

Title: Answers Are Rooted in the Past: Lyudmila Ulitskaya's *Jacob's Ladder* (2015) and Oksana Zabuzhko's *The Museum of Abandoned Secrets* (2009)

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Abstract:

How does family history correlate with the big historical narrative? Why is the past so important for understanding the presence on the private and public levels? How the family saga can contribute to the discussion about civil society development in contemporary Russia and Ukraine?

In my presentation I am going to focus on the comparative analysis of two significant novels of contemporary Slavic literatures Lyudmila Ulitskaya's *Лестница Якова/Jacob's Ladder* (2015) and Oksana Zabuzhko's *Музей покинутих секретів/The Museum of Abandoned Secrets* (2009). Both novels are good examples of women's intellectual prose wherein authors depict the lives, loves, and losses of intelligentsia. I intend to look at these novels through the prism of New Historicism and examine their historical references. Both texts might be considered anti-colonial and therapeutic, for both address momentous collective traumas. The main difference is that Ulitskaya deals with internal colonization, while Zabuzhko makes an earnest effort to show the external character of colonization. I claim, that this is the main distinction which drives the general pathos of both novels.