

Abstract

It is the aim of this thesis to compare and contrast selected novels by the following three postcommunist women writers: Slavenka Drakulić from Croatia, Oksana Zabuzhko from Ukraine, and Domnica Radulescu from Romania. More specifically, my goal is to examine the ways in which each of the selected texts portray issues surrounding feminism, postcommunism, postcolonialism, and sexuality. For my critical analyses, I have chosen the following six texts: *Marble Skin* (1987) and *S.: A Novel about the Balkans* (1999) by Drakulić; *Fieldwork in Ukrainian Sex* (1996) and *The Museum of Abandoned Secrets* (2009) by Zabuzhko; and *Train to Trieste* (2008) and *Black Sea Twilight* (2010) by Radulescu. The novels are set not only in different Eastern European countries, but also occur during different periods of postcommunism, and this will therefore inform my critical examination of them. I am interested in an examination of the ways in which Eastern European feminists writing novels which focus on the female body are writing in response to, and against the nationalist rhetoric that arose during, and following, the collapse of the Communist states. I endeavour to illustrate the ways in which postcommunist feminist writers take up the concern with the individual and personal lives of women, not only to counter former Communist depictions of women, but also to break the dominance of the phallogentric language permeating literature in Eastern Europe

Keywords: Slavenka Drakulić, Oksana Zabuzhko, Domnica Radulescu, postcommunism, feminist fictions, writing the body