of racism in Eastern Europe.

Dubravka Ugrešić is a writer who has, to date, engaged most extensively with the recent transformations in Eastern Europe – from the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s to 21st century migrations and post-communist transitions – and whose work is exemplary in this regard. Chapter 5 focuses on her and explores how alternative modes of global diasporic solidarity from the position of a displaced post-Yugoslav, or an 'Eastern European other' now living in Amsterdam are imagined in her work. It examines the characteristics and draws the limits of Ugrešić's post-Yugoslav cosmopolitanism, but it will begin with a somewhat aleatory reference to *Riblja Čorba* (trans. Fish Soup), one of the most popular rock bands in what was then Yugoslavia, which is intended to draw us into some of the complexities of the racial identities handled in Ugrešić's work and in Eastern Europe.

Indeed, while Eastern Europeans may be racialized when abroad as not-quite-white, as the preceding chapters will show, how does Eastern European whiteness operate at home? The ways in which post-communist nations align themselves culturally with the West in their self-imagining are lucidly exposed and criticised in Ugrešić's recent essays. At the same time, she articulates a new sense of global brotherhood in her work. While I am in agreement with Nataša Kovačević's point about Ugrešić's concern with a subaltern transnationalism that connects postcolonial and post-communist migrants gathered around a shared condition of poverty and exclusion from EU corporate discourses,[89] this chapter will offer a more nuanced reading of Eastern European Otherness in the West by considering the unresolved legacy of racism in Eastern Europe. As it will be argued, contemporary forms of cultural racism that mark the post-communist Eastern European Other must be theorized and considered with these complex (dis)-identifications in mind. This is not to say that Eastern Europeans should dis-identify from Europe — after all, they are part of Europe — but what is needed is a critical awareness of the identification of Europe with modernity and civilization, together with an acknowledgment of its unresolved colonial legacy, that would help expose various forms of exclusion in/from fortress Europe as well as interrogate such condescending terms as New/Eastern Europeans that this book has examined. Finally, chapter 5 will register the waning of some of the earlier optimism in the belief in effective counter-cultural critique and ways to re-imagine the world in Ugrešić's recent work.

What all of us are left with, in the end, in our contemporary world where we live with the lack of future-oriented imagination and a discredited rhetoric of solidarity, is "an eternity of the implacable logic of capital",[90] writes Ugrešić. With reference to her powerful observations from chapter 4, in the afterword I reconsider the recent cultural imaginings between Eastern Europe and the West and the very logic of capital that is bringing New Europeans to Britain and Western Europe as well as onto the literary market. Taking inspiration from Wolfgang Becker's award-winning film *Goodbye, Lenin!* (2003) that triggered all sorts of post-communist nostalgias, I also reflect on the future of these representations. In the wake of the British Brexit referendum result, once can only hope that there will be more literary and cultural responses to Europe and to Eastern European migration more specifically.

10,554 words

[1] Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 165.
[2] I refer here to Nigel Farage's fascist, anti-migrant poster during the Brexit campaign in June 2016. See, for example, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/16/nigel-farage-defends-ukip-breaking-point-poster-queue-of-migrants.
[3] Gilroy, *After Empire*, 4, 98 (my emphasis).
[4] Gilroy, "Multiculture in Times of War", *LSE*, Wednesday 10 May 2006. http://www.lse.ac.uk/PublicEvents/pdf/20060510-PaulGilroy.pdf.
[5] Srećko Horvat and Igor Štiks eds., W*elcome to the Desert of Post-Socialism: Radical Politics After Yugoslavia* (London: Verso Books, 2015), 8.
[6] Dragan Velikić, "B-Europe" in *Writing Europe: What is European about the Literatures of Europe?*, ed. Ursula Keller and Ilma Rakusa, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2003), 335.
[7] I evoke here the song "Wind of Change" by the German rock band Scorpions, about the changes after the end of the Cold War and the fall of Communism in 1989.
[8] I am aware that there have been other definitions and uses of the term "New Europe". See, for example, Cesar Dominguez's introduction to *Cosmopolitanism and the Postnational: Literature and the New Europe* (Amsterdam: Brill; Rodopi, 2015), 4-5, where he looks at how the term was used by the US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in 2003, as well as new definitions of "New Europe" in terms of what he calls "the return of the nation-state".
[9] See Sam Tonkin, "Outrage as homeless East Europeans set up camp at Hyde Park 7/7 bombing memorial - eating dinner off the plaque and using site as a toilet", *Daily Mail*, June 30, 2015. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3144639/Deeply-disrespectful-homeless-east-Europeans-set-camp-Hyde-Park-memorial-victims-7-7-bombing-eating-dinner-plaque-using-site-toilet.html. Interestingly the migrants in these images seem to be predominantly Eastern European Roma migrants. See Tim Dowling, 'They Come Over Here…', *Guardian*, November 22, 2007. http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/nov/22/immigration.immigrationandpublicservices.Katy Lee, *Philippine News*, February 23, 2013. http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/296335/news/pinoyabroad/britain-braces-for-fresh-immigration-wave-from-eastern-europe.
[10] See *BBC News*, June 24, 2016, "Lincolnshire records UK's highest Brexit vote". http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36616740. Of course, many reports have looked at the relationship between the vote for Brexit and migration, and with mixed findings. Although as this report notes: "communities that over the past decade had experienced an increase in migration from EU member states were somewhat more likely to vote for Brexit. For example, in Peterborough the estimated size of the EU migrant population increased by about 7 percentage points and 61% voted leave. Even though areas with relatively high levels of EU migration tended to be more pro-remain, areas that had experienced a sudden influx of EU migrants over the last 10 years were often more pro-leave." See Matthew Goodwin and Oliver Heath, "Brexit vote explained: poverty, low skills and lack of opportunities", 31 August 2016, *The Joseph Rowntree Foundation*, accessed 1 October 2016, https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/brexit-vote-explained-poverty-low-skills-and-lack-opportunities?gclid=CMGHj-CR4NICFaky0wodoAsJCg.

[11] Charlie Cooper, "Michael Gove says vote to Remain would make British public 'hostages' to the EU", *Independent*, April 19. 2016. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/michael-gove-says-vote-to-remain-would-make-british-public-hostages-to-eu-a6990661.html.

[12] Dejan Lukić, *Hostage Spaces of the Contemporary Islamicate World: Phantom Territoriality,* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 2.
[13] Robert K Barnhart, *Chambers Dictionary of Etymology* (Edinburgh: Chambers, 2000), 297.
[14] Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 95.
[15] Julia Kristeva, Leon S. Roudiez, trans., *Strangers to Ourselves* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1991) 11-12.
[16] Ryszard Kapuściński, *The Other* (London: Verso: 2008), 18-20.
[17] Enrique Dussel, "Eurocentrism", quoted in Roberto Dainotto, *Europe (in Theory)*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 15.
[18] Kapuściński, *The Other*, 21-4.

[19] Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 3.
[20] See, for example, publications such as *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on Post-Communist Literatures and Cultures*, ed. Dobrota Pucherova and Robert Gafrik (Leiden-Boston: BRILL Rodopi, 2015), Cristina Sandru, *Worlds Apart? A Postcolonial Reading of post-1945 East-Central European Culture* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012) and my own contributions in *Facing the East in the West: Images of Eastern Europe in British Literature Film and Culture*, eds. Barbara Korte, Eva Ulrike Pirker, and Sissy Helff (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), and in the special issue of the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 'Belated Alliances? Tracing the Intersections between Postcolonialism and Postcommunism', 48.2 (2012): 164–75.
21 David Chioni Moore, "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet? Toward a Global Postcolonial Critique", *PMLA* Special Topic: Globalizing Literary Studies, 116. 1 (2001):111-128, (115).
[22] Neil Lazarus, "Spectres haunting: Postcommunism and postcolonialism", Journal of Postcolonial Writing, Special Issue: On Colonialism, Communism and East-Central Europe - some reflections, 48: 2 (2012): 117-129, (117).
[23] Dainotto, *Europe,* 7; Dominguez, "Cosmopolitanism", 2.
[24] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: OUP, 1997), 19. Further references are given in brackets in the main text.
[25] Dušan I Bjelić and Obrad Savić, eds., *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation,* (Cambridge and London, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 4.
[26] See Milica Bakić Hayden, "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia", *Slavic Review* 54.4 (1995): 917–31, and Alexander Kiossev, "Notes on the Self-Colonising Cultures" in *After the Wall: Art and Culture in Post-Communist Europe*, ed. Bojana Pejić (Stockholm: Moderna Museet, 1999), 114-18.
[27] Vladimir.Arsenijević, "Our Negroes, Our Enemies." Bosnian Institute, 5 Jan. 2009. Accessed 5 May 2011. http://www.bosnia.org.uk/news/news_body.cfm?newsid=2534.
[28] Nataša Kovačević, "Orientalizing Post/Communism: Europe's 'Wild East' in Literature and Film." *Reconstruction* 8.4 (2008). Accessed 20 March 2011. http://reconstruction.eserver.org/084/kovacevic.shtml.
[29] Ibid, n. pag.
[30] Perry Anderson, *The Old New World*, (London: Verso Books, 2009), 56.
[31] Horvat and Štiks, W*elcome to the Desert*, 16.
[32] Andaluna Borcila, *American Representations of Post-Communism: Television, Travel Sites, and Post-Cold War Narratives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 199.
[33] Horvat and Štiks, W*elcome to the Desert*, 16.
[34] Madina Tlostanova, "Postcolonial Theory, the Decolonial Option and Postsocialist Writing" in *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on Post-Communist Literatures and Cultures*, ed. Dobrota Pucherova and Robert Gafrik (Leiden-Boston: BRILL Rodopi, 2015), 29, 31.

[35] Borcila, *American Representations,* 9.
[36] Maria Todorova, "Re-Imagining the Balkans" in *Welcome to the Desert,* ed. Horvat and Štiks, 90, 88.
[37] Ibid., 93.
[38] See Andrew Hammond, *British Fiction and the Cold War* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).
[39] Tanja Petrović, "On the Way to Europe: EU Metaphors and Political Imagination of Western Balkans" in *Welcome to the Desert*, 112.
[40] Mitja Velikonja, *Eurosis: A Critique of New Eurocentrism* (Ljubljana, Mirovni Institut, 2005), 40-42.
[41] Cristina Sandru, "Joined at the Hip? About Post-Communism in a (Revised) Postcolonial Mode", in *Postcolonial Europe?* 65.
[42] Todorova, "Re-Imagining", 91.
[43] Velikić, "Europe-B", 338.
[44] See Marcel Cornis-Pope's article where he discusses several fictions of postcommunist transition, "Local and Global Frames in Recent Eastern European Literatures: Postcommunism, Postmodernism, and Postcoloniality." *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 48.2 (May 2012): 143–54.
[45] Pucherova and Gafrik, *Postcolonial Europe?* 23.
[46] Horvat and Štiks, *Welcome to the Desert,* 3.
[47] It will be interesting to see if the students' responses will change this year when the module runs in October 2016 for the first time after Brexit.
[48] Todorova, "Re-imagining", 91.
[49] Ibid, 90.
[50] On my use of the term '(*un*)*belonging*' with reference to post 1990s Black British and former Yugoslav women's writing, see "The idea of (un)belonging in post-1989 black British and former Yugoslav women's writing", Unpublished PhD Thesis, http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.525107.
[51] Todorova, "Re-imagining", 94.
[52] Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 1.
[53] See "How Gordon Brown 'bigot' jibe row unfolded", *BBC News*, 28 April 2010, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/election_2010/8649448.stm.
[54]See "Rochdale factory 'slavery' raid: Four men arrested", *BBC News*, 15 December 2014. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-30482055.

[55] Gillian Duffy, "I don't want to be a European", *BBC News*, 25 May 2016. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36373649.

[56] See for example Kate Lyons, "Racist incidents feared to be linked to Brexit result", *Guardian*, 26 June 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/26/racist-incidents-feared-to-be-linked-to-brexit-result-reported-in-england-and-wales.

[57] See for example, Ed Vulliamy, "I feel my British passport has become a badge of shame", *Guardian*, 10 July 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/09/after-brexit-british-passport-badge-of-shame-ed-vulliamy, See Wendy Brown, 'Resisting Left Melancholy', *boundary 2*, 26. 3 (Autumn, 1999): 19-27, and Robert Spencer, 'The politics of imperial nostalgia' in *Racism Postcolonialism Europe,* eds. Graham Huggan and Ian Law, (Liverpool University Press, 2009), 176-196. Of course, both Brown and Spencer draw upon the critiques of neoliberalism and postcolonialism from Black British cultural studies, specifically the works of Stuart Hall (Brown) and Paul Gilroy (Spencer).

[58] Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 102.
[59] Ibid., 108.
[60] Ibid., 102.
[61] Gilroy, *After Empire*, 98, 107, 2.
[62] Tlostanova, "Postcolonial Theory", 29.
[63] See Veličković, "Balkanisms Old and New: The Discourse of Balkanism and Self-Othering in Vesna Goldsworthy's *Chernobyl Strawberries* and *Inventing Ruritania*", in *Facing the East in the West: Images of Eastern Europe in British literature, film and culture*, ed. Barbara Korte, et al. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 185-203.
[64] See Etienne Balibar, "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'" in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities,* ed. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (London: Verso, 1991), 23.
[65] By using inverted commas, I want to point out the inadequacy of the term 'migrant' here, particularly when we talk about the post-war migration. As I discuss further in Chapter 4, it is often forgotten that the British Nationality Act of 1948 offered the status of British citizen to all Commonwealth subjects – and even the term 'subject' has colonial roots as does the 'Commonwealth' -- as the recent Windrush scandal has reminded us. Of course, the long history of empire and slavery is also often forgotten in these debates, as David Lammy powerfully notes in his Windrush speech. See "David Lammy lambasts government over Windrush deportations", *BBC*, 16th April 2018, accessed 16th May 2018, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-43789247/david-lammy-lambasts-government-over-windrush-deportations. In a similar way, Eastern Europeans see themselves as citizens of the EU and their own countries, rather than migrants.
[66] See Eva Ulrike Pirker, "The Unfinished Revolution: Black Perceptions of Eastern Europe" in *Facing the East*, ed. Barbara Korte, et al; The project "AfroEuropeans" and their annual conferences on Black Cultures and Identities in Europe, http://afroeuropa.unileon.es/. See also Monica Popescu's fascinating study of Eastern Europe in South African Writing, *South African Literature Beyond the Cold War*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), and her article "Lewis Nkosi in Warsaw: Translating Eastern European Experiences for an African Audience", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 48.2 (2012): 178-89.
[67] See Joanna Rostek insightful analysis of the series, "Living the British Dream: Polish Migration to the UK as Depicted in the TV Series *Londyńczycy* (2008-2010)", in *Contemporary Polish Migrant Culture and Literature in Germany, Ireland, and the UK.* Ed. Joanna Rostek and Dirk Uffelmann (Frankfurt: Lang, 2011), 245-275.
[68] Chioni Moore, "Is the Post", 118.
[69] My first encounter with postcolonial theory was in 2002 at the Belgrade's Centre for Women's studies thanks to my wonderful feminist teachers. See http://www.zenskestudie.edu.rs/en/about-us/center-s-history.
[70] Pucherova and Gafrik, *Postcolonial Europe?,* 13.
[71] Ibid., 23.
[72] Kovačević, "Orientalizing", n. pag.
[73] Katarzyna Murawska Muthesius, "Welcome to Slaka: Does Eastern (Central) European Art Exist?", *Third Text,* 18.1 (2004): 25–40, (26).
[74] See Veličković, "Belated Alliances".
[75] Sharad Chari and Katherine Verdery, "Thinking between the Posts: Postcolonialism, Postsocialism, and Ethnography after the Cold War", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 51. 1 (2009): 6-34 (12, 18).
[76] Sandru, "Joined at the Hip?", 67.
[77] Horvat and Štiks, *Welcome to the Desert,* 2.
[78] See Boris Buden, "The Children of Postcommunism", *Radical Philosophy,* 159 (2010): n.pag. http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/children-of-postcommunism.

[79] Ibid., n.pag.
[80] Boris Buden, "What to Do With the Question: 'What Will the Balkans Look Like in 2020?', wus-austria.org. 2010, 5. http://www.wus-austria.org/files/docs/Boris%20Buden%20Text%20BCC%202010_edited.pdf.
[81] Buden, "Children", n.pag.
[82] Kovačević, "Orientalizing", n. pag.
[83] Pucherova and Gafrik, *Postcolonial Europe?* 20.
[84] Lazarus, "Spectres", 126.
[85] Boris Buden, *Zona Prelaska: O Kraju Postkomunizma*, trans. Hana Ćopić (Belgrade: Fabrika Knjiga, 2012), 125. My translation from Serbian into English.
[86] Michael D Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 6.
[87] See Wolfgang Hochbruck, Elmo Feiten and Anja Tiedemann, 'Vulchanov! Volkov! Aaaaaaand Krum!': Joanne K. Rowling's "Eastern" Europe" in *Facing the East,* ed. Korte, et al, 233-244.
[88] Boyd Tonkin, " On the Road of Excess", The Independent, 14 June 2007, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/features/on-the-road-of-excess-rose-tremain-follows-a-migrants-progress-in-a-bloated-britain-5333471.html.
[89] See Kovačević, "Storming the EU Fortress: Communities of Disagreement in Dubravka Ugrešić", *Cultural Critique*, 83 (2013), 63-86.
[90] Dubravka Ugrešić, *Nobody's Home,* trans. Ellen Elias-Bursac, (London: Telegram/Saqi 2007), 272.