ULYSSES' GAZE
PROJECT 2013-2015:
Stories of migration in Europe

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INTRODUCTION

The project Ulysses' Gaze: Stories of Migration through East-European Cinematography tackled the topic of migration from Eastern to Western European countries through a cycle of film projections followed by debates linked to the this topic and by further contributions on the Internet platform : www.ulysses_project.eu.

The partners involved in the project were both Eastern and Western European associations whose main objective is to stimulate the general public's interest in the heritage, history and culture of the Eastern and Central Europe and of the Balkans: EuropaNova (BE), Dom Spotkań z Historią (PL), Ethnological Museum of Thrace (GR), Platform Spartak (NL) and Student Plus (RO). All the partners introduced their learners to the cinema of Eastern and Central Europe and of the Balkans, and particulary to the issues revolving around migration through 14 European network events involving film projections followed by debates organised by each partner in the home country on a regular basis during a two-year period (2013-2015).

The Ulysses' Gaze project consisted also of brainstorms on migration and cultural heritage through debates following the projections, animated by academics, writers, specialists and filmmakers, both with language teachers/trainers/animators of the associations involved in the project and of clear references provided by the moderators of the debates to the issue of European inclusion and of migration within the EU.

So many years are now separating us from the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the EU has welcomed many Eastern European countries applying for membership. Still, these countries, their inhabitants and their respective cultural heritage remain largely unknown in Western Europe. Striking is the fact that the migration movement from East to West is increasing.
More importantly, these migrants should not be labelled as mere stereotypes but should be accepted for what they are: European citizens.

As the Ulysses myth is the symbol of an common heritage beyond our national borders, our project aimed to eradicate the ghosts of the past such as nationalism, war, separation, identity crisis and to highlight the urge to create a common future which makes sense beyond its social and economic preoccupations: mixed families, multilingualism, stereotypes, Christian cooperation, common aspirations.

In this educational project, the cinema acted as the linking medium and fostered the debate on issues related to the European citizenship at large, including the following aspects: migration and transnational cinema; representation of travelling and culture shock; mixed marriage and its film representations; cross-cultural encounters in everyday life; the influence of cinema on shaping the European identity.

All these aspects were also important in the language classes organized by some of the partners of this project as EuropaNova and Student Plus for the adults learners who are looking to learn on the one hand the languages of Eastern, Central and Balkan countries and on the other hand the languages of Western countries, since our educational approach is based both on developing communication and intercultural skills.

The e-book related to this project presents academic and journalistic papers on the most relevant issues of the migration in the European countries of the partners.

Ioana Belu, president of EuropaNova association

CHAPTER I

ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE.

Belgium, a Country of Permanent Immigration.

Milica Petrovic

EU citizens make up just over half of the total foreign population in Belgium, a large portion of which is comprised of Italian, French, and Dutch citizens. The non-EU immigrant population is comprised of mainly Moroccans and Turkish citizens.

Belgium is often overlooked as a country of immigration because of its size and its less known history of immigration. Yet over the last three decades Belgium has become a permanent country of settlement for many different types of migrants. Migration, asylum, and integration policies have largely been responsive in nature, reacting to circumstance, rather than pursuing a long-term vision. It is only in recent years that policymakers have started to develop new policies and legislation in a more consistent way. Public opinion, heated immigration debates, and a consistent rise of right-wing parties have no doubt played a role in this as well.

From Post-War Labor Migration to Permanent Settlement

The Benelux region has historically been highly mobile. In the aftermath of the two World Wars, and more intensively since the 1960s, Belgium set out to attract inflows of immigrant labor migration. Bilateral agreements were concluded with Southern European and Northern African countries as well as Turkey within a flexible work-permit regime accompanied by lenient family reunification rules.

By the end of the 1960s, the government had adopted a more restrictive labor migration policy, in response to the economic recession and rising unemployment at the time. In 1974, a formal cap was introduced to limit economic migration.

Separately, Belgium has served as the capital of the European Union since the end of the 1950s, hosting most of its institutions. As a result, increasing numbers of EU citizens have since then settled in Belgium, both temporarily and permanently. By now, EU citizens make up more than half of the total non-national population in Belgium. After labor migration was limited, immigration to Belgium was mostly via family reunification and asylum. Since the 1990s, the number in asylum applications has steadily increased up until 2012; for the first time, applications for every month in 2012 so far have been lower than the same month in 2011.

The Belgian government designed both labor migration and asylum policy in response to circumstantial economic or humanitarian needs, without a long-term vision. The first effort towards more comprehensive immigration law was only introduced in 1980. Similarly, citizenship and integration policies were shaped in a laissez-faire way for decades. Only in recent years has the government begun reforming these policies, starting with asylum and family reunification.
Additionally, the government decided to bring the competences for asylum and migration policies together under the auspices of a single Asylum and Migration State Secretary.

Finally, it is important to note that Belgium is a country of two linguistic and political realities. This has become increasingly conflictual over the last decade, partly demonstrated through the continuous rise of the right in Flanders. This dynamic has been largely absent in Wallonia. Migration policies seem not to have been directly affected by this tension. However, increased politicization of migration coupled with the inevitable need to consistently reform migration policy is pushing policymakers to develop more long-term policies for the future.

Data

The lack of comprehensive figures has been a central challenge for Belgium in creating a consistent migration policy. Reliable and comparable data are hard to find because measurements and methodologies vary.

For instance, it is hard to measure the real number of people with an immigrant background in Belgium because of high naturalization rates in the past decades. In addition, information on the nationality or birthplace of parents is not collected, which makes it difficult to ascertain the exact size of the second and third generation of immigrants.

Overall, migration for family reasons is understood to represent the bulk of residence permits issued, but estimations vary between 30 and 50 percent of the total permits issued annually.
Study and remunerated labor are often put roughly between 5 and 15 percent of all permits issued.

Data on both categories is incomplete, as it only counts those who have formally registered – either to acquire a degree in Belgium (hereby leaving out exchange students), or for remunerated labor. Therefore, labor force data only give an indication of the active immigrant population present in Belgium, and their share of employed and unemployed persons.Migration for humanitarian reasons and refugees are often measured separately. The latest figures put their numbers at around 20 percent of the total of residence permits issued. These figures do not take into account refused asylum applicants and unauthorized migrants present on Belgian soil. All in all, it seems that for most categories actual figures might be higher in reality.

Table 1. Total Population by Nationality in Belgium

	Belgian	EU-27	Other	TotalForeign Population	Political Refugee	Unknown	Missing	Total
Belgium	9,832,010	746,972	372,284	1,119,256	2,801	2,456	802	10,951,266
Brussels CapitalRegion	766,744	221,482	130,862	352,344	616	1,135	99	1,119,088
Flanders	5,878,652	268,848	159,138	427,986	1,522	970	383	6,306,638
Wallonia	3,186,614	256,642	82,284	338,926	663	351	320	3,525,540

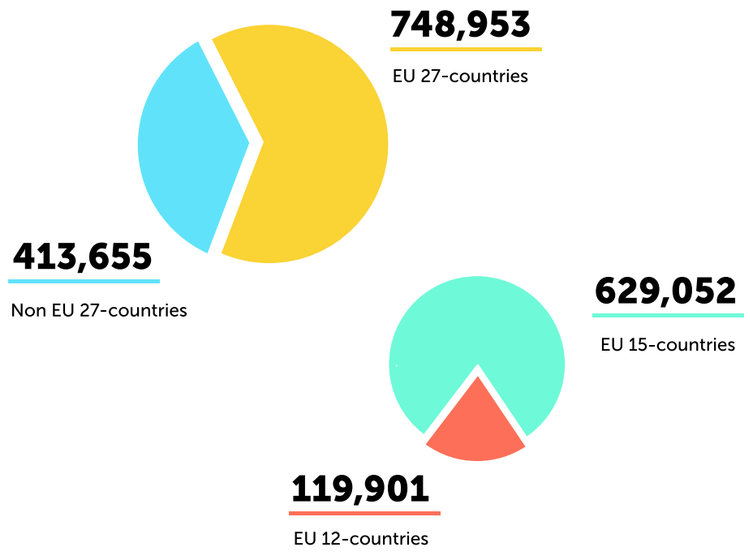
Source: National Statistics, population by nationality, January 1, 2011

Breakdown of the Foreign Population

Immigrants made up almost 18 percent of the entire population in 2010. However, people without Belgian nationality represent only 10 percent *(see Table 1)* of the total population because of Belgium's flexible naturalization policy which has allowed for approximately 30,000 naturalizations annually. Citizens from the 27 EU Member States make up just over half of the total foreign population in Belgium, most of which are from the EU-15 *(see Table 2)*. The immigrant population from Italy, France, and the Netherlands constitute more than 40 percent of the total immigrant population. Moroccans make up almost 8 percent and Turkish nearly 4 percent. These numbers present a somewhat skewed picture as non-EU nationals tend to naturalize more frequently than EU nationals.

In 1984, the Belgian Nationality Code established the principle of jus soli and simplified the process for naturalization; for example, after continuous residence of seven years people could declare their wish to naturalize. This legislation was amended several times, most drastically in 2000 (commonly known as the accelerated naturalization law or "snel-Belg-wet") when this residence requirement for naturalization was shortened to three years (and even to two years for stateless applicants and refugees). Unlike other European countries such as the Netherlands or France, the Belgian Nationality Code has never stipulated any formal integration conditions. Since its entry into force, almost 800,000 people have acquired the Belgian nationality. Of those, the majority are third-country nationals. While more than three-quarters of Turkish and Northern African nationals acquire Belgian citizenship, this is the case for only 30 percent of the EU-27 nationals. The high proportion of naturalizations has led to a new proposal intended to tighten the existing naturalization conditions by introducing formal integration requirements including proof of economic participation and knowledge of language. It also increases the minimum residence to five years and broadens the possibilities for loss of citizenship. The proposal, which has been on the table for the last two years, has finally been approved by Parliament in October 2012 and is expected to enter into force on January 1, 2013.

Table 2. Belgium Foreign Population



Source: Eurostat 2011, population by citizenship **EU-15 countries** include Austria, Belgium (BE citizens excluded from data above), Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. **EU-12 countries** include Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Family Migration

Since the Belgian government limited economic migration in 1974, family migration represents nearly half of the overall immigration to Belgium, followed by refugees and students. As with citizenship legislation, Belgium reformed its flexible family reunification policy in 2011. The new bill introduced stricter conditions for family reunification and a stronger legal framework to combat marriage fraud. As in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the sponsor must prove that he or she possesses sufficient and independent income (120 percent of minimum wage), housing, and health insurance. Only partners and minor children qualify for family reunification, and the time period for demonstrating a stable relationship has doubled from one to two years. In addition, applicants must now meet certain integration criteria. No formal evaluation or data are available, but a decrease in approval rates has been confirmed since the adoption of the new law. The legislative implications of this new law have widely been recognized as controversial, and have raised questions of validity.

Students

Student migration has been on the rise in Belgium and is expected to increase further. It makes up the second largest category after family migration, without taking into account humanitarian migration. Roughly 30,000 students (65 percent) of the total foreign student population in Belgium are from the European Union, and two-thirds from neighboring countries France and the Netherlands. Compared to the European average, Belgium receives a higher number of foreign students (see table 3), but receives a relatively similar proportion compared to its neighboring countries. Only the United Kingdom stands out, attracting 30 percent of the total foreign student population in Europe.

Table 3. Foreign Student Population in Belgium (2009)

Total foreign student population	46,446	11.82
EU27	30,530	7.77
France	16,471	4.19
Africa	7,851	2.00
Netherlands	4,877	1.24
Asia	4,621	1.18
Poland	644	0.16
Turkey	379	0.10
Northern America	365	0.09

Total Foreign Student Population in Europe (2009)

Country	Foreign students in absolute numbers	Foreign students as percentage of student population in the host country (%)
EU-27	1,554,099	8.03
Belgium	46,446	11.82
Germany	256,719	10.57
France	249,143	11.47
Netherlands	44,409	7.27
United Kingdom	498,998	20.66

Source: Eurostat 2009, foreign students by country of origin

Asylum Seekers and Unauthorized Immigrants

The number of asylum seekers has been steadily rising in Belgium over the last three decades (see Figure 1). Asylum applications have peaked particularly throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, due in part to political instability in countries like former Yugoslavia and Iran. In peak years, Belgium received disproportionately high inflows compared to its neighboring countries (see Table 4), equal to about 11 percent of all asylum applications submitted in the European Union. Over the last decade, the main countries of origin have been Russia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, and Serbia.

Asylum applications in Belgium peaked in 2009-10 following the visa liberalization in the Western Balkans. This mostly concerned Roma minorities from Southern Serbia and from Macedonia whose applications were ineligible due to visa-free travel to the European Union. Belgium, together with other receiving countries such as Germany, requested to speed up negotiations on the proposal introducing a safety mechanism to the existing EU Visa Code Regulation for the temporary suspension of visa-free travel in case of an emergency situation. The Belgian government responded more concretely with dissuasion campaigns in the region and with the creation of a list of safe countries – to which Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, and India have been added – to improve and speed up asylum application procedures. For the first time, overall asylum applications for every month in 2012 so far have been lower than the same month in 2011.

The Belgian government has struggled to ensure sufficient capacity for receiving asylum seekers, particularly over the past decade. Before the 2007 Reception Law, no material support framework existed for asylum applicants beyond the admissibility phase of their asylum procedure. To respond to the increasing reception needs, the government has attempted to address this issue by providing more human and financial resources to structurally expand reception places and improve the process and follow-up of asylum procedures.

Similarly, policymakers have been struggling to respond to the growing issue of unauthorized migrants over the last two decades. There is no comprehensive data, but estimates put the numbers between 40,000 and 140,000 in 2007. Belgium has attempted to address this with a longstanding voluntary return policy in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration, bilateral readmission agreements, and scattered regularization programs, though a comprehensive approach is lacking. In 2009, new regularization (and integration) criteria were introduced, but the subsequent regularization campaign in 2009 has been received with mixed feelings by both supporters and opponents. Despite the government's intention to drastically respond to irregular migration, the new regularization criteria and campaign were very much a piecemeal approach to an issue which requires a comprehensive answer, not just legislatively but also structurally and financially.

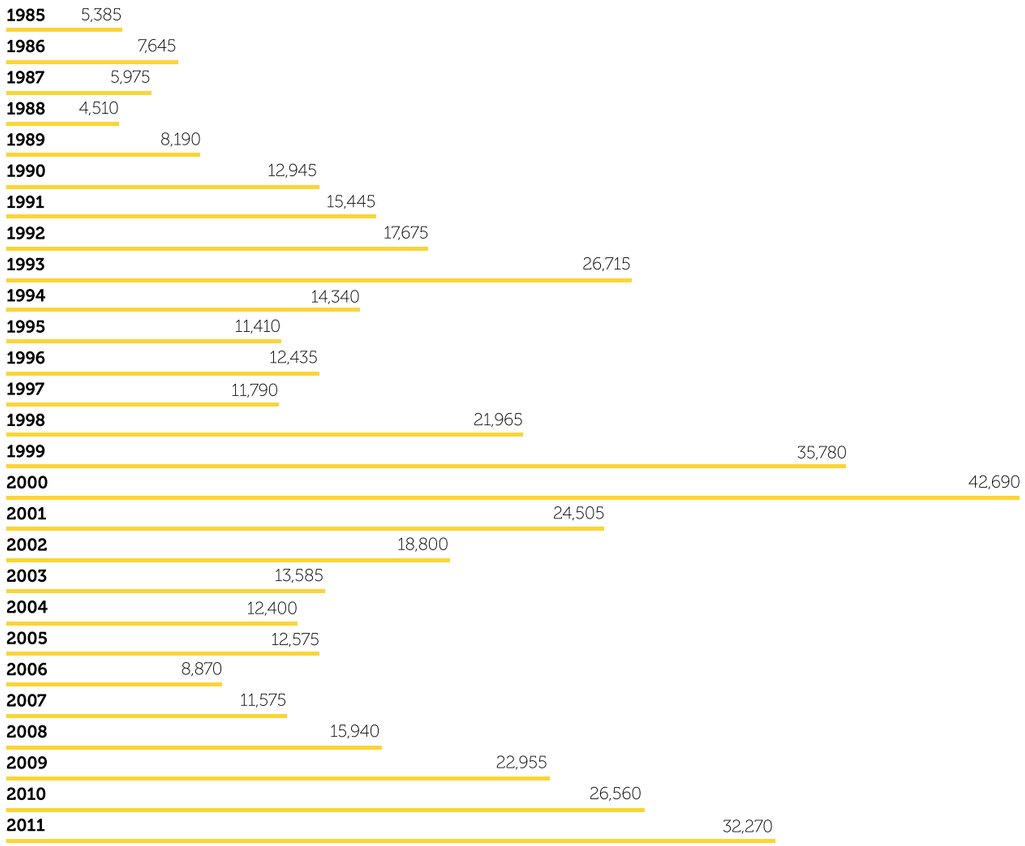
Table4. Asylum Applications in Neighboring Countries

Asylum application inflows

Country	Total population 2012	1992	1993	1998	1999	2000	2001
Belgium	11,041,266	17,675	26,715	21,965	35,780	42,690	24,505
Germany	81,843,743	438,190	322,600	98,645	94,775	78,565	88,285
France	65,397,912	28,870	27,565	22,375	30,905	38,745	47,290
Netherlands	16,730,348	20,345	35,400	45,215	39,275	43,895	32,580
United Kingdom	62,989,550	32,300	28,500	46,015	71,160	80,315	71,365

Source Eurostat, asylum applications annual data

Figure 1. Asylum Applications in Belgium since 1985



Source: Eurostat, asylum applications per year annual data
Note: The data from 2007 onwards measures individual asylum applicants as opposed to applications.

Economic Migration and Labor Market Integration

The number of work permits issued by the Belgian government has decreased over time. Only 12 percent of all long-term permits issued in 2011 were for remunerated labor. This can be explained by two factors. Firstly, the Belgian government cancelled the bilateral work agreements and subsequent work permits in the 1970s. After this, work permits were limited to more highly skilled immigrant workers. Secondly, Belgium receives increasing numbers of EU free movement workers, who live and work in Belgium but do not require work or residence permits under the European free movement legislation. As a result, it is difficult to paint a complete picture of the total number of non-Belgian workers.

Overall, Belgium scores very low on labor market integration of third-country nationals compared to other European countries. There is a stark difference between the labor market integration of EU and non-EU nationals. According to 2011 Eurostat labor force data, less than 40 percent of the non-EU population in Belgium is employed as opposed to more than 60 percent of EU nationals – the lowest average of all its neighboring countries, and contrasting with an average of more than 50 percent employed third-country nationals in EU-27. Particularly non-EU women have very low employment rates: just over 25 percent are employed compared to an average of 45 percent employment rate of non-EU women across the EU-27. Additionally, non-EU immigrants in Belgium were hit harder by the economic crisis and unemployment in recent years than the native population, though EU citizens coming from Southern and Eastern Europe were also affected. One possible explanation for such low scores is that these numbers only represent those third-country nationals who have registered as either employed or unemployed. This also brings up the issue of Belgium's fairly large shadow economy and of potential economic activity that goes unregistered. Another reason why so few third-country nationals are employed may be Belgium's comparatively attractive unemployment benefits.

Integration on the Policy Agenda

For a long time, integration policies in Belgium were designed in an equally laissez-faire and ad hoc approach as the other migration and asylum policies. The Belgian government introduced integration as a policy concept as part of general migration legislation in the late 1980s, but without any formal or coercive requirements. Integration and reception became a competence of the communities, to which other policies regarding social inclusion were added, such as housing, urban planning and education.In the 1990s, the Center for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism was established, responsible for the promotion of equality of opportunity and to combat all forms of discrimination and exclusion. Integration Decrees were introduced in both communities in the mid-1990s. The integration policy in Wallonia has historically always been focused on social inclusion in general, while the Flemish approach has shifted from a minority policy in the 1990s and 2000s (similar to the Dutch example) to an overall inclusive policy regardless of origins in 2009.

In both communities, integration supporting frameworks for language, access to the labor market and housing already exist, but both communities are considering defining their policies more extensively in the future.

At the regional level, cities have been steadily adapting to the increasingly multicultural environment regarding newcomer initiatives, language learning, etc. The 2012 regional elections are a testimony of the changing Belgian demography: almost all electoral lists had representatives from a migrant or minority background. Research has shown that migrants in Belgium identify themselves with their city and local environment more so than with the country of Belgium or a linguistic community. Even if a more right-wing wind might blow at the community level in Flanders, cities in both communities are likely to continue structurally approaching the social inclusion of their urban areas as a whole, regardless of the possible introduction of obligatory integration measurements.

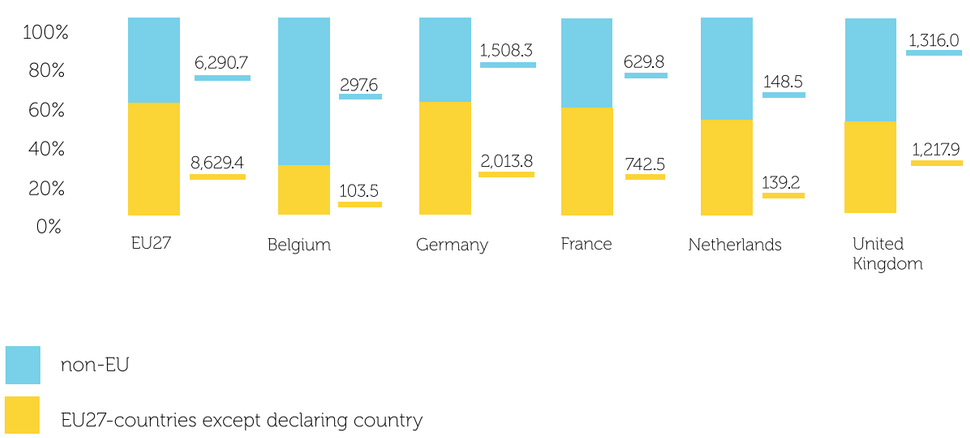
The New Migration-Integration-Islam Debate

What makes overall migration and integration all the more complex in Belgium is its dual linguistic and political system. Historically, public opinion in Flanders has been much more (center-) right, while the public opinion in Wallonia has always been much more (center-) left. This has been reflected in the power balance between parties in the federal government. Recently, however, the political composition of the regional governments no longer corresponds with the composition of the federal government, as the Flemish government has shifted much more toward the right. This is likely to put the Belgian federal system under increasing pressure in the years to come.

In Flanders, public opinion has fueled a steady rise of the far right party Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest) in the last three decades. Nevertheless, both the Flemish and federal governments have been able to avoid Vlaams Belang from entering into both regional and national government – despite its electoral victories of up to a third of all votes – because of a consistent cordon sanitair, an agreement between all parties never to enter into government with Vlaams Belang at local, regional or federal level. Over the last decade, the non-xenophobic, right-wing, separatist party, N-VA (New Flemish Alliance), has increasingly acquired ground on the political scene at the expense of Vlaams Belang.

Overall, the migration-integration-Islam debate has been much more polemic and heated in Flanders than in Wallonia. If N-VA continues to gain influence in the future, they are expected to push for a more acceptable right-wing reform of migration policy. However, it is debatable whether the consistent rise of right-wing parties has had a direct effect on the recent legislative reforms regarding family reunification and citizenship. Firstly, these are federal competencies for which agreement from all communities – Belgium's linguistically-based political entities – is needed. Secondly, the reality of Belgian society today has pushed policymakers for more consistent reforms in migration and asylum policy, decided by the federal government, of which N-VA is not a part (yet). As a result, the current and future governments are likely to continue evaluating and reforming migration legislation in Belgium, not because of shifts in political party politics, but because of the concrete needs of a diverse and sustainable welfare society.

Figure3. Total Employed Immigrants (in thousands) for 2011



Belgium, a Country of Permanent Immigration

The evolution of migration, asylum, and integration policies in Belgium has shown that there is a clear need to think about these policies more holistically, comprehensively, and proactively at the federal, regional, and local levels – and several steps have already been taken in that direction. At the federal legislative level, important reforms have been passed (or are about to) regarding family reunification, asylum, and citizenship. Both the Flemish and French-speaking communities have reformed integration and social inclusion policies in the last decade, though this area remains a work in progress. Apart from newcomer integration frameworks, both communities are increasingly aware of the need for mainstream inclusive policies such as for education. The French-speaking community has passed a major education reform in 2006, postponing the beginning of secondary education (and the accompanying selection) to the age of 14 instead of 12, thereby extending general basic education for everyone. The Flemish community has been debating and attempting to implement such as reform since 2009, but this has been met with much resistance, especially from the center-right.

In the two biggest cities, demographic data is proof of the permanent diverse nature of Belgium: in Antwerp, nearly 38 percent of its population is of foreign origin, while approximately 18 percent have a foreign nationality; in Brussels, nearly 62 percent is of foreign origin and approximately 31 percent have a foreign nationality. The Brussels-Capital Region is of course extremely diverse not just because of general immigration, but also due to the vast community of European nationals working for the European institutions. The ratio of net migration is expected to stabilize over the next decades and even slightly decrease. Nevertheless, Belgium will need to accommodate the present and future permanent diverse character of its population, not in the least by improving both opportunities and outcomes in the education system and in the labor market of its entire population.

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Biography

Milica Petrovic was an Associate Policy Analyst at the Migration Policy Institute Europe. Her work focused on immigrant integration policy, and in particular the governance and mainstreaming of integration policy, as well as education and labor market integration.

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'Other' posts in 'other' places: Poland through a postcolonial lens?

Lucy Mayblin, Aneta Piekut, Gill Valentine

Introduction

Postcolonial theory has tended to focus on those spaces where European colonialism has had a territorial and political history. This is unsurprising, as much of the world is in this sense 'postcolonial'. But what of those postsocialist states to the west of the 'East' and the east of the 'West'? – Former Soviet 'colonies' experiencing new Western imperialisms at the same time as adjusting to their 'transition' to capitalism? Postcolonial theory has much to offer to social and cultural studies of postsocialist spaces and a growing number of scholars in Eastern Europe have been arguing as much in recent years, particularly in Poland (Carey and Raciborski, 2004; Cavanagh, 2004; Deltecheva, 1998; Janion, 2006; Kania, 2009; Kuus, 2004; Owczarzak, 2009; Pickles, 2005; Skórczewski, 2006: 2009; Todorova, 1997; Zarycki, 2011). Yet there are limitations in this literature, particularly amongst those who offer a 'comparative empires' reading of postcolonial and postsocialist spaces. In this article we offer a reading of everyday understandings of diversity in Poland using postcolonial theory. Our intervention is crucially to argue that contemporary ideas of Polishness and otherness might be understood in terms of a triple relation: Poland as former colony, as former coloniser, and finally in relation to the Western hegemons.

In Poland, the experience of socialism and the aftermath of 1989 are fundamental to understanding political and public experiences and understandings of difference and diversity in the country (Kania, 2009). And yet, while the 'post-socialist condition' (Stenning, 2005) is important for understanding the nation and its response to difference, this is not the only lens through which one might look. A more long term perspective, and a more complex vision of Polish society which reaches beyond post-socialism as the focus for analysis, can offer new insights. Pre-socialist histories are important in thinking through contemporary articulations of Polish national identity, particularly in terms of Polish dominance over others in the near East. The history of Poland is also cut through with 'colonialisms' – Poland experienced Soviet imperialism and was itself an imperial power in the Eastern European region. More recently, Poland has turned Westwards and sought to 'return' to Europe (both politically and culturally) and in a sense to learn to be European again, for example through the European Union (EU) and NATO enlargement processes (Kuus, 2004). The old colonial powers of Western Europe, within this context, have exerted significant imperial influence over trajectories of social difference in multiple spheres of national life.

We draw here on data from in-depth biographical interviews with Poles living in Warsaw conducted within a larger research project "Living with Difference in Europe: Making communities out of strangers in an era of super mobility and super diversity" (cf. Piekut et al., 2012; Valentine et al., 2014; Valentine and Sadgrove, 2014). On the basis of a representative survey on attitudes and encounters with difference in Warsaw (N=1,499), 30 participants were selected for a qualitative study. Three interviews were then conducted with each participants in Polish over a one year period in 2012 (n=90). Each interview explored different 'scales' of experience with difference: individual, approached as a life history interview; urban, discussed around diversity changes in Warsaw; and national, investigating general views on relations among Poles and various minorities. The research participants represented a range of demographic characteristics, in terms of age, (dis)ability and socio-economic status, with some representatives of minority sexual, religious and ethnic groups (see summary of respondents' profile in Table 1).

Interviews were verbatim transcribed, coded and analysed using qualitative data software. We draw on this data to illustrate the means by which postcolonial theories and concepts might offer insight into research in Poland today. More specifically, we propose that thinking Poland postcolonially offers much in terms of understanding both national identity and ideas of 'otherness' in the country.

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents (N=30)

Characteristic		No.	Characteristic		No.
Gender	Female	15	Nationality	Polish	28
	Male	15		Other	2
Age group	18-34	11	Religion	Catholic	25
	35-59	12		Other religion	2
	60+	7		No religion	3
Marital status	Single	13	Place of birth	Warsaw	13
	Married	11		Other city in Poland	16
	Other	6		Abroad	1
Disability	No	25	Work status	Student	6
	Yes	5		Employed	18
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual	28		Unemployed	2
	Other	2		Retired & permanently sick	4

Poland through a Postcolonial Lens

In recent years a growing number of scholars in Poland have begun to explore the possible application of postcolonial concepts (cf. Janion, 2006; Kania, 2009; Skórczewski, 2006; 2009; Zarycki, 2005), predominantly drawing on an analysis of discourse, however, such discussions rarely draw on individual narratives which reflect everyday encounters with difference. This work falls in to two divergent strands which might be labelled 'comparative empires' and 'theoretical insights'. In the comparative empires perspective Poland is seen as a country historically colonised by Soviet Russia. The contemporary situation can therefore be interpreted in the same way that the postcolonial experience of other European colonies might be understood. Here, the central questions are around Polish identity (and anxieties around identity) in relation to their former Russian overlords (Fiut, 2007: 34). This line of investigation has clear limitations, not least in the practical complexity of Soviet colonialism, the question of whether the ambition of world socialism 'counts' as colonialism, and the local articulations of the relationship. Furthermore, this approach also falls victim to the central danger of this intellectual project: re-inscribing the colonial relation between East and West. Furthermore, postcolonial theories emerged in connection with leftist discourse and were mainly developed by Marxist scholars during the Cold War. This, as Korek (2007) has pointed out, makes the notion of Soviet Russia being a colonising power problematic. Soviet Russia supported the decolonisation process of countries that were 'oppressed by capitalism', taking the role of the only non-colonial empire.

The promise of postcolonial theory is not, we would argue, in engaging in the work of comparative empires, or to say that the postsocialist East can be subsumed into a postcolonial understanding of the world which foregrounds the Western empires. Rather, where the application may work is through using some of the tools of postcolonial theory to better understand the Eastern European experience, while also acknowledging that the hegemonic discourse of western enlightenment has a variety of spheres of influence, one of which is within Europe itself. Some postcolonial concepts might therefore be helpful here, such as: orientalism, hybridity, giving voice and speaking back, time as space, and contesting the project of 'modernity' (from modernisation to multiple modernities and beyond) (Bhabha, 2005[1994]; Bhambra, 2007; Spivak, 1988; Said, 1978; 1994; Eisenstadt, 2002). Postcolonialists, over the past 35 years, have called for a dramatic change in the way colonialism is approached. The central concern is with the narrative of modernity. Modernity has both temporal and geographical dimensions. The temporal concerns rupture – the idea that at some point in time something happened to Western societies which transformed them from pre-modern into modern societies. The Renaissance, the French Revolution and the industrial revolution form the key pillars of this story, together facilitating the Enlightenment, the emergence of democracy and the rise of capitalism in the West (Bhambra, 2007). This narrative reaffirms the idea that some places in the world are today modern, while some are not. Combined with the temporal variable, this logically means that some societies are 'behind' Western societies, existing in their past rather than in a global present. Modernity is therefore commonly theorised as simultaneously distinctive and Western European in its origins. What is interesting for our case is that postcolonial scholars often generalise about Europe, implying that the whole continent might be subsumed into their critique. And yet not all of Europe pursued representative democracy, capitalism or human rights (key indicators of modernity) at the same point in time as the 'Western core'. This peripherality to conceptions of modernity raises interesting questions for sociology in postsocialist spaces.

In looking at attitudes towards Poland and Poles in western European countries through a postcolonial lens one can observe politicians, the media and the public at large drawing on colonial tropes of East and West, setting Poland within a wider civilizational hierarchy (Spigelman, 2013). However, if we look at perspectives from within Poland then the discourses drawn upon are different – unsurprisingly, the relation is not reversed. There is, in fact, a triple relation apparent: the relation to Russia (complex in itself as this was not an example simply of another colonialism), and then there is a countervailing relation to 'the West' as an alternative ideological hegemon, the discourse around which draws on themes of Western superiority, on orientalism. Then, there is the relation to eastern and third world 'others', including those living in the pre-war Polish territories in the near east, who are often viewed in civilizational terms. Poland's position within this discursive framing isn't simply an 'inbetweeness' (in between East and West), as some scholars have argued (Galbraith, 2004; Janion, 2011), it is something much more complex. These three axes operate in parallel, and the outcomes of competing discourses, spheres of influence, racial and social hierarchies, distinctions between 'insider' and 'outsider', the 'self' and the 'other' manifest themselves in complex and contradictory ways.

This triple perspective resonates with Kuus's (2004) analysis of the European discourse on EU and NATO enlargement. Kuus suggests that the Cold War era binary division of Europe into communist and capitalist changed in the early 2000s, as powerful European actors began to divide the continent into three different regions: the European/Western core, the Central European applicants, and eastern peripheral states which are not yet European enough to join the EU (e.g. post-Soviet republics), or at all (i.e. Russia, Turkey). Kuus (2004) has proposed that other studies should look at how these 'othering' framings are used in the 'power margins' (Central and Eastern European countries). This paper follows this question by situating 'inscriptions of otherness' in the Polish historical and geo-political context. Specifically, we explore how the triple relation influences people's responses to diversity and how the responses are aligned with different narratives of modernity. The next three subsections address the three aspects of the triple relation.

Poland as a formerly Colonised Country

Poland has experienced multiple histories of colonisation by external powers. In the 18th Century Poland disappeared from the European map and the country was partitioned three times – by the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austrian Monarchy (1772, 1793 and 1795). Poland was deprived of sovereignty for 123 years, during which time ethnic Poles were pressured into cultural assimilation and experienced discrimination as a minority. Partial sovereignty was regained after the Congress of Vienna in 1815 which resulted in the creation of the Kingdom of Poland (1815-1918, known also as Congress Poland or 'Vistula Land' (rus.: Priwislinskij Kraj)). Poland remained politically integrated with Russia, though seized some limited independence after failed uprisings in November 1830 and January 1863. From 1945 to 1989 the Polish People's Republic (PPR) was a satellite of Soviet Russia. This period has been recognised by many as another colonisation, with Soviet Russia acting as a coloniser (Moore, 2001) or as a semi-coloniser (Carey and Raciborski, 2004), since Poland was officially an independent state, but it's internal and international politics were profoundly controlled by the leaders of the Soviet bloc countries

As this brief historical account shows, Poland has experienced multiple phases of colonial domination in a variety of forms. This, and particularly the 20th century experience of independence and independence-in-domination by Russia, has had a profound impact upon contemporary Polish national identity (Janion, 2011). Some scholars argue that a dislike of the Russian people is "glue that holds Polish identity together" (Janion, 2011: 6). One of the central popular anxieties around relations with Russia is the perception of Russia as a threat. The stereotype of 'threatening Russia' was reinforced during the Second World War and communicated to younger generations. One of our respondents, a woman born in the inter-war period in formerly Polish Vilnius, shared painful stories about the Wartime period and post-war resettlement in Poland. When referring to Russian people or language she always used the disrespectful term 'Ruski' (so called 'Russkis'). Her father fought in the Home Army, which did not accept the pro-Soviet communist authorities that emerged at the end of the war. Thus, as she explains, the hatred of Russia "came from home". While her husband was a communist party member sympathising with the Soviet Union, her son was virulently anti-Russian. When her son refused to learn Russian at school she felt ambivalent:

My [son] said, for example, he will not learn Ruski in school. I went to my son's [school] (...), I was constantly called by Ruski teacher to come there, [because] he won't learn Ruski. [My son said] "I won't learn!". [Happily] I admired him on the one hand, he is so tough, I was delighted, but I had straight A's in Ruski (...) I guess, because I was brought up there, in those regions and I was quite good at Ruski. I was good. I still buy Ruski [cigarettes], I read to my grandson what is written here [Respondent shows cigarettes with Russian inscriptions], (because) they are cheaper

Alina, 76

Another woman reflected on her memories about Russian people that lived in Warsaw during the socialist period. She perceived Russian people as those who 'stifled' Poles. Today, though she is aware of her prejudice and is self-critical, yet she cannot escape it:

As I tried to get a job, I went to the Ministry. One day I was standing at the door, waiting for someone to come (...) [and] I heard a conversation in Russian on the phone. And my hair stood on end. What are the Russians doing in our Ministry of Education? I've always been so suspicious about them. When I heard the conversation in Russian on the street I thought "Oh, those people again, those who want to stifle us here." At the moment I no longer have this very suspicious and reluctant attitude to them, but I can't say I love them. I am aware that authority and society are two different things, but society is unfortunately prone to do what authority says. (...)

Did you meet any Russians here in Warsaw?

No, I didn't meet any Russians, and probably wouldn't want to.

I'd be afraid that I could at some point show my dislike and someone would be sorry.

Danuta, 67

In this account the respondent admits that Russia no longer poses any threat to Poles and yet fears around being stifled, as she puts it, continue. Following 1989 the popular press has framed the Russian threat as an issue of gas supply, and more recently in the form of conspiracy theories around the Smoleńsk presidential plane crash in 2010, which happened close to one of the symbols of martyrdom of Poles during the Second World War (Zubrzycki, 2011).

In countering this sense of threat, Poles have developed multiple negative representations of Russians which cast Russia as weaker politically, more 'backward', and less civilised – the former 'coloniser' has become 'the other'. For example, in discussing the debate on the possibility of introducing same-sex civil partnership in Poland, one respondent used Russia as a reference society whose fate Poles should avoid. In this context, Russia remains 'less advanced' from the perspective of the European narrative on modernity in that it lacks compliance with international equality laws. Poland possesses a moral superiority and could avoid the Russian fate (Zarycki, 2004). Therefore, rather than depicting Russian equality and human rights laws as simply ineffective or limited, the discourse sites this limitation within a temporal and spatial narrative – some countries are lagging behind the modern West and should catch up. Lagging behind is implicated in lacking 'civilization'.

This orientalising perspective has been transposed onto Polish regions that were governed by Russia during partition. The post-Prussian and post-Austro-Hungarian regions are remembered as regions of prosperity and modernisation, while any economic successes and progressive social and voluntary work that occurred in the past and are occurring today in the formerly Russian regions are silenced or forgotten (Zarycki, 2008). This 'discourse of competences' is often applied to the eastern territories of Poland, which are perceived as more 'backward' because of their historical connections with Russia, while the positive legacies of Russian influence in these regions are overlooked (Zarycki, 2011). Negative views on these regions especially prevail among young people. For example, one interviewee described the town where his grandparents live in eastern Poland as a more superstitious place and with amusement, mimicking the eastern Polish accent. The social and cultural hegemony of the Russian Empire was therefore only marginally successful in Poland. Some scholars link this failure of the Russian colonial project with the Polish 'inferiority-superiority complex' – a sense of inferiority in relation to the West, alongside high levels of Polish national pride (Kurczewska, 2003). Perhaps because Poles feel inferior (insufficiently modern and European) in relation to the West (Kuus, 2004), they have developed a disrespectful attitude towards other 'more eastern' and 'even less European' countries. However, in the Polish context the negotiations of 'Easterness' are marked by centuries of difficult history of being neighbours or citizens within one national organism; a history that spans well beyond the recent post-1989 transformations and EU enlargement.

Poland as a Coloniser: 'Orientalisation' of Borderlands

The territory of present day Poland, like many states, differs considerably from previous incarnations of the country. From the fourteenth century up to 1945 the Polish eastern borders were located approximately 200 km south-east of their present location, incorporating the territories of contemporary western Belarus, western Ukraine and eastern Latvia. Following considerable changes to the Polish territories introduced with the Yalta Conference in 1945, Poland was moved westwards, and the eastern territories were lost while some western and northern regions (including almost the entire Upper and Lower Silesia, Pomerania, Lubusz Land, parts of Greater Poland, Kuyavia, Warmia and Masuria) were regained and named the Regained Territories. Polish people living in the former Polish territories in eastern neighbouring countries were repatriated to Poland and mostly to the Regained Territories in parallel with German repatriations in the same area. The lost eastern territories have colloquially been named the 'Eastern Borderlands' and over time a nostalgic and idealising discourse built upon mythologies of a 'lost homeland' created during the partitions has emerged (Bakuła, 2007). However, historically these eastern territories were never considered to be ethnically Polish in terms of their population. The territories of contemporary Belarus and Ukraine were conquered in 14th and 15th Century by the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and incorporated into Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (common elective monarchy, 1569–1795). These territories were a mix of people of different ethnicities and religions (Catholic, Orthodox and Jewish). People in the Commonwealth had, in theory, the same rights and privileges irrespective of their ethnicity (introduced by the Warsaw Confederation 1573), but the rights were limited to nobility (10% of the population). Ethnic and religious differences were interwoven with social and class divisions, with Polish gentry, who had more economic resources and power, being significantly advantaged in this context (Gella, 1989: 13; Snochowska-Gonzales, 2012).

During the Commonwealth period the eastern border was perceived by Poles as a territory where nomadic Cossacks, Tartars and people who came as 'fugitives from serfdom' led ungoverned lives, so it was represented both as a space of freedom and a space of fear (Janion, 2006). These perceptions reflect one of the central national myths – Catholic Poland as a bulwark of Christiandom defending Europe against the infidel, against the barbarian, and against the Asian threat (Wise, 2010a; Zubrzycki, 2011). The Borderlands became a space of nationalistic tension in the time of Poland's regaining of independence, specifically with Ukrainian people (e.g. war over the Eastern Galicia regions, 1918-19, 'Massacres in Volynia', 1943-44). The imperialistic approach towards people living in these territories (assimilation was expected into the socio-cultural norms of contemporary Poland) and the homogenising mythologies of the Polish national identity were strengthened by socialist national policy (Copsey, 2008). All these experiences have been incorporated into the national collective memory (Konieczna, 2001). One of our research participants was born in south-east Poland in an area which until 1945 was Polish and is currently Ukrainian, a region of Polish-Ukrainian clashes in the period 1943-44. Stories of the massacre were passed to younger generations and the term 'Ukrainian' has become a powerful symbol of the 'other' that has deeply shaped her attitudes, even to things that belong to the Ukrainian people, such as animals: "it's not our dog, but Ukrainian dog, we can say, dog which belongs to people who murdered us. Somehow, it's a psyche, it's scary" (Urszula, 52). When she moved to Warsaw she rented a room in her flat to a girl who dated a Ukrainian boy. The couple broke up and in her justifications she drew a connection between her beliefs regarding Ukrainians and her encounter with the Ukrainian boy:

I had some terrible expectations of Ukrainians, really terrible. They told me that they were there, they killed, they murdered, they nailed children to walls, it was simply, it's what I heard from my grandma, my grandma told me such stories (...)

And in the course of time, when you got to know this boy better, did your attitude change? How was it?

I mean, that's why I imagined that, that he may hurt this girl. Somehow, I didn't feel it would be all right. And it turned out that he hurt her because he left her afterwards. He left her. He promised wonders, he promised to marry her and so on, that they would be together, and then he said: "You know, I want to date also other women". (...) she slept with him. Even, I shouldn't say it, but he perhaps infected her, because she visited a gynaecologist and she said that she contracted some disease (...). So I don't think of Ukrainians in positive terms, quite the contrary, my attitude is, that they are, we shouldn't generalise, maybe it's only my imagination, maybe I don't know, maybe somebody says it and I just repeat it.

Urszula, 52

These memories around the brutality of Borderland relations have been interpreted as indications of failings in the Ukrainian character. What is interesting, the Ukrainian boy is racialised, since his actions are not seen as personal failings, but as a reflection of his 'Ukrainian nature'. The contemporary migration of Ukrainians, Belarussians and citizens of other eastern neighbour countries (the major immigration source) adds another dimension to discursive constructions around the relations with the 'Borderlands'. 'Borderland people' are again living among Poles, and more importantly, many of them have some Polish roots or family relations (Konieczna-Sałamatin, 2011), so the association of these people with 'otherness' becomes complicated by the banal realities of everyday life. A common representation of Ukrainians as a poor and economically 'backward' nation, and the association of Ukrainian immigrants with undocumented migration and illegal working (Konieczna, 2001) was also present among our respondents. One respondent in our research spoke of her Ukrainian sister in law. In her story she negotiates her son's immigration experience, who lived in UK and now resides in Sweden, with her own experiences in the labour market. Working as a domestic help she competes with mostly Ukrainian women as she says "I don't mind that she is Ukrainian at all".

You know what, but if our [Polish] people move to other countries, then they perceive us similarly there. (...) So this is the natural order, everybody takes away [jobs]. Sure, I was annoyed many times because they [Ukrainian women] raise price, they unreasonably raise prices. (...) Well, because there are a lot of them, for example cleaning and keeping a house. There are a lot of these Belorussians and Ukrainians and they take up jobs and raise prices, they even have higher salaries than we do. (...) So, yeah, something has changed. Back then, I didn't mind, now it is a bit different. (...) And it is because they are employed more often... Because we have got families, we come back somewhere. And they usually stay over [in Poland]. (...) Possibly, they come and are ready to work at anyone's beck and call. Unlike us. Because I've got eight hours and I go back home. So it is different. Well, but for example my sister-in-law works shorter hours in Poland and has the same salary as I do.

Celina, 58

Similar stories were shared by other respondents who perceived economic immigrants from the eastern neighbouring states as those who do not 'deserve' to have the same salary as Polish people. However, Poland through the same means of migratory experience has moved closer to the 'Western core', because it has become an attractive destination country for immigrants. These accounts provide evidence that citizens of the Central and East European countries negotiate their own degrees of 'Easterness' or 'Westerness' in relation to other countries of the region (Kuus, 2004), especially those in close proximity (Siemieńska, 1996). Past Polish emigration was compared with contemporary immigration, particularly from the Eastern neighbouring countries:

Although their [immigrants] status is certainly worse, like usually in the case of gastarbeiters [ger.], but... it tickles my national pride, that we used to go to Germany to pick up strawberries and we went to saksy [pol., a colloquial term for a seasonal job abroad], to a bauer [ger.]. (...) And now we've become 'the West' and other nations come to us, and we are almost these masters [pol. 'paniska']. We give them jobs, they clean up, they build, they babysit.

Henryk, 66

In this relation 'modernity' appears as a 'colonisation of space and time' (Mignolo 2011: 6); this 'lower', less empowered social positioning is ascribed to a specific region (Eastern Europe), but is also associated with the 'past' Poland, and thus is presented as more immature. The narrative on the Borderlands is also reflected in the feeling of responsibility, emotional attachments ('lost homeland') and, in turn, a paternalistic approach towards these regions which could be taught by Poland how to become European (especially Ukraine, Bakuła, 2007). Reverse mechanisms seem to be in operation in relation to Jewish people, who also represent a former multicultural facet of pre-war Poland, but are not visible and encountered on a same daily basis as immigrants from the East are. This group was 'imagined' by respondents as more dominant in relation to Poles (understood in socio-economic terms and power relations; cf. Kofta and Bilewicz, 2011), which could not be 'orientalised' and described as a 'backward other' (Snochowska-Gonzales, 2012). It could be argued that this 'colonising incapacity' constitutes a source of uneasiness and prejudice. As such, the triple relation does not fully explain anti-Semitism or any other prejudice, but it helps to uncover how everyday encounters with 'others', even if they are 'imagined encounters', are relationally bound with different narratives of hegemonic relations and contestations of previously 'subaltern' positioning of Polish people.

Poland and the Western 'Hegemons'

Until the 9th Century Poland was a pagan country. In the 10th Century the Polish duke Mieszko I decided to convert to Christianity, but according to Latin, as opposed to Slavonic, rite. Since then Poland has had a stronger relation with Western Latin religious culture and thought. Janion (2006) sees this event in Polish history as the starting point of a national identity split between the East (represented by Slavdom) and the West. The subsequent history of Poland, during which stronger links with the Russian Empire developed, has only reinforced this tension. Some scholars argue that the aspirations of being included into Western Europe and accepted as not a 'barbarian Slavonic' people, has led to the creation of a para-colonial relationship with Western countries (Buchowski, 2006; Kuus, 2004; Thompson, 2010).

Thompson (2010) describes the relationship between Poland and the 'West' as a 'surrogate hegemon'. She traces its roots in the period of partition (1773/1795-1914) and argues that similar processes were at work in the socialist period. In both periods large numbers of Polish intelligentsia emigrated from Poland and with them the narrative on Polish socio-cultural life was relocated outside Poland. The narratives developed by Polish intellectuals in Western Europe – who were seeking explanations for the partitions or commented on internal affairs in socialist Poland – confirmed the inferiority of Polish society and, according to Thompson, Poles started internalising the orientalising gaze of the West, but at the same time "they tended to transfer the notion of inferiority onto the lower social strata in Poland, or onto those strata that did not subscribe to the Enlightenment slogans about progress and secular development of humanity" (Thompson, 2010: 4; for critique see Snochowska-Gonzales, 2012). Through the decades Poles adopted the discourse of the conquerors, blaming themselves for the failure of the Polish state, at the same time as the belief in Western supremacy grew stronger. This orientalist perspective which casts Poland as traditional and behind the West was present among our informants too. Reflecting on changes that have occurred in Poland in the last two decades, Jakub perceives current public debates in Poland, those represented mainly by politicians who shape the discourse, as parochial in relation to Western political culture. He explains:

When you are saying that Poland is parochial, then?

(...) But still in certain situations, being parochial means that we are far away from this Western Europe, we are far away in terms of thinking, perceiving certain issues. And, as I've mentioned, politicians are to blame. (...)

What's the difference between thinking of western politicians and our Polish politicians? I will put it differently – our politicians mentality in certain cases, as I've said, with respect to otherness, generally, otherness, and so on, they are simply, they think like in the past.

Jakub, 36

This description of 'thinking like in the past', while Western politicians presumably think in a new mode which is distinct from old ways of thinking, reflects the articulation of ideas of modernisation and progress which are often taken for granted. 1989 brought independence and a chance to re-establish and reassess relationships with both the West and the East. Neoliberal politics privileged the modernisation discourse of 'transition' which depicts Poland (and other postsocialist countries) as lagging behind the capitalist West. In this period postsocialist Poles again internalized the orientalist gaze which depicted the country as 'backward'. Much like the partition periods, Polish intellectual elites identified societal groups 'responsible' for the failure of the national state after 1989. Some people were marked as 'domestic others' or 'losers of transformation' – those who are automatically proved to fail to adapt and to be 'civilizationally incompetent' or are unable to reject old mental habits, the homo sovieticus complex, who do not fit into this new civilised, post-communist reality of capitalism and progress (Buchowski, 2006). This internal orientalisation justifies a para-colonial relationship with Western societies, casting them as more modern and representing a future which Poles aspire to, of underdeveloped 'East' and the civilised 'West' (Kania 2009).

Domański (2004) suggests that the ideology of 'catching-up' reinforces the acceptance of external influences, and a sense of exclusion from European integration after the Second World War leads, Domański argues, to the acceptance of the recipient role and in turn to the reproduction of the East-West division. While assessing the Polish role in the European Union respondents in our research in Warsaw were appreciative of the financial benefits that accession to the EU brought, the active role that European institutions take in Polish domestic policies was rarely mentioned. Assessing Polish accession to the EU, respondents focused on differences in the standard of living that exist between Poland and Western Europe. The West was not only represented as better in terms of labour market opportunities and conditions, but also as 'more developed' in terms of social care and welfare, despite the fact that Poland was a 'socialist welfare state' in the past (Golinowska, 1994). Barbara, who has been the primary full-time carer for her disabled husband for more than 10 years, suggested that Western European countries represent a comfortable life to which she aspires:

So, those centres [for disabled] were founded, right, this is thanks to the European Union probably, but we are far behind, when it comes to any social assistance, suppose. I also had an uncle in West Germany, (...) [and] his wife died, he was left alone and he was also after the stroke, he immediately had such care as it should be, they brought him absolutely, completely out of it. Later (...) he had home care, a young woman did everything there until he died, right. Here [in Poland] there is no such assistance. (...) Social welfare in the West is more developed.

Barbara, 62

The internalisation of the narrative of modernity is clear in this quote. Though the arrival of capitalism brought an end to many social provisions in Poland, it is not the Soviet Union that was 'ahead', but Western Europe. While state social care is being eroded in Western European countries as neoliberal capitalist economic agendas have risen to prominence (and in that sense the West is behind itself in terms of social welfare), what provision there is, nevertheless presents a future with which Poland shall one day 'catch up'. Interestingly, here Germany is included in the Western narrative not in the post-partition and post-war narrative, along with Russia. For example, some anti-EU debates regarding the possibility of buying land in Poland by foreigners were anchored in anti-German sentiments (Buchowski, 2010). This further exhibits the fluidity of discourse of the past and present hegemonial relations.

Attitudes toward Western countries are, indeed, a mix of desire and resentment, a negotiation, an ambivalent hybrid (Bhabha, 2005[1994])). Western countries receive the highest scores in public opinion polls on perceptions of other nations, and have done for many years (CBOS, 2013). For decades Western Europe and the United States have constituted migration destinations for economic migrants from Poland and have been popularly depicted as 'promised lands' of prosperity. At the same time, Poles acknowledge that they are not always seen as desirable citizens in the West, and they have developed "a complex of the unwanted child" (Horolets and Kozłowska, 2012: 51). Being 'unwanted' results in a sense of a uneasiness about one's own position among other European countries, being not European enough, which is overcome by attempts to prove Polish superiority over the West in other dimensions. Poland is therefore often depicted in political and media debates as morally superior to Western countries and as a society that has not been 'spoiled' by changes brought about by 'civilizational' processes (Wise, 2010b), for example its ethnic and religious homogeneity was valued by some. Reflecting on the multicultural projects pursued by some of the Western countries respondents expressed scepticism in relation to the results in the UK, France, the Netherlands and Denmark. Beata, who has resided in a number of Western European countries, connected her Islamophobic feelings with this kind of argument:

I would very much not like for Poland to find itself in a situation like it is in France. At some point there was untamed immigration there. They had to accept people from the Maghreb, because it was their colony, and suddenly it turned out that those people were unwilling to integrate with society. They started living with their own enclaves, speak only in Arabic, and France started having whole Arabic cities. They started evicting the French from their estates because with time, more of them immigrated there and the value of those flats was lower, right? (...) Based on my observation of French, British and Dutch society, it seems that mass acceptance of migrants from Arabic countries has a negative impact on society in the long run.

What kind of risks are you talking about? (...) *The risk is of those people not wanting to accept the culture they are entering. (...) They don't want to accept that value, those European values, they don't want to accept human dignity, right? That man and woman have the same dignity and the same rights. They start living in their enclaves, I'm talking about The Netherlands, for example, right? They don't learn the language, they act on their own law, they listen to their Imam more than, you know, the police or what the Dutch have to say. And for example I'd be against Warsaw, the city of Warsaw issuing a permit to build a mosque*

Beata, 37

Here, the racialised attitudes towards Muslim people intersect with the vision of the West, demonstrating how race is temporarily and spatially reconstructed (Meer and Nayak, 2013). As such, the applied triple relation anchored in the postcolonial theory reveals the complexity of racialization processes in a society that imagines its future through the experiences of the 'civilised West', to which it aspires, but also distances itself from. Approaching ethnic diversity from the perspective of an outsider ('they have a problem', Weinar, 2008: 5), despite being an insider in the EU, reinforces the self-representation of Poland as peripheral in Europe.

Discussion

This paper has presented original empirical material from research investigating the contemporary responses of Poles to ethnic diversity. We have here employed a postcolonial perspective with reference to ideas of Polishness and 'otherness', but, as we argue, these ordinary experiences have to be anchored in a long-durée perspective penetrating complex Polish history and hegemonic relations with other nations – either as a colonised or colonising power. The application of these postcolonial lenses has demonstrated that attitudes towards other nationalities are not merely a result of the 'East-West split' (Galbraith, 2004) or by-product of the 'post-socialist condition' (Stenning, 2005). Rather, we propose that the contemporary Polish condition be considered in terms of the triple relation: in relation to Russia as its former colony reflecting past Russian Empire and Soviet domination, as a former coloniser of other Eastern European nations and in relation to the Western hegemons.

The triple relation set out in the article provides a novel framework for understanding Polish identity within the context of three key external influences, drawing upon some of the central tropes of postcolonial theory. In doing so, it was not the aim of the article to provide a theory of prejudice within Poland. For instance, anti-Semitism, which continues to be present in Poland, could not be fully explored (cf. Cała, 2012). It is worth noting, however, that while postcolonial theory has not adequately addressed the issue of anti-Semitism, we would in this context distinguish between internal and external others. In the Polish case, Jews were (before the Holocaust) the 'other' within, and remain an 'imagined internal other' today. This prejudice is aligned with ideas of racial hierarchy in that being Jewish is related to descent, and is thus biologically unavoidable. This connects to popular ideas of a homogenous, mono-ethnic nation, which were pursued as an official policy of the state in the post-war period. Hierarchical conceptions of humanity and racial difference rose in Europe with the rise of the major colonial empires, and it was on this epistemological basis that anti-Semitism took hold in Germany and beyond. Racism and racialization, including anti-Semitism, are therefore woven through all elements of the triple relation. As such, postcolonialism raises questions about dominant epistemologies which have long framed the world in hierarchical terms. Situating the analysis in racially homogenous Polish society paradoxically demonstrates "the resilience of race as a construct for organising social relations" and how this 'algebra of race' is reconfigured across time and space selectively drawing upon past, present and imagined future (Meer and Nayak, 2013: 13). Through the postcolonial epistemological optic racial hierarchies, which include 'invisible' and 'internal' others such as Jews, other Eastern European nations and the working classes, go hand in hand with hierarchical ideas of civilization.

Furthermore, the triple relation exposes constraints regarding the concept of modernity in its temporal and geo-political dimensions. While modernity is usually assumed to be a distinctive feature of Western societies, the analysis provided demonstrates that Polish people make sense of their contemporary encounters with ethnic diversity by relating it to non-linear representations of past, present and future. This collective imaginary is relational and fluid and there is not one vision of modernity and change; for example Germany shifted from a category of colonisers to the Western hegemons and Jewish people, as explained above, from 'internal' to 'imagined' others. As such, the data presented in this paper has clearly demonstrated the ways in which ordinary people draw on aspects of this triple relation in making sense of both Polishness and 'otherness' in contemporary Poland. While more work is needed to develop this line of enquiry, we propose that concepts which have been developed in postcolonial studies have much to offer in terms of conceptualising and theorising processes of identity formation in the 'power margins' in Europe. Indeed, the complexities of national identities cannot be explained solely by historical events, but also the ways in which those events are subsumed into an ideological representation of past, present and future. What a postcolonial lens might offer, then, is an understanding of Polish national identity as mediated through a vision(s) of modernity: the modern society, the modern citizen, modern policies – what is especially important in the context of increased intra-EU mobility and Europeanization of national politics. While Western Europe looms large in this framing of the world as a vision of the (or a possible) future, the triple relation draws attention to other relations also framed in terms of modernity which should be considered.

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Migration as a form of abandonment

Mona Vintilă

Introduction

Statistics say that over 4 million Romanians have emigrated in the past 25 years. Unfortunately not all as families and due to this it lead to a rupture in numerous families. Some families emigrated all together. These are the less affected cases from the family's suffering point of view. They had to confront the difficulties of integration in a new country, culture and environment, but they were together in their struggle. In less fortunate cases one family member, one parent emigrated, leaving behind the other parent with the children. Of course, in most cases there was an agreement among the partners to do so for the financial wellbeing of the entire family, but the emotional consequences were huge, sometimes going up to the dissolution of the family. After 1989 the only emigration reason was the financial one, to move to more developed and wealthy countries.

In 2010 a number of 82.464 children were reported by the Romanian National Child Protection Authority, to have been left at home without one or both parents in the emigration process. Most parents think when they leave that it is temporary and that either they return in a short time or that their family will join them soon. Also, they always put the economical interest first. In the worst case scenario both parents leave and the children are left in the care of the oldest sister or brother, this happened to 3,500 children.

When one parent leaves the families are incomplete. In my view this is a sort of divorce and the reactions the children have in these cases are very similar to that of children whose parents are in actually getting a divorce. Unfortunately, in many cases sooner or later the result was the actual divorce of the parents, as they got emotionally separated due to the physical distance that was between them, they grew apart. The changes in the family system were so huge, the dynamic, the functioning was altered, so that in many cases in the end divorce was the only option. Being in different environment they grow apart, their interests, visions are becoming more and more different, so even when they meet they seem to have less and less in common. Statistics show that although men are those getting involved in other relationships sooner, while women are the ones asking more frequently for a divorce. In many cases the divorce becomes just a last step in making official a state of fact which already exists, as the family is disintegrated, living apart for several years. The parent who remains at home will act with the children exactly as a single parent does, assuming all roles. In many cases the parent who remains at home will rely on the extended family as this is a cultural tradition: "The typical Romanian attitude is to seek information and help from family members. This is due to the fact that most households contain members of two or three generations (...). The extended family is therefore naturally the main network of support and information. Wider social networks are underdeveloped ..." (Goian et al, 2010).

Children left at home by their parents will miss them, and will then react as children whose parents divorce becoming: depressed, frustrated, angry and aggressive; they will feel a lack of protection, they may feel confused and develop sleeping problems; they might have problems related to social integration, internal tensions, negative self-esteem; they can develop feelings of helplessness and rejection.

Children at pubertal or teenage years will feel abandoned by the parents who are overinvolved in the challenges of the emigration process. They will try to compensate by playing on the computer or having fun with friends, going to bars etc. in worse cases they will develop suicidal ideation, asocial and antisocial behavior, negativity, lying, stealing, robbery, interpersonal violence, threatening behavior, rape, running away from home or vagrancy, alcoholism and drug addiction. Studies proved that greater levels of family distress are associated in children with depression, aggression, anxiety, low self-esteem and even delinquency (Aroian, K.J., 2006). As Voracek (2007) suggested, an interplay of genetic susceptibility factors, such as to aggression, depression, and impulsivity (all of which behavioral and personality traits have a genetic component) with specific environmental factors (...) leads to high susceptibility for mental disorders and, in turn, also to suicidal behavior.

Migration is always about losses, but it is even worse than a loss, it is the feeling of being abandoned, and this might happen to each of those involved: the partner/parent who left and is alone abroad, the partner/parent left at home, and overall the children left home by one or both parents. In a study that we have done in 2010 on 60 adolescents, aged between

15 and 19, whose parents had left the country for at least two years we found out that adolescents who have emigrant parents have a higher anxiety and depression level than teenagers whose parents are at home with them. This can be explained by the fact that only 10% of the adolescents receive support from their parents while they are abroad (Eleoff, S., 2003).

Children do not know what will happen in this new situation, and they ask themselves: is the parent coming back, will he take care of him/her, is it maybe his fault that the parent left. Also, often the children get caught in the middle between the parents, the parent who remained home gets frustrated about the partner and confides in the child. This will be a huge responsibility and even a burden for the child, who will feel bad to need to take sides for one or the other of the parents; the child might also develop anger toward both parents for being put in this position.

A parent who is depressed and unable to manage this state will induce this psychological state to the child too. Children who are or feel abandoned in the process of migration can develop a feeling of guiltiness, as in case of parental separation in the divorce process, and think that maybe it is their fault that one or both parents left. Due to this their level of self-esteem will be lower than that of the teenagers whose parents have not emigrated. Children need their parents' love in order to develop a healthy self-esteem. Here we must add that the hyper-protective behavior of the parent who remained home will not lead to an adequate psychological development of the child either. On the contrary, this will make the child to be even less able to face situations of normal life.

Migration compromises the relationship between the parents and the adolescent so that they will feel they are not important for their parents; there is nothing more painful for a child than to feel this. Parents sometimes think, wrongly, that if they send money and gifts to their child, they can compensate for their absence. But what children and even adolescents need most is the time spent together, the quality of their relationship, their parents' attention and care.
Moreover, in order to be able to grow up as a competent adult, the adolescent needs to see both parents interacting in a normal relationship, to have the necessary role models. This is the premises to be able to have healthy partner relationship in his adult life. Family therapy can have a huge role in this process for all those involved and it might even influence the entire process of family emigration. Informing families about what will happen to them from a psychological point in the process of emigration can help the families make the right choices, foreseeing the loneliness and rootlessness that will follow and they will have to cope with.

The therapist can help the family to overcome the problems encountered in this difficult period in their lives. Accepting that emigration is a difficult and stressful process can make the whole process easier for the family, than the approach in which they try to play down the difficulties encountered. At the same time the therapist should consider the cultural and ethnical background of the family, as well as each families particularities when working with the family members, consider the family values and rules, the dynamic of the family. Each family is unique, so even if the therapist is familiar with the cultural background, we must know that each family lives its own drama in the process of emigration which we have to consider. Just getting to know the specific values, rules, roles, borders, habits etc of the family, the intervention can be personalized and become successful. Assessing the type of family in a correct way prior to the intervention is crucial: functional / dysfunctional; involved / uninvolved / over involved; differentiated / undifferentiated. After all these above have been done the therapist can be there for the family in the process of migration and help them overcome its challenges, by offering support and making the necessary interventions to obtain family restructuring and making them capable to function in these new circumstances.

Conclusion

The child's emotional security and wellbeing is affected once a parent leaves –emigrates in this specific case. This leaving might be perceived by the child as an abandonment which makes him question his entire meaning of life. From being angry with the abandoning parent up to feeling guilty to have been the cause of this act he will pass through all the stages. From all we can say this emigration process has a very similar effect to that of a divorce.

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Migration in 21st century Greece

Yannis Koukmas

Introduction

Immigration constitutes an integral part of human mobility and history. People always migrated in search of new living conditions. For this reason, it had always been a matter of concern and discussion. In the day of globalisation, more particularly, it has been found not only at the epicentre of debates, analyses and political plannings but also scientific researches and studies. The modern Greek state and the Greek society have long-term migration experience for two main reasons. Firstly, the Greek people were-historically-people of diaspora. Secondly, Greece constitutes from the late 19th century a country of sending immigrants abroad. (Damanakis, Konstantinidis, Tamis 2014: 11-12) Migratory flows from Greece are divided into two periods. The first big flow lies between 1890 and 1914. As a result, it is estimated that 1/6 of the population emigrated (Kassimis & Kassimi, 2004), mainly in America and Egypt. The causes of migration must be sought mainly to the poor economic situation of the newly formed state that was particularly noticeable in the rural population (Laliotou, 2006). The flow of expatriation is diminished the period 1912-1924 when significant migratory influx seems to involve a predominant reception of immigrants from the Balkans due to the Balkan wars and Greeks returning home. There were many reasons for the repatriation such as the refugees from Minor Asia, the eastern and the northern Thrace (Gropas, Triantafyllidou 2009: 193).

The second migratory movement from Greece appears after the end of World War II until the mid-1970s, and was directed mainly towards the Central and Western Europe, where countries such as Greece, were involved in industrial development by providing cheap labour. It is estimated that this period approximately 1,400,000 Greeks emigrated to Australia and America as well as the Central and Western Europe, specifically West Germany, which absorbed 85% of migration within Europe. At the same time, however, expatriates from Egypt, Turkey and the countries of Eastern Europe come in Greece (Dimitriadi 2013: 37). The reasons, that enhanced this migration were both economic and political as it is the period after the civil war and before the dictatorship in Greece. The emigration stopped almost completely in the mid to late 1970's, when the Nordic countries adopted more restrictive immigration policies after the oil crisis (Gropas, Triantafyllidou2009: 193).

The substantial changes, however, were brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent decline of the communist regimes in Albania and the Balkan and former Eastern bloc countries, such as in Bulgaria, Georgia, Poland and Romania in the early 1990s. These new streams moved mostly to neighbouring countries, including Greece.

At the same time, the political changes in the country itself had a key role. More specifically, the consolidation of democracy and the integration into the European Union, turned Greece overnight into a desirable destination for immigrants from third countries (Poulopoulou, 2007). Civil wars in Central Africa, in the mid-1990s, the first war in Iraq and the socio-economic conditions, which prevailed in the countries of Central Asia and Africa, have led to population movements, which several times went beyond borders towards Europe and the last decades especially in Greece.

From the late 1990s onwards, essentially within a decade, Greece accepts migrants who, although they vary in frequency and numbers, they have something in common: their migration is an innovative phenomenon for the country. In addition, Greece is now perceived as a transit country to other European countries and particularly those of the North. (Dimitriadi 2013: 38-40).

After 2010, due to the economic crisis in Greece, a mass emigration of Greeks launched. They have been mostly academics, workers in EU countries as well as to the traditional immigrant receiving countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia where until 2013 about 200,000 thousand Greeks emigrated (Damanakis, Konstantinidis, Tamis 2014: 11-12).

Legal immigrants

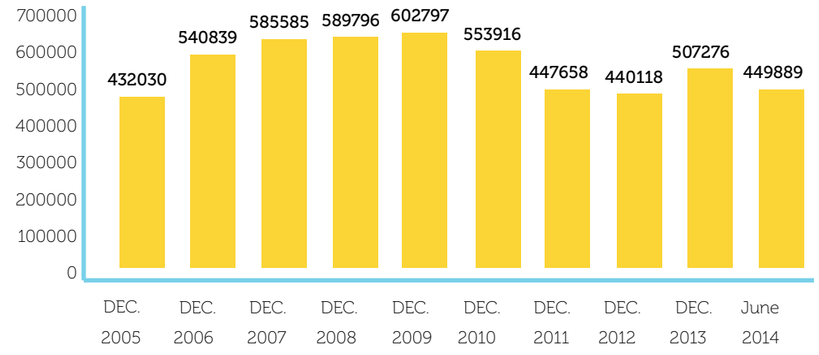
The major institutions on the collection of statistical data is the Hellenic Statistical Authority (ELSTAT) which conducts sample surveys and population censuses and the Ministry of the Interior through the services that are responsible for issuing residence permits to immigrants. According to the census data, Greece accepted the highest percentage of immigrants in the EU in the 1990s in comparison with its population and its workforce. The 2001 census showed that immigrants in the country were estimated to 762.191, surpassing the 7% of the total population. Studies estimated that the actual number is considerably higher (10% of the population), the participation in the economically active population approaches 15%, while the greek SOPEMI report (2010) estimates the total number in 1.259.258.
Over half of the immigrants, according to the 2001 census, come from Albania and secondly Bulgaria which along with Romania constitute the 2/3 of the total immigrants. The reason is the proximity with these countries. The integration of Bulgaria and Romania in EU (2007) has considerably increased their numbers in the migratory population as a result of the allowance of the free movement of EU citizens (Zografakis, Kasimis 2014: 384).

It is also recorded in the recent census of 2011 according to which the ELSTAT enumerated 911.929 individuals with foreign citizenship. In comparison with the census of 2001, the number of individuals with foreign citizenship was increased by 149.738 (+19,6%). The biggest percentage of 52,7% of foreigners that resided in 2011 in Greece had Albanian citizenship (57,5% in 2001), 8,3% Bulgarian (4,6% in 2001), 5,1% Rumanian (2,9% in 2001), Pakistani follows with 3,7% (1,5% in 2001) and 3% Georgian (3%to 2001) and the Ukrainians and Poles follow (Triantafyllidou 2014:7)

More than the 50% of immigrants entered in the country in order to work. The 13% of them report the family reunification as the cause of entry. The Albanians possess the higher percentage of residence authorisations (71%), Ukrainians follow (3,6%), Georgian and Pakistani (2,9%). The Bulgarians and Romanians, roughly 80.000, are citizens of EU that is to say legal and without the obligation of legalisation. They constitute the 63% of citizens of EU in Greece. The residence authorisations are published mainly for work (43,8%) or familial reunification reasons (43,7%).

Seven out of ten immigrants come from countries that are found in the northern borders of the country (Albania, Bulgaria and Romania). These countries with the other Balkan countries and those of Eastern Europe constitute the 80% while the 16% are Asians. The sexual distribution varies intensely, proportionally with the national origin. The most balanced picture concerns the Albanians, Bulgarians and the Romanians where the men and women are shared relatively while other nationalities have intense asymmetries between the two sexes (e.g. from Egypt the 77% are men, from Bangladesh the 93% are men, from Georgia the 66% are women, from India the 80% are men, from Pakistan the 96% are men and, finally, from Philippines the 70% are women) (Zografakis, Kasimis 2014: 386).

Table 1. Legal migrants (stock) Greece, 2005-2014.



Source: Database of valid stay permits, Ministry of Interior.

Flows of Legal Migrants

Data on effective inflows and outflows of immigrants in Greece are based on the issuing and renewal (or not) of stay permits but are not accurate as hardly any immigrants enter Greece through the legal channel. Table 1 presents the legal migrant stock in Greece from January 2005 to December 2014, excluding seasonal migrant workers, based on the Ministry of Interior database of stay permits. The highest number of legal migrants present in Greece was registered in December 2009, with over 600,000 valid permits. Since then, there is a continuous decrease in the number of valid stay permits, which fell to just over 550,000 at the end of 2010 (553,916 on 1 December 2010) and to an all-time low of 440,000 in December 2012. Permits have slightly increased in 2013-2014 registering nearly 450,000 valid permits in June 2014. The decrease in the number of valid stay permits is related to the current economic crisis that Greece is facing: migrants lose their jobs and are unable to renew their permits. Consequently they either leave the country or stay but become undocumented. It is unclear (as the phenomenon is not registered either in Greece or in the countries of origin) as to how many Albanians for instance or Georgians for that matter stay on or leave because of "befallen irregularity" (i.e. loss of status because of unemployment). (Triantafyllidou 2014: 7-8) The Greek Statistical Authority records rapid shrinkage of population, the Bank of Greece outflow of deposits and the Social Security Institution reduction in the number of the insured. Three statistics are revealing:

1. In hardly one year, the non EU citizens that live in Greece were decreased by 164.959 individuals. According to the Greek Statistical Authority, they were 817.860 in 2011 and they were decreased by 650.825 individuals in 2012. The biggest wave of escape springs from the citizens of Albanian origin. Based on the ELSTAT classification, in the group of countries where Albania is included, the population was decreased by 133.787 individuals in hardly one year (2011-2012). It is appreciated that the wave of escape continued in 2013. However, there is not any new data available.

2. The rest of deposits that non Euro zone citizens have saved in the Greek banks was decreased by 30 billion euros from June of 2010 to June 2014. According to the data of the Bank of Greece, the flow has not stopped. The last 12 months (June 2013 - June 2014) 3,5 billion euros have been withdrawn.

The "escape" that the ELSTAT and the Bank of Greece reflect is owed to the domestic labour market collapse. The last available data of Social Security Institution that the "K" has, shows that within the 5 years of recession (2009-2013) 33% of places of work that foreigners possessed was lost. More specifically:

a) The foreigners presented in the analytic periodical statements of the Social Security Institution were limited in December 2013 in 159.676 individuals (99.826 men and 59.850 women). In December 2009, they were 237.470 (160.901 men and 76.569 women). That is to say, 77.794 places of paid work were lost. The escape of more than 133 thousands of people is justified by this great loss of salaries. The biggest reduction is reflected in the workers of Albanian origin. In the end of 2009 they were 121.902 and in the end of 2013 they were limited in 85.893. It is remarkable to mention that in the end of 2013 the Greeks represented the 90,15% of total number of the secured in the Social Security Institution against the 87,17% in the end of 2009.

b) The rapid reduction of places of work for foreigners is mainly attributed to the building activity collapse. (Tsiros 2014)
Irregular immigrants

An important number of immigrants is connected with irregularity, which is the illegal entry and/or residence and it is determined by a specific institutional framework. The majority is composed by mixed immigratory teams - economic immigrants and asylum applicants- a fact that makes their segregation and measurement difficult. Concisely there are three teams of irregular immigrants.
1. Those that enter illegally in the country and reside irregularly belong to the first team.

2. A second team is constituted by those that reach with a tourist visa in the country and remain until its expiry. This method substantially combines the legal entry with the irregular residence, even if the documents of entry are factitious in some cases.

3. There is also a third category. This is the one of foreigners that lost the legalisation they had acquired. This category includes those who, after the legislative changes do not comply with the requirements of authorisation for work or residence (Dimitriadi 2013: 37).

From 2008 to 2014, 415,071 immigrants have been arrested in total in Greece, roughly 111 nationalities.

A closer look at the nationalities of the migrants apprehended in Greece because undocumented, we notice the emergence of Syrians as the largest group in 2014, for the first time entering the top-5 in 2012, rising to 2nd place in 2013 and now being the largest group. Afghans remain an important group even if with much fewer apprehensions compared to the period 2009-2012. Indeed one might argue that Afghans have stopped coming and those who had come haveprobably moved on to some other European country. Interestingly Pakistanis have also declined in absolute numbers from nearly 20,000 in 2011 to approx. 2,000 in 2014, even if they remain within the top 5 nationality groups as regards apprehensions (Triantafyllidou 2014:8-9)
There are two central entries in Greece.

Table 2. Apprehensions of irregular migrants in Greece

20092		0102		011		20122		013		2014*	
Albania	63,563	Albania	50,175	Afghanistar	28,528	Afghanistar	16,584	Albania	15,389	Syria	17,365
Afghanistan	17,828	Afghanistan	28,299	Pakistan	19,975	Pakistan	11,136	Syria	8,517	Albania	9,485
Palestine	10,763	Pakistan	8,830	Albania	11,733	Albania	10,602	Afghanistar	6,412	Afghanistan	6 ,184
Somalia	7,710	Palestine	7,561	Bangladesh	5,416	Syria	7,927	Pakistan	3,982 P	akistan	2,222
Iraq	7,662	Algeria	7,336	Algeria	5,398	Bangladesh	7,863	Bangladesh	1,524	Somalia	1,239

Note: (at the borders and whitin the country, 5 main nationality groups) 2009-2014
Source: Ministry for the Protection of the Citizen, www.astynomia.gr for all years cited here. * first 8 first 8 months of 014.

The first one is the passage from Turkey, either via Evros or via the sea borders. The trends show that the Greek Turkish land and sea borders seem to follow the hydraulic principle: when inflows at the land border rise, they fall at the sea borders, and conversely when the land border crossings are abandoned (towards the end of 2010 and as of 2011) the island entries rise. Surely these trends are strongly influenced by geopolitical developments in the region since the Arab spring in 2011 and particularly the implosion of the Libyan regime, the conflict in Syria as well as the overall instability and conflict in the Middle East which have reshuffled the irregular migration and asylum seeking routes in the whole southeastern Europe and the Mediterranean. Thus while in 2012-2013, Italy carried the brunt of these developments (since the lack of law and order in Libya was facilitating the operations of the smuggling networks ferrying migrants through Libya to Italy and Malta), during the first part of 2014, numbers of arrivals at the Greek Turkish borders in the Aegean sea and its islands have increased tenfold (form just over 2,500 in 2013, to approx.. 22,000 in the first 8 months of 2014!)"(Triantafyllidou 2014:8-9) When the entry in the country is "successful" (without arrestment), a large number of them continues travelling to urban centres where they have friends, relatives or simply have heard for work opportunities. Even if authorisation of residence is acquired within the framework of a legalisation programme, the irregularity is a danger that lurks for the immigrants as they lapse in illegality because of changes in the national legislation or because of the lack of documents or overshooting of time of entry and residence based on their visas. Despite the fact that this case is not considered as a penal offence, there are enough of those who are often between legality and irregularity as a result of the structure of the system in the country of reception. (Dimitriadi 2013: 42)

Table 3. Apprehensions of irregular migrants, per border, 2007-2014

Apprehensions	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Greek Albanian border	42,897	39,267	38,164	33,979	11,743	10,927	10,413	4,957
Greek FYROM border	2,887	3,459	2,355	1,589	1,003	1,168	1,041	810
Greek Bulgarian border	966	1,795	1,258	983	636	365	505	442
Greek Turkish land border	16,789	14,461	8,787	47,088	54,974	30,433	1,122	1,141
Greek Turkish sea border	16,781	30,149	27,685	6,204	814	3,610	2,525	21,983
Crete	2,245	2,961	2,859	2,444	1,640	2,834	2,557	1,869
Rest of the country	29,799	54,245	45,037	40,237	29,372	31,151	16,253	10,728
TOTAL	112,364	146,337	126,145	132,524	99,368	76,878	34,416	41,930

Note: data refer to apprehensions, not to people. Hence the same person if apprehended twice counts twice. * data refer to the first 8 months of 2014. *Source:* Greek police data, www.astynomia.gr

New Greek immigration

Because of the economic crisis that burst out in 2008, a new Greek immigration is progressively appeared with cardinal directions. The immigratory problem is of concern both to the politicians and the public opinion. The new Greek immigration is very different from that of the pre-war period and mainly the decades afterwards. That immigration was that of a rural population and partly workers with very low standard of living and low level of education. On the contrary, the new immigrants are, as a rule, young persons with academic qualifications, different kinds of scientists that work in various fields or lost their work and unemployed university graduates. A great number of Greek students studying abroad has also to be added to those that abandon the country. They are not going to return after their studies have come to an end. It is obvious that this immigration deprives the country of important scientific force that could contribute to its development. It is called brain drain. It deprives the regional countries of scientific force or even of specialised workforce in multiple sectors of economy (Konstantinidis 2014, 83-84). As it is written in an article in the newspaper Kathimerini (Lakasas 30-11-2014) over 100.000 Greek scientists, in their majority young persons, seek for a good job abroad or have consolidated professionally. Furthermore, 30.000 Greeks still study in abroad. Many of them are going to search for a professional opportunity so as to remain in the foreign country permanently. And the dimensions of the problem are extended. Experienced and qualified academics and researchers also seek for job opportunities and claim European funds. The director of a Research Institute has migrated in Singapore recently when others have taken unpaid leave because they found a (better) job abroad. "The Greek universities and more widely the Greek academic community not only can they not make new employments but also they are not able to keep their experienced personnel. The consequences of this problem will be intense for the country if we contemplate the developmental dimension of the universities and the Polytechnic Colleges", Evi Sachini stresses in the "K", director of the National Centre of Documentation (ESF) of the National Research Institute. The economic and qualitative data shows that the Greek higher education is found in the brink of a major crisis.

More specifically, according to the research conclusions of the professor of the Department of Economic Sciences of the University of Macedonia Mr Lois Lamprianidis, over 100.000 Greek scientists (doctors, engineers, economists, lawyers etc.) until 40 years old are found abroad. Precisely, according to the UN data, the number of Greek scientists of different age living abroad approaches the 150.000. More specifically, the immigration of new scientists has been intensified the last five-year period because of the economic crisis and the high unemployment which exceeds the 50% in youngsters until 25 years old. It also remains particularly high in youngsters from 25 to 29 years old (40%) and the equally dynamic age-related team of 30-44 (25,5%). According to a research of the University Macedonia (Unit of Regional Growth and Policy) the young people that seek for their job opportunity abroad have high academic qualifications. The 73% of them has finished its postgraduate studies, the 51,2% its doctorate, the 41% has studied in very good universities. We should also add to them the 30.000 Greek students in foreign Higher Education Institutions. Many of them have chosen to have postgraduate studies abroad in order to strengthen their academic arsenal in the battle for a place in the labour market because they hope they will find a job in the country of their studies after their graduation. And for many of them this is the basic reason of immigration (Lakasas 2014).

Immigratory Policy

A) Legislative framework

Today Greece has roughly 912.000 immigrants (Triantafyllidou 2014:7) that constitute approximately the 8,5% of the total population of country and about the 12% of the economic working force. This data shows the place the immigration has in the Greek society and economy. It is, however, not reflected respectively in the immigratory policy of country.

During the decade 1990 and to some extent until today, the immigratory policy was characterized by the "fear" of immigration and a total negative approval of influx of immigrants in the country. The "fear" is connected with worries about the regional stability and the exterior policy of the country. In accordance with the lack of experience on issues about the reception of immigrants, the delay of Greece in the application of the first program of legalisation of immigrants (1998) and the first substantial law about the immigration in 2001 as well as that in 2005 (it was modified in 2007) is explained (Triantafyllidou 2010: 123). The aim of the latter is the rational co-ordination of the immigratory policy of the country, the simplification of the processes, the fight of bureaucracy as well as the harmonisation of the Greek legislation with that of the EU regarding the family reunification and the arrangement of the long duration of the immigrants' residence. Nevertheless, these laws were criticised by political parties of Opposition, Non-Governmental Organisations, organisations of immigrants as well as by academics. Academics are accused of ignoring the majority of irregular immigrants and not effectively incorporating the directives of the European Committee in the national legislation about family reunification and long duration residence. At the

same time a medium-term planning for the management of immigratory influxes is absent (Gropas, Triantafyllidou 2009: 198).

As of April 2014, Greece has a new immigration law that brings some improvement to the previous situation although it does not reform the main bastions of Greek immigration policy which for 25 years treats immigration as a lesser evil that has to be cushioned but that is not managed in any proactive way. As reported by Prof. Anna Triantafyllidou "the new Migration Code aims to simplify and organize the different types of stay permits into six categories: stay permits for work or professional reasons; temporary stay permits: stay permits for humanitarian or exceptional reasons; stay permits for study, training or voluntary work; stay permits for victims of trafficking or human smuggling; stay permits for family reunification, and stay permits of long duration. This categorization follows the relevant European logic for stay permits and the Code transposes into national law the relevant EU directives for family reunification, migration for study or vocational training, migration of researchers, the Blue Card directive and so on. Indeed, there are no major innovative elements in the field of stay permits for work purposes (salaried or freelance). There is some encouragement of investment, as people who make important investments (albeit the minimum sum of this investment is not specified in the law) may bring with them and receive permits for up to ten highly skilled person that will work in relation to the investment. These people like also generally highly skilled migrants may bring their families with them and receive permits for their family members immediately and do not have to wait (like other migrants) for settling down and applying for family reunification. Second, the migration code offers a certain security of residence to the second generation (article 108). People who were born in Greece or who have finished 6 years of schooling in Greece by age 21, can obtain a stay permit of 5 year duration. Such a stay permit is renewed every 5 years with the mere presentation of the previous stay permit. Nonetheless there is no preferential treatment for the second generation as regards citizenship acquisition. Parents of children who are Greek citizens can apply for a 5 year duration permit, renewable as long as their family relationship with the Greek citizen is maintained. Third, Article 19 codifies stay permits for humanitarian and exceptional reasons and further develops the provisions of law 3907/2011 (outlined briefly above) as regards the regularization of people who have lived in Greece and have developed "special and strong ties with the country"... Overall the Migration Code takes steps to bring back to legal status people who have been in Greece for the last 10 years undocumented and people who have lost their legal status because of unemployment.

Last but not least, the Migration Code seeks to streamline the management of permits, work and insurance issues for seasonal migrants working in agriculture or the fisheries. These are both areas of seasonal migration from neighbouring countries (Egypt for the fisheries, and Albania or other Balkan countries for agricultural work). The Migration Code introduces important improvements in the simplification and codification of the legal provisions and in fully aligning Greek legislation with relevant EU directives but it remains a management law rather than one that has a sense of perspective for Greek society and its changed demographic composition (as this is confirmed also by the 2011 census data)" (Triantafyllidou 2014:22-24) .

B) The new asylum law

The common element of all the political and legislative regulations is the connection of immigration with work and its loss leads to irregularity. This led the newcomers to turn inevitably to the system of asylum that until the voting of the new law in 2011 it was characterized by bureaucracy, enormous delays and arrestments and jailing. The new asylum law is an important step.

The new asylum law was voted and published on 26th January 2011 and harmonises the Greek legislation with the provisions of the Directive 2008/115/EK "with regard to the common rules and processes in the state-members about the return of the illegally residing nationals of third countries". Two new Services of Asylum and First Reception were created while Centres of First Reception in selective points of country with increased influx of immigrants were made. They will have the responsibility for making nationals of third countries aware of their rights and obligations. Asylum applicants will be referred to the regional offices of asylum that will be responsible for the receipt and examination of demands, the conduct of interviews and first degree decision. According to the Ministry of Interior, Decentralisation and Electronic Governing (11/07/2011) "with the provisions of the Directive a harmonised process of return of illegally residing nationals of third countries is established, within the states of European Union, aiming at the pause of their illegal residence. The "illegal residence" is the presence of each national of third country in the Greek territory that does not fulfill or does not fulfill anymore the requirements of entry, as they are defined in the fifth article of the Code of Borders of Schengen or the rest requirements of entry of residence of the current legislation".On the other hand, the administrative jailing is applicable (article 13) on the installations of First Reception, but its time fringe is of course smaller. The jailing is justified by the need of data verification. Provided that there is a demand for asylum, the applicant will stay in the Centre as long as the process of the examination of his/her demand lasts. The decision should be taken within 30 days. If it has not been published by the end this time limit, the office gives to the interested an asylum application bulletin and refers him to hospitality buildings for which the Ministry of Health is going to take care of. (Dimitriadi 2013: 55).

Greece has a peculiarity. Despite the fact that it is geographically found in an ideal place in order to function as a passage to the rest EU, it functions, because of the European policies (Dublin II), as border (Dimitriadi 2013:98). According to the Treaty of Dublin II, the immigrant is eligible to ask for asylum in the European country in which he entered firstly". Thus the "immigrants who enter in the country and then move in another country in order to ask for asylum should be returned in Greece" .Greece is substantially enclaved in a European regulation that signed without ensuring the suitable returns, apart from the community aids for Frontex and the centres of residence. As a country of reception, it is compelled to manage an enormous, European in effect, problem in accordance with its awkward economy.

The need for changing the European institutional and legal framework

"The major question that equitably occupies us these years in the country is the planning of a cohesive and total immigratory policy. One of the first things that we need to comprehend is that its configuration constitutes a continuous process and not a final and irrevocable finished fact" as Ioanna Laliotou mention. Simple magic initiatives that "solve" the immigratory problem that is not only a national but also an international problem and its management requires so much direct and continuous collaboration as with the other European countries as with the third countries from where immigrants -refugees come from or pass through do not exist.

Taking into consideration the fact that people are not going to stop moving there aren't, substantially, metres of prevention of entry in other countries. The change of the European institutional and legal framework that determines the mobility of immigrants-refugees in Europe is necessary and it can and should be a medium-term objective of the Greek immigratory policy. (Laliotou: 2015)

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Biography

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CHAPTER II

INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES.
MIGRATION AS AN EXPERIENCE

Interview with Romanian actress Clara Vodă

Olivia Maria Hărşan

Introduction

The cinema of Romania is a vast domain that has emerged from hiding a decade after the communist downfall whereupon it was critically coined the 'Romanian New Wave'. Romanian actress Clara Vodă has witnessed first-hand the growth and decline of the Romanian film industry since the early 1990s having worked with an array of prominent Romanian film directors. Her breakthrough occurred when she was cast in Mircea Daneliuc's The Snail's Senator (1995) and has since played a variety of diverse personas working with the so-proclaimed instigator of the 'Romanian New Wave', Cristi Puiu (The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu, 2005, Aurora, 2010) and other leading filmmakers such as Florin Şerban (If I Want To Whistle, I Whistle, 2010), Cătălin Mitulescu (Loverboy, 2011) and Adrian Sitaru (Best Intentions, 2011, Domestic, 2012). In recent years, Vodă has proven her ability to extend her talents to other global cinemas, most notably, playing Romanian immigrant roles in Spanish director, Chema Rodríguez's Nightfall in India (2014) and in Australian director Stuart McBratney's Pop-Up. Vodă has transcended through various stages of recent Romanian cinema history, working with renowned auteurs, successfully adapting to new filmmaking methods and styles and challenging herself to work internationally. By means of an interview with Vodă, the Romanian identity and the woman migrant is explored and the complexity of the characters that she has portrayed is examined.

What was it like working with Mircea Daneliuc in The Snail's Senator? You played a journalist reporting on a corrupt politician in Romania so you spoke French predominantly. Did you enjoy this role and was it a challenge?

I played a Swiss character and spoke French. It was a very good part for me. I was 23 or 24 years old and it was a big challenge to work with a director like Mircea Daneliuc. It was my second role in a feature film because my first one was in Luxury Hotel (1992), directed by Dan Piţa, which won the Silver Lion in Venice. But, absolutely, it was a challenge for me because I had to speak in French and it is difficult for an actor to speak and to act in another language. But it was a great meeting with good actors, like Dorel Vişan and Cecilia Bârbora, and it was a very good experience for me.

In the films of that time, metaphor is very strong and that is why a lot of films were banned or disapproved by the censorship board because a lot of them were speaking against the communist regime. Did you feel like it was an exciting time for cinema working with these bold and fearless filmmakers that were effectively protesting against oppression?

It was also one of the first important movies that came out after the Romanian Revolution and there was a good energy there. But unfortunately the Romanian film industry during that period of time was not doing well, because with every change, every movement, everything was quite new. And Daneliuc had this great idea to make a movie about corruption and about all the changes in politics. Daneliuc was seen like a hero amid Romanian film circles. He was a Communist party member because it was a must in Romania during the 1980s but he was the type of person that would go to a communist member and tell them about his disapproval of the system, risking potential imprisonment. There was conflict surrounding his film, Glissando (1982). It was forbidden in Romania and in that moment Daneluic said I don't want to be in your party anymore and seen like a hero.

Daneliuc's actions seem courageous and appear to be reminiscent of new wave filmmakers. Would you say that the Romanian New Wave began in the 1980s?

Actually I don't know if there is a Romanian New Wave, but I do hope so. I think that the most important movie in Romanian cinema is Lucian Pintilie's The Reconstruction (1968). It is an amazing movie and such an important part of Romanian cinema, because it is metaphoric and poetic but also very realistic. The actors were great, they delivered remarkable performances and in my opinion, it is Pintilie's best movie. If I were to converse about the new wave in Romanian cinema I would begin the conversation with The Reconstruction.

Cristi Puiu's The Death of Mr Lăzărescu is nothing short of a masterpiece. What was it like working with Puiu who has been coined 'the instigator of the Romanian new wave'? His debut feature, Stuff and Dough (2001) started a resurgence of Romanian cinema on a global scale. Would you agree?

Definitely. I think that Cristi Puiu is the

most important filmmaker in Romania today. He is capable of changing the game in the Romanian film industry and it was amazing to work with him. Stuff and Dough certainly placed Romania on the map for a more global cinema but it was also his short, Cigarettes and Coffee (2004), which is inspired by Jim Jarmusch's Coffee and Cigarettes (2003) that turned heads.

It was very funny because I met him during an audition for a ridiculous commercial, but it was great that I was able to meet such an important filmmaker like him, which eventually led to the opportunity of being cast in The Death of Mr Lăzărescu. Working with Puiu was like a new school of acting for me. I think he has this instinct for good cinema. He can change an actor and, in fact, he changed my artistic perspective on acting and about cinema.

Doctors, ambulances and hospitals seem to be recurring themes in New Romanian Cinema. And, most of the time, hospitals are depicted as dreadful places with corrupt and grumpy doctors. Is this the real picture? Customs that were widely practiced during communism in Romania, are they still ingrained in Romanians behavior today?

I don't know what to say, because my father is a doctor (laughs). This 'Romanian style' was the same everywhere in Romania during communism, and it was a way to survive, you could not exist otherwise. It was and still is like that. It is very hard to be a doctor in Romania and the salary is nothing. It is not a good system, but I cannot judge the Romanian customs because I have been apart of them, they were second nature to me and it is very difficult to survive another way. It is only when you are out of the system that you think differently but when you are inside you just think, "I have to do something, I have to look after my family". There are honest doctors and there are corrupt ones, it is a shame that the good ones have to work alongside the bad ones.

You play the mother character in Florin Șerban's If I Want to Whistle, I Whistle! How difficult was it to portray this persona that seems so detached from her Romanian identity and from her whole life really, because she primarily abandons her children to seek a better life Italy. Does she undergo a transformation when she leaves Romania and become a different person? Does she forget her identity? She returns to Romania for her younger child but does nothing to help her older son who is in prison, because it seems that she is in a hurry, wanting to escape back to Italy.

I spoke a lot with Florin Șerban about this character. He studies philosophy and psychology so he has an amazing way of working with actors. He never gives direction to his actors, but instead he just asks them questions, which is great because you can discover a lot of different things about your character. With my character in If I Want to Whistle, I Whistle! I found out that there were a lot of money issues that she was facing and that she wanted to leave Romania for a better life. But I think that the most important thing about this character is that she was never loved. Her move to Italy was like an escape for her and a shout to be loved. Because she was young when she had her kids and experienced relationship problems, her partner didn't stick around to support her and she suffers because she is hungry for love. This was the point where I could connect with this character, when I discovered this about her. At first glance, the audience will think that she is a bad character, but as an actor you must always try and find the good parts about a character and to love your character.

What was it like working on Night Falls in India with a Spanish filmmaker, Chema Rodríguez? The film was shot in Romania, Spain and India. Was it an exciting experience to shoot outside of Romania?

Yeah it was a big challenge because I didn't know a word of Spanish before we started filming and I was playing the protagonist, Rada. It was a nightmare for me because I could not understand any of the other actors and I did not think that I could do it but Chema was incredible, he encouraged me to not give up. At one point I said to him that there is no way that I can play this role and he replied "No I am sure that you can because you are the only actress in the world that can play this part, even if it is a shock for you, I am trusting you and I know that you will be great in this movie". It was amazing and exciting to work with him and with all the Spanish crew. They are such friendly and nice people, they make jokes but they are hard workers too. We filmed in Romania for 10 days and then in Seville in Spain. The desert scenes in India were filmed in the South of Spain, in Almeria. India was an incredible experience for all of us because we filmed near Agra so it was the real India, the beautiful and strange countryside.

You recently moved to Sydney, Australia with your partner Bogdan and son, Vlad who are also actors and have performed in theatrical productions and New Romanian Cinema. How difficult has the transition been for you in terms of finding an acting identity here in Australia?

It was and still is really hard. I was very lucky because not long after my arrival in Sydney, Australian film director Stuart McBratney needed a Romanian actress for a part in his movie Pop-Up and he waited five years for the right person. Originally he contacted Laura Vasiliu that portrayed Găbița in 4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days (2007), to play the Romanian woman in Pop-Up and he tried everything to get her here but it did not work out due to visa and immigration issues. When I found out that he was looking for a Romanian actress, I sent him my details, which led to an audition with him and then I got the role. In November last year, we went to Sebeș, Romania to shoot the final part of the film, which focuses on my character's memories of her homeland. Renowned actress Maria Ploae played my mother and Laura Vasiliu was my sister. Also, American actor, Evan Olman played my brother-in-law.

Did you find it a challenge to portray a role in a non-European context? Are there any vast differences between being on set in a Romanian production as compared to an Australian production?

Australians are more relaxed and friendly. The cast members of Pop-Up asked me if I had an agent and wanted to help me in any way they could. They are all incredible. This kind of generosity is rare in Europe. Australian actors are also very open to learn and curious to understand. They want to everything there is to know about European cinema. I have made a lot of friends here in Australia in the past year.

Clara Vodă

Biography

Clara Vodă (born 8 March 1970) is a Romanian actress. She appeared in more than twenty films since 1995.

Olivia Maria Hărşan

Biography

Olivia Maria Hărşan is a freelance writer and Masters candidate at La Trobe University in Australia. Her current focus is on the cinema of Béla Tarr where reality meets the unexplained and the past haunts the present. In her spare time she assists with the PR and publicity for The Czech and Slovak Film Festival of Australia. Olivia updates her thought process on her blog thecinemaofeasterneurope.blogspot.com.

Costa Gavras about his experience as an immigrant.

Interview by Nikos Ago

The least said the sooner mended and the work of a journalist becomes easier when you speak with Costa Gavras, the well-known Greek-French director that I had the opportunity to meet these days in Athens. I asked his opinion for immigrants, with the attribute of an immigrant, as he clarified that feels in the preceding press conference.

"The migratory problem of Greece is henceforth very acute. Greece is a very small country and not rich enough to accept so much influx of immigrants. This is a serious parameter. Another parameter is, however, the unserious confrontation of life of immigrants in Greece. What is more, I could say that they are faced negatively in contrast to the positive role they play in the economy of the country. We hope that the decisions and the resolutions, the ascertainment and the conclusions that will come out of the Forum, will make the government be more interested in it. The new government, which has been committed for a new policy on this subject, I hope it will correspond positively.

The same problems France also faces with its immigrants .Especially with children. There are roughly four million immigrants from African and Arabic countries. Even if the children have legal papers from the French authorities, the police and the state in general behaves very badly to them. Their appearance betrays their parents are not French and their life becomes very difficult. Their names also constitute an obstacle, especially when they search for work. Hence, we could claim that the problem is general. With the exception, however, that in Greece it is more acute. Here they do not have an identity, they do not have a citizenship and they do not even have papers!

There are many problems which concern the societies and, especially, Greece in relation to the immigrants. The children-migratory problem, however, is bigger than the usual because these children are Greeks and they need official papers that certify it. I wrote an article about it in France years ago. I mentioned that French are those who choose to be French. Today I am saying the same about Greece. Greeks are those who choose to be Greeks. By the time somebody comes in Greece, learns Greek and brings his or her children up, is Greek. Imagine his/her child. S/he is 100% Greek. Citizens, the government and the state should respect them like Greeks.
Two and a half thousand years ago, Isocrates said that the Greeks are the participants of the Greek education.
Hence can't we make the obvious today? Can't we respect our democracy in Greece? The ancient Greeks said also many other serious and useful things. Unfortunately, however, in Greece we continue not respecting them.

A child that has been born here and does not know any other homeland it is certain that s/he loves this homeland. Imagine that I left Greece when I was roughly 20 years old. I loved France and it also loved me. Many times I have been given official positions. And I can say that, even if Greece is always in my mind, I feel being very French. Substantially, I return to them the respect they show to me. And this is, in my opinion, a general rule.

A child that was born in another country than the one that his parents were born s/ he cannot be an immigrant. Many times in France I am asked, like other foreigners, if I feel French. I answer them asking: Do you feel that I am French? And for these children I say: If Greeks feel them being one them, immediately they will feel as Greeks. If, however, the Greeks face them foreigners in bad faith they will react, feel and behave as foreigners because they will feel despised. The society itself is going to make the step, open on its laps and say "come with us because you belong here". What, in any case, was unacceptable and simultaneously deplorable for all Greeks concerning to the children of immigrants, was that history of flag. Theexcellent student, a child of immigrants, worthies keeping the Greek flag. Country mongers awaken. In France, there aren't these kinds of phenomena, mainly because the tradition of marching with military terms in the national feasts does not exist! What is more, the best student in France, despite his/her nationality, is respected. That's why French know how to respect their education and the intelligent people. They are immediately willing to take full advantage of them and not isolate them.

Whoever distinguishes for his/her talent, irrespectively of his/her origin or parents, is immediately respectable and acceptable here .Not only them, however. All children that are given birth here are supposed to enjoy human and equal treatment. That is how democracy works, this is the correct way of a privileged state."

The interview was politely given by the journalist Niko Ago. It was published in the Avgi tis Kuriakis in October 2009 on the fringe of the press conference that the Institution Onasis given for the Third World Forum on the Immigration and the Growth. It was organised by the Institution in Athens on 2nd -3rd November where Costa Gavras chaired.

Costa Gavras

Biography

Costa Gavras (short for Konstantinos Gavras - Κωνσταντίνος Γαβράς; born 12 February 1933) is a Greek-French film director and producer, who lives and works in France. He is known for films with overt political themes, most famously the fast-paced thriller. Z (1969), but he has also made comedies. Most of his movies have been made in French, however, six have made in English: Missing (1982), Hannah K. (1983), Betrayed (1988), Music Box (1989), Mad City (1997) and Amen (2002). He produces most of his films himself, through his production company K.G. Productions. Among many awards, he has received an honorary doctorate from School of Film Studies at the University of Thessaloniki in Greece.

Nikos Ago

Biography

Nikos Ago was born in a village near Tepeleni but the town of Drama has also been registered as his hometown since 1992. He studied history and literature and financial studies. However, he fell in love with journalism from which he earns his money vindicating his father who had told him that he would never become a good farmer. He lives in Sweden.

Your (apparent) enemy

Nina Bogosavac

Exactly fifteen years after Belgrade signed the contract which ended the war, a Dutch report published this June sheds light on future scenarios for the troubled region of North-Kosovo. The main focus: integration and lowering of tensions between the local ethnical Serbian and Albanian population. The report, made by peace organization PAX and Clingendael Institute For International Relations, states that although good policy on peaceful co-existence is necessary, the people it's about shouldn't be forgotten. What has changed for Albanians from Kosovo in these past fifteen year? Two students – now living in The Netherlands - talk about their motives to learn the Serbian language and their effort to see it apart from events in the past.

''For me the conflict between Serbia and Kosovo is not a sensitive topic anymore. Besides: a language is a language. The fact that I know how to say 'Hi, I'm Arnisa' in Serbian doesn't mean that I am Serbian.' Friends Arnisa Shehu and Endrita Banjska share the same historical background and migration path. The parents of both fled from Kosovo, building a better future elsewhere. While Arnisa's family found their new home in the south of The Netherlands, Endrita was raised in the east part of The Netherlands. The two girls met each other at university where not only their past was discussed over several cups of coffee, but also their common road towards the future.

Overcoming ones enemy

Arnisa Shehu (25) lived in Priština till the age of five. She learned her first words on Balkan grounds, in the capital of the then southern autonomous province in Serbia. She can recall a certain feeling of union about those first years of her life. ''I never really understood why Kosovo and Albania were not one. Besides, I was sort of ´in love´ with toshk, the other dialect of Albanians. No, I don´t think that me learning Serbian is something weird. I even think that all Kosovars should be obliged to learn the Serbian language since Albanian is not used by so many people.'' In the conversation with Arnisa her family gets mentioned a lot as they're of great importance to her and - her culture. ''In my father's hometown a combination of Slavic languages was the spoken language and my mother had to learn it in school. She hated it until her teacher said to her that 'the best way to overcome your enemy is to learn his language.' Arnisa laughs: ''I've always kept that in the back of my mind. But not because Serbs are my enemy. I mean, I also have horrible stories and painful memories, but precisely because of that I think we should move on with our lives. We also shouldn't forget that it was a war, so there's more than one side to the story.''

Language as a tool

''At the time my parents grew up, Albanian language was suppressed. And now, by multicultural efforts, again. On the other hand, 'Gheg', the dialect that I speak, is being glorified by the people. Don't get me wrong, it's fine to speak this within the comforts of your own home. But now the uneducated mass of people has the chance to say anything they want. The value of knowledge and development is going downhill because of that. Take a look at all the current corrupt politicians! For this reason I'm against an independent Kosovo. That's an opinion not many people will share, but I simply see my people losing their identity more and more every day. They're 'Americanized'. And yes, this is more severe here than in The Netherlands or any other Western-European country. Although I'm not pro an independent Kosovo, I do have an ideal. That is to form one great Albania.'' Arnisa states that although she hasn't ever been there, she will always define herself as Albanian.

Obama junior

Arnisa: ''I think that for many poor countries, including Kosovo, America is still the dream. I see Kosovo as the little kid who looks up to big brother USA, or the European Union for that matter. The country almost screams: 'Look, we're also developed!' With a lot of newborns named after Obama or Clinton, this America-mania even influences the way babies are being called nowadays. Just that, the search for such a role model, is not a good thing. The point is that the changes which take place aren't naturally evolving. It's the same with Kosovo wanting to be a member-state of the EU and therefore making changes. Because things are being imposed, people's way of thinking isn't actually different. It's just the outer layers that seem to have gotten different colours.''

Critical thinking

''Kosovo has to make a shift in thinking in order to make real changes. But changes are only possible when critical thinking is being stimulated and curiosity is piqued. That's a thing that's missing now, illustrated by fortune-tellers that are still doing a very lucrative business. This to me shows that a large part of the population has no sense of critical thinking.'' Arnisa mentions that even changes on a small scale are okay. ''After all, I belong to those people and I – even if it's just by telling this story – am making a slight change.

"The family of Endrita Banjska (20) comes from Mitrovica, the region of Kosovo where Serbs and Albanians are being separated by a single bridge to maintain the obtained peace. Endrita, who lives in The Netherlands as well, plans on going back to her home country in the future. She explains about her choice to learn the language of an apparent enemy and how this – in contrast to her friend Arnisa – takes quite the effort.

"We often used to take the car to Kosovo. The conversations in that strange language that my father would have when crossing customs were fascinating to me. Not to mention the Cyrillic road signs. Besides that, it's nowadays often a requirement to speak Serbian if you're looking for a job in Kosovo. It's the second language next to Albanian."

Patriotism

"Although my parents once fled from Kosovo, they've always kept the idea of returning there. My elderly sister already lives there again. You can say that I have quite a patriotic family. I for sure see myself returning as well. Kosovo is such a big part of my life, and always has been. While other kids used to watch Sesame-street, I watched the Kosovar news with my parents about the ongoing war. A war shapes you, no matter what. That's really noticeable with my parents."

Feed the duck

"A few summers ago, when I and my sister were at the bridge of Mitrovica, a Serbian man turned to us. He asked – although in jibberish Albanian – if we wanted some bread to feed the ducklings as well. I thought that was really special: my point is that he didn't assume that we spoke Serbian. That acknowledgement is so important since Kosovars know what it's like to be suppressed. Maintaining your own language, whether it's Serbian or Albanian, is perfectly possible – I think."

Easy-peasy? Think again

"To be honest: taking Serbian language lessons is sometimes an internal-conflict. I even waited for a long time telling this to my parents. I was afraid that I would disappoint them. Fortunately they responded well and they support me in my decision. It's also rather useful since they know the language already. A while ago, when I just didn't know anymore why I was learning it, my father reminded me of the fact that the language didn't do anything bad. It is not the cause of ethnical conflicts. That realization helped me to distinguish affairs in the past and the now – and a language that will help me in my future."

Olga Papadopoulou

Biography

From The Netherlands but with an international background, freelance journalist Nina Bogosavac is, with a Dutch mother and a Serbian father, well aware of cultural differences and the benefits of exploring multiple cultures. It's no surprise that this young journalist focuses on foreign countries and issues having to do with mixed roots, just like herself. She enjoys reporting abroad, but is very comfortable being based in the Dutch city of Utrecht.

Two facets of migration in GOLDEN AGE Romania

Marius Radu

Using the opportunity and the context given by Ulysses' Gaze Project, we need to share an almost peculiar double facet alternative for the concept of migration practiced in communist Romania's 'GOLDEN AGE'. First, the applied Russian invention of deportation, and second, more local and perverse, "filling the purse" of the *nomenclature,* people serving the regime and, no doubt, of the presidential family - Ceausescu.

Baragan Deportation [1]

As we pointed out, the first program, created and enforced by the stalinist communism, the deportation or "interior exilum", represents "an *invention of the continent-countries, of the endless space, where populations, attitudes or histories can be annihilated. As a practice, deportation was created by the Russian czars, and then, by bolsheviks taken and exported in the communized countries of the East". (Pentecost '51,* , V. Marineasa; D. Vighi, Timisoara, 1994).

Therefore, this endless space in Southern Romania, a swampy territory, became over-night (Pentecost of 1951, June 22) populated by 45.000 people dislocated from the Western Romanian region – Banat, a more developed and multicultural land, common border to Yugoslavia and Hungary. This new colonist community, made of speakers of different languages (Serbian-Croatian, Macedonian or Hungarian) found themselves in the middle of nowhere, with a hand of personal things, to build a life and to learn how to survive under the communist red cloud until the fall of 1956. In a totally hostile "nobody's land" they started from nothing to build houses and communities, creating 18 new villages. Many died there, enduring tough winters, floods or heat and drought, but, many were born there. Life was tough but the "desert generation" born in those years is a real example of moral integrity and civic spirit.

The russification of the spirit didn't work. It was just an expression of cynicism and tribal mentality of what communism intended to create; a school of generic terror and fear, of gregarious mistrust and servitude meant to crush personhood, identity and even humanness. As a positive fact, this obnoxious ideal, used to generate an opposite reaction, created real personalities, the taste for independent action and a total adversity for everything labeled as Russian. Therefore, after the death of "daddy" Stalin, the influence of Russian "liberators" and the "hosting" of their troops, started to end in Romania, but the vassality, the servilism, continued up to the first days of post-revolutionary government lead by Ion Iliescu, a nostalgic lover of communism, educated and indoctrinated during his studies in Moscow. But this kind of stories knit other themes, which can open a different page of debate.In a sense, looking back, deportation remained, to some of us, a prophetic episode that predicted the failure of communism accomplished in 1989...The second true story is more interesting, because it emphasizes the irrational creativity of a corrupt logic of a poisoned state-system, a proof of what a total moral decayed dictatorship may become.

Slave trade reloaded or... human trafficking?

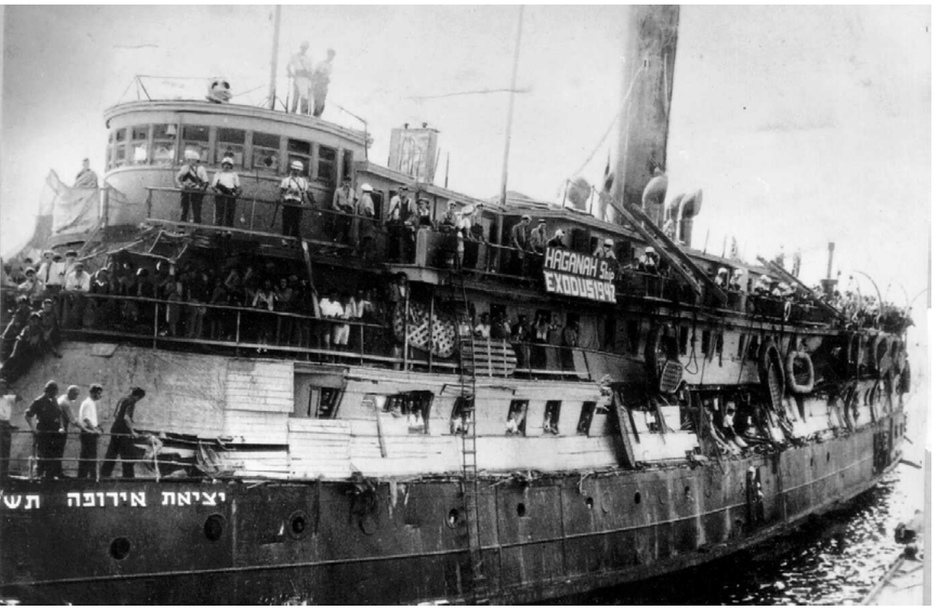
One of the Golden Age's top secrets are lists of names and numbers. Apparently innocent, what gives us a clue is the fact that all these names are not usually Romanian. For those who have little to do with culture and colloquial anthropology, the lists comprise Jewish and German names. What do they have in common with Romania? The logic is quite simple. All those lists of names represent a part of Romanian citizens and the numerals point to the price! Wow! Was that real? Is that the reason that made all these lists to be qualified as "classified"? Definitely YES! In the 90s, when the idea of research over the horrors of communism in Romania became a national program, the access to the classified archives began and many things that used to be époque's rumors proved to be legally true... including the truth about the non-Romanian name lists.It all began in 1948, the year of consecrated soviet communism in Romania under the leadership of Gheorghe-Gheorghiu Dej, the general secretary of the communist party, a soldier totally devoted to Stalin. Beginning with Stalins death, the political direction of the Romanian communist party changed, starting to show independence and even rebellion, asking the "liberating troops" to leave the country and taking the road of "a genuine type of communism for Romania." In this new context, what we know is written in the book *The Ransom of the Jews. The Story of the Extraordinary Secret Bargain between Romania and Israel*[2] , by Radu Ioanid, director of the

1 Baragan is a plain reach soil region SE /Romania, meant for agriculture and not for regular living...

2 Radu,Ioanid, The Ransom of the Jews. The Story of the Extraordinary Secret Bargain between Romania and Israel, Ivan R. Dee Press, Chicago, 2005.

Archival Programs Division at The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C. From his position, he could study top secret documents concerning the factual reality of this phenomenon. Therefore, according *Codex Judaeorum* (The Jewish Codex), the ransom of hostage brothers, called *pidion swuim,* demands a collective effort of the whole Jewish community for the liberation of the "hostage brothers" by all means. By this decree, the new Israeli state could initiate diplomatic dialogue even with communist countries, which used to accommodate large Jewish communities, in the attempt to "save" as many as they could. The negotiations were successful at a large scale, and the price was fixed as *per capita,* for some representative people with a prominent social position and wealth, or *by average*, for the majority.

If in Gheorghiu Dej's era the negotiations were conducted more in the terms of "Jews for Know How" via kibbutz farming and soil fertilizing, progressively, in Ceausescu's era (1966-1989) the deal changed to "Jews for money", to be more close to the vow of the Codex. Actually, if in Gheorghiu Dej's era more than 100.000 Jews got the chance of a "new exodus program" in Ceausescu's Golden Era, only 40.577 where accepted to be sold at 2.500 – 3.000 dollars *per capita,* generating a total of 112.498.800 dollars which went into Ceausecu's secret foreign bank accounts.



Jewish Exodus in early '50. *Copyright:* wikimedia.org

German ethnics sold to Fatherland

A second source of fortune was generated by the German ethnics settled since the first half of the XVIIIth century in Transylvania and Banat. The research in the secret services archives uncovers diplomatic haggling between West Germany and Romania concerning the prices per capita. Between 1971-1976 the "price list" shows:

- New college students = 5.500 DM/capita
- Final year coll. students = 7.000 DM/
- Graduate coll. students = 11.000 DM/
- Qualified workers / specialists = 2.900 DM/
- Retired and average persons and children = 1.800 DM/

In 1983, the contract was renegotiated for a fix of 7.800 DM each, changed again in 1989, for 8.950 DM/person. Considering a media of 5.000 DM/capita for a total of 200.000 persons, we have a billion DM deposited in secret Swiss Bank accounts under the Romanian dictator's name.
But not enough. Every ransomed person had to unconditionally sign a document of renouncing the Romanian citizenship and all properties and goods remaining in the country, all in exchange of a self-purchased freedom. A bunch of personal memories in the hand luggage and not even a passport, but a single paper, called... "Travel Certificate" was all they could take .

German ethnics arriving in Nuremberg

Conclusions

For all Romanians the dream of a better life with freedom, welfare, no more sitting in lines for food, and freedom "to speak what you think" was always linked with "The West". In a large sense, such desires where promised by the victory of the Revolution of December '89. But the new-born democracy was not what everyone expected, the neo-communism disguised as neo-liberalism showed the impotence of the new state institutions based on the same rooted nepotism and high officials corruption. A new wave of general delusion, high inflation rate, unemployment, small incomes and huge taxes are only a short list of ubiqual anxieties that pushed up many Romanians to look for a better life abroad, using the advantage of work migration as European citizens. According to recent statistics, around four million Romanians found a living in the core states of Europe and, unfortunately, only a few of them think to return.

Is migration an important subject to think about and discuss in today's Europe? I believe it is! Not only a European phenomenon but a consequence of globalization and of a generic spirit of autonomy, adventurism, generalized fear, mistrust concerning the power of state institutions and welfare programs, and the increasing influence of economic philosophy and influence over politics in almost all areas of social life.
What to do then? What are the solutions to diminish such unfriendly effects? What do each of us need to do?

I try to think for myself and would dare to say that by personal will and action in the social field, by realistic opinion and social dialogue, influencing young people by personal example, and reloading human values like empathy and compassion, we may have hope in succeeding.

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Marius Radu

Biography

Marius Radu, associate university lecturer. His current activities are entrepreneurship, psychotherapy, theology, independent journalism. He is a founding member/President of DIANOIA Association – Institute for Family Therapy and Systemic Practice.He pursues various interests like: over 300 articles published, producer and host of over 1000 hours of live radio in the national stations, he has translated John Wyatt's book "Matters of life and death: Human Dilemmas in the Light of the Christian Faith" - second edition released in 2011. He has taught theology and philosophy in Christian high schools of Timisoara in his capacity as a teacher and a pastor at "Jesus the Hope of Romania" and "Bethel Baptist Church". Also, as an associate lecturer, he taught journalism, anthropology and political sciences courses at "Babes-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca and West University of Timisoara. Marius is an experienced musician: former member of the "Banatul" Philharmonic (1977-1991) and participant in numerous jazz festivals in Romania and abroad (1975-1986).

An immigrant in Belgium about immigrants

Mirona Mitache

I am an immigrant. Although I don't feel like one anymore, I still am and some people around think about me in this way. In Europe where free movement of people is a right, we still label our fellows and treat them different based on their nationality. Are we wrong or right?

Moreover, if we are free to travel and work wherever we want in our Europe, why do we chose to immigrate, to leave behind our lives and start over in countries that we don't know? Sometimes we even get to immigrate in countries of which languages we don't speak. Are we all immigrants based on the same reasons?

Why do people immigrate inside Europe?

In an article[1] published on the BBC website, there were quoted four reasons for migration in general: economic, social, politic and environmental.

I strongly believe that inside Europe, meaning from one European country to other, people don't migrate from politic or environmental reasons: there is no oppression system in place and no really big natural disasters menace our continent. But there are a lot of people emigrating based on economic or social reasons. And I think in the beginning of the 21st Century the Eastern Europeans are more prone to migrate from their countries to the Western Europe chasing the occidental way of life.
I remember what happened in 2007 when Romania got into the European Union: suddenly a lot of people were leaving the country in search of a different life. Many would say a better one, but only time can tell if it is really this way or quite the opposite. True, some of them left before 2007, when it was more difficult to work legally in another European country. Anyway, the large perception in Romania was and still is that people are immigrating because of the lack of money and jobs. For many of those left "home", there can be no other reason to leave your country and accept to be a stranger among others. But the truth is different. There are a lot of Romanians that put themselves in this situation because they wanted to change their lives as a whole, not only because they were lacking money. Maybe they wanted to change the surroundings or the line of thoughts or they just wanted a new challenge. So the reasons behind choosing to become an immigrant are different from person to person.

And all this above doesn't apply just to the Romanians. There is also a large Polish community in Brussels and in Belgium in general, and the reasons behind their decision to leave their homes are most likely the same. The number of Romanians immigrating in Belgium and officially registered at the beginning of 2013 placed them in the 3rd place in a statistics [2]published by "The Centre for Equality of Chances and Fighting against Racism" with 8% of the total number of immigrants that crossed the Belgian borders in the past few years. In total, at 1st of January 2013 in Belgium they were 61,524 Polish, 50,906 Romanians and 23,386 Bulgarians.

Moreover, there is also a question of adapting to some particular conditions. As we don't get to pick the family in which we are born, we don't get either to choose the country where we first open our eyes. But later in life we can decide for ourselves if we like where we live or we would prefer another country, culture and mentality, or maybe just higher living standards. Although we say we are all Europeans, the truth is that the cultural differences between the European countries are significant. And all comes from the social background of a certain nation. It is visible and no scientific studies are required to notice that the Eastern Europe's nations, and especially the Balkan ones, have a different approach in life than the Westerners or even more the Scandinavians. Even among the same "cultural group" there are significant differences: Belgium is different than Holland or France, for example.

So a person born in one European country may feel that his or her mentality is more suitable in another culture and based on this decides to become an immigrant. And this is a question of adaptability and personal choice and has nothing or little to do with the financial aspect of life.
How can you see the difference between those who left for money and those who left for another way of living? Sometimes is obvious, sometimes there are many "shades of grey" in between. I've met people that were earning a minimum wage of a few hundred euro, living crowded in small apartments, working illegally and not paying or having any kind of insurances just to be able to send

1 http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/geography/migration/migration_trends_rev2.shtml

2 http://www.diversite.be/sites/default/files/documents/publication/rapport_statistique_et_demographique.pdf

money back to their countries to finance the building of an awesome house that would amaze all their neighbours. Or to buy a fancy car, go back to their home towns for a week and brag about the apparent wealth they have. The majority of these guys don't even speak the language of the country where they live in after years spent there. On the other hand, there are those who spend all their earnings investing in trainings or other means to better integrate in the culture of their choice, the ones that understand that integration is the key to feel "at home" in a foreign country and to be accepted as "one of them".

And in between are all those who had no idea why they were emigrating, but they still did it. And somehow they managed to be part of the country where they are living in, to successfully participate in the economic and cultural life of their communities, but without having this purpose clear in their minds.

Who's right and who's wrong? Which category should be treated more like "immigrants"? Well, none... Or all. The point is that the first ones are in a foreign country and manage to work and earn money because they cover a segment of the labour market left open by the local people. I remember the example of Italy. In 2010, 2011 many Italians strongly believed that Romanians were stilling their jobs by accepting reduced wages to work as a care provider or on constructions sites. The truth was that many Italians refused to do those jobs and preferred studying, although for degrees that had no value on the market. This applies to other European countries also, including Belgium, where young men don't want to work anymore on building sites and young women don't dream about building a carrier in house cleaning. So, we wouldn't have immigrants for money if the labour market wouldn't propose jobs for them.
At a personal level, I don't agree with the line that this category of immigrants makes no real effort to integrate. Not speaking the language of the country where you work and live for several years is not something to be proud of. And I wouldn't dare to ask them to speak at academic level, but at least to be able to solve their administrative issues. Especially in a country like Belgium where in the Flemish part the public administration has interdiction to use another language than the official one. What bothers me further is that some of those non-integrated immigrants are always complaining about how difficult it is to live in a foreign country and how malicious are the Belgians, for example.

Expat vs. immigrant in Brussels

Talking about immigrants, especially in Belgium, we can't ignore the particular case of Brussels. Brussels is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. After New York, here is the place where you have the highest number of established companies and the most diverse population. Benefiting from the presence of the European Union's institutions, Brussels managed to attract people from all over the world seeking for a carrier or just for a change in life. Although many believe that the majority of immigrants from Brussels are actually employees of the UE institutions or people working in connected industries like lobby, actually the reality is completely different. Brussels is flooded with people of many nationalities, European and non-European, and most of them are active in services, being actually the back bone of all this service-industry created around the existence of the European Institutions in "the heart of Europe".

In Brussels you can meet two types of immigrants: the real immigrants that I've spoken about until now, and the expats. What are the expats and why we categorise them differently? Well, from my point of view the expats are those coming here for temporary contracts, working for a few years in the European Union's institutions or the connected organisations. As long as they don't settle for good in Brussels or Belgium, for me they are expats, equal temporary immigrants. Those that start building a real life, meaning giving up living in collocations, investing in their houses, and getting into the system are not expats anymore, but real immigrants. The expats are here not to build a life, but to finish a contract. They have no interest in learning the local language as long as English is the one they are using at work. Still, some of them do. Also, they have no interest in putting their children in the Belgian public school system and they prefer private schools where they are thought in English or even their mother tongue. Some of this expats don't even register as residents in Belgium, but still they are contributing to the local economy and keep Brussels moving.

I would also include in this category the students or the huge number of interns searching for start up jobs in Political Affairs and Administration. They are not here to stay, but to gather experience and, if possible, to get a job.

Why am I talking about expats? Because when you visit Brussels and its main touristic attractions, you get the impression this people are the majority of immigrants in this city. You meet them around the European Institutions and in the city centre and you get the feeling Brussels is such a cosmopolite city and you don't understand why anyone would complain about immigrants here. And also because they are not representative for the real immigrants: most of them came here already having a job and already having the means to support themselves.

Just to be clear, there are more than 21,000 people employed by the European Commission[1] , another 10,000 by the European Parliament and the European Council[2] and around 4,000 (employees and representatives) by NATO Headquarters. To this we should add some thousands of people working for the lobbing industry. At least half of them are expats, being here temporary and almost all of them are living in Brussels. So this is what actually creates the image of a cosmopolitan city you have about Brussels.

Are the immigrants a problem? Or the receiving countries lost control?

Lately we keep hearing about how some groups of immigrants are negatively influencing the culture of their adoptive country, how they refuse or fail to integrate and how their own culture prevents them from being good local citizens. To be more specific, I am hearing this more and more about Muslims, especially after what happened in Paris in January 2015. And I am shocked of the short memory of my fellow European citizens, their need

1 http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/docs/hr_key_figures_en.pdf
2 http://europa.eu/about-eu/facts-figures/administration/index_en.htm

to blame the obvious guilty person, and their lack of comprehension of the more complex background. Let's remember how this process of immigration really started by taking again the example of Belgium. At some point this little country needed workers so it opened its borders for Italians and Moroccans (and other nations, but this two were more prominent[3]) . Not exactly at the same time, not for the same reason, but I believe that for the sake of argumentation we can put the two communities on the same level. Both Italians and Moroccans arrived, struggled for their lives in the beginning and then formed strong communities. But from a cultural point of view the Italians were closer to the Belgians. Yes, still immigrants, still different, still some under level workers of whom kids should not come closer to the Belgian ones, but finally they managed to get to the point where they were not seen as outsiders anymore. Now, like any other immigrant community, they have their own stores, markets from where they buy their own traditional products. And I understand them because it costs a fortune to buy from a Belgian supermarket the same product which in Italy is extremely cheap.

On the other hand we have the Moroccans, and the majority of them are Muslims. So, the women wear a veil, the men behave always like a pater familias, they speak Arabic among them and they are just very different in general. Like the Italians, they brought their families, but more they brought other relatives also. They moved in together, like big happy families, occupied buildings, streets and neighbourhoods. Just that their culture is different than the basic Western European one. Much more different.

Where the average Western European won't have more than two kids, the Moroccans will. So the community became larger and larger. And this shouldn't be a problem. After all, the Belgians called them here because none of them wanted to or could do the jobs they were doing.
But now we, the Europeans, are complaining that they are not integrated, that their women continue to cover their faces, that they are becoming more and more religious in a Europe that becomes more and more atheist. So apparently we have an issue and it is their fault because they failed to integrate, they refuse to play by our cultural rules and they continue to live in their community with little real interaction to us.

Now let's be honest! What makes them this visible? The fact they prefer living in their community and consuming traditional products? Well, Italians, Romanians, Polish and other Europeans are doing the same and I still haven't heard any Western European blaming them for this. The fact they speak their own language among them? We, the rest of the immigrants do the same. (I speak Romanian with my husband and I can't imagine speaking French or Flemish with him.) So it must be the fact that they are practising another religion so different from ours and that they are wearing clothes that makes them pop up in a crowd. Is this a fault?! In my opinion no, as long as nobody told them they should behave otherwise.

The Western Europe receives immigrants and chooses also to be tolerant, to let them be. No government imposed laws about their duties, no state imposed conditions for their stay on its territory. They were all happy that workers were there and somebody got to do the jobs their youngsters refused because they were busy studying. And after decades they all realized they have an issue and start blaming the immigrants for it. So, after all, who's to blame? The one who came and did what knew best and had no interdiction for or the one who failed to impose some rules?
We "see" them all over because they have a different way than ours. The truth is that in Belgium the largest community of immigrants is the one of the French people, followed by the Dutch and the Italians and only in the 4th place by the Moroccans. And from all the Moroccans only a part of them are traditionalists and very religious. So in the large mass of people living in Belgium or even in Brussels the ones wearing a veil are a very small percentage. But we see what we want to see.

Some psychological aspects of immigration

Usually immigrants are seen back in their countries as brave people who left everything behind in order to find a better life. After they manage to build up a life in this new place, they are even looked at with envy and considered lucky. In practice, no one except the immigrant really knows how difficult it was to achieve what he or she achieved.

Being an immigrant is not easy. The moment you leave your country and your comfort zone, you leave behind a life that you knew and in exchange you get something that may or may not work. There is no guarantee you will succeed or that you will integrate. Most of the times your family and your friends are left behind and no matter how much you struggle you won't get to keep some relationships.
Before leaving, you promise everyone and you get promises that you will keep in touch and you base everything on the hope that social media and modern means of communication will replace the face to face interactions. Still, that is not quite what will happen... For everyone life goes on and you will find out that the interactions via social media are usually superficial and you don't get to spend quality time with the people you love. Struggling to find a job or to keep one will make it difficult to get to an Internet connection when your beloved ones also can so you will get to talk to them not so often as you used to.

Moreover you will get to know new people and to make new friends. They will also somehow make you put distance between yourself and those left in your home country. Still these new friends won't come easy and it will take time and in the meanwhile you will feel sad and most probably lonely. This feeling, combined with the issues of finding a nice job, can sink you down fast. And still everybody sees only the nice part: you are in a very nice country or city and you are living the dream you chose to live.

You also feel the need and the pressure to succeed, sometimes going back in your home country not being an option. And this is how you get to be judgemental and to almost hate other immigrants of other nationalities because they have more rights than you do.

3 http://www.espace-citoyen.be/uploaded/agenda/2013/dossier_immigration.pdf

having a dream and not really understanding how difficult it can be to reach it. Maybe they don't know themselves or maybe they have no measure of their aptitudes, or their motivation is not strong enough. Still they try and the disappointment is huge when, after months of struggle, they are in the same situation as in the beginning.

I think in this last case the bravest thing to do is to admit emigration is not for everyone. Just because 10 others managed to integrate somehow, that doesn't mean the 11th will also manage. Some of these people will never understand they need to get out of their comfort zone and to think outside the box if they want to succeed: the way of thinking that works in their home country may not be suitable in the adoptive one.

So, what's the conclusion?

Being an immigrant it's not easy in a Europe that still labels people. Actually we are labelling among us, we are intransigent and we see first the differences and only then the similarities. Unfortunately we are also a little bit ignorant and we don't seem open to learn new things about the people around us. (I was asked so many times if all Romanians are gypsies that I've lost track of it...).

But at least we have the choice to stay in our home countries, to travel or to emigrate. We can also choose the country and we can hope to succeed. It is up to us to struggle to integrate and to understand that we can't just pick another country and demand from it to accept us without any effort from our part.

We should not label, but we should also make efforts to integrate if we choose to

Mirona Mitache

Biography

Mirona Mitache is a Romanian who imigrated in Belgium almost five years ago. Since then, among other things, she started blogging in Romanian (http://mironamitache.net) about her life and adventures in Belgium. In the meanwhile, Mirona also started writting as a journalist for a Romanian news agency and has ongoing colaborations with other bloggers and on-line websites.

Inventing new languages

Anne Marie Majlund Jensen

Moving pictures: Portraits of Bosnian realities as seen through a lens.

It seems that, for the time being, new languages are invented around the corners of the river Miljacka. These languages both create and describe new realities. While it takes more than a glance around Sarajevo theatres to catch a glimpse of them, they are there. These new pictures are portraits of a reality that exposes us to fragments of life as seen from the point of view of some of those who live there, around the Sarajevo theatres, and in Bosnia's major cities, Banja Luka, Mostar, Tuzla. Around the capitals of the rest of Europe and beyond, these realities also figure in forms of poetic filmic interpretation – but here they are seen through the eyes of those who only used to live there. Seen from a distance, yet with the self-conscious, however undefined longing intact, young film makers are finding new ways and forms of expressing a longing for a place that maybe no longer exists the way it used to, but which is now embedded in new narratives and artistic forms – pushed forward by pictures in motion.

The Migrant

My *lost generation* (2009) is a thrilling documentary self-portrait by Copenhagen-based Vladimir Tomić (*Unfinished Journeys* (2012) *Flotel Europa* (2015)). Tomić plays the main part, yet he could be any young man out of a generation whose sense of direction and track in life has been lost in war. In Tomić's case, the path towards his existential wilderness is the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Any war is about losing, usually more than it is about winning. Everybody loses something; those who keep their lives lose friends, family members, and homes for good. Bosnia lost a whole generation. Tomić's generation.

Tomić portrays his own search for identity, while knitting his own directionless identity search tightly together with that of his peers. He goes back in time to look, but in his case, going back in time also means travelling through European airspace, back to a country that is no longer there. He experiences a triple loss: loss of time, loss of space and thus – loss of a generation. To lose a generation means that adult life forever becomes a dialogue with an *absence*. In *My Lost Generation* this absence is, first and foremost, an absence of a world that reflects and recognises the grieves pertaining to the migrant experience.

My lost generation is a quiet testimony to the human loses of war, as they are manifest even among those who "only" lost their country - and with it, everything they left behind. Yet, it is also a testimony to the experience of migration: it portrays how ambivalent the encounter with more or less well-meaning host societies can be, and how this ambivalence persists - also to the point where what started as a flight from war, becomes classified and put into a box of "successful integration."

Enemies on the forehead

If ambivalence is the engaging determinant when dealing with Tomić's migrant tale, normality – or its absence – is what engages those who stayed behind. Sometimes raw, sometimes poetic, usually both, the works of Ines Tanović (*A day on the Drina, Some Other Stories, Coal Mine*), Namik Kabil (*Magnet, Inside*) and Timur Makarević (*Jugonostalgia, Yours and Ours*) all take part in such negotiations seeking out the boundaries of a post-war normality in the making. The immediate post-war generation lead by Euro-famous film making figures as Danis Tanović and Pjer Žalica, were humorous and explicit in their social critique; now they are accompanied by directors the works of which are subtle, more quiet, yet piercing, portraits of human condition *after war*. Portraits of how everything gets back to normal - and yet to a normality far from the normality that was. Turning the camera from the inside out and back again, reversing the perspective from the inner conflicts of traumatised souls of individual bodies to the outer, yet equally troubling, realities of the surrounding world, these artists portray a world of people in whom we may, or may not, trust.

For who can be trusted? *After war?*

Officially, there is no enemy. *War is over.* Yet, the enemies persist. The Sarajevo-based documentarist and film maker Timur Makarević shows how antagonisms persist to the extent that, actually, "enemy" is everyone, written on the forehead of even the youngest ones whose post-war vagaries seem to take no end. "Its like having "Serb" written on the forehead" says the young woman in her twenties in *Yours and Ours*, a painstaking but surprisingly optimistic experimental documentary portraying youth living on either side of the "Inter-Entity-Boundary-Line" – the administrative boundary dividing the population of the 20-year-old country into two distinct (and almost ethnically homogenous) territories.

Watching Makarević is watching how young people put words onto their experience of *being*. And perhaps more precisely: how a young generation put words onto how they *think*. Another Makarević documentary, *Jugonostalgia,* in the same way portrays tales of Yugoslavia as told by those who could have been Yugoslavs but instead became its predecessors. While in *Yours and Ours,* the Makarević shows how young people (Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats) think about the Others (Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats), *Jugonostalgia* depicts Yugoslavia as seen in retrospect.

The art of being in transition

Both pieces are part of a larger project - *Priče iz Tranzicije* – "stories about", or "tales of" transition. However, Makarević makes clear that "transition" is not just *that* – transition - but also, and more importantly, a *state of being* with different faces depending on who the curious mind choses to ask. Transition is per definition "being on the way", but according to Makarević it is much more than going from something to something else. What he shows is that, even during periods of ongoing "transition", young people do have things they care about in the present, they do in fact lead lives that are not only defined by the attentive expectation of some end point in the future, located at the end of an interlude space in time. While in *Yours and Ours*, he lets the camera trace peoples movement in space, what concerns Makarević in *Jugonostalgia* is a certain movement in time. Delving into tracing a history that goes beyond the history of war, *Jugonostalgia* envisions the world of the (now former) Yugoslavia, a world considered to be fundamentally different from the deprived world of a *post-society* (post-war, post-conflict, post-socialist, post-communist and not least, post-Yugoslav).

Working bodies

Raw documentary is what the Sarajevo-born Ines Tanović does, and the human being is at the centre of her concern. Tanović follows it as it works its way through life. Mediated through the Tanovician lens, it is a number in a mass; it rarely shows any trace of individuality or self-hood, no emotions, nor feelings. Not that these people are portrayed as cold or cynic, rather as working animals. Tanović shows how men and women put efforts into what they do with the same taken-for-granted-ness - wherever they are, whenever they do it and whatever they do. Whether they are excavating the remains of bodies at the dried-out bottom of the river Drina (*A day on the Drina*) or whether they work their way through a mountain deep within the black soil and clay of a coal mine (*Coal Mine*) doesn't really matter.

Tanović is extreme in her insistence on showing what raw material man is made of, and with their absence of dialogue and their "action"/motive embedded almost in realtime, her one-day portraits expose at the same time the distinctiveness and the universality of the human being. Tanovic wants us to see how humans are physical, bodily beings. In striking contrast to Makarevic's speech-documentary, Tanovician documentary is documentation of bodies. Bodies digging, bodies seeking, bodies found, bodies covered in soil, bodies over- and underground. Wherever we look, there are bodies. Old and young, male and female, dead or alive. The body is playing the main part. *A Day on the Drina* as well as *Coal Mine* are physically engaging as Tanović captures the paradox of human existence: the inhuman exercise of searching for the remains of children after a brutal mass killing – the plot of *A Day on the Drina* – or as the inhuman condition of spending 12 hours a day several meters under the ground as in *Coal Mine*.

Both these circumstances are so inhuman in contrast to the striking reminder of embodiment of the people Ines Tanović portrays; at the same time this is exactly what leaves us no doubt that it is man itself she wants to show. In contrast to Tomić's personal narratives and Makarević's collective tales, we here get man without performance; the pictures, colours, lights, speak for itself as Tanović let the camera roll down a dried out Drina river just to find the remains of a children shoe size 8.

Learning forgotten languages

Heart language is a particular kind of language. It differs from other kinds of language in that it can be spoken by everyone, is not attached to territory, nor to any particular "region", country, state or national group. Yet, it has a certain grammar, and as such, it can be learned – and forgotten.

Note that nowhere, in this piece, have I referred to "Bosnian film making". I do not think I should be the one to make any defining "status" over what constitutes "contemporary" and especially not "Bosnian" cinema and film-making. What I am doing here, however, is making a case for the works above as they speak a strange dialect of a language that I recognise as my own. Also, I hope, they represent the emerging grammar of a language of others who have so far felt analphabets when seeking to decipher the streams and currents of a post-war reality that has for long been under- and overwhelmed by its own traumatisms but which is now moving, it seems, towards new normalities.

Anne Marie Majlund Jensen

Biography

Anne Marie Majlund Jensen is co-organizing the annual Itching Scratching Film Festival, Aarhus, Denmark, a film festival promoting young directors from Bosnia and Denmark. She has lived and worked in Sarajevo and has conducted fieldwork in various parts of Bosnia over the past 4 years. She has an MA in European Studies and her current research focuses on migration and mobility, memory and reconciliation in Europe, with a particular focus on the former Yugoslavia.

Athens as a melting pot. Migration in Greece.

Alicja Kordos

For most of us, Athens is Europe's capital of culture, a city known for the walls of the Acropolis and its blue sea. Yet, it is also has a different side. Although when visiting small towns and islands you may encounter smiling Greeks who play traditional instruments and serve local cuisine, in Athens the reality is somewhat different. As soon as you get off the beaten track, you will see that the city is a huge melting pot, with immigrants from the Balkans, Mediterranean countries and, more recently, from even more distant corners of the globe.

In Athens, immigrants can be encountered almost at the foot of the Acropolis, on a once-elegant square called Monastiraki that is today a meeting place for immigrants and, at the same time, a "workplace" for many Roma people. You can encounter Roma women there, shoving flowers into your hands, young beggars and street vendors of clearly foreign descent. As the majority of immigrants live around the city centre, west of Warwakio market and Omonia square, you will even find them in the elegant district of Place. It is not uncommon to see armed policemen patrolling the surroundings around the clock in order to prevent fights, which break out quite often. These districts, noticeably poor and dirty, are avoided by the native inhabitants of Athens, who contemptuously call their residents "blacks" (mawri).The population of Poles, centred around the Catholic church in Athens, is also to be found in a part of the infamous immigrant area of the city (near Michail Voda street). However, one has to be aware that the typical profile of an immigrant has changed in recent years. It is no longer the immigrants from Albania and other European countries once poor and devastated by communism that face the aversion of Greeks, but immigrants from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

In order to understand the demographic and ethnic changes in the immigrant groups of Athens, we need to go back to the 1990s. After the transformation of 1989, the city was flooded with immigrants (mostly from Albania and, after 1995, also from other Balkan states), who chose Greece more frequently than any other EU country. This resulted from the fact that Greece was quite prosperous at that time, unlike other countries in the Balkans. For that reason, the inhabitants of post-Soviet countries saw Greece as either a new place of residence or as a transfer point to the West. At that time, immigration was quite a positive phenomenon, as many Greeks had left the country in the 1950s and 1970s and, as a result, the country faced shortages of staff, especially blue-collar workers. Immigrants usually had a primary or secondary level of education, with the Russians the best and Albanians the poorest educated immigrants. They usually took low-skilled jobs[1]. Albanians and Poles worked as builders and got other manual jobs. Female immigrants from the Philippines worked as housekeepers, while Bulgarians worked as waiters and bellboys. The immigrants did their best to integrate with society, to learn the language and blend into the country they had come to – this applies especially to the incomers from Europe. The beginning of the 21st century saw another wave of immigrants as the preparation for the UEFA European Championship and Summer Olympics generated many jobs. Unfortunately, around 2005, once the construction boom was over, the jobs disappeared. The Europeans from countries which are not or, until recently, were not members of the European Union, started to go back to their homelands.

An interesting group of immigrants, larger than any other in Greece (over 50% of the overall number of immigrants), is the Albanians[2]. The amount of information on the immigrants from Albania, though relatively limited when taking into account the number of Albanians in Greece (the topic seems to be inconvenient for the government), is still more considerable than the amount of information on any other group of immigrants in the country. Though numerous, Albanians do not enjoy any special privileges and do not have separate institutions in Greece. The government seems to ignore them and hopes they will assimilate quickly. Albanians had already been present in Germany at an earlier stage but most of them left after 1945. They and their descendants returned to Greece after 1991 as well as during the crisis of 1998-1999 and the war in Kosovo. Although many of them are of Greek descent, they are treated like strangers. Some of them stay in Greece illegally; others – after some time – acquire residence rights, or even citizenship. Albanian immigrants usually know Greek, so they blend into Greek society. They also try not to flaunt their religious beliefs and sometimes even use Greek, that is Christian, names to avoid aversion and persecution by the native inhabitants who, as members of the Orthodox Church, have a hostile attitude towards Muslims. Despite these practices, young Greeks recognize Albanians easily, for instance by their looks. Some interesting and precise information concerning Albanians is provided by the official census from March 2001[3]. At that time, the population of Albanians in Greece was 438,036, which represents more than half of the overall number of

immigrants (761,813) in the country. A total of 220,470 Albanians came to Greece to work, 65,214 immigrants came for family-related reasons, just 7708 people crossed to Greece to study and only 926 people came there to seek asylum. These data give us some idea of the structure of the Albanian population in Greece at that time, but this information is certainly not complete as we can assume that many illegal immigrants may have hidden, or withheld their nationality. The extent to which Greeks attempt to cover up the presence of Albanians in their society is made visible by a story of an Albanian schoolboy that leaked to the press a couple of years ago. In Greece, on national holidays pupils participate in parades. Those with the best school results are granted the privilege of carrying the Greek flag. In 2003, this honour was given to an Albanian boy, provided that he agreed to declare publicly that he considered himself to be a Greek. Even clearer evidence of the intolerance during parades can be found in a film that shows Greek soldiers who, acting as the official representatives of the army in the centre of Athens, chanted racist slogans: "You can be born a Greek, you cannot become Greek. We will drink your blood, you Albanian swine[4]".

The situation of the group of Polish immigrants also reflects the general trend in Athens. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, there were tens of thousands of Polish immigrants in Greece. Until 2004, their number had been estimated at as many as 200 thousand. Measures were taken to legalise Polish emigration. As early as in 1985, there were attempts to set up a school for Polish children. Three independent educational institutions were established. In 1997, they were consolidated as the PolishEmbassySecondary School in Athens, known since 2003 as the ZygmuntMineykoSchool[5]. The Poles in Greece published their own newspapers, the most popular being "The Athens Herald" (later "The Athens Weekly"). However, several years later, Poles began to leave Greece. According to the estimates of the Polish Embassy in Athens, in 2013 the number of Poles in Greece may be less than ten thousand.

In the 21st century, immigrants from European countries have been replaced by those from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Their appearance and behaviour are very different to that of the Greeks. As a result, they find it more difficult to assimilate and it is much easier for them to become alienated. The statistics[6] speak for themselves: in 2010, the total population of Greece was 11 million. The number of foreigners was one million, with 160 thousand citizens of EU countries and almost 800 thousand non-EU citizens.
As a direct consequence, Greek society is becoming increasingly xenophobic. There are many Greeks who do not even try to conceal their contempt for the new inhabitants of their country, whom they perceive as second-class citizens. Extreme nationalism in Greek politics is also growing in influence. The nationalist "Chrisi Avgi"(Golden Dawn) party entered parliament because its slogans ("Greece for Greeks", "Greece above all[7]", "Albanian, you will never become a Greek") correspond to the mood among citizens, who are increasingly afraid of immigrants (in 2013, 8,9% of the population were immigrants[8]), and as a result fear rising crime rates.

To achieve a better understanding of the phenomenon of immigration, it is worth considering it from two perspectives. The tragedy of Albanian immigrants, especially children, who are condemned to wander around the streets and face persecution from policemen and human traffickers, is portrayed in a film by Theodoros Angelopoulos –Eternity and a Day. What is especially poignant is the metaphoric picture of the border presented as a high fence with bodies of Albanians stuck to it as they were trying to cross the "unreachable border" of a European country. Those who manage to cross the border have to acknowledge their inferiority to Greek citizens. Even those with higher education levels are forced to take unskilled jobs they would never end up doing in their native countries. In this way, the poor financial situation of immigrants, which forces them to go a few steps down in the social hierarchy, translates into their inferiority to the rest of the society, and also in their own eyes. Interesting evidence of the difficult situation of Albanians in Greece is provided by A Short Border Handbook by Gazmend Kapllani[9], an Albanian who decided to cross to Greece in the 1990s. The book has been translated into several languages. The author depicts the difficulties the emigrants have to face from the very first day of their time abroad. Although the book is not autobiographical and some facts it presents are exaggerated, it reflects perfectly the atmosphere that accompanies emigration. Kapllani provides readers with a colourful description of the first days "in the West": all the newcomers get locked up in a huge warehouse in appalling conditions, practically without food, while they wait for a decision on their futures. Instead of getting the help they were promised by the UN, they get truncheon-wielding Greek policemen who do not let them leave the warehouse. The book is full of comments concerning the next stages of life in a foreign country – learning a new language, looking for a job, searching for a flat. At every turn, the protagonist has to face the aversion of Greeks, and he has to understand that "no-one asked him to come, that he is there uninvited and nobody notices him. An invisible creature, which, on the rare occasions it is noticed, inspires either momentary pity or enduring disgust[10]". The author also describes the witch-hunt of the Greek media, which propagates the negative image of Albanians, contributing to the aversion and fear of almost all Greeks towards them. Kapllani quotes TV news excerpts (A gang of Albanians have raped and murdered a seventy-year-old woman. A horrendous crime in the suburbs. Police warn Albanians might be responsible etc.) as well as slogans published in the press (Expel Albanians! Albanians are the most horrible tribe in the world). It should come as no surprise that Greeks – already suspicious towards floods of immigrants, especially by those they see as infidels (at least this is what Greeks believe; in reality, many Albanians are atheists) – are confirmed in their aversion by the media, which inundates society with accusations towards this group of immigrants.

The point of view of contemporary immigrants is also presented in a documentary made by a British journalist Alex Miller, who decided to take a closer

look at the problems of immigrants. He met many of them, talked to them about their everyday lives and problems and saw their living and working conditions[11]. Illegal immigrants cross to Greece to fulfil their dreams of freedom in Europe. However, they face aversion and even persecution from the police and neo-Nazis. They fall victim to physical attacks but cannot ask for help as officially they are not present in the country. The immigrants work in low-paid jobs that Greeks would never take; they agree to being treated like slaves because this is the only way they will keep their jobs and survive.

They live in appalling conditions in plastic tents. Large groups of immigrants camp out near the city of Patras, where they await a chance to sneak on a ferry and leave Greece for further parts of Europe, just as they had planned from the very beginning.

The government, however, perceives immigration from a totally different perspective[12], emphasising the differences between the structure of immigration in Greece and other EU countries such as Sweden, where immigrants are usually well-educated Europeans and culturally similar to the native population. Greece is flooded with illegal immigrants who arrive by sea – from Indo-China, Pakistan, and other countries with totally different cultures. It is impossible to effectively control the long coastline and all the islands, so new groups of immigrants regularly reach Greece. On the other hand, many people have lived in Greece for years or have even been born and brought up in the country, though they still only have temporary residence permits. The social democratic government has planned to at least settle the status of children born in Greece, but the opposition parties and the resistance of some parts of society block these changes effectively[13].

It remains to be seen how Greek society will cope with the problem of immigration and whether far-right extremists will accept the fact that – as a member of united Europe – Greece has to be open to citizens of other countries and has to be ready to help incomers from other continents. It seems immigrants will still come to Greece, as their numbers have not decreased despite the economic crisis.

Greece will have to find ways of settling their status and organising their live within society, for the benefit of its own citizens, both the friendly and sceptical ones.

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Alicja Kordos

Biography

Alicja Kordos graduated the Modern Greek Philology and the East European Studies at the University of Warsaw and is currently the PhD candidate at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw, where she works on thesis covering the controversial theme of critical aproach to Greece and the influence of the French author Edmond About's work on the perception of Greece. She also cooperates with the Hellenic Studies UW as translator, editor and proof-reader. She is interested in issues concerning religion tolerance, French and Greek culture and pedagogical approach to the children in travel.

PARTNERS OF THE ULYSSES' GAZE PROJECT

EuropaNova

Belgium

The first of its kind with a unique approach in Brussels, EuropaNova was created in 2010 and is composed of 42 effective members from different nationalities and backgrounds (language teachers, interpreters, translators, anthropologists, etc.) whose common interest revolves around the promotion of the languages and the cultures of Eastern, Central Europe and the Balkans. In April 2012 EuropaNova opened a Cultural Center including a bookstore and, since September 2013, also a library near the European Parliament offering a wide choice of literary works from the aforementioned regions (more specifically, Bulgaria, Greece, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Romania and Estonia) and mostly available in their original version and in French.
The Cultural Center EuropaNova (www.europanova.be) is a meeting space where language courses are organised but also functions as a cultural center at large, with conferences, writers' meetings, poetry and/or music sessions, exhibitions. The language classes are offered in Romanian, Greek, Turkish and Croatian. For the advanced learners, cultural courses are organized. For the multicultural public in Brussels, the center set up conference cycles in French about authors of the Eastern, Central Europe and the Balkans.
Since September 2013, EuropaNova has organized a festival (www.europanovafestival.eu) which celebrates the languages, cultures and spiritualties of Central, Eastern Europe and the Balkans. This festival is part of the events celebrating each year on 26 September, the European Day of Languages. The first edition took place from 23 to 29 September 2013 and was dedicated to Romanian language and culture. The second edition took place from 25 to 30 September 2014 and was dedicated to the Romanian, Moldavian, Bulgarian and Greek culture.

For the Ulysses' Gaze project 2013-2015: *Stories of Migration through East-European Cinematography* (www.ulysses-project.eu), EuropaNova collaborated with the History Meeting House in Warsaw (PL), the Ethnological Museum of Thrace in Alexandropoulis (GR), the Student Plus Foundation in Timisoara (RO) and the Platform Spartak in The Hague (NL).

Ethnological Museum of Thrace

Greece

The Ethnological Museum of Thrace was founded with the purpose of preserving historical memory in the wider region of Thrace and is a self-funded organization. Since 1899 it has been operating in Alexandroupolis in a leased, stone-built neoclassical building that dates from 1899.

The Museum is open for the public since October 2002. It was self financed project and at times sponsored by the Stauros Niarhos Foundation and the Ministry of Culture.

The Ethnological Museum of Thrace is a living cell where people can learn about the folk culture and the customs of Thrace, a place that will connect tradition and the memory contained within it with the concerns of modern society.

The purpose of the museum is to study, project, and promote the Thracian culture. The Museum is aims for its place to be a motive for re-evaluation of tradition.The exhibits where organized in such a way so that the visitor can form a full picture of the traditional way of life in Thrace, especially in the North Evros prefecture from the late 17th century to the early 20th century.

- Ground flour 161,4 square feet
- Basement 130,5 square feet
- Ancillary building 35 square feet

In the inner yard of the house the museum create a relaxing café with aromatic herbal teas and traditional sweets and the gift shop with mementos from Thrace.

The museums collection is comprise out of objects, archives with documents and pictures, recordings, videos, and the library. Inside the museum there are in display over 500 objects from the museums collection.

History Meeting House

Poland

The main focus of the History Meeting House (HMH) is the history of Central and Eastern Europe in the twentieth century. In HMH, history is presented through exhibitions, discussions, meeting cycles devoted to the history of Warsaw, screenings of feature films and documentaries, educational workshops, book launches, seminars and conferences. Additionally, the HMH acts as a publishing house, with a wide selection of books concerning the history of the twentieth century available in its book-store. The Audiovisual Library collects eyewitness relations, digitises photographs, documents and films.

The HMH was founded in 2006 as a result of the initiative of the KARTA Centre, an independent non-governmental organisation which has been documenting modern history and conducting actions to promote democracy and civil consciousness since 1982. The HMH cooperates with renowned Polish and foreign institutions devoted to historical studies of the twentieth century.

The History Meeting House presents history using diverse and modern methods of communication; HMH's co-workers include young artists and curators who create artistic installations, happenings, urban games and para-theatrical events. We present the most important events from the history of the twentieth century, including social history, fascinating biographies and unique life stories of ordinary people.

We try to make history popular by using primary sources and relations of individuals. We focus on those aspects of history which are frequently absent from course-books; it is easier to grasp the uniqueness of an epoch trough stories of every day life and fates of individuals. We are open to different circles and generations. The testimonies presented by us were given by people of various nations and beliefs.

Platform Spartak

Netherlands

Platform Spartak is a learning platform that connects young people from Europe to the Hague and vice versa. We envision a Europe based on strong and sustainable local communities, in which (young) citizens are socially involved and encouraged to express and develop themselves. We believe creative expression and cultural exchange are crucial to the development of such communities.

As part of Platform Spartak, one can gain experience on both local and international level: our projects range from Art Jams in The Hague to voluntary work in the Balkans. Young people have the opportunity to join existing projects, also to organize their own. Platform Spartak is a non-profit organization with a small dedicated staff. We have the ambition to work as a learning platform, where young people are supported and stimulated to implement new projects and realize their own ideas.

Strategic Goals:
Provide young citizens the tools to express and develop themselves
Support local initiatives to strengthen the community
Offer a platform for intercultural exchange
Bring local youth work to a European level

Student Plus

Romania

The Student Plus Foundation (www.studentplus.ro) was founded in 1999 in Timișoara, Romania. Started as an organisation focusing on offering educational opportunities and access to information to the numerous university students of our city, over the years our target groups became more diverse, adding groups of professionals, such as teachers and nurses, senior citizens and high-school students. Our goal is to provide educational services, personal growth opportunities, to support individuals and groups of individuals with special attention to the disadvantaged, in gaining and improving knowledge and skills in different areas of interest: foreign languages, communication and life skills, computers and media, social work, culture, religion and civilization. Since 1999, annually, in the organization's activities participate about five hundred people, out of which more than half are young people aged between 18 and 30 .
Our main programmes are: the Student Plus Modern Languages Center, the Seniors' Academy, the Media Center, the Volunteer Center of Timișoara (www.voluntar-timisoara.ro) and the Europe Direct Information Center Timișoara (www.europedirect-tm.ro).

By joining in 2008 the YMCA Romania Federation, the Student Plus Foundation has become part of the greater Romanian YMCA's family with members in nine cities in Romania, and also of the wide world YMCA family which operates in over hundred-and-twenty countries.

Since Romania joined the European Union in 2007, the Student Plus Foundation implemented several educational projects every year through the Youth in Action Programme. The citizens' interest in the topic of migration is quite high in Timisoara, a city with a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic population, therefore in 2011 we implemented the EU project called "Strangers Yesterday, Friends Today, a Family Tomorrow" which aproached the issue from the view point of the asylum seekers and refugees in Romania. The activities of the project supported their integration process in our local community and raised awareness about the migration related issues. Later on, in 2014, we published an informative brochure for migrants and authorities working with migrants, "Welcome to Timișoara – An Integration Guide for Migrants".

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