

artisans were designated as selfish, even though they were largely unemployed workers who lost their jobs due to government's economic policies. The party designated protesting Bolshevik workers, who were formerly members of other revolutionary parties or oppositional trends, as petty bourgeois and thus selfish in order to marginalize them and ensure that other workers would not protest against their lowering standard of living. Sloin concentrated on former Bundists and Trotskyists, among whom were many Jews. Former non-Bolshevik revolutionary party members, particularly Bundists and later Trotskyists, were politicized within the Communist Party, while workers, likely to protest against the state's anti-worker policies, were designated as petty bourgeois and thus, again, selfish. The accusation of selfishness was easy to make against those engaging in illicit trade and smuggling as a reaction to the scarcity of goods within the republic. In Belorussia, where before the 1917 Revolution Jews were major actors in trade, an attack on illicit traders was bound to be associated with an attack against Jews. All of these accusations and thus exclusions from the Soviet polity were allegedly never against Jews per se, but in practice always against groups where Jews in Belorussia constituted a substantial majority. This practice, which culminated with the Stalinist turn when the state no longer encouraged proletarian cultures of ethnic minorities and insisted on such minorities' merging within what was perceived as the general Soviet culture, thus put an end to the "Jewish Revolution." Still, while the racialization of policies and the blaming the Jews for the failures of the Soviet economy created severe interethnic tensions in Belorussia, the author points out that the sense of belonging that the Jewish workers developed during the earlier period never disappeared and was, in fact, encouraged by the regime.

These essays present an exceedingly well-researched, original, and highly-nuanced analysis of how even in a society committed to an anti-racist stance, an ethnic minority still faces discrimination due to pre-existing cultural perceptions. The author describes how each time the society experienced economic difficulties, Jews as a cultural idea were turned into scapegoats. Thus, individual Jews fighting for equality whether as Jews, as workers, or both found themselves designated as the "wrong" Jews of one sort or another—Bundists, Trotskyists, petty-bourgeois, or nationalists. Some Jews indeed were one or more of these, but this almost did not matter. The government found it useful to draw a connection between resistance to its economic policies and a despised ethnic minority, thereby marginalizing such resistance. The author did an excellent job in showing how the government achieved this outcome, while at the same time retaining its anti-racist image.

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Slavne i ignorisane: Ka kritičkoj kulturi pamćenja. By Svetlana Tomić. Belgrade: Alfa BK Univerzitet, 2018. Notes. Bibliography. Illustrations. Photographs. Tables. Paper.

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When speaking of the cultural memory of a society, we discuss select content from the cultural past of the given society that it has elevated to the highest ranks in its apparatus of knowledge, myth, and power. This is also related to the hierarchy and constellation of the set of relations and knowledge that trickle down from that pinnacle, through the education system and public usage, becoming the self-comprehensible foundation of a socially-active identity. This steadfast mechanism of reproduction

of social relations and knowledge survives, similar to orientation habits and opinion matrices, greatly thwarting their reevaluation.

In her book, *Celebrated and Ignored: Towards a Critical Culture of Remembering*, Svetlana Tomić deconstructs precisely the opinion matrix and governing mechanisms that determine the balance of powers and issues of truth in Serbian and South Slavic cultural memory. The study starts from the standpoint of the truthfulness of remembrance, and the order in it, by verifying the reliability of academic knowledge that actually produced that memory. The selected standpoint includes shedding light on the nexus of normativistics and patriarchal ideology, with focus on the normativistic denial of the significance and memory of celebrated women, as well as the issue of the eradication of the intellectual heritage and current production of women by other women. This systematic endeavor resulted in the analysis of the weaknesses and the selective devastation of academic knowledge, so that we would finally arrive at a persuasive document on the strategically-persistent fostering of ignorance about the intellectual contributions of women, and the mechanism of the institutionalization of counterfeit knowledge as society's important knowledge, thus depriving half of the population of its intelligence and historical subjectivity.

Prominent female authors and scientist have not been forgotten but rather systematically and consistently ignored—this is the main thesis of this book. Forgetfulness is the euphemism for conscious non-recognition, belittling, and removal of women from literary and intellectual history, something that the author does not accept. Furthermore, Tomić resolutely opposes the euphemism “forgetfulness,” contemplating it in the sense of an excuse that abolishes and corroborates the perpetual discrimination of the intellectual creativity of women. “Forgetfulness” is a seemingly banal, but actually offensive and dangerous rhetorical shelter from the durability of the negative selection and double standards of evaluation in the violent competition of mediocracy and the male-centered worldview.

Male monopoly in the sphere of creativity evaluation, with the given worldview, has led to the issue of the continuous overlooking, blocking, and expunging of the intellectual creativity of women not being perceived as a problem because of its persistence and ubiquity. This is a “state of affairs” that is not causing any objection, but rather is being served and abided by. Tomić raises the issue of the comprehension of cultural memory precisely from the perspective of an unchangeable “state of affairs,” and not only from the standpoint of the ignored and expunged content. She challenges it in the domain of education, in literary and historical readers, the culture of monuments, and memorization, where cultural memory is the safest and where it is otherwise capitalized symbolically.

The methods that the author uses are descriptive, comparative, historical, cumulative, and statistical. The established literary canon is questioned, from the perspective of the part of cultural creation that is not presented in it, which was falsified or had been expunged. In clarifying the huge discrepancy between the reality of female authors' existence and ignorant norms, the simplest models proved to be the most efficient. The comparative review of the representation of female authors in literary histories over time (from the early twentieth century to the present), clearly shows that with the passing of time the number of women in them has decreased. One history of Serbian literature published in 2011 recoded one. Another work published that same year did not mention a single female author. Recent histories have ignored the achievements of once-celebrated female authors the same way that Jovan Skerlić, the author of the first history of Serbian literature in the early twentieth century expunged Queen Natalija Obrenović as the author of the first book of aphorisms in Serbia, consciously denying the link between a woman and the history of generally-accepted wisdom (38).

The canon established on eradicating, counterfeiting, and officially covering up the creativity of women, as if it was something disgraceful for the community, has in the past hundred years been conserved in an even more rigid form by the strengthening of the notorious dogma that creativity worth remembering is produced solely by men.

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The Portrayal of Jews in Modern Bielarussian Literature. By Zina J. Gimpelevich.

Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018. xx, 479 pp. Appendixes. Notes.

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Zina Gimpelevich bases her argument that “anti-Semitism in general isn’t a stain on the Bielarussian conscience” (ix) on the work of a dozen writers, writing primarily in Bielarussian, mostly from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She uses writers’ biographies, detailed summaries, and translations of poems to show that Jews were viewed as an integral element of the Bielarussian landscape. During World War II, some 90% of Belarus’s Jews were murdered, while 50% of the total population was killed or forcibly relocated, making the region, as Timothy Snyder notes in *Bloodlands* (2010), “the deadliest place in the world between 1941 and 1944” (cited in Gimpelevich, 32). Most of the surviving Jews and their descendants emigrated by the early 2000s, and these absent Jews have become symbols of a lost past of ethnic tolerance, communal warmth, and Bielarussian cultural autonomy.

Gimpelevich’s argument is strongest for recent texts. Her final chapter addresses Georgii Musevich’s 2009 *Narod, kotoryi zhil sredi nas* (People Who Used to Live among Us), which focuses on the cities of Kamianiec-Litoŭsk and Vysoka-Litoŭsk. Relying on written sources, his own prewar childhood memory, and interviews with current residents, Musevich described this area’s Jewish history, Jewish migration, migrants’ return visits, and locals’ memory of Jews. Gimpelevich concludes on an elegiac note, hoping that once Musevich’s readers “understand the truth about the common past of Bielarussians, they will want to preserve it and to pass it to future generations” (338). The penultimate chapter considers a similar work, the poet Ryhor Baradulin’s 2011 *Tolki b habrei byli! Kniha pavahi i siabroustva* (If Only Jews Were Here: Book of Respect and Friendship), with essays about individual Jews (some of whom he knew), poetry translations from Yiddish into Bielarussian, and original poems. Gimpelevich translates additional Baradulin poems in an appendix, including one with these lines:

Even the shtetl dogs have stopped responding to Yiddish.
Sparrows do not chirp in Yiddish.
Now even they don’t remember: the sparrows have forgotten
That Bielarussians jokingly called them Jews.
No more Jewish schools,
No more students.
Just a few words dropped along the road
Found their way to the warm hands of the Bielarussian language (375).

This image of abandoned Yiddish words recuperated by Bielarussian evokes the remarkable 928-page Yiddish-Belarussian dictionary published by Aliaksandar Astravukh in 2008, recent evidence of the Jewish-Belarussian cultural connection that Gimpelevich describes.