

a white woman with African men, which was viewed disapprovingly by most Ukrainians, together with the fact that, as an American of Ukrainian extraction, she was often seen as “someone who had abandoned her homeland” (119). But as her Russian improved—most Ukrainians are fluent in Russian, but the reverse is by no means true—and her Ukrainian accent and vocabulary became more up to date, she was able to position herself differently according to the fieldwork context, although it was often assumed that she was the mother of a teenage rapper participating in hip hop events. When she goes to Uganda to trace Ugandan Ukrainian hip hop artists’ origins, she finds she is “disjointing [her]self from a white-as-American or white-as-European identity to a white-as-East-European identity, falsely assuming that such a displacement came with less cultural, ideological and psychological baggage” (176). Perhaps not surprisingly, she concludes the book with an emphasis on the need to “really see how the people we interview see themselves” (193) rather than hastily ascribing labels such as “minority,” “ethnic,” or “racial” to them.

Early in the book, Helbig reveals how, when she applied for funding from U.S. agencies for this project, she was “taken aback” that not only were all of them successful but she was also offered a grant for which she had not applied (23). She mentions the U.S. State Department’s 2005 Rhythm Road program, based on jazz ambassadorial programs during the Cold War, which sent “hip hop envoys” to the Middle East and parts of Africa as an exercise in soft power, and Hillary Clinton’s much-quoted comment that “hip hop is America.” She then paraphrases *The Hip-Hop Wars: What We Talk about When We Talk about Hip-Hop—and Why It Matters*, Tricia Rose’s devastating 2008 analysis of U.S. commercial hip hop—which is of course the most widely diffused around the world—as promoting misogyny, violence, and racism, while emphasizing the importance of promoting its positive aspects and the contributions of women, Latino/-a, and white rappers. In this context, her taking issue with Miles White’s description of a 50 Cent concert in Prague in 2007, where he compares the “racially monolithic” audience in hip hop garb to a theme park crowd “half a world away,” is appropriate. Some would say that 50 Cent represents a theme park model of gangsta rap, and Helbig is right to criticize White’s reinforcement of a “Western European stereotype of Slavic people as uneducated and backward” (3), when the reverse is more likely true.

I should emphasize, however, that this book is about much more than hip hop. It is a nuanced study of issues of race, gender, and music as social activism (and hip hop as therapy) in post-Soviet and African society and a thorough historical analysis of race and racism in Soviet and postsocialist society. It is also a detailed account of the complex causes and effects of African migration to Ukraine and a careful study of the growing body of literature on African, east European, and U.S. hip hop, as well as the pitfalls of U.S. government- and NGO-sponsored forms of hip hop, and a lot more besides.

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Transitional and Retrospective Justice in the Baltic States. By Eva-Clarita Pettai and Vello Pettai. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2015. xiv, 375 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$120.00, hard bound.

The history of transitional justice in the Baltic states is best captured by the metaphor of “beets and radishes.” Coined by Rein Taagepera, it describes the difference between the home-grown communists of Lithuania who facilitated Iosif Stalin’s an-

nexation of the country in 1945 and the communists who relocated to Estonia and Latvia from the Soviet Union. Members of the Lithuanian Communist Party were “red on the outside” but “white on the inside,” meaning they represented the interests of Lithuania to a greater extent than they did those of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the members of the Estonian and Latvian Communist Parties were either Slavs or born in Russia, with their loyalties directed toward Moscow. These communists were, like beets, “red on the inside as well as the outside.” This difference, coupled with the fact that Lithuania had fewer Russian settlers than Latvia and Estonia but more anti-Soviet resisters implicated in Holocaust participation, warrants using these three states as an opportunity to do careful comparative analysis while controlling for many features the Baltic states hold in common. Taken together, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are different enough from eastern Europe—in their history and their transitional justice constraints—to merit separate treatment. Not only was their occupation by Nazi Germany followed by the Yalta-sanctioned takeover by Stalin, but the Nazi invasion itself was preceded by Russia’s subjugation of the Balts, in accordance with the notorious Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of August 23, 1939. The term *collaborator*, uttered in the Baltic context, owes its ambiguous meaning to these three consecutive occupations. Many of those accused of collaboration with the SS following World War II were in fact anti-Soviet resisters. And some of the Nazi resisters found themselves accused of crimes against humanity or genocide following the 1989 transition away from communist rule.

Although other parts of eastern Europe also suffered from the triple Stalin-Hitler-Stalin aggression, in the case of the Baltic states, entire countries were seized, blocking opportunities to flee. Furthermore, in contrast to Poland, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania were forcibly transformed into Soviet republics, placing the security apparatus of the NKVD, and later the KGB, in charge of spying on Lithuanians, Estonians, and Latvians. As a result, following Baltic declarations of independence, almost all secret police files were transferred to Moscow.

These two historical facts paved the way for the Baltics’ focus on two transitional justice challenges: shaping Europe’s collective memory of the twentieth-century totalitarianisms, and vetting communist collaborators for political positions. The first challenge has been resolved by the three countries’ pooling their efforts to revise Europe’s collective memory and forcing it to see Stalinist crimes through the same lens as Holocaust crimes. The second challenge has produced some of the most creative solutions to dealing with uncovering former KGB collaborators, ranging from citizenship laws in Estonia and Latvia to self-reporting subjects to verification against preserved evidence in Lithuania.

In *Transitional and Retrospective Justice in the Baltic States*, Eva-Clarita Pettai and Vello Pettai not only deal with these important differences between the Baltic countries but also provide a holistic framework for accounting for how states deal with their totalitarian pasts. They offer a taxonomy of transitional justice measures that distinguishes policies focused on victims from those focused on perpetrators and, within these categories, differentiate between administrative, symbolic, and judicial approaches. Presenting a country’s complex transitional justice trajectory in this way promises more fruitful comparisons than those focusing on just one type of transitional justice policy, such as lustration.

Yet despite the book’s holistic ambitions, the theoretical contribution it offers is very thin. Of its 388 pages, only the last eight attempt to explain, as opposed to merely record, the patterns of transitional justice. This monograph provides readers with taxonomy in place of theory. It also provides thick historiography in place of empirical analysis. The authors seem to be defending themselves against the second criticism by pointing out that large transitional justice datasets miss many nuances

of transitional justice policies. Indeed, being able to distinguish between symbolic self-revelation, lustration, and decommunization is just one of many advantages that a study focusing on three countries avoids.

However, not being in a position to conduct large-n analysis does preclude careful small-n analysis. Yet the closest the Pettai and Pettai study comes to empirical analysis are the three tables placed in the concluding chapter, which follow the taxonomy presented in chapter 1. For each of the three countries, the cells mark transitional justice intensity (using shades of grey) between 1992 and 2012. This is a good way of summarizing the dense historiographical detail provided in the preceding chapters, but 50-plus shades of grey cannot stand in place of true empirical analysis.

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Ethnic Conflict and War Crimes in the Balkans: The Narratives of Denial in Post-Conflict Serbia. By Jelena Obradović-Wochnic. London: I.B.Tauris and Co., 2013. ix, 257 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$92.50, hard bound.

The process of dealing with the past in post-Milošević Serbia has attracted much scholarly interest. Since the trials of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and domestic courts were the main mechanism of transitional justice, researchers have engaged in assessing the ICTY's work and effects (Diane F. Orentlicher, *Shrinking the Space for Denial: The Impact of the ICTY in Serbia* [2008]; Jelena Subotić, *Hijacked Justice: Dealing with the Past in the Balkans* [2009]); cooperation with the ICTY (Victor Peskin, *International Justice in Rwanda and the Balkans: Virtual Trials and the Struggle for State Cooperation* [2008]); and their media presentations (Amer Džihana and Zala Volčić, eds., *Media and National Ideologies: Analysis of Reporting on War Crime Trials in the Former Yugoslavia* [2011]). The book under review approaches the subject of dealing with the past from below, using participant observation, field notes, and interviews conducted in Serbia in 2006.

Apart from an introduction and brief overview of the 1990s conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the book is divided into five main chapters. Each deals with one major theme of past recognition, as it was revealed in the interviews: the '90s, knowledge, denial, victimhood, and conspiracy theories. The opening chapter presents a general impression of the '90s as a decade of "sickness, insanity and horror," a time that "was not normal." It describes a multilayered break with "normality" as a collapse of "borders, known political systems, the country/countries, standard of life, friendships, companies, morals" (63). Jelena Obradović-Wochnic rightly points to the often unacknowledged suffering of distanced audiences, the shared feeling that "you feel like it's war, but you just don't see fighting anywhere" (101). This starting point allows her to build the subsequent arguments, which, instead of mistrust and dismissal of individual trajectories, take them seriously and with undivided trust.

The following chapter provides an innovative interpretation of public knowledge and silence. The author interprets troublesome silences as an attempt to reach "narrative closure," combining media presentation with personal experiences and rumors. Silences as attempts to forget show that "something terrible had taken place; there is a 'mourning'" while cover-up language is used as "a plaster being applied to conceal a wound" (108). This understanding of silence, avoidance, and forgetting as signs of the dealing with the past is enabled by shifting the connotations of "confrontation" from positive (regret and apology) to negative ("silences, negotiation and navigation through vast amounts of disturbing knowledge, information and images" [128]).