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Shifting Statuses and Lasting Codes in Janice Kulyk Keefer's *The Green Library*

Abstract I: In most of her writings, mainly in the novel *The Green Library* (1996), the Ukrainian-Canadian writer Janice Kulyk Keefer offers what can be seen as a collection of case-studies of the forming, dissolving and re-forming in colonial and postcolonial history, of patterns of class belonging and class perception. By dissecting the concept of class into its dynamic components, Kulyk Keefer shows how movements and changes due to the passing of time, the forming of new nations and the massive migration from country to country disclose deeply embedded, albeit partly unconscious, elements of thorny and even dangerous class images.

Abstract II: Nella maggior parte delle sue opere, soprattutto nel romanzo *The Green Library* (1996), la scrittrice ucraino-canadese Janice Kulyk Keefer presenta una collezione di esempi del formarsi, dissolversi e riformarsi nella storia coloniale e postcoloniale di modelli di appartenenza, di percezione e auto-percezione di classe. Esaminando il concetto di classe nelle sue componenti dinamiche, Kulyk Keefer mostra come i mutamenti dovuti al passare del tempo, al formarsi di nuovi stati e alla massiccia migrazione da paese a paese, rivelino elementi profondamente radicati, se pure in parte inconsci, di un difficile e persino pericoloso immaginario di classe.

We can perceive this truth on the political map of the contemporary world. For surely it is one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and exiles than

ever before in history, most of them as accompaniment to and, ironically enough, as afterthoughts of great post-colonial and imperial conflicts.

(Said 1994: 402)

The logic of Marxian class theory, however widespread and interpreted, was not enough in the last century and it is certainly not enough today to investigate or even describe the forming of new class hierarchies and their fractured and mobile interplay from the onset of colonialism, during colonial domination, within postcolonial new social realities, and, especially, as far as migration to and from colonial and postcolonial countries is concerned. Even when he discussed colonialism (1) Marx could not anticipate the future modifications and interplay of classes generated by throngs of people moving around the globe. Max Weber's stratification of the social system can offer a more apt set of instruments, if Weber's triad, class, status and party, is read as wealth, prestige and power, and if class is considered as being determined not only by wealth but also by prestige and power – prestige being the most difficult to assess. That is not to say that class issues have not been studied in the most crucial decades of colonialism and after. On the contrary Adorno, Lukács, Lucien Goldmann, to mention only three of the great historians, philosophers and critics who concerned themselves with class, wrote fundamental pages, including the examination of literary texts in their research (2). Yet class has hardly been studied in its specific connection with the fast moving new realities brought into being in the whole world by colonialism and migration (3). It can be said, of course, that class in Marxian and Weberian theory and class in the contexts created by migration are intrinsically different. To a certain extent this is obviously true, but, even if we can no longer speak of class struggle in the Marxian sense, and even if more attention is given to the emotional side of individuals as persons than to the masses, this is only partly true – indeed

education, money, social mobility or immobility, availability of commodities are only few of the elements constantly at work in almost every context connected with migration, determining emotional reactions and actions of paramount social consequences. Much can be found in Fanon's writings, if the concept of migration is broadened enough to include temporary migration (students for instance), and if a red thread of class allusions, which are no less strong for being most of the times implicit, is followed both through Fanon's intellectual analysis and his case studies (4). And still, even Fanon does not deal directly with any new concepts of class, and indeed in his times he could not, not yet. Nor have new theories been advanced in the recent decades to explore the extremely difficult and variegated question of class in our postcolonial, post-modern and globalised world. Most of the problems involved are all the more difficult to probe because they intersect cultural differences and because of irreversible historical processes and events.

While race, ethnicity and gender have been widely, and masterly, discussed by many scholars as well as exposed by writers of creative literature – and although class and the perception of class exude from most of their texts – class remains mostly un-investigated and undeniably disturbing in its emotional phenomenology. Many novelists, like Edward Morgan Forster, George Orwell, Joyce Cary, Brian Moore, Cyprian Ekwensi, Chinua Achebe, Nadine Gordimer, and more recently Tsitsi Dangarembga, Yvonne Vera, Zoë Wicomb (and there are many more) have been fairly explicit in their representations of class issues, even though in their works the narrative barycentre does not allow class to be specifically the main focus (5).

The following pages do not pretend to draft even the beginning of a theory but merely offer a very limited contribution to a more general future assessment of the 'class and migration' question by reading the novel *The Green Library* (1996) by the Canadian-Ukrainian Anglophone writer Janice Kulyk Keefer along the line of class perception and class material and emotional

conflicts. The choice of reading a novel as a form of testimony of socio-political events is fully conscious of the limits and risks of the fictional nature of a novel, and justified by *The Green Library* being itself an investigation into periods of Canadian and European history in the last century. Furthermore, as far as migration and its problems are concerned, Canada is a most interesting case study, albeit an extremely vast and multifaceted one, all the more interesting because paradoxically local and global at the same time. It is well-known that even in those settler colonies, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and partly South Africa, where the colonizers, who were at all effects themselves migrants, seemed to reproduce within their communities the class hierarchies they left in the country they came from, the class question proved itself to be problematic and too varied, even among the first colonizers themselves, to be given a systemic classification. Simultaneously, the local populations, who from the point of view of class identification could not simplistically be thought of as poor or proletarians or third state, imposed new general and biunivocal problems. The already fragmented pattern increased in complexity every time the arrival and settlement of new immigrants of diverse provenience caused the hierarchy to be modified – besides, the immigrants could not be seen as a homogeneous whole. It would be too long to give a description of class stratification (of which *The Green Library* gives more than a few eloquent illustrations) – suffice to remind the social implications of the acronym WASP: White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, or the twisted logic of the rules of the “Registration Population Act[s]” created by the Apartheid in South Africa (6). In addition, all the groups and individuals taking part in the class/classes agon at a certain stage became aware that they had a voice and that they needed their voice to be heard in the polyphonic whole of society – or rather, the whole system had to become interrelated and polyphonic to survive. One of the best achievements of *The Green Library* is precisely its drive towards a polyphonic network of perspectives, while the main narrative lines are maintained in tension.

That is not to say that *The Green Library* succeeds in solving centuries old problems, novels cannot and are not meant to do that, but they have the power of stirring thoughts by representing some of those problems and their costs in the past, and even by suggesting, as we shall see in Kulyk Keefer's novel, their cost in the future – Goldmann's theory of 'homology', as long as it is not used as a magic wand (7), may be helpful in reading *The Green Library*, while the novel itself offers disquieting representations of the risks of lazy generalisations and too confident rigidity in fixing social, economic, intellectual parameters to anything and anyone that appear as otherness.

When dealing with European Colonialism and with Imperialism in the Western World, the so-called Soviet Colonialism and/or Imperialism are too often barely mentioned if not altogether neglected; and yet their history and aftermaths bear many similarities to the Western ones, and become of paramount importance when they are put in connection with the worldwide phenomenon of migration in the twentieth century. Janice Kulyk Keefer's *The Green Library* offers postcolonial studies one more important contribution as it reminds the readers of the existence of that other colonialism and of the fierce and intricate struggles for power that before and after the advent of the Soviet Union continually changed the geography of Eastern Europe and caused several waves of emigration.

It would be unfair to give a detailed summary of the novel, the pleasures of the plot being in themselves an interesting feature of the book, yet at least a skeleton outline of the story is helpful: Eva Chown a forty three Torontonion WASP, divorced, mother of an eleven-year-old son, comfortably well off after her rich father's death, living with a partner, Daniel, and his adolescent daughter in a shabby big house in one of the chic areas of Toronto, while her partly deranged mother, Holly, resides in an elegant nursing home, one day receives an old photograph, dropped into her mail slot in an otherwise empty envelope. The photograph, clearly taken in the thirties of the twentieth century,

portrays a woman and a boy; the boy bears an astonishing resemblance to Eva's own son, Ben. There was a man with them, but he was cut off the photograph. This is the outset of Eva's pilgrimage, both in Toronto and in Kiev, towards the past of her family and the history of Ukrainian SSR, a country that until then had been not much more to her than "a dull green splotch on the page" of her atlas (Keefer 1996: 83). She discovers that her biological father is a Ukrainian refugee, her grandmother a Ukrainian poet, and that the 'cleaning woman', who worked for her family when she was a young girl, was not what she seemed to be. Eva will never know all the facts about her biological father's and paternal grandmother's lives – the reader will know much more.

It is perhaps too much to say that before looking at that photograph Eva, who is "not at all a political person" (Keefer 1996: 14), lived "inside the whale" (8), and yet it is not altogether preposterous, all the more so when it becomes clear that her mother, too, wanted to live in the whale, the whale for Holly being a small island in the middle of a lake in northern Canada, where she could not shake off class but, at least, ignore it, make friend with a native girl, Phonsine Kingfisher, and become the lover of a *bohunk* from the near lumber camp (9) – although one of the puzzling questions in the novel is Eva's mother lack of cultural, if not intellectual, awareness of the social world around her: she is certainly no Thoreau, while Phonsine is described as far more socially and economically alert than her. It must be said that, while it obviously includes elements of Kulyk Keefer's own experience as a Canadian-Ukrainian citizen and writer, the novel is not in the least autobiographical (10). Moreover, the fact that she created Eva Chown does not mean that Kulyk Keefer approves of her fictional character's ideas and behaviours, on the contrary Eva is more often than not the instrument of Kulyk Keefer's analysis and criticism of the social contexts shown in *The Green Library*.

Already in the first pages of *The Green Library*, we understand that the novel is structured like an ensemble of voices, literally conducted by a strong

unifying voice that connects and assigns a-solo parts, very different in length (Eva's by far the main voice), and keeps them under control by a rigorous third person narration. The narrative unfolds over more or less sixty years, from 1933 to 1993, alternating, not chronologically, Canadian and Ukrainian settings: Toronto and Porcupine Creek, Kiev and Soloveyko, a symmetry not devoid of irony. The novel is divided into eleven sections, some of which are subdivided into separated units; all sections and units bear the indication of the place and year in which the narrated events take place. In the first section, "Kiev, November 1941" it is soon clear to the reader that the woman sitting under the solemn trees of the "Green Library", a large tree-lined square in Kiev, is an intellectual, a poet – although the question here is not where does an intellectual fit in the social hierarchy, it is very clear that in *The Green Library* to be a poet, an artist and/or an intellectual, rates high in prestige, means to honour one's country, culture, family, and should be recognized as such anywhere in the world.

The representations of class interactions – long, short and very-short – are so many in the novel that a drastic selection is necessary. They start with a signal of Eva's personality: she habitually shares a bench in the park with a "bag lady"; and soon after with Daniel's running the Janus Travel Agency, specialized in dealing with a constellation of immigrants' problems. Daniel himself, depicted by Kulyk Keefer as a generous, sympathetic person, resents Eva's money and upper-class ascendancy every time he is brought to think that: "he grew up a working-class Jew and Mrs. Chown's daughter, a WASP princess from rich man's row" – Eva can afford "to work for next to nothing at a day-care" for children, while Dan's mother "still scrubs the floors of her poky, third-floor apartment in Ste. Marie de Grâce" (Keefer 1999: 17, 22). The theme of housing and urban areas as markers of class, rank and status, a study that could fill volumes, appears insistently in *The Green Library*.

In the second subdivision of the third section, "Toronto, 1963", it is not poetry but science in the form of vocational and professional aspirations that

seems to bridge the gap, although the incident elicits more bitter emotions than real communication. The scene is a vivid *mise en scène*, a superb example of hypotyposis:

Eva's father has amassed a collection of rocks and minerals that will one day find their way to the Royal Ontario Museum, but now his study is filled with glass-topped oak tables bearing specimens of all shapes and colours. [...] Alex discovers them one day when his mother is dusting the study. Refuses to leave the room [...] there is quick desperate speech in that language Eva can't understand. [...] She Eva follows the sound [...] she holds tight to the door frame, pushing just enough of her face into the openness to let her see him, the boy gripping the edges of the display case [...] (Keefer 1999: 62).

Eva's father, the rich and successful mining engineer Mr. Chown, coming back home early, enters the stage of his elegant study while the Ukrainian cleaning woman (he once corrected Eva: 'cleaning woman', not 'cleaning lady') and her son, Alex, are there, and Eva, unseen, is looking at them:

And what Eva thinks she will never forget is how the cleaning woman turns from her own language into English [...]: "Sorry, meester, dees my son, he no mean bad ting, he be good styoodent [...]" And how her father cuts through the woman's words as though they're rags she's polishing with – as though she doesn't exist as anything more than those rags [...] (Keefer 1999: 63).

Too long to be fully quoted, the tableau is a choreographic epitome of how both the perception and self-perception of class work, and will work in the future, on all the actors involved. The crucial element of language bursts in a second time when the boy introduces himself to the mining engineer as 'something of a rockhound'. Both Mr. Chown and his daughter, separately, are

impressed: language is a fitting key. The boy's mother recedes out of the room, even less heeded than her rags: "Later, when Eva learns the word 'abject', she will think of that self-consuming manner of withdrawal". Another character is part of the tableau, Oksanna, the dark-haired adolescent daughter of the cleaning woman, and she is "watching a woman abase herself", and especially watching, with a mixture of anger and envy, "her brother's defection to the side of the man who pays her mother ... for cleaning his house" (Keefer 1999: 63). Oksanna resents fiercely her family and her own situation in Canada. When her father goes back to Ukraine with her brother, the Chowns help her to enter the same school Eva goes to, where she proves herself a "top student, the most conspicuously gifted of them all", but this is in fact "another liability" (Keefer 1999: 80-82), and she is persistently made the target of discrimination and derision by her upper-middle-class classmates. Out of resentment, Oksanna takes revenge on Eva's budding sentiment for her brother, and is made in turn the victim of Eva's revenge. Eva manages to let their classmates know that Oksanna's mother is a 'cleaning woman', that she 'scrubs toilets for a living'. Kulyk Keefer deals most effectively with the episode, skilfully inserting in it a panoramic view, albeit fragmented, of the Canadian rigid class hierarchy in the fifties.

Denied return to Ukraine, Oksanna, with the help of well-deserved scholarships, goes to university and becomes Dr. Susan Frost, Dermatologist, MD, unmarried, rich and successful – Susan Frost is the exact translation of her Ukrainian name Oksanna Moroz. She utterly and rancorously refuses a dual identity, or, to go to the roots of her tenacity, she enters the Canadian mainstream out of class rancour. Now she is herself upper-class and wealthy, she owns a three-storied house "right downtown, in the Annex. An old house [...] expertly renovated" and "expensively furnished" (Keefer 1999: 89-90). Eva is duly impressed and humbled. What Kulyk Keefer implicitly tells the reader is that vocational and professional qualifications and achievements are established

markers of class belonging and, of course, of class perception and visibility, but simultaneously she makes Oksanna unhappiness patent and baffling at the same time.

Oksanna's mother, Olya Pavlenko (no longer Mrs. Moroz), lives in the same house, in another apartment, and even more than her daughter she

has undergone a metamorphosis [...]: the tightly braided hair now cut as beautifully as Oksanna's; the cheap, harsh housedresses changed into clothes so simple, so elegant they could only have come from the most expensive shops in town. [...] Her apartment is as crowded with objects as her daughter's [...] starved of them. [...] Eva's disconcerted ... then she kicks herself for the arrogance of the expectation: *the house of a cleaning woman, after all*. Everywhere there are paintings, books, newspapers. A kilim hangs on the wall, a kilim much finer than the ones she sees for sale in the expensive shops on Queen Street (Keefer 1999: 93).

It is Eva's turn now to feel, if not altogether inferior in elegance and culture, at least almost in awe: the 'cleaning woman' is a lady and an intellectual, she works in the Department of Slavic Studies at Toronto University, she speaks with a 'precise' accent and with agile "fluency and the simple power that goes with it" (Keefer 1999: 94).

The element of language is most important, but the theme of the house seems even more powerful throughout the novel: Eva's parents' house, rich and elegant; Eva's, expensive but shabby; Oksanna's, cold and sophisticated; Olya's, brimming with art and culture; Alex's, heart-rending in its squalor; Phonisne's house, with its pots of "rayon fuchsias" (Keefer 1999:46); the grimy "duplexes across from the railway tracks" in the part of Toronto called the Junction (Keefer 1999: 161) – and in addition a number of other drab houses fleetingly sketched within the most concise personal stories of minor characters, such as a waitress in a restaurant, a guard in a museum, a hotel receptionist in

Kiev. When he is a teenager in Toronto, in 1963, Alex dreams of an elegant house: “he respects Mr. Chown, admires him, wants to be exactly like him. To know what he does, to have a house like this, to have so beautiful a wife” (Keefer 1999: 150-151). After thirty years in Kiev, where he lives in a small one-room apartment, a “box” he calls it, Alex, *malgré soi*, keeps musing on his dream house in Toronto and of the lavishness of goods and commodities he could enjoy there. Alex is now “Professor Oleksander Moroz, Academy of Sciences, Kiev”, but Kulyk Keefer makes him feel his lack of money, commodities and a comfortable, if not elegant, house as lower-class markers, especially because it is Toronto he has in mind. Eva too, without any real act of volition, cannot help a sort of Torontonian class rating of Alex’s apartment in Kiev:

The vestibule, papered in a photograph of autumn leaves, the colours leaking, soured. The bathroom, scarcely larger than the chipped enamel tub; the toilet and its inextinguishable smell of drains. [...] and the shawl-draped table hardly bigger than an ironing board. And last, the verandah, looking out to nothing but the backs of other, equally dismal buildings (Keefer 1999: 180).

Eva cannot help but observe the unpredictable, dingy escalator, “the cracks in the plastic upholstery of the one chair, its padding coming out in dirt-coloured tufts, the large sack of onions under the sink” (Keefer 1999: 145, 155, 215).

In fact, most of the tension and even the rows between Eva and Alex in Kiev are basically related to money. The word ‘expensive’ recurs obsessively in the novel both in Toronto and Kiev, but especially in Kiev. Alex responds to the hard facts of his financial status with Orwellian (11) almost fatalistic rancour, Eva suffers every time a wound ambiguously inflicted to her both by her love for Alex and her inbred Canadian sense of class. She is “ashamed to admit that she owns a whole house, with twelve rooms in it for only four people” (Keefer 1999:159), but when she goes shopping for souvenirs her last ‘whole day’ in Kiev

she cannot bring herself, even for the sake of Alex, to buy objects she considers “ugly” and “shoddily manufactured” (Keefer 1999: 203). In turn, Alex thinks bitterly:

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 (Keefer 1999: 188).

The three parts of Max Weber's theory of social stratification are all pertinent but in *The Green Library* the emphasis is heavily on money. During their parting confrontation in Kiev, Alex bursts out: “I don't have your freedom, Eva [...]. You come to this country for two weeks, and you spend more money than most of us see in a year” (Keefer 1999: 214). Interestingly enough, Kulyk Keefer makes him use the word “freedom” in a situation redolent of a self-punishing self-perception of himself as lower-class. The prestige of being a professor and an intellectual is not enough, not even within the context of his home country, because a vision of the world outside is constantly present to him. It is mainly because of money and new prestige firmly tied together that Phonsine up north in her Porcupine Creek log-house considers her family successfully upgraded (Keefer 1999: 45).

The concept of class and the very word class have dramatically changed, things are extremely intricate and can be emotionally very dangerous. Kulyk Keefer's deontological honesty is remarkable: she makes her characters make mistakes and even dream, but she does not evade reality. She is evidently well informed as regards international migration, multicultural and transcultural theories and laws (Keefer 1996), and she is well aware that:

There is a great difference [...] between the optimistic mobility, the intellectual liveliness, and 'the logic of daring' described by the various

theoreticians on whose work I have drawn, and the massive dislocations, waste, misery, and horrors endured in our century's migrations and mutilated lives (Said 1994: 403).

The Green Library is an extremely crafted and rich novel, perhaps too much. If it is undeniable that Kulyk Keefer's emphasis falls mainly on personal and interpersonal conflicts but it is true, too, that her representation is also a perceptive analysis of the causes and outcomes of those conflicts, even in a far-reaching future. At the cost of falling into the trap of a 'fictional fallacy', that is the fallacy of dealing with fictional characters as if they were real persons in real life with a past and a future outside the first and last page of the novel, it is very difficult to resist the temptation of speculating about the future of Eva, Alex, Oksanna, and especially about the adult life of Eva's son Ben. Kulyk Keefer, very early in the novel, gives the reader an almost hidden flash-forward of Ben's and Julie's future:

Julie has become a medical engineer; she designs appliances and prostheses for paraplegics, amputees, stroke victims. [...] Unlike Julie, he Ben has no profession to speak of. Instead he has a rash of stamps and visas on his passport; he does odd jobs until he makes enough money to settle somewhere and paint for six months, and then he's off again (Keefer 1999: 16).

Ben, in a way, is a misfit, his maternal grandmother was a sort of misfit too, his maternal grandfather a war criminal, his Ukrainian grand-grandparents a poet and a painter. Indeed, it is not easy to assign him to a social class, he seems to live beyond the concept of class: a fascinating hint to read the novel along another of its threads, that of a seemingly noble, yet dubious and hazardous, sort of escapism.

NOTES

1. Avineri, Shlomo, Marx, Karl. 1969. *On Colonialism & Modernization*. New York: Doubleday.
2. Adorno, a migrant of excellence in Los Angeles, frequently inserts observations on class in his works; particularly interesting for their modernity are those disseminated in *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life* (*Minima Moralia: Reflexionen aus dem beschädigten Leben*, 1951); Lukács, addressing the problem of class in *History and Class Consciousness* writes: "Marx's chief work breaks off just as he is to embark on the definition of class. This omission was to have serious consequences both for the theory and the practice of the proletariat" (Lukács 1971: 46). Lucien Goldmann, who being a Rumanian refugee was himself a migrant, has the great merit of insinuating doubts in *Pour une sociologie du roman* (1963), and, even before that, in the crevices of *Le dieu caché* (1955). Yet, although fully conscious of the changing times, it was too early for them to discuss class in connection with migration.
3. In his *Diasporas in the Contemporary World* (Esman 2009), Milton J. Esman examines several extremely interesting aspects of class stratification, unrest and ensuing turbulences. He does not touch directly interpersonal class problems (nor literary representations of them either), yet psychological problems of class perception ooze incessantly between the lines. After reminding the readers that "Diasporas arrive[d] as conquerors and settlers" as well as "refugees escaping war or persecution [...] fleeing drought, famine, or overpopulation", Esman states that "Never have there been so many transnational migrants as during the current era" (Esman 2009: 3-4). Esman does not forget the transportation of slaves but does not pursue that particular aspect of 'coerced' migration. In the third chapter of the book, Esman analyses aspects of the Ukrainian immigration in Canada.
4. Fanon offers several most interesting examples of that in Chapter 2 and 3 of

Peau noire, masques blancs (1952). *Ausländers* and *Ostarbeiters* should be added but that would make things even more complex.

5. Early instances of reciprocal class perception appear in Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924); later, to mention only few writers apparently very different one from the other, interpersonal problems connected with class are crucial in some of Achebe's novels and in more than one of Nadine Gordimer's novels; in Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1988), and in Zoë Wicomb's *Playing in the Light* (2008) aspirations cannot but be subjected to class. In Canada class issues are connected with immigration since the very beginning of European settlements – they are already extant in Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852); it is impossible to give even a selected list of the Canadian writers who introduced elements of class belonging and consciousness in their works – two interesting examples are Brian Moore's *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* (1960) and Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* (1996). Outside Canada, the Irish writer Roddy Doyle deals with class belonging and class perception, moving from Polish to Nigerian immigration in Ireland, in *The Deportees* (2007), fulfilling in its eight short stories the promise implicit in his previous novel *Paula Spencer* (2006).
6. In her novel *Playing in the Light*, Zoë Wicomb offers extremely enlightening pages, first when she makes her leading character, Marion, who never doubted to be entirely white, pore on the texts of laws and amendments, and subsequently fleshing them out with segments of the life of Marion's parents (Wicomb: 2006, 120-134).
7. Lucien Goldmann deals with the concept of 'homology' in his *Pour une sociologie du roman* (1973).
8. This is a reference to the well known, and yet today not enough valued, Orwell's 'whale' as it is discussed in his tripartite essay *Inside the Whale* (1940).
9. 'Bohunk' is a disparaging term for a person coming from East-Central and

- South-Eastern Europe, especially if a new immigrant and manual labourer.
10. Kulyk Keefer tells the story of her Ukrainian-Polish family in *Honey and Ashes – A Story of Family* (1998), where she also gives a detailed account of her long visit to the place her family came from on the historically unstable border between Poland and Ukraine.
11. Orwellian is here thought especially in connection with *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936).

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interest are Romanticism and Contemporary Studies, particularly within the postcolonial frame. Among others, she wrote on Smart, Coleridge, Shelley, Moore, Mangan, Joyce, MacNeice, Seamus Heaney, Anne Michaels, Alistair MacLeod, Janice Kulyk Keefer, Solomon Mutswairo, Chinua Achebe, Yvonne Vera, André Brink, Zoë Wicomb.

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Janice Kulyk Keefer (born 2 June 1952) is a Canadian novelist and poet. Born in Toronto, she studied literature at universities in England and France, and currently teaches literature and theatre in the graduate studies department at the University of Guelph. Of Ukrainian heritage, Kulyk Keefer often writes about the experiences of first-generation Canadian children of immigrants. Her sister is the Canadian artist, Karen Kulyk. 1987 Governor General's Awards, nominated, *Under Eastern Eyes*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 2 editions - first published in 1989. *The green library*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 2 editions - first published in 1997. *Travelling ladies*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 2 editions - first published in 1990. *Download DAISY. Die grüne Bibliothek*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 1 edition - first published in 2001. *The Paris-Napoli express*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 1 edition - first published in 1986. *Midnight Stroll*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 1 edition - first published in 2007. *Transfigurations*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 1 edition - first published in 1987. *Anna's goat*. by Janice Kulyk Keefer 1 edition - first published in 2000. *White of the lesser angels*. by ... Janice Kulyk Keefer was born in Toronto, Canada on June 2, 1952. She was educated at the University of Toronto and the University of Sussex, England where she received her doctorate in English literature. She is a novelist and poet. Her works include *White of the Lesser Angels*, *Reading Mavis Gallant*, *The Green Library*, *Marrying the Sea*, and *Thieves*. She won the CBC Radio Literary Competition, for fiction, for *Mrs. Putnam at the Planetarium* and *The Wind*. She received the National Magazine Award for poetry for *Fields* and the Malahat Long Poem Prize for *Isle of Demons*. She is also the winner of t