

# Toronto, Capital of Ukraine: the Ends of Desire and the Beginning of History in Janice Kulyk Keefer's *The Green Library*

Peter Roman Babiak  
University of British Columbia

**T**HE SLOVENIAN CULTURAL THEORIST SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK posed a timely question in his 1993 book *Tarrying With the Negative*: “Why was the West so fascinated by the disintegration of Communism in Eastern Europe?” (200). The standard response is that the West wanted to see liberal democracy and a market economy flourish in the region, but Žižek proposes a more caustic answer. The real object of fascination is “the *gaze*, namely the supposedly naive gaze by means of which Eastern Europe stares back at the West, fascinated by its democracy” (200). In this gaze, he says, the West sees “its own lost origins, its own lost original experience of democratic invention,” and it is in this sense that Eastern Europe represents an Ego-Ideal, “the point from which the West sees itself in a likable, idealized form, as worthy of love” (200). Žižek’s account of the narcissistic spell by which the West views the collapse of communism as an affirmation of its own values is significant on a number of counts, not least of which is that it explains the alarmingly widespread belief that over the last ten years the world has broken free of age-old patterns of ideological confrontation and national difference and emerged into an era of rootless cosmopolitanism. This hypothesis of a definitive settlement in how we organize our politics and economies, the claim that the

**PETER ROMAN BABIAK**  
teaches English at the  
University of British  
Columbia, where he is  
also Academic Director  
of Humanities 101,  
an outreach initiative  
that offers a first-year  
survey of liberal arts  
and social sciences to  
low-income students  
from Vancouver's  
Downtown Eastside. He  
has published articles in  
*Alphabet City*, *English  
Studies in Canada*,  
*Evelyn Waugh Studies*,  
and *Jouvert*, and is an  
editor at *SUB-Terrain*  
magazine.

social antagonisms which for many years gave us our sense of being in history have withered away, has been repeated tenaciously over the last decade by liberal pundits and intellectuals alike. It was first articulated by the U.S. State Department's philosopher-in-residence Francis Fukuyama, who argued with breathtaking simplicity in a 1989 essay that the end of communism marks the "end of history," or less bluntly "the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government" (4), and it has been taken up since then, albeit less euphorically, in Jean-Marie Guéhenno's *The End of the Nation-State* and Robert Cooper's *The Post-Modern State and the World Order*. The problem is that this hypothesis stands in contradiction to the data of recent events in Eastern Europe. At the very moment in history when people previously yoked to the Soviet empire should be taking up citizenship in the post-historical world—at this very moment, nationalism and the historical consciousness to which it is attached are coming back in their most basic form. The emergence of ethnic causes from Kosovo to Kaliningrad, the revival of national rivalries, the assertion of historical divisions of language and religion, the appearance of genocidal racism and anti-Semitism: untimely phenomena such as these fly in the face of the Western claim that the end of communism has ushered in universal civilization of consumer-citizens built on the pillars of democracy and the free market.

However extraliterary this speculation on the ideological landscape of the post-communist world order may at first seem, it presents critics and literary historians with a clearly defined challenge. For one thing, there is a remarkable thematic congruity between the liberal assertion that history and ideology have run their course and the vaunted post-modernist claim that it is no longer through collective conceptual and social structures but in the sphere of individual autonomy that we define ourselves. As Jean-François Lyotard so famously put it, the world has grown sceptical of master-narratives and this scepticism results from the "redeployment of advanced liberal capitalism," particularly its valorization of "the individual enjoyment of goods and services" (37–8). The line of thinking behind this argument—the rejection of socializing forms of life in favour of a postmodern apparatus attune to the desires of sovereign individuals—has a remarkably strong hold on literary studies today and versions of it have been repeated in recent Canadian literary scholarship. For example, in his aptly titled essay "*Generation X and the End of History*" G. P. Lainsbury argues that most literary writing in Canada today is characterized by "its inwardness, its emphasis on the libera-

tion of individuals within the private sphere allowed them within late capitalistic reality” (229). From a broader historical perspective, Frank Davey claims that a great many Anglo-Canadian novels written since 1967 “announce the arrival of the post-national state.” The sixteen works covered in *Post-National Arguments*—from Margaret Laurence’s *The Diviners* to Jeannette Armstrong’s *Slash*—“imply a rejection of politics”: in the absence of any viable collective discourse the centre of gravity in these works is “a solitary individual, often solitary because of the failure of politics ... or because of the intrinsic viciousness and untrustworthiness of social groupings” (256). The result is an overarching sense of a global arena “in which sites are as interchangeable as postcards, in which discourses are transnational, and in which political issues are constructed on non-national (and often ahistorical) ideological grounds” (259). Granted, Davey’s argument refers to a distinctly Canadian phenomena, but the fact that it is made at a time when we are witnessing quite the opposite tendency in a rather large part of the world poses a problem to our understanding of how recent global history should be brought to bear on our interpretive practices. It may be that in literature as in life we are experiencing a good deal of alienation, that the inward orientation of contemporary literature is the result of a recent change in the structure of human consciousness, a postmodern variation of what Georg Lukács called the split between desire and actual experience in capitalist society that renders the novel the genre of “a world that has been abandoned by God” (*Theory of the Novel* 88). Perhaps today it is not God but the collective trappings of history and nationality that have been shuffled off the field, thus turning our literary sensibilities from “social content”—to use Lukács’ terminology—to “psychologism,” a tendency to portray the “life of the soul” as the “centre of gravity” (*Essays on Realism* 47). It is worth asking, however, if this subjective paradigm holds in the case of fiction that takes as its material frame of reference a place where history and national sentiment are only beginning. In other words, what happens to those assumptions—the end of history, post-nationalism and its resulting inwardness—when a novel stages a confrontation between the individualist sensibilities of the West and the manifestly historical and national consciousness of post-communist Eastern Europe?

This thematic duality, the tension between a postmodern condition that is inward and nominally divorced from history and materiality, and the emergence of a national consciousness that complicates this condition, describes fairly well the paradoxical landscape of Janice Kulyk Keefer’s 1996 novel *The Green Library*. Through a dialectical narrative that drifts

It may be that  
in literature as  
in life we are  
experiencing  
a good deal of  
alienation, that  
the inward  
orientation of  
contemporary  
literature is  
the result of a  
recent change in  
the structure of  
human  
consciousness.

between Canada and Ukraine, spanning the troubling sixty-year period between 1933 and 1993, the novel traces the coming-to-consciousness of Eva Chown, a forty-three year old “WASP princess from rich man’s row” in Toronto. This is a woman whose distinguishing feature is that she “loses consciousness of everything outside herself” (10); she is “the least political person,” a woman who “wants to turn the whole fucked-up world into a child of two: hold it on her lap, tell it a story” (14–15). Confronted with the naked necessities of life—the children at her day care job, relationships, family history, cultural identity—Eva habitually melts them into lyrical expressions: she is “in her element telling stories, making up adventures that have nothing to do with the laws of probability” (24). But this excess of interiority is confounded when Eva comes up against the monstrous and heroic scenes of Eastern European history, and this confrontation stands at the centre of the plot, which turns on two distinct yet overlapping stories. The first begins with a late-night telephone call from a foreign-speaking stranger and a photograph dropped through Eva’s mail slot by the same man. It is an old photo, taken in some unknown location, of a woman who is about Eva’s age and a boy who is struggling to break free of her clutching arms. The boy bears a striking resemblance to Eva’s son, Ben, and for this reason the photo puts her to some questions which in turn raise doubts about her presumed Anglo-Saxon ethnicity. Eventually, Eva learns that she is the illegitimate daughter of a shady “bohunk” with whom her mother had an affair after the Second World War, and it is at this point that she begins to contemplate her place in a bloodline that extends far beyond her High Park home to a thousand-year legacy of invasions, wars and pogroms on the Eastern frontier of Europe. The second story picks up when, in the course of searching for clues about her biological father, Eva realizes that for thirty years she has been in love with a sixteen-year-old boy named Alex Moroz, the son of her family’s former Ukrainian cleaning lady, with whom she once engaged in a vaguely erotic “watching game” in the corridors of her house. Through her pursuit of Alex, Eva drifts away from excavating her family history and begins to clarify her own consciousness, a task made necessary by her ultimate realization that she let so many people crowd into her heart “that it had ceased to know its own shape, or the views outside its windows” (158). Eva’s quest for fulfilling a personal desire that is freed from the restrictions of time and place and her search for a father that brings these restrictions to light collide with one another and the struggle between them, as I shall argue here, requires a continuous adjustment of her mind to an unstable equilibrium, a tight-rope act of consciousness over the materiality of his-

tory and cultural difference that may be forgotten every now and then but which never finally goes away.

The narrative begins with a letter sent from Kiev in 1993. Neither the writer nor the addressee are identified, though by the end of the novel we know they are Mykola Savchuk, a retired man possessed by a need to write “stories” about all the people he has known, and Eva, who has requested information from him about a dead Ukrainian poet named Lesia Levkovych. That this poet loved reading and writing in a Kiev park she called “the green library” is the only information Savchuk offers, as most of her poems were destroyed during World War II, “torn into pieces smaller than a fingernail, to be safe, to leave nothing behind that could harm the living” (1). Savchuk expresses some concern that his writing too “will disappear when I die” and then comforts himself by thinking about “that other scribe, almost a thousand years ago,” an allusion to an eleventh-century Ukrainian monk who wrote *A Chronicle of Bygone Years*. The allusion is enigmatic but its importance must be stressed: the *Chronicle* is the only existing textual record of the Kievan-Rus empire—the mythical-historical homeland of Ukraine—written before it fell in 1240 to Ghengis Khan, who claimed it as a western khanate of his *Pax Mongolica*. The text was reputedly written by Nestor, a monastic figure repeatedly invoked in the novel as a symbol for the history of what has been called “the most tragic nation in Europe.” The narrative then abruptly shifts to Kiev in 1941, where Levkovych is making her way to her green library through the rubble of a city that has just been razed by the Soviets retreating to the East and overrun by the Germans advancing from the West. We learn that she has been ordered to write tracts by the occupying army but that she has refused, and has instead gone to the park with a bundle of her poems to meet a man who “can pass them on to the people waiting for them” (5). We also learn that she belongs to an underground group of Ukrainian artists and radicals but that “The Organization” split, one group welcoming the Germans as liberators from the Soviets while the other remained neutral in their allegiances. Nobody comes for Levkovych’s poems; instead, a collaborationist—whose disturbing identity is revealed only in the final chapter—arrives and takes her to the Nazi concentration camp Babi Yar where, in an act of infamy that many years later will stand at the centre of Eva’s quest, she is executed.

The story leaps years and geography to Toronto in June 1993, where Eva is sitting in High Park watching over her son as she in turn is watched by “a stranger, staring and staring at her, till she feels his eyes cutting along the edges of her body, cutting her out from everything and everyone she

knows” (10). When she finds the photograph of the woman and the young boy waiting for her at home she instinctively knows that it has been left by this stranger, which throws her into a half-reluctant vertigo. Eva is convinced that the boy’s resemblance to her son is no coincidence, but the thought that this foreign-looking boy became her mother’s lover—her biological father—threatens the stability she craves. Predictably, she finds no trace of the man’s existence in the family photo albums, which is just as well since she prefers her own stories “to the ones that photographs tell”: “Your own stories you can alter, whereas albums are prisons, each image a cell in which you’re confronted” (33). But there is one photograph that provides a clue Eva is willing to pursue. It is a picture of her mother’s friend, a Native woman named Phonsine Kingfisher, taken at her parents’ former home in Porcupine Creek, a small mining community in Northern Ontario where her geologist father Garth was stationed in the 1950s. After a late-night drive north from Toronto, she arrives at Porcupine Creek and contacts Phonsine, who tells Eva that her mother Holly was a misfit in the Anglo-Saxon community. “[Y]our mom,” Phonsine tells her, “she didn’t know what to do with the minister’s wife, and the bank manager’s wife, and the wife of the collectin’ officer from the finance company. And they didn’t know what to do with her” (46). Nor was she less estranged from Garth. While he was on a research expedition Holly took up residence in a tent on an island across the lake from their home, and it was while canoeing the vicinity that she met one of “the bohunks from the lumber camp,” whose faces, Phonsine explains to Eva, “were a little like ours—they had these wide, wide cheekbones, and black eyes” (48–9). This man, one of the many “Dee-Pees” recently arrived from Europe and working in the camps to pay off their passage, stayed with Holly for two weeks and then ran off; when Garth returned three months later Holly was pregnant. Eva, the lovechild of this island escapade, is unwilling to believe any of this and at one point conjures a more palatable story, “the only one she can accept. If there had to be a stranger on the island, he was no lover,” as Phonsine told her, “but exactly the intruder Garth feared: *a bohunk from the lumber camp*. Her mother had been raped” (56). However, when she makes a pilgrimage to the island she realizes why Holly would betray “the husband who never spoke to her in a language she could understand. Because he wouldn’t admit her one desire: to live in a wild, free place, as wildly, freely as possible” (55).

Holly never again found this “wild, free place.” Garth moved her to Toronto where she lived a comfortable middle-class life, although she is now living in a nursing home and prone to “endless withdrawals, refusals

of love,” which Eva recognizes as symptomatic of her mother’s unfulfilled desire. When Eva returns to Toronto she looks through more photo albums for evidence, but now she sees Holly as a kidnap victim from a fairy tale: “the water nymph, the firebird tricked from her true home by an earthly lover who holds her captive through the child she bears him” (59). The romantic image of the captive lady and her “earthly lover” makes a lasting impression on Eva. As she looks through the albums her thoughts turn from Holly and her foreign lover to “a different kind of stranger, alien, yet intimate with the Chown’s house, or posed to look so.” In front of her are pictures of the family’s Ukrainian cleaning lady—“cleaning woman” Garth once corrected Eva, in an attempt to remind her of their class difference—with her daughter and son, the boy who has been “at the back of Eva’s eyes” since she visited Porcupine Creek. A revealing tableau ensues in which the narrative falls back thirty years as Eva remembers her first encounter with Alex Moroz. She is thirteen years old and standing at the door of her father’s study watching Mrs Moroz clean and Alex examine the stones in the display case. Her father arrives unexpectedly and Eva recalls the cleaning lady apologizing in broken English for her son’s intrusion: “*Sorry, meester, dees my son, he no mean bad ting, he be good styoodent, worrrk harrrd.*” And how her father cuts through the woman’s words as though they’re the rags she’s polishing with—as though she doesn’t exist as anything more than those rags—and goes straight to the boy as if to turn him out of the room” (63). But he does not. Charmed by Alex’s attempt to translate his mother’s English into something which “fits, tongue and groove” his expectations of “how an educated person, a like-minded man should speak,” Mr Chown engages the boy in conversation, although he dismisses his mother, who walks “backwards out of the room, almost as if she’s bowing.” “Later, when Eva learns the word ‘abject,’ she will think of that self-consuming manner of withdrawal, that way of turning your whole body into something less than the floor on which everyone else is standing” (63).

The scene is moving for its Brechtian qualities, particularly the image of class conflict etched in Eva’s memory, although much of what passes for class-consciousness in her mind is usually dwarfed by the sheer expansiveness of her imagination. The conflict comes out strongly with the presence of yet another stranger in the scene, Alex’s sister Oksanna. What she resents is that her brother, who goes to school by day and works evenings and weekends with his father at a Canada Packers plant in Toronto’s Junction district, is being seduced by Garth and Eva. He has become, for the man of the house, “the lad,” and this “makes him an hon-

It is nothing less  
than Eva's sense  
of history  
and class  
consciousness  
that begins to  
take form in this  
"new language"  
of sexual  
memory.

orary Anglo-Saxon" (64). Not, of course, that he could ever become a real one. On visits to the Chown home he would often stare at Eva, and she would receive "his gaze on her skin like a watermark, or the hickeys girls at school make such a show of hiding" (64). They both understood the dangers of this "watching game," they knew that for all his praise of the lad "Garth would banish him from the house should he discover him eyeing Eva. Those are the rules of the social game; these are the players: not just a boy and a girl but the cleaning woman's son; a gentleman's daughter" (65). For Eva the enticing impossibility of this adolescent romance reaches a climax when Alex visits her house before returning to Ukraine with his father, a member of the Ukrainian-Canadian Labour Temple who decided, along with a small group of other exiles, to give Soviet communism another go. Eva and Alex are standing on opposite sides of Garth's display case. She offers her hand, which he takes and kisses, "a landscape his mouth travels over and over; never touching the same part the same way, twice," as if his tongue were "writing a new language, private, secret, along the edge of her thumb":

Her skin is humming, beating, she has never known any pleasure so precise and yet so overpowering. Something is starting here, something so much deeper and more terrible than a kiss that she wants to cry out as he puts his mouth to the place where her wrist joins her arm. (68)

It is a brief encounter which Eva graduates into an erotic memory, but her understanding that it marked the beginning of something "deeper and more terrible than a kiss" suggests that this watching game involves more than a grown woman's recollection of an adolescent sexual fantasy.

It is nothing less than Eva's sense of history and class consciousness that begins to take form in this "new language" of sexual memory. Behind her desire for Alex stands a fetishized perception of his class and ethnic difference: he is "an unlikely god ... from a country no one's ever heard of" who "has come into her life like an electrical storm: darkness and jags of light; a noise that dins in her ears" (61–2). He represents for her something like the "wild, free place" that other "bohunk" represented for Holly, and in this sense Eva's memory of the watching game conjures what Fredric Jameson calls the "objective mirage" of culture, "the nimbus perceived by one group when it comes into contact with and observes another one. It is the objectification of everything alien and strange about the contact group" (271). On this score, Eva's memory of Alex is reminiscent of the cross-cultural romance that plays such a formative role in *A Jest of God*.



Rachel, the Scots Presbyterian in Margaret Laurence's novel, tells her lover Nick Kazlik that she likes Ukrainians like him because they seem "more free" than Anglo-Saxons, to which he responds in mock exaggeration of this objectifying stereotype: "More free? That's a funny thing to say. How did you think we spent our time? Laying girls and doing gay Slavic dances?" (94). That Eva's desire for Alex is, like Rachel's for Nick, prompted by a sense of his otherness explains why she convinces herself that her mother's lover must have been Ukrainian, too, despite the fact that her only material proof is that Phonsine identified the man as a "bohunk," which is at best a tenuous lead since this pejorative term was used to identify anyone from "that other Europe" (77).

[S]he knows her mother's lover was Ukrainian—she's sure of it.... Not so much that it's true, but that she has to believe it. Because of Alex, because of the way they've mixed in her head, the man watching her in the park, and that boy with whom she once played the watching game. Because she knows she can't find one without searching for the other. (77)

The only person who can provide Eva with the proof that would lend credibility to this belief is Oksanna, a feisty class warrior who "had never liked her, had hated being so much smarter yet so much poorer than Eva" (78). When the two girls attended St. Hilda's, the prestigious WASP school Holly helped Oksanna enrol in, the other girls saw Alex's sister as "simply, unredeemably different: the other that makes the rest feel interconnected, on side" (81). The elemental marker of difference was Oksanna's unpronounceable name, which jarred the linguistic sensibilities of "the Sarahs and Kates and Jills." Though Eva did nothing to help Oksanna, she was awestruck by the girl's exotic Slavic features; the dark eyes and olive skin created a "visual disturbance" at school and seemed as out of place "as a heron in a birdcage" (82). When the two met one day, not long after Alex returned to Ukraine, Oksanna passed on a message from her brother:

"Say hello to the slut for me." That's what he calls you, Eva—the slut. That's all you are, in spite of your rich father and your expensive house, and your mother who's too fine a lady to know how to slice a loaf of bread. Do you know what a slut is, or are you too stupid? You are too stupid, aren't you, Eva? Do you think I don't know what you wanted from my brother? (83)

Upset by these accusations, Eva defends herself by telling the other girls that Oksanna's mother scrubs toilets for a living and is not, as they were all

Eva's memory  
of Alex is an  
allegory for her  
emerging sense  
of history.

lead to believe, a librarian. And yet she also delights in hearing Oksanna's obscenities because they involve Alex. When she imagines what it would be like kissing Alex, he disappears "and it's Oksanna she's kissing. Oksanna's tongue in her mouth, tasting sour, rotten: her own tongue, now, after what she's said about Oksanna's mother" (84–5). The wilful imprecision of Eva's thinking—her confusion of father with would-be lover, brother with sister—suggests that she has all but thrown off the search for her family history and replaced it with intoxicating recollections of the small moments and erotic experiences which constitute her memory of Alex. We might say she is acting out what Freud calls a "cultural frustration" (44). Disappointed by her unfulfilled desire for Alex, Eva invokes a "substitutive satisfaction" in the search for her father, which would bring her closer to fulfilling this desire since both men are "bohunks." Whereas the psychoanalytic explanation would say that Eva's interest in learning the identity of the boy in her photo is pure wish-fulfillment, a shadowy continuation of an early sexual fantasy which is the inadvertent effect of sublimation, it is more likely that the opposite is true. Her memory of Alex and Oksanna is symptomatic of the prohibitive pressures of her class and ethnicity; after all, he is the son of a "cleaning woman" and his sister is "unredeemably different." To the extent that these life-denying pressures, the same ones Holly tried to overcome, are in effect dissolved by a photo which gives Eva some reason to think she too is a "bohunk," her obsession with Alex is not the act of a mind that wants to free itself from the dead harmony of history. Like an exile who remembers her ancestral homeland as possessing a palpating physical charm which she has now lost, Eva's memory of Alex is an allegory for her emerging sense of history. Its allegorical character—the fact that the object of her desire is Ukrainian history and ethnicity and not simply a boy who happens to be Ukrainian—takes its impetus from a perception of a lived experience, what Isaiah Berlin calls "that which alone is genuine ... the transforming moments, the ordinary day-to-day succession of private data which constitute all there is—which are reality" (36).

History begins to penetrate Eva's mind soon after she locates Oksanna but it is some time before it speaks to her in the language of robust literalism. She learns nothing from her about the people in the photo—perhaps because Oksanna has renounced her Ukrainian heritage and changed her name to Susan Frost—but their identities are finally revealed in a chance encounter with the woman's mother. The Chown's former cleaning lady shows Eva a collection of pictures taken at a Ukrainian artist's colony in 1933, a few years before most of its members were executed, either by

Stalin, whose henchmen deemed anybody working to rehabilitate Ukrainian culture and language a counter-revolutionary, or the Nazis, who viewed Slavs as a race of disposable *untermenschen*. One of the photos is a complete print of Eva's fragment: the boy is identified as Ivan Kotelko, who Mrs Moroz thinks disappeared during the war; the woman is his mother, Lesia Levkovych; the man who has been cut out of the fragment is Lesia's lover, a painter named Pavlo Bozhyk. It is now that Eva realizes, but barely beyond the esoteric contours of her own imagination, that there is "a bloodline, not just ink on paper, but a thin, tough line of blood linking her ... with these doomed people ... in a country no more real to her than a kingdom in a fairy tale" (99). Mrs Moroz urges Eva to go to Ukraine, not to make a pilgrimage to the birthplace of the man who abandoned her mother but to honour Levkovych's memory, to "[g]ive her back her name, her past." This is Eva's first lesson in being Ukrainian, which Moroz says begins *vichnaia pamyat*, in everlasting memory: "We are people who remember, Eva, even when there is nothing to remember but defeat and death. That is the only way we have kept ourselves alive—by remembering" (102).

Charmed by this folkloric wisdom, Eva finds herself "leaping into a story still to be told" (119), but not before her aestheticizing impulse is flattened by her Jewish boyfriend, Dan, a man of "anger and action" who has always resented her family's wealth and now finds himself even more troubled by her new-found ethnicity. Long before names are found for the people in her photo, Dan had suspected that they had "the cast of face he calls Slavic" but decided this is "not worth much" (52). When Eva tells him what she has learned from Moroz, his dismissal escalates into invective. "God, Eva. Of all the things to turn out to be. Ukrainian" (112).

It is not just Easter eggs and perogies, being Ukrainian. It also happens to be things like pogroms. Your national hero, Khmelnitsky ... was one of the great pogrom-makers of all time, and if you don't know that, it's time you learned. Khmelnitsky and his cossacks. They were the bogeymen my grandparents frightened me with, if I didn't behave. It's true, Eva—you have no idea about my grandparents. But let's not get personal. Let's just stick to history. We have the little matter of Babi Yar, and all those jolly Ukrainian guards at the death camps, some of whom are alive and well and living in friendly, all-Canadian towns the length and breadth of this fair land. Just what did he do in the war, this long-lost daddy of yours? (113)

Eva's immediate response is to say "no" to these things Mrs Moroz never talked about, "no to whatever it was that Ivan Kotelko may have done in that war he was supposed to have vanished in." How can she be implicated in the genocidal filth and vomit of Ukrainian history when, until very recently, she did not even know she had a connection to this man or his country? But complications ensue when Eva's refusal collides with the demands of Dan's historical consciousness. In effect, he is reminding her that reduced to Easter eggs, perogies or any of the familiar stereotypes—red-booted dance troupes from Alberta, onion-domed churches on the Prairies, butcher shops and babushkas in Toronto's Bloor West Village—Ukrainian culture is consumer kitsch divorced from history, hollow expressions of what Andreas Huyssen calls "museal sensibility," a tendency to seek out "emphatic experiences, instant illuminations ... rather than serious and meticulous appropriation of cultural knowledge" (14). Dan's unsolicited description of Ukrainian history as one big act of villainy is a caricature of the conventional Western perception of Ukrainian nationalism as a form of crypto-fascism, an all too easy judgment about the relation of political ideals to moral conduct, but behind the stereotype lies an accusation that has enough basis in fact—both historical fact and the "facts" of the novel—to warrant a response. The romantic image of the Cossack, the primitive rebel on horseback who inhabited the Eurasian landmass north of the Black Sea, is for Ukrainians intimately linked to the tragic struggle of national identity against a long-line of victorious colonizers, beginning with the Mongols and Turks, then the Poles, Lithuanians, and Austrians, and more recently the Russians and Germans. The decisive event in Ukrainian history occurred in 1654, when Bohdan Khmelnytsky staged an uprising against the Polish aristocrats who had for a century held Ukraine's peasant population in agrarian bondage and erased all traces of its cultural memory—Byzantine churches, the Cyrillic alphabet, Ukrainian place names. Of course, it is supremely ironic that Khmelnytsky's picture now adorns the walls of Ukrainian community centres and church halls across Canada, functioning as something of a "quilting point"—the term is Žižek's—for Ukrainian identity, since the brief period of independence he inaugurated was eclipsed by a period of Russian imperialism which, with few interruptions, did not end until 1991. More importantly, the Khmelnytsky uprising was also the occasion of a barbaric massacre of Jews, an appalling episode in history usually overlooked by Ukrainian nationalists intent on seeing their homeland as a "victim-nation," a sort of Golgotha, as Morris Ilyniak calls it, "the site of a crucifixion by one foreign subjugator after another" (387). It is true that

the negative integrating force of nationalism built on the need to eliminate real or imagined aggressors may derive partly from a pathology shared by many of the other conquered nations of Eastern Europe, but probably more than most of them Ukraine has articulated a good deal of its mythology on the premise of victimization, narrating in its discursive practices how other nations or foreign bodies within its borders have deprived it of self-determination. For obvious reasons, stories of victimization and suffering at the hands of oppressors will resonate among a trampled and humiliated people whose homeland has been a “real” country for less than twenty of the last three hundred years, even if the same stories are too often turned into denunciatory gestures or used to blame alien forces and influences as the cause of this suffering.

That the Cossack uprising is at once a point of security for Ukrainians and a tragic point in Jewish history—along with the Exodus and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah an “archetypal event,” as James Young describes it, “by which new disasters are measured” (95)—is precisely the ethical conundrum Dan is asking Eva to consider. To say this a difficult task for any Canadian claiming Ukrainian ancestry is an understatement—why would anybody *want* to claim it? is Dan’s apropos question—for it involves suturing a history of failed national aspiration with the insane brutality waged in its name. It is a task that Kulyk Keefer, who is herself the daughter of a Polish-Ukrainian mother and a father who had Ukrainian as his mother tongue, broaches in her 1998 family memoir *Honey and Ashes*. The most haunting episode in this otherwise poetical book is the shock she experienced upon revealing her ethnicity to a Jewish friend, who replied, much like Dan in her novel, “Ah, Bohdan Khmelnytsky. The Great Killer of Jews” (200). Confronted with a version of history her Ukrainian school teachers in Canada never bothered to mention, Kulyk Keefer’s initial reaction resembles Eva’s cerebral refusal in *The Green Library*. She remembers longing “for permanent flight and forgetting,” although soon after she realizes “even if I tried to hide my maiden name, it will always be there, the deep ditch of nightmare” (201). This negative insight—elsewhere she calls it a “trauma of ethnicity” (“In Violent Voice” 44)—is followed by some accounting for the extenuating circumstances of history: Kulyk Keefer reminds us that the hatred of Jews in Ukraine “was a product not of genetics but of economics and empire,” that Ukraine was the only Nazi-occupied country where the penalty for helping Jews was immediate execution, and that in any event her family “never spoke out against Jews or any other group of people” (207). But none of this aims at evasion or exoneration. Nor could it, since with geno-

One could probably make the claim that Ukraine's cultural script of victimization is modelled on precisely the suffering it has at times inflicted on the imagined Jewish enemy standing in the way of nationhood.

cide, as George Steiner quite rightly puts it, “there can be no meaningful forgiveness because there can be no repair” (164).

On the contrary, it is the shock of the revelation, which detonates like a psychological landmine amid the whispered lyricisms of *Honey and Ashes*, that is alone necessary because it is in the inaccessibility of the experience, Kulyk Keefer's inability to meaningfully represent the brutal absent presence of pogroms in her Ukrainian heritage, that the sheer weight of history is grasped. What the episode reveals, in other words, is something very much like “the historical power of the trauma,” as Cathy Caruth calls it, which is not just that a catastrophic event is repeated after its forgetting “but that it is only in and through its inherent forgetting that it is first experienced at all” (187). It is an a-chronological structure of feeling similar to the “madness of the day” with which Emmanuel Levinas describes the Holocaust: it “does not succeed in passing” but is on the contrary “the structure of the present ... that lies hidden in the temporality of time, maintaining it” (159). Of course, the lines of experience are obscenely reversed in Kulyk Keefer's memoir. She is not experiencing the trauma as a victim but is encountering the blood-and-iron nationalism that lead to the catastrophe in the first place. And yet victim and victimizer converge to the extent that they both remember a history that precedes them but exists for consciousness only because of their intervention. Perverse though it may seem, this point reveals something crucial about Ukrainian history, namely that it is itself caught in a reflexive relation to Jewish history; indeed, one could probably make the claim that Ukraine's cultural script of victimization is modelled on precisely the suffering it has at times inflicted on the imagined Jewish enemy standing in the way of nationhood. To put this differently, the logic of nationalism here takes the form of what Werner Hamacher calls an “agonism,” at once a “homicidal” will to destroy the other and a “suicidal” identification with the other (439). To be sure, something of this double structure looms heavily in Kulyk Keefer's memoir. The shock she experienced upon revealing her Ukrainian heritage to her Jewish friend is at once provoked by the knowledge that her bloodline is stained with the blood of innocent people and by the knowledge that her own people are themselves a tragic lot. It is this ambiguous structure of feeling that stands behind what she calls—following Henry James—“the imagination of disaster,” a retroactive gesture of sympathy intended to act as a defence against potential catastrophes in the future:

When, on the horizon of your ordinary life, you spy something unexpected, even something promising delight—the visit of a loved friend, the birth of a child—you must imagine the worst to keep that world from happening. (221)

It may be that such pessimism is all too familiar to those of us who trace our bloodlines to Ukraine, those who Kulyk Keefer says “have grown up not in a haunted house, but haunted by another home” (215). In a manner of speaking, this sense of identifying with a place one has never visited, or a history one did not participate in, is a form of what Michael Ignatieff calls “long-distance nationalism” (82). It is that part of the ideological matrix of global capitalism whereby national identification is sustained by an émigré community’s relationship to a way of life, its experience of the nation as “something accessible only to us,” as Žižek explains in a similar context (201). That Ukrainian-Canadians doggedly hold to the proposition *nasha Ukraina*—“our Ukraine”—may indeed lend credibility to the claim that today the most dangerous nationalisms, those which sustain a belief in national personality, patriotic feeling and the purity of the national patrimony, are to be found in places like Toronto, Edmonton and Winnipeg, not in Kiev, L’viv or Odessa. However, Kulyk Keefer has something far less polemical in mind. By “imagination of disaster” she means a lingering sympathy for the more than seven million Ukrainians who left their homeland in the past century, the six million or so who perished in Stalin’s famine and the six million more lost in Hitler’s war, as well as a requisite act of contrition on behalf of those people who were, so to speak, victimized by the victims. Ukrainian history has been a nightmare, in other words, and it will continue on its bestial course unless we confront it with an outpouring of pessimism, which is rather like picking at the scabs of history with the hope that this action might make the scar heal.

It is this nagging presence of a history that is so foreboding that it must be forgotten even as it is invoked in the present that shimmers throughout the half-remembered stories and half-imagined histories of *The Green Library*. If we cast around for a suitable point of comparison, it may be tempting to place this novel alongside fictional works which recount the experiences of Ukrainian immigrants in Canada, for example works such as Vera Lysenko’s *Yellow Boots* (1954), Illia Kiriak’s *Sons of the Soil* (1959), or George Ryga’s *A Letter to My Son* (1982), works which display what Kulyk Keefer in a 1989 essay calls “an obsession with a vanished country” (“Another Country” 10). However, in its stubbornly dialectical treatment of Ukrainian history, the way it forces confrontation with the material

[Perhaps] the most dangerous nationalisms, those which sustain a belief in national personality, patriotic feeling and the purity of the national patrimony, are to be found in places like Toronto, Edmonton and Winnipeg.

and mythical histories that vanished behind the communist revolution and were only partially retrieved after the transition from *perestroika* to market democracy, *The Green Library* goes parallel with the many recent books on post-communist Eastern Europe which set themselves the task of reporting on factual matters that until very recently have been accessible only in imaginative representation. One thinks here of works like Ryszard Kapuscinski's *Imperium* (1994), David Remnick's *Lenin's Tomb*, and Tina Rosenberg's *The Haunted Land*, or those written by Canadians, such as Ignatieff's *Blood and Belonging* (1993), Myrna Kostash's *Bloodlines* (1993), David Manicom's aptly titled *Progeny of Ghosts* (1998), and Modris Ekstein's controversial *Walking Since Daybreak* (1999). Indeed the phantom tenor implied in these titles is suitably conveyed by the frontispiece in *The Green Library*, a detail from the 1993 oil painting called "Pandora's Parcel to Ukraine," the centrepiece of Natalka Husar's collection *Black Sea Blue*. Taking as its subject the anxieties of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America, Husar's painting is a collage of characters, folkloric items and "emotional baggage" which unravel into a parcel, the kind of commodity-laden care package—"gesture[s] of good will," as Husar explains, "laced with a sort of guilty superiority" (56)—Ukrainian-Canadians have been sending to their families in the old country over the last century or so. At the centre of the painting is a mournful young girl and her ghostly other; together they symbolize the future of a country which "has been robbed and raped blind" but is still shadowed by the "scary ghost of limited possibilities" (Husar 55–6). It is this spectral girl divorced from her real self that Kulyk Keefer uses as her frontispiece, the absent original reminding us that the future of this country, which is present only as the recurrent memory of a failed project, rests on evocations of history even if such gestures will occasion Pandora's punishment. The single epigraph in *The Green Library* points to a similar problem in salvaging Eastern European history. It is drawn from Czech writer Ivan Klíma's "The Painter's Story," a sombre reflection on the responsibility of memory when faced with the brutality and political destruction that scorch the histories of so many Slavic nations. The assertion at the end of the epigraph recalls Adorno's familiar statement on the barbarism of writing poetry after Auschwitz: "When compassion and the commandment that life should be lived in dignity have been lost, where awareness of the past is lost, there are no stories, there are only cries of horror." This claim comes in response to questions a painter asks himself about the dignity of death in a totalitarian society, questions which are worth repeating here. How can we understand life and death, he asks,



when we have stood by while the bodies of countless brothers and cousins, whom they have tortured, beaten, shot and gassed, have been thrown into common holes in the ground, like garbage? When we have looked on in silence while they scattered the bones and ashes of others over fields or tossed them into rivers? When we have pretended not to hear their voices crying for help? (46)

There is little sustained evidence that questions such as these are addressed in *The Green Library*. Kulyk Keefer has the indispensable nerve to enter into contact with the monstrous scenes of the past, but she is resolutely literary in her treatment of them. History and its “cries of horror” do not weigh like a nightmare on Eva’s mind when Dan tells her about Khmelnytsky’s Cossacks, nor is she troubled by his prophetic insinuation that her father may have been among the “jolly Ukrainian guards” at a Nazi death camp. On the contrary, she takes his imputation and weaves it into the poetic fabric of her interior monologue, where it becomes an ugly blip she forgets soon after arriving in Ukraine.

Eva is not prepared for what she finds in Kiev, a city that in 1993 was beginning to rebuild itself as Ukraine’s capital after seventy years of Soviet domination. She notices the poor condition of the sidewalks and by the end of her trip “her eyes will have learned to read the cracks and the fissures underneath her feet,” but her first reaction is to “take in nothing but the bright emptiness of the sky stretching over her, a huge sheet of paper on which she can write anything she likes, tell any story in the world” (126). Predictably, the story she chooses to tell herself concerns Alex, “the man for whose sake she has come all this way, to this extraordinary, foreign place” (133). That other story, the one that “has to do with guns and graves,” remains hidden along with the fragmented photo and the biography of her murdered grandmother in the bottom of her suitcase. As Alex shows her around Kiev she is singularly possessed by a need to bring her memory of him to reality: “*I want you*. This is what she needs to say” (140). But there is no need to say it, for they spend half of their time together walking in Kiev’s parks and the other half in Alex’s fold-out bed, “knocking over the furniture, shouting the roof off” (157). Eva wants to think their relationship is like the embroidered shawl Alex has given her: it keeps “everything outside their joined arms from touching them” so “she can open: not just her body but her heart” (157–8). But if she is ever more lost in the self-deceptive rhetoric of private fantasy, Alex takes an even more complicated pleasure from her presence. The complication arises when he remembers a visit to the Chown home in 1963, not to play

the watching game with Eva but to look at “the wife of the man he could wish were his father” (150). Alex is in Holly’s room looking through her wardrobe when, just as he is about to leave, “a pair of hands slips over his eyes: cool hands, with long, accurate fingers, moving from his eyes down to his mouth, tracing his lips and then his chin, and his Adam’s apple, which he can’t keep from bobbing up and down.” But when Holly calls him by Ivan’s name he runs. Entangled in the “fear and guilt and hopeless desire” of this Cold War Oedipal web, Alex remembers returning to “the locked room of his father’s country;” Soviet Ukraine, with only two memories of the country he thought of as “home”: “a woman’s hands binding his eyes; a girl’s hand that he puts to his mouth, to keep his fear from spilling” (154). Now, thirty years later, he is scraping by as a geology professor in a country erupting under the pressures of “shock therapy;” the West’s recipe for introducing market freedoms and democratic reforms into Eastern Europe by rushing headlong into deregulation and privatization. It is two years after the restoration of Ukrainian independence and Alex no longer speaks the official language of the Soviet Empire. Like most Ukrainians he enjoys more freedom than he did under the old regime, but as he explains to Eva these rights are intangible and there is little confidence in their sustainability: “there’s no paper to print on, and no money to buy books. It’s crazy, Eva; everything here is deeply, seriously crazy” (163). It is no surprise, then, that his passion for her “is a need, like the need to cover your eyes with your hands when you can’t bear to see what’s in front of you” (164).

In a sense, both of their lives are expressions of what Adorno calls the “ideology of personalization” in which “the value of individual people and private relationships is immeasurably overestimated in comparison to actual social determinants” (169). On the one hand, an unfulfilled Canadian woman who wants to relive a story-book adolescent encounter and forget that other history locked away in her suitcase; and on the other, a man taken away from his mother, his sister and the life he wanted to live in Canada who finds in this woman an enclave of comfort amid the upheavals of post-communist transition. Both lines of desire express the classic romantic revulsion for society which replaces anything resembling a concern for gripping reality—whether it is Eva’s sordid paternal history, or Alex’s “whole rotten empire” (164)—with what René Girard calls “the emanation of a serene subjectivity, the creation *ex nihilo* of a quasi-divine ego” (15). It is the sort of thing that might be expected when two people, eager to exist entirely by and for themselves, independently of all relationships with the material world, pursue the language of “erotic

braille” in a country where “there are no maps” and where “everything’s in flux” (159). Like the English patient in Michael Ondaatje’s novel, who only “desired to walk upon such an earth that had no maps” (261), Eva and Alex build their relationship on discursive fantasies that promise a passage beyond the conflicts and distresses of their lives. For her what matters is “the telling of stories that pass, from mouth to mouth, like long, intricate kisses” (161). Her compulsive romanticizing drift collapses the “vertigo” she experiences in Ukraine in order to “transform the differences between them—country, language, history itself—into the smallest of particles” (163). She does not want to think about “anything that would take them across the sealed borders of the present” (190). She is ashamed to admit she owns a house with twelve rooms, so instead she tells him about High Park and the nearest branch of the Toronto public library. Economics is an equally irresistible motivator for Alex, but it is not guilt he feels so much as *ressentiment*. He is a nationalist whose dream of an independent Ukraine has been waylaid by a state of permanent economic and social crisis. His Russian wife divorced him partly because of their linguistic and cultural differences, and their daughter has been struck with thyroid cancer as a result of the Chernobyl nuclear meltdown. Under the Soviets his country was steeped in “helpless sourness”; with the therapeutics of global capitalism it is mired in “helpless optimism” (188). “Loss, absence, these are his daily bread” living in a country whose history “tells of nothing but disasters” (189). But he shares none of this with his visitor from Canada; instead, he tells her that he has always wanted to be a “chumak, travelling from the salt flats of the Crimea to villages in the steppes or the mountains ... a cossack living in an island fortress” (161), in effect using her “like a bottle of aspirin so hard to find here” (204).

But their spell of transcendental homelessness begins to collapse the moment it comes up against the dead weight of historical facts. One afternoon when Alex is away from the apartment Eva searches through his books for something written in her own language and discovers *History of Ukraine*, a book published in Toronto—quite likely a fictional disguise for Orest Subtelny’s *Ukraine: A History*, which Kulyk Keefer credits in her end notes. Scythians and the *Pax Mongolica*, Polish and Austrian imperialisms, the Civil War of 1918, the arrival of the Red Army three years later, Stalin’s purges, the Nazis, Russification: as Eva scans the touchstones of Ukrainian history she understands that, like Canada, this country has always been “somebody else’s property” (181). Its history begins to weigh on her when she comes across her grandmother’s name “in a list of the less prominent victims of the Nazi occupation” (182); however, when Alex

returns Eva conceals the book, since “she doesn’t want history tearing holes in the magic that’s been setting them apart, protecting them” (182). But her resolve is broken and she eventually tells him “I’ve had enough museums. I want something real—I want to go to Babi Yar.” As if reacting to an overdetermined moral commentary implied in her request, on the way to the Holocaust memorial Alex shares an anecdote about an Englishwoman he once met who told him there was nothing in Ukraine comparable to the high culture of neighbouring Poland. “And then all that nastiness during the war. The Ukrainians were collaborators, weren’t they,” she said, “welcoming the Nazis with bread and salt, cheering as the Jews went off to Babi Yar” (183). He then supplies Eva with the response he was not able to muster in front of this woman. Civilian casualties, as it turns out, were higher in Ukraine than in any other country in Europe, since both the Nazis and Soviets were killing the people here, and there were fully three times as many Dutchmen recruited by the ss than Ukrainians, although the Dutch have managed to go down in history as arch-enemies of the Nazis. And then the inevitable reminder that others besides Jews died at Babi Yar, including waitresses from the Kiev nightclubs, the entire Dynamo Kiev soccer team, which dared to beat the Germans in a match designed to show off Aryan superiority, and countless partisans, artists and writers, which of course Eva already knows (185).

Given that the Nazis executed some 200,000 Jews at Babi Yar, and given that many of them were escorted to their deaths by Ukrainian Nazi sympathizers, it may be tempting to read Alex’s response as a parabolic excuse. Indeed, in the midst of his response Eva bursts out “But that doesn’t excuse—,” to which he responds “I’m not excusing anything” (184). Rather than refuse outright the accusation that Ukrainians participated in the mass murder of Jews, Alex voices the standard academic claim that, as Subtelny puts it, “Ukrainian participation in the massacres was neither extensive nor decisive” (472), which is not to say there was no complicity. There was, especially after the German defeat at Stalingrad when Nazi authorities conveniently forgot the racist conceptions on which their invasion of Eastern Europe was in part based and decided to recruit Slavs into their army. However, the extent of Nazi presence in Ukraine warranted under the policy of *lebensraum* made it clear that Germany had no intention of liberating the resource-rich country and marching back West or leaving it to the Soviets, but on the contrary wanted to turn the local population into cheap labour for the fatherland. Notwithstanding the broader historical and economic context of the complicity—which, no matter how relevant it may be, will always sound like a

pathetic red herring when invoked in the context of the Holocaust—the larger issue for Alex is Eva’s patronizing attitude, which he sees as typical of the West’s view of his country as an anachronism prone to spasms of irrational political behaviour. Later when he takes Eva to *Swan Lake*—“an antidote to Babi Yar”—he is infuriated by her anecdotal observation that the production ended with the swan princess nestling in Siegfried’s arms instead of dying, which is what the text dictates. He wants to tell her that “only those who can’t believe in happy endings desire them so”; defensive, he feels she wants “to judge him, his country, its history” (187). But telling her this would anchor the purely mental path of their relationship in the material differences that separate them:

Should he confess that one of the things he feasts on when he’s in bed with her is the cleanness and goodness of the way she smells? Tell her how his wife used to line them up like trophies on the shelves, the empty containers of whatever she managed to scrounge on the black market—hair conditioner, bubble bath, mouthwash—with their Western labels, their American brand names shining brighter, better than stars?

But Alex says nothing; instead, he reminds himself—a gesture that recalls Eva’s earlier thought of Holly and Ivan—that they “will always be playing the swineherd and the princess” (188). But his reticence eventually gives way to the blunt language of class and material culture. At one point he asks Eva, in the midst of an otherwise banal exchange on the unavailability of toothpaste and toilet paper in Ukraine, “Why don’t you stay home if you can’t live without pizza and Coca-Cola? Why don’t all you Westerners, with your big money that you spend like water over here, for Christ’s sake just stay home?” (204). And then again later before her departure: “You come to this country for two weeks, and you spend more money than most of us see in a year” (214). It may be, as Catherine Belsey has argued, that in postmodern capitalism “love is a value that remains beyond the market” (72), but for Alex this transnational relationship, unfolding within the ruptured fabric of post-communist Ukraine, is essentially dependent upon objective economic conditions. His desire for Eva is very clearly a desire to be *like* her—Western, affluent, perfumed—but where she tends to push aside the external struggles of the world, never fully recognizing the materiality of situations or the dependence of her consciousness on social structures, Alex sees this all very clearly and is willing to defend his nation and its history when the differences between them become clear to him.

What is ultimately at issue here is not an encounter between two individuals but the collision of two very different worlds.

This disparity between Eva's social indifference and Alex's defensive posturing should not be underemphasized, for what is ultimately at issue here is not an encounter between two individuals but the collision of two very different worlds. In effect, Alex's interventions serve as a reminder that globalization and post-communist reform, which were, and still are, underwritten by the promise of democracy and economic equality, have reinstated Ukraine in a subordinate and economically dependent relationship vis-à-vis the West. His angry reply to Eva exemplifies what Daniel Chirot, writing on post-communist Eastern Europe, calls nationalism based on *ressentiment*: the sentiment that begins with "love and admiration," a desire to be more Western, but ends in "rejection and hatred" when this desire is crushed by the failures of liberal capitalism (245). This irony of history has been the subject of substantial amounts of commentary in the last decade. Slavoj Žižek, for example, has argued that what is at stake in post-communist Europe is "the struggle for one's place, now that the illusion of the 'third way' has evaporated: who will be admitted 'inside,' integrated into the developed capitalist order, and who will remain excluded from it?" (222). Theoretically, the antagonism at the heart of this struggle poses the free development of capitalism against nationalist populism, but it is waged according to a distinctly Western view of Eastern Europe as "the Other to whom one attributes the fundamentalist nationalism" (223). Thus, the history and ideological universe of Eastern Europe is not an obstacle to fulfilling the West's desire for an organic global community; on the contrary, it is "the price to be paid for this impossible desire" (211). Put differently, with the end of communism in Eastern Europe the West's official explanation was that it wanted to replace the legacies of collectivism, whether ideological, statist or ethnic, with a post-national market model, but this depended on the existence of a political and economic "other" over whom the West could exert control. Francis Fukuyama, on the other hand, has said that nationalism and ethnic causes are not endemic to global capitalism but are lingering symptoms of "the old rules of power politics." After the collapse of communism that part of the world where interaction between states is economic did indeed reach "the end of history"; but there remains "a part that is still stuck in history," namely Eastern Europe, where the nation-state continues to be "the chief locus of political identification" (276–7). Given that recent European history has been a cartographer's dream—in 1920 the continent had 23 states, by 1994 it had 44—this latter trend may be more indebted to capitalism than Fukuyama thinks. Perhaps a slightly better way to describe the difference in levels of historical and national consciousness

is by referring to what Samuel Huntington calls the “civilizational fault line” that has long separated the West from Eastern Europe (165). Beginning in the north at the Finnish-Russian border, weaving its way down to the Balkans where it meshes with the historical division between the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, this “cultural border of Europe” has since 1989 become “the political and economic border of Europe and the West” (158). The result is a “West and the Rest” mentality whereby distinctions among nations are diminished in theory but are in practice trumped by a line separating those places which fit the globalist political and economic orthodoxy from those which do not—“the Rest.” Practically speaking, people like Alex who live on the wrong side of this border are caught in a cruel double-bind: on the one hand, they would like to convince themselves and the West that they are *not* Eastern Europeans—by coveting Western commodities or setting their watches to Central European time—and on the other, when the West engages in finger-wagging diplomacy they regroup around historical pan-Slavic allegiances, as was evident during the recent anti-Western protests that flared up in Ukraine and Russia during NATO’s carpet-bombing of Serbia.

The Croatian writer Slavenka Drakulic offers an accurate observation on how this paradox was staged in the aftermath of the Bosnian crisis. To the Eastern European imagination, she says, “Europe” is not a question of geography, it is “something distant, something to be attained ... something expensive and fine: good clothes, the certain look and smell of its people” (12). The bombing of the Hotel Europa, the old Hapsburg establishment in the middle of Sarajevo, in effect made this ideal disappear from the city. That people across the Eastern part of the continent are busily erecting more of these icons demonstrates their desire to prove to the West that “this is not the old, communist, poor, primitive, Oriental, backward Eastern Europe any longer. Can’t you see that we belong to the West too, except that we have been exiled from it for half a century?” (10). Of course, there is nothing new about this characterization of Eastern Europe as a cultural and economic backwater. It was here that an unbridgeable gap first crystallized in the minds of the ancient Greeks between Hellenistic culture and the barbarians on the other side of the Black Sea. The cradle of civilization has since migrated to the capitals of Western Europe, but the frontier of barbarism remains the same. In his imaginative reportage from post-communist Eastern Europe, Richard Swartz locates this frontier in Przemysl, a city on the Polish side of the border with Ukraine, “where Europe ends or where Europe begins, depending on one’s perspective” (109). Quoting the nineteenth-century Galician writer Karl

It is a  
prejudice that  
has its roots in  
the West's fear  
of marauding  
bands from the  
Orient.

Emil Franzos, Swartz describes the world East of the city as *Halbasien*, “Half-Asia, a designation that made it clear that European civilization here was not much more than a thin layer of veneer.” Cultural allegiances here take the form of graffiti, which reveals a chasm between the resident Poles and the “vandals” from the other side of the border who come to Przemyśl “to visit Europe” and “admire the overabundance in the shop windows”: “To the gas chamber with the Ukrainians” scrawled by the Polish nationals, “Castrate the Poles” countered by the Ukrainians. Of course, the reasons for much of this hostility are economic—the European Union and NATO have migrated eastward very selectively, bringing some former communist states, like Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, under the protective cover of the so-called “Belgian Curtain” but leaving others on the oriental side—but its roots are deeply historical. The eastern border of Europe has always been farther off than Prague, Budapest and the other cosmopolitan centres of *Mittleuropa*. There is a passage in Canadian writer Myrna Kostash’s *Bloodlines* that brings us closer to this point, particularly as it relates to our reading of *The Green Library*. Recounting a visit to southeastern Poland, a region historically inhabited by ethnic Ukrainians, Kostash describes it as a place where the difference between West and East is framed in the language of class and culture. In a passage that recalls the English woman’s comment to Alex on the difference between Poland and Ukraine, Kostash describes how in this region Ukrainians “are *always* peasants, sans literature, sans philosophy, sans destiny, sans everything,” little more than “bandits, traitors, rogues, murderers” (142–3). It is a prejudice that has its roots in the West’s fear of marauding bands from the Orient, a kind of near-Orientalism predicated on the fear embodied in the image of Ukrainian Cossacks. Four hundred years ago when they arrived on the frontiers of Europe to reclaim their land from Poland “it was as if ‘Asia’ had erupted within Polish order”: they were seen as “Mongol progeny stampeding out of war camps and over the parcelled estates, upsetting everything” (159).

But if Ukraine is both economically and culturally non-Western it also stands in a marginal position vis-à-vis those countries with whom it might be allied. It has always been an ethno-class on the margins of those imperial centres—St. Petersburg, Istanbul and Warsaw—which were themselves “civilizational peripheries of the West” (Szporluk 86). Neither geographically Western nor a significant part of Eastern Europe’s imperial axis, Ukraine is, as the etymology of its name suggests, a “borderland” or “edge.” Culturally drawn from a vast ethnic mass and geographically carved from the frontiers of other powers—in the south from the land



historically ruled by Tatars and Ottoman Turks, in the East and North from tsarist and then Soviet Russia, and in the West from Poland—these different “Ukraines” did not truly become a single entity until the 1950s (Szporluk 112). Certainly the first wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada attests to this, since most who arrived prior to the First World War called themselves everything but Ukrainian: Galician, Bukovinian, Austrian, or Russian (Kostash *Baba’s* 315). To be sure, it is a country whose existence owes more to the modern imagination than to historical fact, geopolitical proof that a nation is indeed an “imagined community” (Anderson 6). Long divided by insufferably opposed interests—Russified Eastern Ukrainians against nationalists in the Western provinces, republicans against communists, Greek Catholics against Orthodox—the country now finds itself in the bizarre position of having to erect for itself a sovereign nation at a moment in history when nationalism is neither politically fashionable nor economically viable. It is a condition reminiscent of our situation in Canada if it is true, as Northrop Frye has argued, that our country passed from a “pre-national” to “post-national” phase “without ever having become a nation” (15). Of course, there is a good deal of the anxiety and defensive posturing that comes with a tenuous sense of national identity in Alex’s response to Eva. In fact, many of the stories he tells her hint at precisely this predicament, particularly those which recount the recurrent tragedies of Ukrainian history. For example, he tells her about the widowed Kievan princess Olha, a politically-savvy tenth-century ruler who has become in the popular tradition Ukraine’s version of Queen Elizabeth I, and about Oleg, the first historically-verifiable ruler of the empire who according to legend was told by a soothsayer that his favourite horse would be the cause of his death. When the horse died of natural causes Oleg taunted the soothsayer and then went to visit the animal’s bones, only to be fatally bitten by a serpent which slid out from its skull. The parable, which is spun from the same thread of pessimism as Kulyk Keefer’s “imagination of disaster,” is particularly relevant for Alex because it stands as a reminder of the constantly thwarted hopes of his country. Everything that makes Ukraine what it is, he tells Eva, “is in that story” (162). That his story is drawn from Nestor’s *Chronicle* is significant not only because it demonstrates Kulyk Keefer’s interest in giving voice to a history which until recently never stirred the Western imagination. Compared to the familiar Cold War icons of Eastern European national-consciousness raising—the Prague Spring, the Solidarity movement in Poland, the autonomy project in the former Yugoslavia—the dream of Ukrainian national liberation was unknown or of little interest here, per-

The intellectuals  
upstairs speak  
of art and letters  
and pretend  
this talk is a  
subversive  
practice.

haps because of the West's tendency to view Ukraine as an appendage of Russia—as Canada is sometimes seen in relation to the U.S.—or perhaps because of a patronizing belief that its national sentiment is just a stone's throw away from fascist ideology.

Eva's sense of reality is far too tender-minded to be compatible with any struggle for recognition or national sentiment implied in Alex's story, but the fatal imagery contained in the parable brings her closer to the two questions at the centre of the plot: what happened to Lesia Levkovych and why did her son Ivan come to Canada? Eva's pilgrimage to her grandmother's grave at Babi Yar is far less melodramatic than might be expected, though it is one of the few moments when her overheated cerebralism arrives at cognition of its own impotence. The episode—which begins with Eva picturing Dan and his daughter Julie as “two imagined victims” and ends with her wondering what happens to memory “when you are shot in the head and kicked into a ditch” (185–6)—does not generate an extraordinary loquacity. On the contrary, it reveals very little of Eva's mind and still less of the barbaric moral climate of nationalist hatred that beset the region during the Nazi occupation. In fact, just before Eva arrives at Babi Yar the narrative is interrupted and we are pulled back for the first time to the most important scene in the novel. It is a cafe in an artists' colony at Soloveyko, Soviet Ukraine, and it is the summer of 1933, the year Stalin's politically-engineered famine ended and his purges began, a brutal period of history that Kulyk Keefer seems to lay open because it was for so many years unacknowledged in the West. On the one hand, the episode grounds the narrative in a set of concrete historical facts that bring us closer to understanding what happened to Lesia and Ivan, but because these facts unfold precisely before Eva's pilgrimage to Babi Yar the episode has the additional function of clarifying the defensiveness and suspicion that underscores the business of Ukrainian-Nazi complicity. Ivan is standing with his mother and a group of her friends, Ukrainian writers, artists and academics, and their picture is being taken—the same photo delivered to Eva at the beginning of the novel—but the boy is struggling to break free from Lesia's arms. It is a symbolic gesture which demonstrates that Ivan sees the gathering as a *trahison des clercs*. Later, when he is playing “Secret Army” in the basement of the cafe he rages to his friend Mykola that the intellectuals upstairs speak of art and letters and pretend this talk is a subversive practice while the rest of the country is being gutted in the name of collectivization: “All of them up there—useless and stupid and soft. You have to be hard as a knife, you have to be able to slash right through if you want to fight for your country” (171). And

then he tells his friend a story that “isn’t just a story. It’s history, even if they’ll never teach it to you in school.” It is one of the stories Alex shares with Eva, about Olha, the princess warrior who exacted brutal revenge on her husband’s murderers and spent the remainder of her life ruling Kiev with her son Sviatoslav. Ivan’s nascent political radicalism explains why he identifies with Sviatoslav, since it was under his rule that the Kievan Empire extended its territory from the Black Sea to the Gulf of Finland, and why he sees in Nestor’s story an antidote to the weak-kneed aesthetic politicking typical of his mother’s friends. Inspired by ancient heroism, as Ivan tells the story “he is speaking the ancient language, in which words like killing and burning, treachery and revenge ring out as clear as trumpets, and leave no stain on the tongue” (173). That Lesia’s lover, the artist Pavlo Bozhyk, whom Ivan refused to accept as a surrogate for his dead father, is among the Soloveyko circle lends further significance to the story of Olha and her son, for not only does Ivan wish that his mother would be more like the princess, he sees Bozhyk as a foil to this dream. What he does not—and, tragically, will never—know is that this man is his real father but that this has been kept secret for his own safety, since Bozhyk, like so many Ukrainian artists and intellectuals during Stalin’s purges, was a prime target for execution.

This episode at Soloveyko is one of only three in which the narrator appears in the guise of an eye-witness; the other two, Levkovych’s arrest in the Kiev park at the beginning of the novel and the final scene where her executioner’s identity is revealed, also take place outside the horizon of any character’s memory. However, it is clear that Ivan’s friend Mykola—the same man whose letter, which is presumably sent to Eva at some future time, begins the novel and whose interior monologues appear throughout—supplies many, though not all, of these details. Not long after her visit to Babi Yar, Eva meets Mykola, who happens to be living next door to Alex, and what he tells her constitutes a partial resolution of the novel. From him she learns that Ivan was indeed a nationalist with revolutionary aspirations and that just before the war his mother, who was one of the few people at the artist’s colony who survived the purges, left her son in the care of Mykola’s family, to shelter him from the hostilities in Kiev. But Ivan soon ran away to the western part of the country to join Stepan Bandera’s Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, an underground outfit established in the 1920s by Ukrainian exiles living in Prague intent on waging a guerrilla war against the Poles, who at the time controlled Western Ukraine, and the Soviets, who controlled the remainder of the country. Ivan, Mykola explains, was an idealist who believed Bandera’s

guerrillas could be mobilized to fight the Poles, Russians, Germans, or “who ever stood in the way of an independent Ukraine” (194). When the Soviet-Nazi war broke out a rift arose between the Organization’s moderates, who refused to participate in any armed struggle for independence, and the hardliners, who sided with the Germans because no other Western government expressed interest in supporting their national cause, a strategic alliance that went down in history as a pact with the devil. Ivan eventually travelled back to Kiev, not to fight the Nazis or Bolsheviks but the moderates, people like the artists at Soloveyko who were “more at home with books than guns” (195). In a momentary flash of blind action induced by the spirit of insurrection no less than his hatred of Lesia’s circle, when the Germans took the city Ivan joined them and became a member of the feared *Nachtigall* unit. Like many nationalists at the time, as Mykola tells Eva, he believed this unit “would be the core of a new Ukrainian army, yet another army to rid our country of invaders, once and for all” (195). But he also tells her that Ivan could not be the man in her picture since he was killed somewhere on the German-Soviet front. She knows this is not true, but what she does not know is what exactly happened to Ivan after the war, which is revealed in one of Mykola’s monologues. The photograph, it turns out, was among a parcel of personal items Ivan left with his friend before he joined the unit, with the promise that he would collect them if he survived the war, which he did, almost fifty years later by way of a letter requesting that the picture be sent to a Toronto address in care of Mykola Savchuk—the change of name intended to conceal his involvement with the unit and thereby expedite his emigration to Canada. All too aware that history “keeps bleeding into the present,” the real Mykola reveals none of this to Eva: “It is best,” he tells himself, “for Ivan to be dead in the war. Dead men court no dangers” (198, 201).

Nor, we might add, do they provoke any interrogation, and indeed the remainder of the novel unfolds like a strategic reminder that we may come close to but never finally access the secrets of the past. Alex is dumbfounded to learn about Eva’s Ukrainian father and exclaims, much in the way Dan did before she flew to Kiev, “God knows why anyone would want to make themselves part of this country if they didn’t have to” (196). But now she is no longer a stranger, an affluent Westerner who cannot understand his country and its history, “but a prodigal, like him” (197). When she returns to Toronto from Kiev she does bring something of the old country back with her in the form of the stories about Levkovych and Ivan that “have littered her life like unexploded bombs” (229). At one point she visits the Ukrainian neighbourhood in the Bloor West Village,

whose inhabitants she remembers her father always referred to as “New Canadians—‘new’ suggesting the rawness of a blister, something needing treatment, cure,” although now she understands that their impossible-to-pronounce names “connect to something real, something that won’t go away just because it’s had to be abandoned” (234). Even so, she needs to prove to herself that “she’s in Canada, not Ukraine,” and so she seals the photograph of her grandmother and father in an envelope, a last-ditch effort to shut history out of her life that proves futile when, in a fascinating but too contrived scene, she meets with Oksanna, who turns out to have known Eva’s father for many years. He met the Moroz family at a displaced persons camp in Germany after the war, fell in love with Oksanna’s mother, travelled to Canada under an alias, became Oksanna’s lover, and then came to her for help when he thought Canadian immigration officials might deport him for irregularities in his citizenship records. The suggestion is that Ivan had something to hide, which in fact he did—by the end of the novel we learn that he arrested his mother, Lesia, at the Kiev Park during the war and took her to Babi Yar—although he has told Oksanna that he spent the war as a partisan fighting *against* the Nazis. When she arranges a meeting between Ivan, Eva and Ben at a lodge near Porcupine Creek, the old man is less interested in acquainting himself with his daughter than with his grandson, whom he tells only “what he needs to know, and what he’s capable of hearing” about his past, tells it in such a way “that the boy will not judge, will not pull back from him, but will come to know the truth when he becomes a man” (255). What exactly this amounts to we never learn. The narrative offers no moral clarity on Ivan’s past, although it does make some allowances in a brief account of his life in the lumber camp—where he was treated “as second-class, second-rate: a less murderous contempt than that shown to *Ausländer* and *Ostarbeiter*, but contempt all the same” (247)—and the two weeks he spent with Holly trying “to wipe out six years of killing and hiding and running with blind, pure lust, without any other language than cries and moans” (249).

The lack of resolution, the absence of an account of Ivan’s complicity with the Nazis during the war and the placement of the brutal act of matricide outside Eva’s consciousness, puts *The Green Library* dangerously close to staging an historical amnesia. There is no rubbing the noses of readers—as George Steiner once remarked of Günter Grass’s fictional exposures of German history—“in the great filth, in the vomit of their time” (116). There is no doubt that Ivan is a vacant figure who has never quite understood or articulated the sheer scope of his wartime activities.

The lack of  
resolution ...  
puts *The Green  
Library* danger-  
ously close to  
staging an  
historical  
amnesia.

Furthermore, the fact that he is a war criminal seems less important to the movement of the plot than the fact that his actions during the Nazi occupation are in some ways accounted for by his first-hand experience of Stalin's campaign of terror against the Ukrainian peasantry, which is very clearly an important but altogether tangential historical consideration. That Eva learns very little about her father's war-time activities is not the gesture of a text willing to touch the live flame of history, not so much because she is never put in the position of having to atone for Ivan's silences but because this occlusion leaves us with a nagging sense that everything Eva has learned about him, his country and its history—from Mrs Moroz, Dan, Alex and Mykola—is ultimately enclosed within the stories and esoteric desires she chooses to live by. Eva has learned that history matters, but in one of her final reflections on the subject she reveals that her connection to the past is "not just by blood, which means so little now, but by the choices other people made, the desires that pushed them" (229). This is certainly true, especially in terms of the kind of approach to history the novel chooses to represent, which to some degree is an intensely individualist one defined by the prioritizing of private life over the looming reality of inexorable historical facts. Ivan's political extremism, the barbarism he enacts working for the Nazis, Eva's exploration of the disastrous borders of her paternal history: each, accordingly, is an act of desire stemming from some vital, impassioned illusion, perhaps a subjective predisposition from which history unfolds in the form of an unintended consequence of barely discernible private acts. And yet, everywhere Kulyk Keefer's novel displays a self-conscious sense of historical purpose and a need to locate the heroine's consciousness in a setting of concrete historical facts, perhaps for no other reason than to show us that—in the words of Emmanuel Levinas—"It does not suffice to be an I to interrupt history!" (50). Kulyk Keefer anchors Eva's story in references to Ukraine's brutal history and the difficult material conditions of its post-communist present as though she were paying homage to some inexorable historical determinism that values social, economic and political realities over her heroine's *élan vital*, that lyrical flow of desires that provide her with a sense of being alive. The penultimate chapter of the novel, the episode preceding the revelation that it was Ivan who took Lesia to her death, much of which is in the form of a letter in which Alex explains to Eva that their affair is impossible because they "*don't speak the same language, the same history,*" evokes an argument for the materiality of consciousness in the image of a people trapped in the turmoil of economic and social conflicts that are bound to get worse, as indeed

they did during the 1990s: “*They say it will be fifty years before things get better here,*” he writes, “*if, by some miracle, there isn’t a Russian invasion, or civil war, or another Chornobyl*” (264).

It is difficult, on moral and theoretical grounds, to avoid calling attention to the paradox that holds this novel’s excess of interiority against its fierce solicitations of history. But the paradox may be part of the point. Above all, *The Green Library* is haunted by the tattered and tragic remnants of the Ukrainian history that it takes as its subject, a history that requires excavation and understanding even if this task is from the get-go bound to unearth nothing but disaster or to be rendered anachronistic by the political and academic clichés of the postmodern age. In this, the novel is less a subversion of the vaunted claim for the end of history or post-nationalism than a reminder that fine-spun arguments on globalization, particularly those discursive celebrations that have accompanied Eastern Europe’s transition from communism, hold to a vision of world history that simply does not mean much in places like Kiev and Moscow, which is not to say that *The Green Library* inverts the familiar liberal dialectic and prioritizes matters of history and nationality over the sovereign individual, alienated or otherwise. On the contrary, like its half-Canadian, half-Ukrainian heroine, it settles somewhere in the middle, neither endorsing the historical aspirations of Eastern Europe nor accepting the standard post-history or post-nationalism arguments advanced in the West. If I interpret Kulyk Keefer at all correctly, she is saying that the task confronting a Western writer who ventures into the a-chronological twilight of a country like Ukraine will be a logical extension, perhaps a *reductio absurdam*, of this paradoxical position.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks to William New and Gabrielle Helms, both from the Department of English at UBC, for their discussions on the subject of Eastern European-Canadian literature. My thanks to the students in English 202, who allowed me to subject them to my ideas on Ukrainian history and post-nationalism when we were reading *The Green Library*. In particular, special thanks to Renée Martin, Gianni Perciballi and Flo Wong, who helped me better appreciate the wilful imprecision of this novel. Thank you to my father Dmitro Babiak, for his conversations on Ukrainian history and culture.

## Works Cited

- Adorno, Theodor W. *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays in Mass Culture*. Ed. J. M. Bernstein. London: Routledge, 1991.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1990.
- Belsey, Catherine. *Desire: Love Stories in Western Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.
- Berlin, Isaiah. *Russian Thinkers*. Ed. Henry Hardin and Aileen Kelly. London: Penguin, 1978.
- Caruth, Cathy. "Unclaimed Experience: Trauma and the Possibility of History." *Yale French Studies* 79 (1991): 181–92.
- Chirot, Daniel. "Who is Western, Who is Not, and Who Cares?" *East European Politics and Societies* 13 (Spring 1999): 244–249.
- Davey, Frank. *Post-National Arguments: the Politics of the Anglophone-Canadian Novel Since 1967*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993.
- Drakulic, Slavenka. *Café Europa: Life After Communism*. London: Abacus, 1996.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and its Discontents*. Trans. James Strachey. New York: W. W. Norton, 1961.
- Frye, Northrop. *Divisions on a Ground: Essays on Canadian Culture*. Ed. James Polk. Toronto: Anansi, 1982.
- Fukuyama, Francis. "The End of History?" *The National Interest* 18 (Winter 1989): 3–18.
- . *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Avon, 1992.
- Girard, René. *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*. Trans. Yvonne Freccero. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1965.
- Hamacher, Werner. "Journals, Politics: Notes on Paul de Man's Wartime Journalism." *Responses: On Paul de Man's Wartime Journalism*. Eds. Hamacher, Neil Hertz and Thomas Keenan. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1988. 438–67.
- Huntington, Samuel P. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.
- Husar, Nataalka. "Pandora's Parcel to Ukraine." *Black Sea Blue: Nataalka Husar Paintings*. Ed. Carol Podedworny. Regina: Rosemont Art Gallery Society, 1995. 54–56.



- Huyssen, Andreas. *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Ignatieff, Michael. *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. Toronto: Viking, 1993.
- Ilyniak, Morris. "Still Coming to Terms: Ukrainians, Jews, and the Deschenes Commission." *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating an Identity*. Ed. Lubomyr Luciuk and Stella Hryniuk. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1991. 377–90.
- Jameson, Fredric. "On Cultural Studies." *The Identity Question*. Ed. John Rajchman. New York: Routledge, 1995. 251–95.
- Klíma, Ivan. "The Painter's Story." *My Golden Trades*. Trans. Paul Wilson. London: Granta, 1992.
- Kostash, Myrna. *All of Baba's Children*. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1977.
- . *Bloodlines: A Journey Into Eastern Europe*. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1993.
- . "Domination and Exclusion: Notes of a Resident Alien." *Ethnicity in a Technological Age*. Ed. Ian H. Angus. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1988. 57–66.
- Kulyk Keefer, Janice. "Another Country." *Canadian Literature* 120 (Spring 1989): 6–11.
- . *The Green Library*. Toronto: Harper Collins, 1996.
- . *Honey And Ashes: A Story of Family*. Toronto: Harper Collins, 1998.
- . "In Violent Voice: the Trauma of Ethnicity in Recent Canadian Fiction." *Multiple Voices: Recent Canadian Fiction*. Ed. Jeanne Delbaere. Sydney: Dangaroo, 1990. 44–58.
- Lainsbury, G.P. "Generation X and the End of History." *Essays on Canadian Writing* 58 (Spring 1996): 229–40.
- Laurence, Margaret. *A Jest of God*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989.
- Levinas, Emmanuel. *Proper Names*. London: Athlone, 1996.
- Lukács, Georg. *Essays on Realism*. Ed. Rodney Livingstone. Trans. David Fernbach. Cambridge: MIT, 1971.
- . *Theory of the Novel: A Historico-Philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*. Trans. Anna Bostock. London: Merlin, 1971.

- Lyotard, Jean-François. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984.
- Ondaatje, Michael. *The English Patient*. Toronto: Vintage, 1993.
- Steiner, George. *Language and Silence: Essays on Language, Literature and the Inhuman*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1970.
- Subtelny, Orest. *Ukraine: A History*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1988.
- Swartz, Richard. *Room Service: Reports from Eastern Europe*. Trans. Linda Haverty Rugg. New York: New Press, 1997.
- Szporluk, Roman. "Ukraine: From an Imperial Periphery to a Sovereign State." *Daedalus* (Summer 1997): 85–118.
- Young, James E. *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990.
- Žižek, Slavoj. *Tarrying With the Negative: Kant, Hegel, and the Critique of Ideology*. Durham: Duke UP, 1993.