THE UKRAINIAN DIASPORA

Vic Satzewich

London and New York

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This fascinating book traces one hundred and twenty-five years of Ukrainian migration – including the economic migration at the end of the nineteenth century, the political migration of the inter-war period, the post-war migration of displaced persons and the new wave of labour migration following Ukrainian independence in 1991. This has resulted in the Ukrainian Diaspora now being located not only in North America, but also in Australia, South America, eastern and western Europe and in countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union.

Satzewich looks at both the different factions within the North American Ukrainian Diaspora, and at the ways in which the Diaspora has retained its identity. After examining the North American Diaspora's response to the post-war suppression of Ukrainian language, culture and religion in Ukraine, and the response to the war crimes issue of the 1980s and 1990s, the book concludes by exploring how the Diaspora's relationship with Ukraine has changed since the fall of the iron curtain.

This book will be essential for students interested in Diaspora identity and politics, as well as Ukrainian and eastern European studies.

Vic Satzewich is Professor in the Department of Sociology at McMaster University. In addition to his work on the Ukrainian Diaspora, his research interests include aboriginal/non-aboriginal relations, international migration, and racism. He is the author of *Racism and the Incorporation of Foreign Labour* (1991), co-author of *First Nations: Race, Class and Gender Relations* (2001) and editor of *Racism and Social Inequality in Canada* (1998).

GLOBAL DIASPORAS
Series Editor: Robin Cohen

The assumption that minorities and migrants will demonstrate an exclusive loyalty to the nation-state is now questionable. Scholars of nationalism, international migration and ethnic relations need new conceptual maps and fresh case studies to understand the growth of complex transnational identities. The old idea of 'diaspora' may provide this framework. Though often conceived in terms of a catastrophic dispersion, widening the notion of diaspora to include trade, imperial labour and cultural diasporas can provide a more nuanced understanding of the often positive relationships between migrants' homelands and their places of work and settlement.

This book forms part of an ambitious and interlinked series of volumes trying to capture the new relationships between home and abroad. Historians, political scientists, sociologists and anthropologists from a number of countries have collaborated on this forward-looking project. The series includes two books which provide the defining, comparative and synoptic aspects of diasporas. Further titles focus on particular communities, both traditionally recognized diasporas and those newer claimants who define their collective experiences and aspirations in terms of diasporic identity.

This series is associated with the Transnational Communities Programme at the University of Oxford funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council.

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THE UKRAINIAN DIASPORA
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First published 2002
by Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2003.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-203-21749-7 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-203-27323-0 (Adobe eReader Format)
ISBN 0-415-29658-7 (Print Edition)

FOR UNCLE MYKHAILO AND
COUSINS OLHA AND HALYA,
WHO DIDN'T MAKE IT
INTO THE DIASPORA

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been some time in the making and I have incurred a number of debts along the way. Sergei Vainykof helped with research assistance, as did Heather Gillespie, who is now at law school learning the intricacies of how to sue people. Patrick Kyba was a wonderful traveling companion on a research visit to Ukraine. Even though they may not have known exactly why I was asking so many questions, I would like to thank Oryst Pidzamecky, Michael Wawryshyn, Eugene Duvalko, Ihor Bardyn, Wsevolod Isajiw, Dirk Hoerder, Christiane Hartzig, Bob Miles, Christina Isajiw and Father Walter Makarenko for bits and pieces of information, and advice, over the years. Ron Cahute's unique sense of humor and take on life, along with Melanie Cahute and *Dobrodiyka* Olga Makarenko's kindness, warmth and hospitality will always be appreciated. While not able to address all of their concerns, the thoughtful comments of the referees were very helpful in revising the manuscript. Freya Godard and Frances Nugent provided efficient editorial advice. I also want to thank Robin Cohen for initially encouraging me to take up this topic, and Mari Shullaw at Routledge for sticking with this project. The staff in the Deparanent of Sociology at McMaster University, including Jackie Tucker, Olga Cannon, Corrine Jehle, Wendy Goncalves and Maria Wong, are absolute treasures and help run a busy department. I am also fortunate to work with a number of wonderful colleagues who played only indirect, but nevertheless important, roles in this book. Charlene Miall has an infectious sense of humor and invariably provides sensible advice. Pam Sugiman has a unique way of keeping things in perspective. Billy Shaffir introduced me to the joys of smoked meat sandwiches, John Fox shares his interest and expertise in *The Sopranos* with me, and Rhoda Hassmann has 'talked me down' a number of times. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage provided substantial, and much appreciated, financial contributions that enabled me to conduct the research for this book. Some of the ideas in this book were presented at the

'Year 2020' conference, organized by the Ukrainian American Professionals and Businesspersons Association of New York and New Jersey; the Recasting European and Canadian History Conference held in Bremen, Germany; and at a race and ethnicity symposium in the Department of Sociology at McMaster. Linda Mahood read the chapters many times, and the manuscript in full. She is the reason I drive so fast from work to home. Jack and Lucy Satzewich, as usual, make sure that I do not get too distracted by my work, which is, as Martha Stewart says, 'a good thing'. Any and all errors, of course, are my responsibility.

INTRODUCTION

On October 23, 1994, a fifteen-minute segment of the CBS news-magazine program *60 Minutes* was devoted to the increase in anti-Semitism in Ukraine since that country became independent in 1991. The item was called 'The Ugly Face of Freedom' and was hosted by Morely Safer. The program showed snippets from interviews with Jewish leaders who described what appeared to be rampant anti-Semitism in Ukraine. It also juxtaposed events and organizations that were associated with atrocities committed against Jews during World War II with present-day Ukraine; the implication was that in the 1990s Ukrainians were continuing in their alleged long-standing and traditional hatred of Jews. In one scene the program overlaid images of goose-stepping German soldiers during the war with a torchlight march of a present-day Ukrainian youth organization. The images were accompanied by the sound of marching boots, implying that the youths were the new brownshirts of Ukrainian ethnic nationalism. Elsewhere in the program, Safer commented:

> Many of the Ukrainian men of Lvov [Lviv] who marched off as members of the SS never returned, killed fighting for Hitler. But last summer, a good number of the survivors, veterans of the SS Galicia Division, did return for a reunion laid on by the Lvov City Council – Ukrainian SS veterans now living in Canada, the United States and Ukraine. Nowhere, certainly not in Germany, are the SS so openly celebrated. And for this reunion, Cardinal Lubachevsky, head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, gave his blessing, just as his predecessor did to the SS more than 50 years ago.
>
> (Cited in Kuropas, 1995)

Near the end of the program Safer moderated the allegations with the comment 'that Ukrainians . . . are not genetically anti-Semitic'.

But the Ukrainian diaspora community considered that he meant exactly the opposite (Gregorovich, 1998). The broadcast raised the ire of Ukrainians in the United States and Canada. In the weeks following, thousands of letters were reportedly sent to CBS protesting the bias and hatred expressed in the program, and demonstrations were held at the CBS offices in Washington and New York (Kuropas, 1995). In addition, an ad hoc committee of Ukrainian Americans met with Safer, the producer Jeffrey Fager and the vice-president of CBS Joseph Peyronnin to demand an apology and a retraction. The CBS executives stood by the story, but they did agree to 'revisit the issue'.

At least two detailed critiques of the program were published, one by the noted Ukrainian-American historian Myron Kuropas (1995) and another by Andrew Gregorovich (1998) of the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre in Toronto. Among other things, both critiques argued that it was not anti-Semitism that led Ukrainians to join the Waffen-SS during the war, but rather their hatred of the Soviet system. The critiques also commented on the seemingly deliberate mistranslation of the term *zhyd*, which in Ukrainian means Jew, but which was translated as 'kike' in the television program, and the meaning of the wartime activities of organizations like the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

> The program distorted historical fact, provided mistranslations of statements originally made in Ukrainian, altered dates on which events allegedly occurred, used statements out of context, produced unsubstantiated photos, accepted statements from discredited sources at face value, and, in numerous instances, employed half-truths to insinuate a rising tide of anti-Semitism exists in western Ukraine.
>
> (Kuropas, 1995)

The published criticisms also considered the motives behind the program. Kuropas and Gregorovich both suggested that larger geo-politics were at play. Kuropas called the program a 'willful act of hate mongering . . . The fingerprints of the KGB can be seen all over the CBS broadcast' (Kuropas, 1995). Like others in the diaspora community, he considered the program to be part of a covert attempt by the Russian security forces to undermine the legitimacy of independent Ukraine. In response to his rhetorical question 'is it possible that Mr Safer and the CBS were hoodwinked by a Russian agent?' Kuropas pointed out that this was not the first time that an American journalist was fooled by 'the Russians'. As evidence, he referred to the *New York Times* reporter Walter Duranty and his false reporting, sixty years earlier, of the famine that was

orchestrated by Joseph Stalin in Soviet Ukraine in 1932–3 (see Carynnyk, 1986a, 1986b).

The suspicions about a Russian conspiracy were also fed by the timing of the broadcast, which coincided with Leonid Kuchma's first visit to North America as President of Ukraine: 'The purpose of the program was to blacken Ukraine and its 53 million people' and to undermine the international stature of the country (Gregorovich, 1998).

Others, however, argued that the program was simply an example of tabloid journalism. Askold Lozynskyj (1999) of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) and president of the Ukrainian World Congress did not believe that CBS had an anti-Ukrainian agenda *per se*; at the same time he did not think the program was simply 'a mistake'. In his view, the producers were marginally aware of a lingering historical hostility between Ukrainians and Jews and exploited that hostility to create a sensational story. And some members of the Jewish community agreed. In fact, the Ukrainian diaspora's case against the program was supported by a number of Jewish leaders who also disavowed the allegations in the program. Yaakov Bleich, the American-born Chief Rabbi of Ukraine, who was interviewed for the program and whose statements appeared to be particularly damning, later stated that his comments were taken out of context and that the program did 'not convey the true state of affairs in Ukraine' (cited in Gregorovich, 1998: 3). Other Jewish leaders, including Martin Plax, area director of the American Jewish Congress in Cleveland, Ohio, complained that the distortions in the program did little to help the Jews in Ukraine:

> The Jews who have chosen to remain in Ukraine and to live Jewishly cannot be aided by an eruption of indignation and panic. We can give aid to them however, by supporting the forces that exist within Ukraine which are striving to contain any hatred and promote stability and moderation. If we do anything other, we may learn another lesson: that those who distort the present, by assuming that nothing has changed from the past, will increase the probability that they might relive the past from which they hoped to escape.
>
> (Plax, n.d.)

In the light of CBS's unwillingness either to retract the story or to apologize, members of the Ukrainian-American community turned to the courts. At first they considered a class action lawsuit against CBS on the grounds that it had defamed the Ukrainian people. This strategy was dropped because in US law the definition of aggrieved parties in class

action cases is fairly narrow. Instead two individuals, Alexander Serafyn and Oleg Nikolyszn, with the support of the UCCA and a number of prominent Ukrainian-American lawyers, petitioned the American Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reject CBS's application for broadcast licenses for stations it had acquired in Detroit, Michigan, and Providence, Rhode Island. Their argument was that since the *60 Minutes* item distorted the news, the network had failed to serve the public interest (Serafyn *et al.*, 1998: 7).

The legal wrangling lasted for nearly four and a half years, but in April 1999 a settlement was reached. The complainants agreed to drop their petition to the FCC, and in exchange CBS agreed to cover the legal fees of the community, which amounted to some US$328,000. The attorneys representing the complainants in turn donated their fees from CBS to a number of Ukrainian-American organizations.[1]

In the opinion of the UCCA and other members of the Ukrainian-American community, the settlement was neither a complete victory nor a complete defeat. Though the Ukrainian diaspora in the United States and Canada was disappointed that CBS stood by the story and refused to admit that it had distorted any facts, it regarded the settlement, and the negotiations that led to it, as a moral and political victory. Arthur Belendiuk (1999) a Ukrainian-American attorney who helped present the community's case, observed that the Ukrainian Americans had stood up for themselves and that they would be a force to be reckoned with the next time that CBS or any other media outlet defamed Ukraine or Ukrainians. Another Ukrainian-American attorney involved in the case, Donna Pochoday, argued that

> the Ukrainian community should be aware that this is probably the closest we've ever come to protect our interest as a group in cases of news distortion and defamation of our good name. Other groups have not been afraid, nor would we as a Ukrainian American community be afraid or too timid to have our voices heard.
>
> (Pochoday, 1999)

And at a conference of Ukrainian-American organizations held in Washington, DC in June 1999, Askold Lozynskyj caustically 'thanked' CBS for having galvanized the community and drawn 'the baby boomer' generation of Ukrainian Americans into organized Ukrainian diaspora life.

This episode in the life of the Ukrainian community in North America is also significant because it highlights a central dilemma in the academic literature on both the sociology of ethnicity and the sociology of migration:

what is the relationship between ancestral homelands and members of ethnic groups who have left that homeland, or have never even set foot in it? This dilemma, which in turn touches on a number of broad theoretical and conceptual questions about the intersection of ethnic identity, group boundary maintenance, history and historical memory, and ancestral homelands, forms the intellectual backdrop for this book. Although the issues are relevant to many different ethnic groups in various places and situations, this book explores that dilemma by using the case of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America.

Chapter 1 is a theoretical chapter that outlines some of the main conceptual issues, in particular the concept of diaspora as a heuristic device. I review competing definitions of diaspora and argue that, while there are a number of conceptual problems associated with how diasporas are defined, the concept and some recent typologies remain useful because of the questions that they generate and the kinds of sign posts they provide for further research and comparative analysis. In addition, the chapter briefly sketches some of the similarities and differences between the Ukrainian diaspora experience and that of other groups.

Chapter 2 asks two questions about the first wave of Ukrainian migration and the process of diaspora formation. Why did Ukrainians begin to leave their homes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? And what impact did international migration, settlement in a new land and ethnic elites have on the formation of the identity of the first wave of migrants? I argue that Ukrainians left their ancestral homelands to search for wage labor. However, in addition to providing Ukrainian peasants with work and land that they could farm, emigration at the turn of the century also resulted in their discovery and definition of themselves as 'Ukrainian'. Put differently, part of the process of diaspora formation involved becoming conscious of themselves as Ukrainian.

Chapter 3 deals with the second wave of migration, which occurred between the wars. In particular it asks why Ukrainians left their homelands during those years, and it traces the impact of World War I and the Russian Revolution on the way that group boundaries were formed within the Ukrainian diaspora. These critical events in Ukraine's history helped solidify a division that had already begun to emerge in the diaspora between nationalists and communists, and one of the purposes of this chapter is to examine how those divisions played themselves out in relation to the diaspora politics of the homeland. I will show that various nationalist groups in the diaspora thought that the diaspora condition was temporary and they therefore plotted for, and worked towards, Ukrainian independence from both Poland and Russia. For diaspora communists, the Russian Revolution provided an opportunity for a return movement to develop,

and every effort was made to support efforts to create a Ukrainian socialist state. What is theoretically interesting about these episodes in the history of the interwar Ukrainian diaspora in North America is that they show that diasporas do not necessarily display just one attitude towards the homeland, and that hostility within groups can be just as important to the formation and maintenance of group boundaries as hostility between groups.

Chapter 4 deals with the third wave of migration: the displaced persons. It traces the influence of World War II on emigration from Ukraine, and discusses the postwar solidification of political factions within the nationalist side of the diaspora and the uneasy relationship between longer-settled members of the nationalist-oriented diaspora and the highly politicized displaced persons, who took on the characteristics of a victim diaspora.

Chapter 5 is an examination of the organizational structure of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America. By looking at the concept of institutional completeness, the chapter asks how Ukrainians have used ethnic organizations to maintain the boundaries and consciousness of their group. The chapter shows that Ukrainians have maintained a strong ethnic group consciousness over many decades and that the diaspora has been a site of creativity for Ukrainians. Through the formation of umbrella organizations and through the use of the Internet, the diaspora has also tried, albeit with only mixed success, to maintain a sense of solidarity among its members, both those in North America and those in other parts of the world.

Chapter 6 examines the effect that the Cold War and the associated human rights violations in Soviet Ukraine had on the Ukrainian diaspora in North America. It begins by discussing Soviet repression of the Ukrainian people, language and culture in Ukraine after World War II. It then asks how those violations of human rights in Soviet Ukraine affected the consciousness and political mobilization of Ukrainians in North America. In other words, how did Ukrainians respond to their inability to return to Soviet Ukraine, how did they mobilize to support the wider Ukrainian population, and Ukrainian dissidents in particular, in Soviet Ukraine, and how did these activities help to solidify, and at the same time help undermine, group boundaries?

Chapter 7 describes the sense of historical and contemporary victimization that permeates some aspects of Ukrainian diaspora life in North America. The emphasis is on how members of the Ukrainian diaspora responded to Nazi war crimes trials, and to the related allegations of Ukrainian anti-Semitism in the 1980s and 1990s. The chapter also examines the resentment displayed by some members of the Ukrainian diaspora towards the Canadian and American governments for not placing the famine in Soviet Ukraine in 1932–3 on the same philosophical and political terrain as the Jewish Holocaust. It suggests that while victimization is not

the only, or even the most important, narrative in Ukrainian diaspora community life, the cultivation of a sense of victimization may be one avenue by which the Ukrainian diaspora maintains its identities and group boundaries; it may also be one way to draw new generations of diaspora Ukrainians into the ethnic fold.

Chapter 8 examines the effect that Ukrainian independence has had on the organized Ukrainian diaspora. In many ways, independence has been a case of prophecy realized. The fall of the Iron Curtain and the rise of an independent Ukrainian state were what many individuals and organizations in the postwar North American Ukrainian diaspora had longed and worked for. Independence has accordingly resulted in increased opportunities for the diaspora to return to Ukraine and has resulted in a new fourth wave of emigration from Ukraine. However, the developments have had certain unforeseen consequences. The question is being asked whether there needs to be a Ukrainian diaspora now that Ukraine is independent, how do longer-settled members of victim and cultural diasporas interact with new labor migrants, and who the more authentic Ukrainians are. In the conclusion, I return to the issue of diaspora and discuss some of the ways in which the concept of diaspora needs to be revised, expanded and modified in the light of the Ukrainian experience.

1

UKRAINIANS AND THE CONCEPT OF DIASPORA

In the years immediately following World War II, the term 'diaspora' was not used by Ukrainians living outside of Ukraine. Instead, it was much more common for them to think of themselves either as being 'in the emigration' or as 'an immigration'. The diaspora label tended to be used only when Soviet authorities wanted to discredit Ukrainian émigré nationalists living abroad who were calling for the overthrow of the Soviet regime and the liberation of Ukraine. For the Soviets, diaspora was a pejorative term that referred to groups of people living abroad who had ulterior political motives for their interest in their ancestral homelands in the Soviet Union. As Harvard historian Roman Szporluk (1998) explains: 'The Soviets needed to characterize immigrants negatively since the immigration fought against the "silent liquidation" that was proceeding against Ukrainians in a complicated historical and political process'. Szporluk suggests, however, that the politicized Ukrainians 'in the emigration' were not, in fact, offended by the diaspora label and gradually embraced it as part of their self-definition.

Since the late 1980s, the term diaspora has increasingly formed part of the everyday vocabulary of Ukrainians living outside of Ukraine, who routinely use the term to describe their organizational life and identity. For instance, in October, 1998, the Ukrainian American Professionals and Businesspersons Association of New York and New Jersey organized a 'Year 2020' conference. Its goal was to begin to formulate answers to four fundamental questions. 'Will there be a North American Ukrainian diaspora in the year 2020?', 'Does an independent Ukraine enrich and invigorate the diaspora, or undermine its reason for being?', 'Will a new wave of immigrants play a key role in the diaspora's future?' and 'Are the futures of the Canadian and American diasporas tied to each other, or will their paths be shaped by markedly different circumstances?' In 1994, the Shevchenko Scientific Society in New York helped fund the publication of *Ukraine and Ukrainians Throughout the World: A Demographic and Sociological*

Guide to the Homeland and its Diaspora. The Society is currently preparing an encyclopedia of the diaspora, which is intended to be a source of information about all Ukrainian communities outside of Ukraine. And, to complicate things even further, the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council and the Ukrainian World Congress (each of which claims to represent the interests of Ukrainians in the diaspora), see Ukrainians living abroad as made up of two diasporas – an 'eastern' diaspora, which lives in various countries in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and a 'western' diaspora, which lives in North and South America, western Europe and Australia.

The postwar shifts in the way that the concept of diaspora has been used in reference to Ukrainians outside of Ukraine inevitably raises the question of definitions. In other words, what does the concept of diaspora refer to, and why is it a useful tool for carving up social reality? Before discussing the concept of diaspora, this chapter briefly considers some of the parallels between the Ukrainian diaspora and other diasporas. This will set the stage for a critical theoretical analysis of the concept of diaspora, and for a discussion of the scope and limitations of this study.

Comparing the Ukrainian diaspora

In addition to being a label used by Ukrainians to refer to themselves, the idea of a diaspora, through implicit and explicit comparisons with the Jewish diaspora, has helped Ukrainians living abroad to understand their own community life and politics (Bardyn, 1993). Indeed, according to Manoly Lupul (1990: 466), 'the Jewish people – . . . members of a persevering and successful diaspora that has regained its promised land – have always been the model for Ukrainians in Canada'. According to Lupul (1990: 466), discussions of Ukrainian-Canadian issues are replete with references to the Jewish community, and '*Dyvitsia na zhydiv* [look at the Jews] has been the *coup de grace* or call-to-arms of many a Ukrainian Canadian leader'. Some diaspora Ukrainians have, for example, pointed out that after the founding of the state of Israel, Jews in the diaspora did the same soul-searching that Ukrainians are now doing about the new independent Ukraine. It was once thought that the existence of Israel makes the Jewish diaspora unnecessary, and the creation of an independent Ukrainian state in 1991 is sometimes thought of in the same way. Others have pointed out that even though many diaspora Ukrainians are disillusioned with certain facets of life and government in independent Ukraine, many Jews living abroad have consistently stood behind the state of Israel even though they have their own reservations about some of the government's policies. Furthermore, Ukrainians have pointed out that

Jews are concerned about the long-term survival of their communities in many of the same ways as Ukrainians. For example, *The Vanishing American Jew*, by Alan Dershowitz (1997), has both comforted and alarmed some Ukrainians in the diaspora. Some find solace in the fact that 'even the Jews' are being assimilated and are seeing the fortunes of their organizations decline; others suggest that if the Jews cannot withstand the forces of assimilation and survive as a diaspora, then there is little hope for groups that appear to be less powerful and less organized.

The persecution of the Jews also has parallels in the narratives of Ukrainian diaspora life, for many diaspora Ukrainians argue that their ethnic group has been the victim of genocide, and that there was a Ukrainian Holocaust that was at least equal in horror to the Jewish Holocaust. The famine of 1932–3 is considered as a deliberate attempt by Stalin and the Soviet regime to physically annihilate the Ukrainians as an ethnocultural group. And the Soviet government's subsequent policy of Russification is seen as a further attempt to destroy Ukrainians, culturally if not physically.

In fact, much of the vocabulary that forms the discourse about the Jewish Holocaust is increasingly being used by Ukrainians when they describe their own experiences and those of their ancestors. At the 1997 World Forum of Ukrainians, for instance, the Ukrainian World Congress proposed that the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council be authorized to lobby the Ukrainian government to strike a 'Second Nuremberg' where leaders of the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and of Ukraine would be tried for crimes against 'the Ukrainian people and the human race'. These crimes 'include forced starvation, terror, deportation, genocide and penal servitude'. The Congress also wanted the Forum to ask the Ukrainian government to proclaim a Ukrainian Day of Sorrow and Memory for all Ukrainians who died in their fight for the survival of the Ukrainian nation (Ukrainian World Congress, 1997). In that same vein, the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association (UCCLA), which was formed, in part, to lobby the Canadian government to acknowledge, and pay restitution for, the internment of Ukrainian Canadians during World War I, uses emotion-laden terms from both the Cold War and the Holocaust to describe what happened to the Ukrainians. Terms like 'concentration camps' and 'gulag archipelago' are used regularly to describe the Canadian internment operations. The UCCLA web site, for example, describes the camps as the Canadian 'gulag archipelago', an obvious reference to the Soviet Union and its treatment of dissidents. Similarly, the term 'concentration camps' evokes images of barbed wire fences, emaciated prisoners, brutal prison guards and, above all, the Jewish Holocaust.

Though Ukrainians less often compare themselves with groups other than Jews, the experiences of other diaspora groups may actually be just as relevant, in particular those of other east central Europeans in North America such as Latvians, Lithuanians, Hungarians and Poles. For the Ukrainians and other east central Europeans, their ancestral homelands were all dominated by the Soviet Union and this gave them a number of things in common as diasporas. First, they were physically cut off from their homelands. Certainly the Soviet Union and countries of the eastern bloc liked to see the occasional diaspora socialist or communist return temporarily to the homeland to tell Soviet workers how well off they were and how exploited the workers were in the west, but large numbers of diaspora returnees were not welcome, particularly if they had nationalist political aspirations.

Second, until the 1980s, not many people in these communities were keen on actually returning while their countries were under Soviet control. The fear of arrest or repression for having left the homeland, particularly among those who escaped during the chaos of World War II, acted as a strong brake on any return movement. Even going back temporarily as a tourist or to visit relatives was out of the question.

Third, the anti-Soviet attitudes of many people in the diasporas who came from east central Europe, or whose ancestors had come from there, led to an active political mobilization against human rights abuses and the wider Soviet domination of their homelands. Many longed for, and worked toward, the day that their ancestral homelands might one day be free.

Fourth, because of Soviet restrictions on emigration, for many years east central European groups in North America saw very few new arrivals from the homeland. Some individuals did occasionally escape from the Soviet Union or the larger eastern bloc in circumstances that were sometimes not dissimilar to the adventures of James Bond, but their numbers were far less than the masses of emigrants who left before and during World War II. In fact, the decades-long drought in new immigrants for many east central European diaspora groups in North America may mean that they all have similar difficulties integrating new members into existing structures and organizations. This issue certainly requires further research.

Fifth, the diaspora has been a site of creativity for many east central European groups. During the period between the end of World War II and the rise of independent states in the former Soviet Union and eastern bloc, eastern European diaspora groups felt that in many ways their authentic language, culture and traditions were making their last stand in the diaspora. The suppression by the Soviet Union of languages other than Russian, and its efforts to create *Homo sovieticus* in a Russian mold, seriously threatened the ethnic cultures and languages, or so it appeared in the

diaspora. For Ukrainians and other east central European groups, some of the impetus to maintain the language and culture of the ethnic group came from that larger political subtext.

Finally, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Iron Curtain have provided new opportunities for members of these diasporas to reacquaint themselves with their ancestral homelands. However, after decades of separation, the freer movement of goods, people, ideas and information to and from the homeland may be having unintended consequences. Though it is not entirely accurate to compare the 'reunification' of the Ukrainian diaspora and Ukraine with the reunification of East and West Germany, commentators have noted how both forms of 'reunification' have resulted in a greater sense of the differences between 'us' and 'them'. In some ways, getting reacquainted has only led to a greater recognition of the differences.

Despite these similarities, there are also differences between the Ukrainian case and that of other east central European groups. Though this idea is still speculative and needs further research, the Ukrainian diaspora seems to have been less successful in becoming involved in the politics of the homeland than other diasporas. The Ukrainian diaspora's involvement in the politics of the homeland also seems to be less welcome in the homeland. While there are political parties in Ukraine that draw at least some of their resources and leadership from the diaspora, the extent of Ukrainian diaspora involvement in politics in the homeland seems to differ markedly from that of places like Latvia. The President of Latvia, Vaira Vike-Freiberga, left the country as a child, grew up in refugee camps in Germany and spent much of her adult life as a professor of psychology at the University of Montreal. However, in 1999 she was elected President. Though the case of a person who had spent most of her life in the diaspora and has then become a head of state in the ancestral homeland may be more the exception than the rule, it does suggest a dramatically greater social acceptance of diaspora involvement in the politics of the homeland. And, finally, comparatively fewer diaspora Ukrainians seem willing to 'return' to, or to move to their ancestral homeland, than members of other east central European diasporas. The size, nature and extent of 'return' movements are difficult to measure, and further comparative research on this topic is also necessary. However, if there is a difference between the Ukrainian diaspora and other diasporas in the willingness to return, one reason may be the make-up of those different communities. The contemporary Ukrainian diaspora, particularly in North America, has comparatively few first-generation immigrants. In 1986, for example, 92 percent of the Ukrainian population in Canada had been born in Canada (Isajiw and Makuch, 1994: 328), and in 1980 83.1 percent of the American-Ukrainian

population had been born in the United States (Markus and Wolowyna, 1994: 363). If the pull of the 'old country' grows weaker with the number of generations that people are removed from the ancestral homeland, such differences may be due to general sociological processes rather than the particularities of different ethnic groups.

The concept of diaspora

Even though the term 'diaspora' is widely used in Ukrainian communities in North America, and even though parallels can be drawn between the diaspora experience of the Ukrainians and that of Jews and other east central European groups, not everyone considers it a useful term. The dissenting view has not been expressed systematically, but some reservations about the applicability of the diaspora concept appeared in an article in the Canadian *Ukrainian News* in October 1998. Thomas Prymak, a professor of history at the University of Toronto, took issue with the recent tendency of many ethnic communities, including Ukrainians, to refer to themselves as a diaspora. In his view, there are three reasons why it is inaccurate to call Ukrainians a diaspora. First, he argued that, historically speaking, the vast majority of Ukrainians have always lived in their European homeland. Despite various waves of emigration from the late nineteenth century, the reality is that most Ukrainians have stayed home and therefore have no history as a diaspora. Second, he suggests that only a small proportion of Ukrainians left Ukraine for political reasons. The comparatively few political émigrés from Ukraine are not, in his view, very representative of the total emigration, which was made up largely of labor migrants who left Ukraine for essentially economic reasons. Third, he argues that, in the case of Canada, people of Ukrainian ancestry are so thoroughly assimilated that the vast majority think of themselves as Canadian first and Ukrainian second. In view of the high rates of language loss and intermarriage, he suggests that the term diaspora is of limited use in describing the Ukrainian-Canadian community (Prymak, 1998).

Both Prymak's reservations about the concept of diaspora, and the ease with which the term is used within the organized Ukrainian community raise the question of definitions. Specifically, how should diaspora be defined, and does the term help us understand the social reality of emigrants and their ancestors who left an ancestral homeland?

The penchant of ethnic groups to use the term diaspora as part of their self-definition has its parallel in the academic world, where the word has experienced a certain amount of conceptual inflation. A keyword search of sociological abstracts for 'diaspora' turns up eighteen scholarly social science papers published in 1980–1, but no fewer than eighty-seven papers

published in 1999–2000. Cohen (1997: ix) points out that the word is derived from the Greek terms *speiro* (to sow) and *dia* (over), and was originally used to refer to processes of migration and colonization. In the 1970s, it referred more narrowly to a forcible collective banishment, and was applied mainly to the Jews or, occasionally, to Palestinians and Armenians. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, scholars in the area of Black Studies began to refer increasingly to the African diaspora or the Black Atlantic. And, by the 1990s, any group that had a history of migration and community formation was termed a diaspora (Safran, 1991; Akenson, 1995). Indeed, the term has become so popular that sociologist Floya Anthias calls it a 'mantra' (Anthias, 1998: 557), and historian Donald Akenson (1995: 382) a 'massive linguistic weed' that threatens to take over academic discourse about immigration and ethnicity.

Anthias (1998) finds two general ways that the concept of diaspora has been employed in scholarly analysis. One approach likens diaspora to a social condition and process; the other uses 'diaspora' as a descriptive, typological tool. According to Anthias (1998), the conceptualization of diaspora as a social condition and process tends to be linked to post-modern understandings of globalization and recent literature on transnationalism (Basch *et al.*, 1994). The diaspora condition is seen to be structured by the complicated interplay between migration and settlement. It is characterized by complex and contradictory sentiments, attitudes and practices that are 'put into play through the experience of being *from* one place and *of* another' (Anthias, 1998: 565). Migration results in the formation of new and fluid identities and social boundaries, which in turn are rooted in a desire to be different within a global context that seems increasingly to emphasize homogeneity. These new identities are also seen to result in wider social and political changes, particularly in the hybrid spaces of global cities, where numerous diasporas come into contact and interact. In some formulations, new diaspora identities and hybrid social spaces are believed to undermine traditional understandings of ethnic identity and the nation state. Traditional ethnic identities become destabilized in the diaspora because of multiple forms of interaction with other diaspora groups; national boundaries become less significant because diaspora groups often have loyalties to two or more different states. Thus, the emphasis within the 'diaspora-as-condition approach' is on the ways that new identities, cultural forms and social spaces are created and negotiated in the course of complex interactions between different kinds of 'home'.

The typological approach, on the other hand, is linked to the work of Robin Cohen (1997). Cohen, like the proponents of the first approach, is dissatisfied with the traditional analyses of international migration and ethnic relations. In particular, he is critical of the static terms in which

ethnic-relations theory has conceptualized movement from, and return to, a 'homeland'. Leaving and returning 'home' are much more complicated, multilayered and interactive than implied by concepts like migration, settlement and assimilation. In Cohen's view, many groups that have migrated display complex loyalties and emotional attachments to an 'old country'. These vary in both intensity and direction, but they nevertheless signal an attachment to an ancestral homeland and a larger imagined community.

Cohen uses the cases of the Afro-Caribbean, British, Armenian, Chinese, Jewish, Lebanese and Sikh communities to construct both an ideal-type and a typology of different kinds of diaspora. He suggests that diasporas normally exhibit several of the following features:

- dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically
- alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions
- a collective memory and myth about the homeland
- an idealization of the supposed ancestral home
- a return movement
- a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over time
- a troubled relationship with host societies
- a sense of solidarity with co-ethnic members in other societies
- the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in tolerant host countries.

(Cohen, 1997: 180)

Though an important element in Cohen's (1997) definition is a forcible and traumatic dispersal from an ancestral home, he includes mass movements of people for economic reasons, such as the search for work and trading partners. Political persecution is not, therefore, the only basis for the diaspora condition (Akenson, 1995: 382).

According to Cohen, the type of diaspora a group becomes, however, depends in large part on the reasons they left their country in the first place. *Victim diasporas*, such as the Jews and Armenians, were formed as a result of the traumatic events that occurred in their homeland and that resulted in large-scale and widespread dispersal. *Imperial diasporas* are formed out of the colonial or military ambitions of world powers. Despite cultural differences between Scots, English and Irish, Cohen argues that the people from the United Kingdom who moved overseas to the new dominions and the colonies formed a larger British imperial diaspora. *Labor diasporas* consist of groups who move mainly in search of wage labor; they include the Turks who, after World War II, emigrated to a variety of countries in Europe,

North America and the Middle East. *Trade diasporas*, like those formed by the Chinese merchants who emigrated to Southeast Asia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, consist of people who left their homelands to pursue opportunities as movers of goods and services in the emerging system of international trade. And, finally, Cohen develops the notion of a *cultural diaspora* to characterize the migration and settlement experiences of migrants of African descent from the Caribbean after World War II. These migrants are taken by Cohen (1997: 127–53) to be the paradigmatic case of people who have developed a unique culture and identity out of the influences of Africa, the Caribbean and their new countries of settlement.

Anthias (1998), who points to a number of specific limitations of both conceptions of diaspora, highlights two more general problems with the concept. The post-modern conception of diaspora tends to be silent on the contradictory tendencies of globalization. In relation to notions of hybrid identities, she argues that being in the diaspora and living in a globalized world can often reinforce and solidify old ethnic boundaries and attachments rather than undermine them. Even though the identities chosen by some individuals and groups may become more fluid as a result of movements back and forth, globalization and the diaspora condition may also lead to various kinds of fundamentalism (Anthias, 1998: 567). Referring to Cohen's typology, Anthias suggests that there is no logical reason why priority should be given to the reasons for dispersal as the basis for constructing a typology of different kinds of diaspora. The intentions of those who left their countries of origin may have little to do with the kind of diaspora a group becomes: 'The factors that motivate a group to move . . . do not constitute adequate ways of classifying groups for the purpose of analyzing their settlement and accommodation patterns, nor their forms of identity' (Anthias, 1998: 563).

A more general problem with both conceptions of diaspora is that those who use the term sometimes slip into a form of ethnic essentialism. The notion of a diaspora tends to invoke the homeland as the essential ethnicity of individuals and collectivities. But as theorists of ethnicity have pointed out, ethnicity is situational and socially negotiated in particular situations. While one's ancestors may 'objectively' be from one particular part of the world, the ethnicity that develops in the diaspora is the result of the complex interaction between homeland cultures and identities, and the cultures, identities and politics of countries of settlement. In turn, this means that the identity of a diaspora may be a reflection of the kind of society that the group lives in, rather than a basic and primordial ethnic attachment to an ancestral homeland (Anthias, 1998: 569).

This criticism has some resonance for the analysis of the Ukrainian diaspora. Though more research is needed on this issue, the differences