

II. Art in Exile - Literature Review

Art in exile is a relatively new but growing field of exile studies. Most ideas and theories connected to the notion of exile originally came from literary studies and the methodological debate about the characteristics of exile literature helped the development of the academic field of visual art in exile. Alexander Stephan argues that in literature, the focus on the concept of exile facilitated the move from text and aesthetics based examination to sociological and political analysis, making literary studies broader and more inclusive.¹ The theme 'exile in literature' introduced innovative methods and models of analysis and encouraged the expansion of exile studies into newer areas, including the visual arts and culture. Jutta Vinzent states, that the investigation of émigré artists is a newer field than of émigré writers.²

Wolfgang Benz notes that the issue of exile was first stimulated by memoirs written by emigrants³, a point also supported by Jutta Vinzent in her assessment of the early examples of written material in relation to art in exile in Great Britain.⁴ With emigration and re-emigration playing such an important role in many twentieth-century artists' lives, including artists of Hungarian and Czech origin, such as Peter (László) Peri (1899-1967), László Moholy-Nagy (1895-1946), Franta Belsky (1921-2000), Frantisek Kupka (1871-1957), etc., the theme of exile became a customary aspect of biographies and individual monographs. These, however, focused on individual stories and rarely included any contextual examination of the circumstances and consequences

¹ Alexander Stephan, *Exile and Otherness: New Approaches to the Experience of the Nazi Refugees, Exil-Studien; Bd. 11* (Oxford: P. Lang, 2006).

² Vinzent, *Identity and Image : Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain, 1933-1945*. p. 19

³ Wolfgang Benz, "Exile Studies: Development and Trends," in *German-Speaking Exiles in Ireland*, ed. Gisela M. B. Holfter (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006).

⁴ Jutta Vinzent's examples include the autobiographies of German-born artists Jack Bilbo, John Heartfield, Oskar Kokoschka, Fred Uhlman and others. See Jutta Vinzent, *Identity and Image: Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain, 1933-1945, Schriften Der Guernica-Gesellschaft; 16* (Weimar: VDG, Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2006). It is not surprising that the theme of exile would be considered by individuals who were affected by the experience and this trend is also relevant in regards to the formation of the theoretical base of exile studies which was developed by exiles, such as Edward Said.

of exile.

A more focused interest in exile art in Britain has developed since the 1980s, a major landmark being the exhibition *Art in Exile in Great Britain 1933-1945* which was held in London and in West Berlin in 1986 and presented work by German artists who escaped Nazism and found refuge in the UK.⁵ Most research carried out since has continued to consider the period of the 1930s and 1940s and concentrated on refugees from Germany and Austria. There are a number of sources that deal with the experience of German-speaking and Jewish refugees from a social or literary point of view.⁶ These studies also make reference to visual arts and artists. Major studies exploring the influence of German-speaking exiles on the British cultural scene include Günter Berghaus' account for émigré artists from the field of theatre and film⁷, the summary of creative achievements of refugees from Austria entitled *Austrian Exodus*⁸ and *The Hitler Émigrés*, an overview of the cultural impact of Nazi refugees by Daniel Snowman.⁹

Other research related to visual arts and cultural production focuses on specific artistic expressions and groups: Robin Kinross' article acknowledges the influence of émigré graphic designers¹⁰ and Charlotte Benton's detailed investigation explores the role that refugees played in the development of

⁵ *Art in Exile in Great Britain, 1933-45*, (London: Camden Arts Centre, 1986).

⁶ Johannes F. Evelein, *Exiles Traveling: Exploring Displacement, Crossing Boundaries in German Exile Arts and Writings 1933-1945* (Amsterdam [etc.]: Rodopi, 2009), Gerhard Hirshfeld, *Exile in Great Britain: Refugees from Hitler's Germany* (Leamington Spa: Berg for German Historical Institute, 1984), Ian Wallace, *German-Speaking Exiles in Great Britain* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999). Gisela M. B. Holfter, *German-Speaking Exiles in Ireland 1933-1945* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006).

⁷ Gunter Berghaus, *Theatre and Film in Exile : German Artists in Great Britain, 1933-1945* (Oxford: Wolff, 1989).

⁸ Edward Timms and Ritchie Robertson, *Austrian Exodus the Creative Achievements of Refugees from National Socialism, Austrian Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995).

⁹ Daniel Snowman, *The Hitler Émigrés: The Cultural Impact on Britain of Refugees from Nazism* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2002).

¹⁰ Robin Kinross, "Émigré Graphic Designers in Britain: Around the Second World War and Afterwards," *Journal of Design History* 3, no. 1 (1990).

twentieth-century British architecture.¹¹ Both these studies consider the impact of refugees from the time of the rise of National Socialism until the early period of Cold War.

An interdisciplinary conference held at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts in July 2005 examined the connection between exile and patronage, looking at the influence and significance of patronage in the fields of visual arts, music, religion and politics not only involving individuals but also wider systems, such as institutions, corporations and family networks. The presented articles primarily focused on émigrés who came from Nazi Germany to Great Britain, but the perspective of the main theme was expanded to include essays on exiles in the US, Spain and the Middle East.¹² The exhibition *Art and Migration*, which accompanied the conference, presented paintings, graphic works and prints by émigré artists from a private collection.¹³

Keith Holz's study, *Modern German Art for Thirties Paris, Prague, and London* explores the position and stance of émigré German artists during the Third Reich¹⁴. Holz compares art created by artists in their homeland and in emigration and explores German art beyond the modernist and expressionist tradition focusing on the social and political aspects of exile art. Holz concludes that art created in emigration was different to art created in Germany because in exile, artists took on a significant role of educating their new audiences about the realities of Nazism and became leaders in anti-Fascist propaganda.

In the United States, the achievements of exiled artists from Nazism have been commemorated by a major exhibition entitled *Exiles and Émigrés*:

¹¹ Charlotte Benton, *A Different World: Émigré Architects in Britain 1928-1958* (London: RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1995).

¹² Andrew Chandler, Katarzyna Stokosa, and Jutta Vinzent, *Exile and Patronage: Cross-Cultural Negotiations Beyond the Third Reich, Mittel- Und Ostmitteleuropastudien; 3* (Münster: Lit, 2006).

¹³ Jennifer Powell and Jutta Vinzent, *Art and Migration*, Humanitas Subsidia Series (Birmingham: George Bell Institute, 2005).

¹⁴ Keith Holz, *Modern German Art for Thirties Paris, Prague, and London: Resistance and Acquiescence in a Democratic Public Sphere, Social History, Popular Culture, and Politics in Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

The Flight of European Artists from Hitler.¹⁵ The exhibition and its catalogue focused on the most recognised and successful artists, such as Max Beckmann (1884-1950), Walter Gropius (1883-1969), George Gross (1893-1959), Salvador Dali (1904-1989), Piet Mondrian (1872-1944), Ludwig Mies van de Rohe (1886-1969), etc. and considered their individual artistic significance rather than the wider implications of exile on European and American culture. The exhibition replicated the approach of the previously mentioned monographs and biographies of early twentieth century artists, and highlighted the elevated status of Modernism and individual modernists in popular art exhibitions and curatorial practices. This current thesis also concentrates on individual artists and their experiences, but their life stories are examined to provide a comprehensive picture of a group of immigrant artists and considers both famous and lesser known artists.

A study evaluating the influence of European exiled artists on the development of American Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism was published in 1997.¹⁶ In the book, Martica Sawin offers a narrative account of the lives of the selected exiles, piecing together the story of Surrealism in exile in the USA from a combination of interviews, archive material and relevant historical and critical writing with the intention of portraying the wider political and social implications of exile. From a methodological perspective, this current study has analogous objectives and is similar to Sawin's approach in focusing the attention and the main discussion on the analysis of relevant artworks.

In Britain, the research field of exile studies benefited from the establishment of the research centre which has been located in London since 1995: The Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies which is part of the University of London. According to the institution's website: "Although art is not the main consideration for its research purposes, the centre provides invaluable data and resources for exile studies in visual culture." Furthermore, the institution's work "extends to those who came from Czechoslovakia,

¹⁵ Stephanie Barron, "Exiles and Émigrés, the Flight of European Artists from Hitler," (Los Angeles: Harry N. Abrams Inc. Los Angeles County Museum of Art Publishers, 1997).

¹⁶ Martica Sawin, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT, 1997).

Hungary, Poland and other European countries, as well as those from Germany and Austria.”¹⁷ Since 1999, the centre has been publishing a yearbook, selecting a specific aspect for investigation from the wider subject of immigration to Great Britain for every issue. Art in exile was the focus of yearbook 6, *Arts in Exile in Britain 1933-1945*, which widened the understanding of visual arts to political satire, architecture, sculpture, photography and also provided an account of émigré artistic organisations.¹⁸ Exile associations and cultural institutions established by German-speaking émigrés of the 1930s and 1940s were an important aspect of political exile as they represented an anti-Nazi stance and cultural unity, and also provided practical and emotional support for new émigrés. This was a unique aspect of the refugee experience of the German exile community, which grew to 80,000¹⁹ by the outbreak of WWII. Associations and organisations were also established by Hungarian and Czech and Slovak exiles in Britain after 1956 and 1968, although some alliances already existed from earlier periods. The 1956 and 1968 émigrés, however, never represented large diasporas, rather they were dispersed throughout Great Britain and lacked the unity of Nazi refugees. Exile associations did not play a significant role in the experiences of the émigrés of this study and hence this issue will receive limited attention in the thesis, although the most significant organisations will be indicated in the main discussion.

Refugee artists who escaped Fascism left a substantial mark on the cultural scene in Britain and transformed twentieth-century British art. As a result, this period received plenty of academic attention in the field of art in exile. Artists who sought asylum in Britain included leading members of the European avant-garde movement, such as Oskar Kokoschka (1886-1980), Walter Gropius, John Heartfield (1891-1968), Erich Mendelsohn (1887-1953), Piet Mondrian and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. Despite their accomplishment and

¹⁷ http://igrs.sas.ac.uk/research_centres/exilestudies/index.html (27/05/2007)

¹⁸ Shulamith Behr and Marian Malet, *Arts in Exile in Britain 1933-1945; Politics and Cultural Identity*, vol. 6, *The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies Vol. 6* (London: Institute of Germanic Studies and Romance Studies; University of London, 2004).

¹⁹ Data from Johannes-Dieter Steinert and Inge Weber-Newth, *European Immigrants in Britain 1933-1950* (Munich: Saur, 2003). p.73

reputation, these artists often found it difficult to establish themselves within the British arts scene. The sources that evaluate the experience of German-speaking exiled artists emphasise the divergence between arts in Britain at the time and the new forms of expressions arriving with the refugees. Modernist artists and architects frequently felt marginalised in their host country, Kokoschka even stated that he not only had an accent in his speech, but also in his painting, implying that the avant-garde aesthetic approach and its political content was alien to the British arts scene.²⁰ Daniel Snowman concludes that the British audience was not open, and was even hostile towards modernist aesthetic ideals which played a crucial part in the decision of the majority of these artists to move to the US. Charlotte Benton points out that with the exception of Hungarian-born Erno Goldfinger (1902-1987), modernist architects, such as Bauhaus associates Mendelsohn and Gropius, all left Britain and established their careers in America.

The circumstances were markedly different by the time of the arrival of the Hungarian and Czech artists of this thesis. Their reception was less affected by prejudices against modern art trends; in fact the situation was almost reversed in relation to the 1956 refugee artists because official socialist Hungarian art was based on academicism and traditional values and was less progressive than art in Britain in the 1950s. The cultural scene of the period of the Prague Spring was surprisingly liberal and the work of Czech artists was mostly in line with Western artistic developments. By this time, British society was more open and receptive, which aided the adjustment of the discussed Czech-born artists.

A controversial episode in British history, internment, is another central aspect of studies which discuss the life of German and Austrian refugee artists in Britain²¹. The period of internment reflected the official and public distrust of enemy aliens and formed a distressing part of the exile existence with a number of artists creating pieces contemplative of the experience. Jutta Vinzent states: "As internment meant a limitation of personal freedom, it is

²⁰ Willi Guttsman, "The Influence and Failure of Weimar Radicalism in Émigré Art in Britain," *Third Text* 15, no. Summer 1991 Special issue (1991). p.42

²¹ The period of internment lasted from the outbreak of WWII until the summer of 1941 and affected approximately 27,000 Germans and Austrians.

perhaps surprising that there was no corresponding limitation in the volume of art produced during this period. On the contrary, the output was enormous.”²²

Forced Journeys, a recent exhibition staged in the Ben Uri Gallery used internment as the unifying theme for the show.²³ *Forced Journeys* was the first broad survey of exile art presented in London for more than twenty years; the introduction of the catalogue emphasised the timely relevance of the exhibition which queried complex issues of identity arising from the émigré existence and status. The show also intended to redress and reassess the contribution of exiles to the arts in Britain.

Refugees of the period of 1930s and 1940s from Hungary and Czechoslovakia are not the subject of any major published sources in Britain. However, studies, which survey the theme of refugee artists from Nazism, frequently include a number of Czech and Hungarian artists, as many of these artists arrived in Britain as immigrants from Germany or Austria.²⁴ Jutta Vinzent’s book *Identity and Image* mentions the work of Czech associations, the Anglo-Sudeten Club and the Czech Institute in Britain, and includes biographical information about Hungarian and Czech artists, such as Peter Peri, Mary Duras (1898-1982), Franta Belsky, Val Biro (1921-), Ervin Bossanyi (1891-1975), Kalman Kemeny (1896-1994) and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy among others.²⁵

The topic of Hungarian refugee artists from Nazism in Britain was the subject of my MA dissertation. The study focused on artists who settled in the UK permanently (rather than re-emigrated to the US) and established

²² Vinzent, *Identity and Image: Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain, 1933-1945*. p. 99

²³ *Forced Journeys: Artists in Exile in Britain C.1933-45*, (London: Ben Uri Gallery/London Jewish Museum of Art, 2009).

²⁴ The question of nationality can often be problematic due the continuous population exchange and close cultural connections within the borders of the former Austrian monarchy. As regards Hungary, the issue is further complicated by the fact that the majority of Hungarian Modernists – because of the extreme right wing Horthy government - were forced into exile during the 1920s and many settled in Germany, where they joined artistic schools such as the Bauhaus and became integral members of the international avant-garde.

²⁵ Vinzent, *Identity and Image: Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain, 1933-1945*.

themselves in the artistic profession.²⁶ The research, which was based on printed and archive material in Britain and Hungary, and personal recollections by artists' relatives, accounted for visual artists of Hungarian origin, even if they were already living in emigration in Germany or Czechoslovakia prior to their arrival.

Some studies and exhibitions in the field of art in exile in Great Britain focus on areas other than the evaluation of German-speaking refugees from Nazism. An exhibition organised in 2002 presented the works of Flemish artists who temporarily settled in Wales during the First World War and examined the cultural exchange that took place between these artists and their new cultural surroundings.²⁷

In a major study, Douglas Hall focuses on Polish painters who arrived in Britain during the turbulent times of the 1930s and 1940s and settled permanently in the country.²⁸ Hall's book is methodologically and structurally similar to the current thesis. Hall's material is largely based on primary research which originated from personal contacts the author had with the artists and their relatives. Structurally, the main body of the work consists of six case studies which Douglas Hall describes as "critical biographies" as these combine the life story of the selected artists with the analysis and contextualisation of their art. Hall's assessment of their overall situation as artists in isolation is a reminder of the circumstances the Hungarian and Czech artists of this study faced:

They exemplified the unsupported artist, cut off from a national ethos, alienated by the destruction of their native society, beyond the reach of

²⁶ Adriana Kiss, "Art in Exile: Hungarian Artists in Britain in the 1930s and 1940s" (2005). (unpublished)

²⁷ Oliver Fairclough, Robert Hoozee, and Caterina Verdickt, *Art in Exile: Flanders, Wales and the First World War* (Ghent: Museum of Fine Arts; Heino/Wijhe: Hannema-de Stuers Foundation; Cardiff: National Museums & Galleries of Wales, 2002). This catalogue was published in conjunction with the exhibition *Kunst in Ballingschap. Vlaanderen, Wales & de Eerste Wereldoorlog / Art in Exile. Flanders, Wales & the First World War* at the Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent (12 January- 17 March 2002), at the Hannema-de Stuers Foundation in Heino/Wijhe (30 March-2 June 2002), National Museums & Galleries of Wales in Cardiff (22 June-15 September 2002)

²⁸ Douglas Hall, *Art in Exile: Polish Painters in Post-War Britain* (Bristol: Sansom & Company, 2008).

academic conformism. And on the other hand deprived of belonging to a contemporary project, and therefore of critical and peer judgement.²⁹

Like the Hungarian and Czech artists of this study, Hall's Polish individuals existed in isolation, without the consistent and wide support of exile communities, and largely outside of official institutions and the British arts scene. The case studies will explore in more detail how the examined artists coped with seclusion and how they integrated into local, and on occasions, the wider British arts scene. However, the isolation referred to by Hall sometimes took on a metaphoric and philosophical meaning – for example, Robert Vas, who worked for the BBC and hence became part of one of the most recognised institutions in Britain, struggled to overcome his outsider status and the separation from his culture.

The majority of research mentioned so far in this literature review maintains a biographical focus; by concentrating on personal narratives and individual stories these studies piece together the experience of exiled communities. The selected personal experiences are also used to identify general threads and traits characteristic of the displaced existence to enhance the wider discussion of art in exile. This commonly used methodology is applied in the current thesis which considers the human factor in relation to exile and investigates individual experiences in the wider context of politics, art and immigration. Another common element between the studies referred to in this section and the current thesis is the underlying emphasis on how individual lives are subjected to and shaped by monumental historical and political forces.

The essays collected in *Exile and Otherness: New Approaches to the Experience of the Nazi Refugees*³⁰ and Jutta Vinzent's study *Identity and Image*³¹ focus on refugees from Nazi Germany. However, instead of the biographical method, they adopt a more theoretical approach and examine issues such as cultural and individual identity, belonging and the concept of home. Both books understand and present identity as a cultural production,

²⁹ Ibid. p.10

³⁰ Stephan, *Exile and Otherness: New Approaches to the Experience of the Nazi Refugees*.

³¹ Vinzent, *Identity and Image: Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain, 1933-1945*.

which is never complete, but always in process, and always constituted within, not outside of representation, as theorised by Stuart Hall. Vincent's study shows a variety of refugee artists' constructions of identity, although it does not take a deconstructive approach and does not deny the existence of cultural and historical unity. *Exile and Otherness* largely examines literature created in exile, but also includes an essay on the work of Max Beckmann and Herbert Fiedler (1891-1962) by Beatrice von Bormann.³² Von Bormann emphasises that in exile, identity is forced to think in terms of otherness and that exiles remain outsiders in their new milieu but also continue to draw comparisons between their original and adopted culture, even though their perception of home – due to lack of continuous contact - becomes increasingly fictional.³³ The author's argument can be related to the notion of memory and nostalgia which is investigated in the thesis in the context of Vas' and Borsky's work.

Von Bormann is critical of publications on art in exile which either use biographies to illustrate displacement or describe art as a continuous development without the consideration of the exile experience.³⁴ Von Bormann relies on the comparison of different artists and examines how exile changed the discourse of art in a wider historical context. There is a similarity between Von Bormann's understanding and the method of the current thesis which sets out to compare the experiences of two distinctive immigrant groups with the intention of drawing out commonalities related to exile.

With regard to methodology and objectives, the current thesis is largely the continuation of other explorations of the subject of art in exile in Britain. However, this study introduces a new aspect to the field, the arrival and evaluation of work of Cold War refugee artists in Britain. The situation of Cold War refugees is the subject of Kim Salomon's study³⁵, but this book presents

³² Beatrice von Bormann, "Traces of Exile in Art: Max Beckmann and Herbert Fiedler in the Netherlands, 1939-1945," in *Exile and Otherness: New Approaches to the Experience of the Nazi Refugees*, ed. Alexander Stephan, *Exile-Studien* (Oxford: P.Lang, 2006). pp.153-176

³³ *Ibid.* p.159

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 155

³⁵ Kim Salomon, *Refugees in the Cold War: Toward a New International Refugee Regime in the Early Postwar Era* (Lund University Press, 1991).

political context and statistical data and does not look at the impact these refugees had on the cultural scene. Cold War refugee artists, in general, are rarely the subject of any major research and printed source. Soviet refugee artists and their experiences in the US are considered in a couple of studies³⁶, both of which explore the difficulties of adjustment to a totally different world system. It is clear from these studies that artists leaving behind a state-supported cultural framework and an embedded idealised view of the function of art found it difficult to get accustomed to the commercialised and often cynical aspect of art production in the West. Although these refugee artists rejected the official standards of Soviet art and its bureaucratic organisation, the émigrés brought with them “cherished values and assumptions that were formed in the world they left behind.”³⁷ The reference about the artist’s role in the East and the West adequately reflects the position which the Hungarian and Czech artists found themselves in and it is an issue which will be explored in detail in the main chapters of this thesis.

Another area that has been receiving a considerable academic attention since the 1990s is the exploration of the experiences of artists who arrived in Great Britain from former colonies. One of the first was an exhibition of African and Asian artists in post-war Britain was held in London, Wolverhampton and Manchester in 1989-1990³⁸; the show, entitled *The Other Story* presented the work of artists who entered Britain from former British colonies in search of institutional support and fulfilment of artistic ambitions. The artists of the exhibition not only experienced the hardship of displacement, but also had to negotiate their pre- and postcolonial cultural heritage in the context of British modern art. A main question posed by the exhibition was how the work of these artists, now residing in the country of

³⁶ Igor Golomshtok and Aleksandr Glezer, *Soviet Art in Exile*, 1st American ed. ed. (New York: Random House, 1977), Marilyn Rueschemeyer, Igor Golomshtok, and Janet Kennedy, *Soviet Emigre Artists: Life and Work in the Ussr and the United States* (Armonk; London: Sharpe, 1985).

³⁷ Rueschemeyer, Golomshtok, and Kennedy, *Soviet Émigré Artists: Life and Work in the USSR and the United States*. p. 60

³⁸ Rasheed Araeen, "The Other Story: Afro-Asian Artists in Post-War Britain," (London: Hayward Gallery, 1989).

their former coloniser, can fit into and be measured by the tenets of traditional Western art history.

Jutta Vinzent highlights how important the postcolonial discourse, which was triggered off historically by the move of Asians and Africans to Europe and America in the 1960s, has become in relation to exile and many artists/theorists apply these ideas when examining the work of Asian and African artists in Britain.³⁹ Vinzent's specific research area concerns exiled artists from Nazi Germany and the author understands the significance of political and social differences between the refugee situation of the 1930s and the 1960s migration communities; however, she values the understanding provided by postcolonial studies with regard to the relationship between different cultures and the construction of the "Other". The author questions why so little of the relevant postcolonial discourse has been applied to the study of the emigration of artists from Nazi Germany and argues that a number of issues could be addressed from this perspective, for example the cultural identities of exiles, the cultural relationship between émigrés and natives, and the function of exile as an identification in the invention of the refugee/exile image.⁴⁰

The conference *British Art in a Century of Immigration* aimed to give an overview by considering waves of various migrations in recent British history, such as the refugees from Fascism in the early decades of the century and post-1945 migration from former British colonies.⁴¹ Issues explored by the presented papers included questions of nationality and belonging and the social locations of displaced people, widening the debate on art in exile from personal narratives to theoretical contemplations utilising the postcolonial discourse.

³⁹ Vinzent, *Identity and Image: Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain, 1933-1945*. p. 168

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 17-18

⁴¹ Norwich 15-16 March, 1991. This conference was part of a research project for a touring exhibition under the same title, proposed by the Norwich Gallery at the Norfolk Institute of Art and Design. The presented papers were published in a special issue of the *Third Text*: Rasheed Araeen, ed., *Art and Immigration*, vol. Art and Immigration: special issue of *Third Text*, *Third Text* (London: Kala Press, 1991).

Focusing on the image of the black immigrant artist, Rasheed Araeen (1935-) underlines the connotative function of racial identification when it comes to assessing the contribution of African and Asian artists to British culture. Araeen locates the struggle of these black artists in postcoloniality, a “terrain in which the colonial other struggles to become a historical subject.”⁴² Araeen draws parallels between early twentieth-century migration from the continent to Britain and the arrival of immigrants from the former colonies of the British Empire in the 1960s; at the same time he emphasises the distinction between white European and African and Asian migrants in the way they are perceived in their chosen country. The author argues that black artists are always seen outside the mainstream of art, not because of the lack of relevance of their work to contemporary British society, but because the status and value of their art is predetermined by their cultural heritage and their work is specified in relation to other cultures.⁴³ Araeen’s perception is correct in a sense that artists arriving from the continent would have been familiar with Western art and their work naturally related to this canon. However, artists coming from Central Eastern Europe, especially during the communist period, would have been distinguished by their geographical origin. As explained in the introduction, the notion of “Eastern Europe” has long been used in the western discourse as a paradigm of the “Other”. For centuries, artistic quality and merit has been determined by Western categories and art history has been written from this perspective, excluding not only other continents, but also parts of Europe. The position of the artists of this study show similarities with the African and Asian artists Araeen refers to: their cultural background distinguishes them and even if they achieve financial and commercial success, they rarely enter mainstream British art.

Similarly to the terms of “Black” and “Eastern European”, adjectives, such as refugee, immigrant and exile can indicate separation from the “native” inhabitants of a country or region highlighting the outsider status of the arrivals. In this sense, refugee / exile can act as a signifier that distinguishes

⁴² Rasheed Araeen, "The Other Immigrant: The Experiences and Achievements of Afroasian Artists in the Metropolis," *Third Text* Summer 1991, no. Special issue (1991). p.18

⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 19

and categorises non-“native” artists, and even suggests someone different and threatening. The issue of the perception of refugee artists and the validity of exile in visual cultural studies has been explored by Alex Rotas in relation to her work which examined artists from different cultural backgrounds under the notion of exile.⁴⁴ Rotas argues for distinguishing the category of exile, because even though approach, background and media seem to separate refugee artists, the preoccupation with the experience of becoming displaced binds them tightly together. “To some extent, the experience of dislocation and rupture is powerful enough to provide an arena of commonality that many artists from displaced populations draw on, despite their differences of ethnicity and background.”⁴⁵ Rotas’ argument has a direct relevance to the current thesis where different generations of Hungarian and Czech artists are examined in one study. However, it is also important to note that the artists of this thesis not only shared the exile experience, but also lived under similar social systems in communism and possessed a strong historical and regional connection.

Immigration continues to be a topical and controversial subject of academic research. Immigration and Western attitudes towards migrants has been the subject of an international conference entitled *Fortress Europe and its “Others”: Cultural Representation in Film, Media and the Arts*.⁴⁶ The papers, which were later collected in a special issue of the journal *Third Text*, theorised the discourse of the Other based on the perception of the concept in Western societies, examined the situation of Roma communities on the continent, examined the portrayal of refugees and asylum seekers in cinema, addressed gender and racial issues in relation to the notion of the Other and looked at the levels of hospitality in selected Western countries.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Alex Rotas, "Is 'Refugee Art' Possible?" *Third Text* 00018, no. 00001 (2004), Alex Rotas, "Is 'Refugee Art' Possible?" *Third Text* 18, no. 1 (2004), Alex Rotas, "A Soft Touch: Visual Artists from Refugee Populations (UK) and Representations of Asylum in Contemporary Art " (University of the West of England, Bristol Bath Spa University, 2006).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p. 25

⁴⁶ The conference was held at the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies, School of Advanced Studies, University of London between 4-6 April 2005

⁴⁷ Yosefa Loshitzky and Rasheed Araeen, "Fortress Europe: Migration, Culture and Representation," in *Third Text Special Issue* (London: Third Text, 2006).

Studies that would present a direct relevance to the topic of the thesis – the work of Hungarian and Czech refugee artists who left their country as a consequence of the 1956 and 1968 happenings are scarce. In general, the art of Hungarian and Czech exiled artists, with emphasis on the exile situation, is rarely the focus of academic attention. Oliver Botar, associate professor at the University of Manitoba, has edited an ambitious work taking account of the activities of Hungarian artists in the US and Brazil, entitled *Hungarian Artists in the Americas*⁴⁸, which included painter Lajos Tihanyi (1885-1938), photographer Andre Kertesz (1894-1985), and film set designer Jenő Markus. Botar has also considered the work of other Hungarian émigré artists, such as László Moholy-Nagy and Andor Weininger and researched the life and art of Endre Boszin, who is one of the Hungarian artists included in the thesis.⁴⁹

Understandably, there has been considerable research dealing with the exodus of Hungarian citizens in 1956, carried out by Hungarian historians and scholars either in their home country or in exile, but their focus is never visual culture and artistic production. These studies consider statistical data, the political significance of émigré communities, exile literature, the émigré student movement, and the identity of Western Hungarian diasporas.⁵⁰ Lee Congdon's comprehensive study, *Seeing Red: Hungarian Intellectuals in Exile and the Challenge of Communism*, examines the main political and social

⁴⁸ Oliver A. I. Botar, ed., *Hungarian Artists in the Americas* ([Toronto]: Hungarian Studies Association of Canada: National Szechenyi Library, 1994).

⁴⁹ Mariann Elizabeth Barnett and Oliver T. Botar, *Boszin* (Toronto: Andrew Boszin / Studio A, 1992), Oliver Botar, "An Inner Content Inexpressible through Words: The Art of Endre Boszin," *Hungarian Studies Review* 31, no. 1-2 (2004). pp. 107-123

⁵⁰ Gyula Borbándi, *Magyarok Az Angol Kertben: A Szabad Európa Rádió Története* (Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1996), Gyula Borbándi, "A Nyugati Magyar Szórványok Identitáskérdései," in *Kisebbségnek Lenni Nem Sors, Hanem Feladat. Tanácskozás Kismartonban 1992. Szeptember 19-20* (Kismarton: Ausztriai Magyar Egyesületek és Szervezetek Központi Szövetsége, 1992), Gyula Borbándi, *A Magyar Emigráció Életrajza 1945-1985* (Bern: Európai Protestáns Magyar Szabadegyetem, 1985), György Gomori, "Magyarok Oxfordban Az 1956-Os Forradalom Után," *Európai utas* 12, no. no 4 (2001), Tamás Kanyó, *Emigráció És Identitás: 56-Os Menekültek Svájcban, A Múlt Ösvényén* (Budapest: L'Harmattan: MTA Kisebbségkutató Intézet, 2002), Bela Pomogats, *Hungarian Literature in the West* (Minorities Research, Katalin Soós, "1956-Os Magyar Menekültek a Statisztikai Adatok Tükrében," *Levéltári Szemle* 52, no. No 3 (2002), Péter János Sós, *Magyar Exodus: Magyar Menekültek Nyugaton, 1956-1959* (Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2005), Gyula Varallyay, *Tanulmányúton: Az Emigráns Magyar Diákmozgalom 1956 Után* (Budapest: Századvég Kiadó: 56-os Intézet, 1992).

beliefs of émigré philosophers in England and the USA, and the survival of Marxist ideals in emigration after 1956.⁵¹ George T Noszlopy, renowned art historian and a member of the 1956 exile community in Britain explores aspects of art in exile and has written comprehensive biographies of György Gordon and Edma which are considered to be key sources for the case studies of this thesis.⁵²

Similarly, the post-1968 emigration and political exile (sometimes together with the post-1948 exile movement) have been the consideration of numerous studies; again literature and the political aspects of emigration receiving more interest than the visual arts.⁵³ Some of these sources, however, provide useful information about elements of émigré cultural life. The symposium *Emigration and Exile as a Way of Life* dealt with general issues related to migration from the Czech lands and underlined the significant role Czech émigrés fulfilled in coordinating political emigration, editing various journals, publishing in foreign newspapers, and organising petitions to support the dissident movement in Czechoslovakia. The life philosophy of political exiles was summed up by Stanislav Brouček: “For every single individual living in emigration, the exile existence is closely connected to public responsibilities and activities.”⁵⁴ Written between 1982

⁵¹ The main chapters examine the work of philosopher and mathematician Istvan Meszaros, Marxist theorist Imre Lakatos and historian Tibor Szamuely.

⁵² George T. Noszlopy, *Edma: Life and Work 1924-1997 / Edma Élete Es Munkássága* (Budapest: Robert, Susan and John Balazs, 1998), George T. Noszlopy, *György Gordon, Yorkshire Artists; 2* (Otley: Smith Settle, 1989).

⁵³ Stanislav Brouček et al., *Emigrace a Exil jako Způsob Života: II. Sympozium O Ceskem Vystehovalectvi, Exulantstvi a Vztazich Zahranicnich Cechu K Domovu*, Vyd. 1. ed. (Praha: Univerzita Karlova v Praze: Karolinum, ve spolupraci s Etnologickym ustavem AVR v Praze, 2001), Jan Filipek, *Reflections and Perspectives: Czechoslovaks after Forty Years in Exile* (Palm Springs, CA: Palm Springs Pub. Co, 1988), Lucie Formanová, Jiří Gruntorád, and Michal Přibáň, *Exilová Periodika. Katalog Periodik Českého a Slovenského Exilu a Krajanských Tisku Vydávaných Po Roce 1945* (Praha: Ježek, 1999), Libuse Ludvikova and Milos Vacik, *Literatura--Vezeni--Exil = Literature--Prison-- Exile*, Vyd. 1. ed. (Praha: Readers International: Ceske centrum Mezinarodniho PEN Klub, 1997), Jozka Pejskar, *Poslední Pocta: Památník Na Zemřelé Československé Exulanty V Letech 1948-1994* (Curych: Konfrontace, 1982; 1994), Oldřich Skacha, Jiri Grusca, and Bruno Leuthold, *Praha - Lucern 1968-1989: Kronika Jednoho Přátelství — Prag - Luzern 1968-1989: Chronik Einer Freundschaft*. (Praha: společnost. přátel „Stans“ Švýcarsko v Praze, nakladatelství Jiřího Poláčka, 1996), Pavel Tigrid, *Politická Emigrace V Atomovém Veku* (Praha: Prostor, 1990), Robert Vlach, *Czech Literature in Exile* (Enskede, Sweden: Czech Cultural Council in Exile, 1954).

⁵⁴ Brouček et al., *Emigrace a Exil jako Způsob Života: II. Sympozium O Ceskem Vystehovalectvi, Exulantstvi a Vztazich Zahranicnich Cechu K Domovu*. p.26

and 1994, Jozka Pejskar's ambitious and far-reaching project *Poslední Pocta* (*Last Tribute*) commemorated distinguished Czech personalities who left Czechoslovakia after 1948 or 1968 and died while living in exile in the field of science, philosophy, politics and the arts. The primary function of Pejskar's extensive research was to remember and celebrate the Czechs and Slovaks who refused to obey the communist dictatorship and remained faithful to the ideals of freedom. Pejskar's ambitious work names fine artists Vladimír Fuka (1926-1977), Frantisek Kovarna (1905-1979), Dan Kulka (1938-1979), Marie Pospíšlová (1902-1974), Miroslav Sasek (1916-1980) and Toyen (1902-1980).

It is almost impossible to discover exhibitions which present Hungarian or Czech and Slovak exiled artists together under a common subject or framework. Two major exhibitions held in Budapest, presenting and celebrating works by Hungarian artists living abroad in 1970 and 1982, are rare exceptions.⁵⁵ It is remarkable that such exhibitions were initiated by the highest official cultural organs in a communist state in an attempt to "maintain a live contact with Hungarians living outside her borders."⁵⁶ Such actions can be explained by the special type of communist system developed in the Hungarian People's Republic during the era of consolidation (1962-1989), an epoch in history referred to as *gulyás* (goulash)-communism, which paradoxically incorporated the ideology of Marxism-Leninism with social and economical elements of consumerist culture and advocated personal well-being and partial individual freedom.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Judit Baranyi, *Tisztelet a Szülőföldnek Külföldön Élő Magyar Származású Művészek li. Kiállítása 1982. Dec. 17-1983. Jan. 30, Múcsarnok*, vol. Exhibition catalogue (Budapest: Magyarország Művelődési Minisztérium, Kiállítási Intézmények; Magyarok Világszövetsége, 1982), Krisztina; Bognár Passuth, József, *Xx. Századi Magyar Származású Művészek Külföldön* (Budapest: Kiállítási Intézmények; Múcsarnok, 1970).

⁵⁶ Judit Baranyi, *Tisztelet a Szülőföldnek Külföldön Élő Magyar Származású Művészek li. Kiállítása 1982. Dec. 17-1983. Jan. 30, Múcsarnok*, vol. Exhibition catalogue (Budapest: Magyarország Művelődési Minisztérium, Kiállítási Intézmények; Magyarok Világszövetsége, 1982). p. 7

⁵⁷ Piotr Piotrowski, *Awangarde W Cieniu Jalty; Sztuka W Europie Srodkowo-Wschodniej W Latach 1945-1989* (Poznan: Rebis, 2005). p.105; 173 Gyorgy Gomori, "The Poetic Reception of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956," *East European Monographs* 700 (2006). p.321

Nevertheless, the story behind the first exhibition reveals the contradictory nature of Hungarian cultural policy of the time and the conflicting objectives of art and ideology. Krisztina Passuth, the curator and sole organiser of the exhibition recalled that the works of 1956 émigré artists were forbidden to be shown shortly before the opening. In addition, the period of viewing was reduced considerably and the exhibition was given little attention in official art criticism.⁵⁸ By 1982, the political and cultural atmosphere in Hungary was more liberal and the second exhibition under the title *Homage a la terre natale* was not surrounded with such ambiguity and animosity as the first one. The exhibited pieces varied greatly in style, media and merit and the two exhibitions can hardly be regarded as a full and true representation of the artistic achievements of exiles.⁵⁹

Despite the limitations of both exhibitions, the published catalogues offer invaluable data and information for the purpose of this study, especially as these shows presented a rare chance to view Hungarian émigré artists from all around the world together and the exhibitions gave a glimpse of the variety and richness of artistic involvement of émigrés. Victor Ambrus, Endre Boszin, György Gordon, Julian Vasarhelyi and Les Puskas from Britain were among the artists included in the 1982 show.

Since the fall of the communist regime, there has been more interest in the work and achievements of Czech and Slovak exiles in their homeland. From a visual arts' point of view, academic research and exhibitions focused on film and photography, fields where émigrés from the former Czechoslovakia distinguished themselves on the world stage. Czech film in exile considered not only from a cinematographic point of view but also in relation to social discourse, is the subject of Jiri Voráč's systematic survey published in 2004.⁶⁰ The author's intention is to rectify the unbalanced relationship that exists between homeland and the exiles, due to the limited

⁵⁸ Adriana Kiss-Davies, Interview with Krisztina Passuth, Budapest, 25 April 2006.

⁵⁹ Both exhibition were based on voluntary contribution; in some instances artists were directly contacted by the organisers and asked to exhibit; but, the news about the forthcoming exhibitions were mainly distributed among the Hungarian diasporas through cultural associations, émigré journals and newspapers.

⁶⁰ Jiří Voráč, *Český Film V Exilu. Kapitoly Z Dějin Pro Roce 1989* (Brno: Host, 2004).

information flow and general ignorance of communist rule. Voráč accounts for immigration connected to major historical upheavals, the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Nazi Germany, the Second World War, the 1948 coup d'état and the Prague Spring. However, the post-1968 situation and the effects the departure of the most talented Czech film-makers had on film production in the country comprise the bulk of the study. The author regards the work of Czech-born filmmakers abroad as a manifestation of culture divided by the political situation which forms a complimentary aspect of the history of Czech cinema⁶¹ and he does not only look at the most famous film directors, such as Jan Nemeč (1936-), Ivan Passer (1933-), Miloš Forman (1932-) and Emil Radok (1918-1994), but commemorates actors, scriptwriters, cameramen, stage designers and animators. Artists, such as Jan Bryčta, Mirek Lang and Peter Lang who worked in animation before and/or after their emigration, are not mentioned in Voráč's research. It is possible that their work does not have a national significance from the perspective of Czech exile filmmaking. A well known animator in his homeland, Jan Bryčta had very few opportunities to continue working in animation after settling in England. Mirek Lang only started to show interest in animated film after his exile and his son, Peter Lang, developed both his technique and artistic viewpoint in Great Britain.

Photographer and samizdat publisher Bohumil "Bob" Krčil (1952-1992) who left Czechoslovakia in 1969 spent years collecting material related to Czech exile photographers.⁶² Krčil was originally hoping to stage an exhibition of Czech photography in exile somewhere in the West: London, Stockholm or Paris in the late 1970s or early 1980s. However, his plans could not be realised due to lack of funding. Ironically, the exhibition finally took place in Prague in 1990 and it was accompanied by a catalogue edited by Krčil.⁶³ The author relied on biographical notes, interviews, anecdotes and

⁶¹ Ibid. p. 7

⁶² Starting in 1977, Krčil searched through foreign newspapers and magazines looking for Czech photographers working in the West and then contacted these asking for biographical details and examples of their photographic work. Out of the 67 contacted, 42 photographers responded to Krčil's request.

⁶³ Bohumil Krčil, "Česká Fotografie V Exilu: Antologie," (Brno: Host, 1990).

representational photographs by each of the included artists to map out Czech photographic exile culture.

In 1992, an exhibition organised by the Asociace fotografů (Czechoslovak Association of Photographers) in Prague's Manes gallery commemorated the work of Czech and Slovak exiled photographers who left their home country between 1938 and 1989.⁶⁴

A recently published key text explores exile as a fundamental human experience from the perspective of the Czech and Slovak nation.⁶⁵ Apart from providing a historical context for migration, the study accounts for the achievements of Czech and Slovak immigrants in Great Britain. The authors, Milan Kocourek and Zuzana Slobodová, both political refugees from Czechoslovakia, stress the significance of cultural connection and exchange between the exiles and their host country by interviewing and profiling prominent members of the existing Czech and Slovak émigré community. Artists discussed and interviewed in this study include architect Eva Jiricna and photographer Liba Taylor.

So far, there is no academic research focused primarily on the accomplishments of Hungarian and Czech Cold War refugee artists in Great Britain. This thesis intends to redress the situation by exploring the experiences of the 1956 Hungarian and post-Prague Spring Czech refugees in the field of visual culture. The sources listed in this literature review aided the collection of vital information and also helped to shape the methodological considerations and theoretical aspects of the current study.

⁶⁴ *Československá Fotografie V Exilu 1939–1989*, (Praha: Manes, 1992).

⁶⁵ Milan Kocourek and Zuzana Slobodová, *Cesko-Slovenská Británie* (Carpio, 2006).