The objective of this study is twofold: to contribute to the contemporary theoretical discussion about literature and the experience of displaced writers abroad, and from this largely neglected perspective to present a case study of the writings of the Ukrainian writer Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880–1951). When I started the project, I confronted a methodological dilemma. I had to decide whether to focus on a more established concept, such as that of the exile, or émigré, or emigration, or focus on more recent notions such as the diaspora, nomadism, or travel. My initial intention was to follow the beaten path and work within the traditional framework of “exile studies.” Nonetheless, upon starting the project I became confused by the debates among literary critics who tried to defend the priority of their point of view in how this concept of “exile” was applied. For instance, Hallvard Dahlie classifies the British writer of American extraction Henry James as an exile (5). However, Terry Eagleton sees both James and Polish-born novelist Joseph Conrad as emigrants who chose “English society from the outside” and did not want to return (14). At the same time, a broader study of Conrad suggests that he can also be regarded as an exile, and his works can be seen as an attempt to transcend the bitterness which resulted from his experiences as an exile (Gurko, Milbauer). Moreover, some have even argued that Conrad, who is usually understood as a British writer, can actually be viewed as a Polish writer (Młeczko in Morf, 234). In going through this terminological and conceptual jungle, I realized that any one framework, though it might be useful for addressing specific issues, would nevertheless place excessive restrictions on my research methodology and impede the formulation of broader perspectives on the Ukrainian writer Vynnychenko.
The main reason for this problem is, in fact, that all these various terms occupy a common semantic domain, each with its own historical and linguistic origin, which leads to their constant intermingling and interchange. Among these terms I found displacement the most relevant concept for my study as it conveys a process with a variety of related qualities and characteristics. I consider the overarching methodological concept displacement as a blanket term that incorporates experiences in relation to geographical place – exile, émigré, expatriate, diaspora, emigration/immigration, travel, and nomadism. These terms represent various aspects of a geographical move outside the homeland – different faces of displacement. This allows us to study a given displaced writer not only as, say, an exile who longed for and was preoccupied with his homeland, but also as an expatriate who enjoyed his travels, a writer who sought integration into a new hostland discourse, or an uprooted nomad whose love of homeland extends to embrace the whole planet.

As a case study of displacement, I find the figure of Vynnychenko to be extremely fitting. The fact that this writer lived most of his life and wrote the majority of his works outside his homeland (he spent about thirty-one years in Ukraine and forty abroad) has remained largely unnoticed and barely conceptualized. Given Vynnychenko’s status as one of the most renowned and influential writers in Ukrainian literature, analysis of work has been conducted for the most part in the mainstream discourse, which often ignores tangential discourses. This phenomenon of marginalization is quite apparent in the study of Ukrainian diasporic literature. In Soviet literary criticism, the principle of Antaeus was applied: i.e., literature written abroad cannot be true literature because it is detached from the native social and cultural milieu (Soroka 2000). Yevhen Shabliovsky, for example, substantiates his criticism of Vynnychenko as follows: “Taking Vynnychenko as an example, we are again persuaded that an artist who gives up his progressive principles and betrays his people cannot create anything considerable and significant, and he becomes like a sterile flower” (48). This approach was largely motivated by Soviet ideological prejudice toward so-called “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists.” At the same time, a colonial approach was also at work: whereas Russian émigré anti-Communist writers (e.g., Ivan Bunin) were published in the USSR, the works of Vynnychenko – a former member of the Social-Democratic and Communist parties and insistent supporter of leftist ideals – were falsely lambasted as “bourgeois nationalist” (Shabliovsky). On the other hand,
certain circles in the diaspora considered Vynnychenko to be too left-leaning and modernistic. They refused to support the almanac *Pivnichne siaivo* ([*Northern Lights*], Edmonton) after it published Vynnychenko’s novel, *The Deposits of Gold* ([*Poklady zolota*], no. 5, 1971). As a result, the almanac folded. Since Ukraine’s independence in 1991, another problem has persisted that can be called “metropolitan centralism” – a tendency to neglect peripheral phenomena from the central, i.e., mainland perspective, among which the perspective of displacement is often situated. For instance, the fact that the first Ukrainian utopian novel, *When the Sun Rose* ([*Koly ziishlo sontse*] by Pavlo Krat [Paul Crath], was written abroad (in Canada, 1918), has been neglected. Similarly, late works about diasporic life by the prominent writer Ulas Samchuk (e.g., *On Firm Ground* [Na tverdii zemli], 1967) were not included in the post-Soviet History of Ukrainian Literature ([*Istoriiia ukraїnskoї literatury*], 1994).

In the study of Vynnychenko’s works, scholars often consider his displacement as beginning in 1920, the year when the writer left his country permanently (Fedchenko, Shumylo, Syvachenko, Revutsyky), ignoring the first displacement in 1907–14, when Vynnychenko’s connections with his homeland were so strong that his presence in Ukraine was assumed. For example, Valerian Revutsky’s article “The Émigré Plays of V. Vynnychenko” ([*Emihratsiina dramaturhiia V. Vynnychenka*] examines only plays written during the final migration, even though the title would imply all émigré plays.

Publishers in the diaspora have tended to prefer Vynnychenko’s early works and materials, which dealt primarily with Ukrainian topics or settings. For instance, two works on the Ukrainian-Russian conflict, the play *Between Two Powers* ([*Mizh dvokh syl*], 1919) and the novel *To the Other Side* ([*Na toi bik*], 1923), were republished in 1974 and 1972 respectively; the collection of children’s stories *The Necklace* ([*Namysto*], 1930), in 1976; and the early diaries [Shchodennyk], in 1980 and 1983. Vynnychenko’s last novel *Take the Floor, Stalin!* ([*Slovo za toboiu, Staline!*], 1950) was first published in 1971 and focuses almost exclusively upon Ukrainian homeland topics. But his novel about Ukrainian émigrés in France, *The Deposits of Gold*, written in 1927, was published only in 1988. The play *The Prophet* ([*Prorok*], 1929), which was first published in the West in 1960, focuses on non-Ukrainian locales and characters. This play takes the reader to India and the USA, and is thus an exception. It is worth noting, however, that *The Prophet* appeared together with stories set in Ukraine.
When it became permissible to write about the once-proscribed Vynnychenko, critics in Ukraine devoted attention primarily to his early works set in their homeland (e.g., Beauty and Strength [Krasa i syla], 1989; Selected Plays [Vybrani piesy], 1991). At the same time, some of his exile works were republished. The novel The Leprosarium [Leprozorii], which is set in France, was published for the first time only in 1999 (Vitchyzna [Homeland], nos 1–6; reprinted in a separate book in 2011). Also set in France, the novel The Eternal Imperative [Vichnyi imperatyv] is still waiting for a publisher, as are the philosophical treatises Happiness ([Shchastia], 1930) and Concordism ([Konkordyzm], 1938–48) and twenty-three volumes of his diaries, which deal with the later period of his displacement (1929–51).

Scholars such as Mykola Zerov, Semen Pohorilyi, and Volodymyr Panchenko, while disagreeing about various aspects of Vynnychenko’s writing, all identify three periods in his literary career: 1902–06, when the writer produced short stories that feature objective and impartial observations of life, primarily of the lower social classes (peasants, workers, hobos, criminals); 1907–20, with a focus on dramas and novels, indicating a shift toward analysis and experimentation, moral and philosophical issues, and a preference for ideas over description; and 1921–51, when Vynnychenko wrote socio-philosophical and adventure novels and philosophical treatises, with an emphasis on propagandizing his ideas through a more popular style. Overlooked by the critics is how these stages in the writer’s development correspond to the writer’s various states of displacement and how they can be logically explained by that displacement.

It would be insufficient to argue, however, that developments in Vynnychenko’s writing were conditioned only by his stay abroad. In considering his evolution as a writer, the influence of the modernist fin-de-siècle period, as well as new trends in philosophy (Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche), science (Charles Darwin), and psychology (Sigmund Freud), must be acknowledged. Vynnychenko as a writer was formed in turbulent times, when cardinal shifts in all spheres of life – social, cultural, national, religious – were taking place. As the British modernist contemporary Virginia Woolf observed, around 1910 “All human relations shifted – those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics, and literature” (321). Nevertheless, I maintain that displacement contributed significantly to Vynnychenko’s evolution.
as a writer – and directly determined his social, cultural, and philosophical outlook, his ideological preoccupations, and his vision of society in his homeland, not to mention his attitudes toward his hostland and the world, as well as his choice of themes and settings.

This book starts with an introduction, which addresses the contemporary discussion on literature and geographical displacement, its historical forms and comparative aspects, and employs postmodern concepts of identity to establish the theoretical framework for this study. The main part of the book is divided into two parts, chronologically and thematically structured, with biographical notes included throughout that demonstrate how certain conditions motivated and were reflected in particular works. Part One covers the period of Vynnychenko’s displacement from 1907 to 1914, which marks the beginning of the First World War, followed by revolutionary upheavals. It deals with Vynnychenko the émigré, the expatriate/traveler, and the exile. The writer’s works are still actively present in the homeland literary discourse, and he is preoccupied with social, cultural, moral, and ideological issues significant for his country, such as revolution, morality, love, family, prostitution, and human instincts. In this period, as an expatriate he also enjoys his sojourn in Europe, which significantly reinforces Vynnychenko’s modernist views and provides him with opportunities for education, art appreciation, and to make new contacts and enjoy the benefits of personal freedom. At the same time, as an exile the writer is reluctant to assimilate to the hostland. This engenders some anxiety and escapism, which is counterposed by nostalgia as a means to sustain his identity.

Part Two is dedicated to Vynnychenko’s second displacement in 1920–51, which I analyze as a cardinally different period, with an emphasis on his utopianism, universalism, and late homecoming. Vynnychenko channels his existential uncertainty about the present by projecting a utopian future (The Solar Machine). Vynnychenko’s universalism at this stage is a reflection of his nomadic uprootedness, which resulted in his reorientation to a broader international audience and to issues of international significance (peace, war, co-existence). His utopian universalism at this time also resulted in attempts to initiate the reformation of society and human morality (through a philosophy of concordism). The study ends with an examination of Vynnychenko’s late homecoming in Take the Floor, Stalin! – a swan song that, despite its general universalist framework, is also imbued with exilic feeling and autobiographical memories in his final years.
The present study is based on my doctoral thesis, *Displacement and Literature: The Writings of Volodymyr Vynnychenko, 1907–1925*, which I defended at the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Alberta, 2005. I have substantially revised my thesis and added a new part on Vynnychenko’s writings after 1925 in order to present a holistic view of his evolution as a writer in displacement. All transliteration from the Cyrillic follows the Library of Congress system, except for what has obtained different spelling in the Western scholarship. All translations from Ukrainian and Russian into English are mine, unless the source of translation is specifically indicated. For the ease of my English readers I will use simplified spelling of Slavic adjectival surnames and the translated title of each work providing the transliterated version when first mentioned. The translated titles, along with original titles in Cyrillic, are also presented in the chronological list of Vynnychenko’s works in the appendix.