The Voices of Babyn Yar. By Marianna Kiyanivska. Trans. Oksana Maksymchuk and Max Rosochinsky. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2022. 189 pp. Notes. Illustrations. $16.00, hard bound.
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While the Holocaust is not a new subject in Ukrainian literature, it has emerged as one of the central topics of Ukrainian poetry and prose only in the recent years. The history of the Babyn Yar site, for decades neglected by Soviet officials and left without so much as a commemoration monument, manifested the politics of antisemitism and totalitarian memory. In the context of the emerging body of contemporary Ukrainian writings on Holocaust, the poetry collection by Marianna Kiyanovska, *The Voices of Babyn Yar*, is very timely and important. The collection was recognized as a significant contribution to literature, and awarded a number of national and international literary prizes: the Taras Shevchenko National Award (Ukraine), the Sholem Aleichem Prize (Ukraine), the European Poet of Freedom Literary Award (Poland), and the Zbigniew Herbert International Literary Award (though the latter is awarded in recognition of the collected oeuvres of an author, and not for one specific book).

The book was labeled as controversial from the very start; its publication ignited debates, specifically on the issue of witnessing and its ethical dimensions. The book consists of sixty-four poems. Most poems are rhymed, but the free verse is also present. Each of the poems in the collection is a voice of a human being, a woman, a man, or a child, awaiting, or sensing imminent death; the majority of the poems are written from the first person perspective. Marianna Kiyanovska herself calls her poetic method "channeling"—letting the voices of the dead come through her. The English language volume comes with the critical introduction by Polina Barskova, a poet and academic, and the preface by Oksana Maksymchuk and Max Rossochinsky, who translated the book from Ukrainian into English, and who also each write original poetry and hold advanced academic degrees. While Barskova in her piece focuses on Kiyanovska's poetic techniques and epistemic matrices, Maksymchuk and Rossochinsky provide a historical context of the Babyn Yar tragedy, and speak about the challenges of translating the volume.

Polina Barskova points out that one of this collection's most important features is "destruction" in several ways: it describes a shattered world of those killed at Babyn Yar and it "destroys" the language and syntax. Maksymchuk and Rossochinsky emphasize that the original Ukrainian text, rich with enjambments, is often composed of incomplete utterances in various languages at a time—"Ukrainian, Russian, Yiddish, and Polish" (31).

In Kiyanovska's poems, the people speaking know they are about to die, even though historically the condemned were not explicitly told about their fate. Yet the poet looks into the abyss of knowledge that humans normally avoid, preferring instead to keep up hope even in the middle of the disaster.

"I don't weep/setting my bag on the cobblestone, I carry only a name/I am Rachel" (45). "The mundane has vanished, to go on/harder now than ever . . ." (51). "And now I run my blood runs . . ." (127).

One defining feature about this collection is the poetic rhythm; Kiyanovska, as a renowned poet and translator herself, deliberately chooses to make the language sound broken in order to convey the reality of the feverish, fear- and hunger-based last days or hours of the victims: "there was terror yet but what to call all this/assemble there by nine I do not sleep the nights..." (77).

One of the major translation challenges was to find the matching words in the target language while preserving the cadence. The translators argue: "the so-called originals were transmissions—that is, translations, too" (77). The main strategy they

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chose while translating the collection, it seems, was to strive to render the rhythm first and foremost—the broken, interrupted rhythm, imitating the anxious breathing of the condemned. This meant, at times, sacrificing the code-switching, or changing the word order for the sake of rendering the numerous enjambments in accordance with the rules of the target language. Yet, as a result, the translation turned out to be very wholesome: it successfully preserves the cadence and poignancy of the original, and reads and sounds natural in English.

The book will be of great interest to both general public and the scholarly community. It portrays the Holocaust in Kyiv, a panorama of human suffering, and is a painful but necessary read. The poetry, while highly accessible, even deliberately plain at times, is nonetheless sophisticated, and awaiting for serious academic inquiries, as does its excellent rendition into English. This translation will definitely add to the conversations about literary translation and its strategies.

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The Hidden History of New Women in Serbian Culture: Toward a New History of Literature. By Svetlana Tomić. Lanham, MD.: Lexington Books, 2022. xvi, 275 pp. Bibliography. Index. Figures. $110.00, hard bound.

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Svetlana Tomić pulls no punches in this important book whose very first page calls out the "biased and incomplete picture of the past" (1) that is presented in official histories of Serbian literature and that, even more exasperatingly, refuses to change in light of new discoveries. The hidden history she uncovers spans, roughly, the second half of the nineteenth century, with the 1863 opening of the first Girls' High School in Belgrade marking a turning point in the public visibility of women and their writings. The four writers in Part I include a teacher, a queen, an actress, and the first Serbian woman to travel the world, while Part II looks at two of their male supporters, a painter and another author who has himself been largely shunned by the gatekeepers of the canon for his liberal views. Part III examines the politics of memory through women's memoirs, their translations of foreign works as varied as the novels of Charles Dickens and Florence Nightingale's nursing manual, and two firsts: a 1912 public monument dedicated to a woman, the poet Milica Stojadinović Srpkinja, and a 1913 album of famous women, also named *Srpkinja*. The album—which is what its publishers called this compilation of photographs, biographical texts, ethnographic essays, embroidery patterns—constitutes "an important source for reconstructing Serbian feminist history" (219), with a list of 152 women writers, and is available through the Belgrade city library in digital form.

The impressive array of women in Part I makes for a potent representation of the female point of view, from Serbia's neglected first female novelist, the teacher Draga Gavrilović, to the beloved Queen Natalija Obrenović, better remembered for being the first Serbian royal to divorce rather than the author of Serbia's first book of aphorisms. Milka Aleksić Grgurova drew on both her acting and nursing career to create strong female characters, while Jelena J. Dimitrijević, the most prolific of the four, acquainted her readers with the world through five travelogues, as well as poetry, short stories, and a novel that was translated into other languages during her lifetime.

Tomić writes in a way that makes the reader want to find these women's work and dive into it immediately. She leaves one feeling at once inspired and deprived when considering the impoverished literary canon we have been handed. The present

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