

Foreword

The idea of the current volume came to me in July 2019, on a warm Sunday morning, while visiting the Jewish Cemetery on Okopowa Street in Warsaw. I had been residing in Warsaw for a couple of months already, as a Senior Fellow at the Polish Institute of Advanced Studies, within the Polish Academy of Sciences, working on *(In)Tolerance: Cultural and Political Interactions in Interwar Europe*. My research took me to many places that told the (hi)story of the Jewish community, including POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Muzeum Polaków Ratujących Żydów/The Markowa Ulma-Family Museum of Poles Who Saved Jews in World War II, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, the State Museum at Majdanek, and other places where terrible things happened.

My visit to the Jewish Cemetery – which was established in 1806 and it is the resting place of over 200,000 persons, including spiritual leaders, political activists, creators of Jewish culture, eminent contributors to Polish cultural, economic and social life, and also thousands of nameless victims of the ghetto – was a lesson on remembrance and cultural memory. The Cemetery is a unique landmark of Warsaw, being visited by tens of thousands of tourists every year. While visiting it, I learned that it had been included in the register of historical buildings and monuments in 1973 and has remained under the protection of the Office of Historic Preservation of the Capital City of Warsaw ever since.

What impressed me the most were the many carefully restored funeral stones, some even rebuilt, by members of the family, scattered all over the world (details of the surviving relatives taking care of the restoration process were placed next to the tombs). Those made me think about how surviving family members take care and preserve the memory of ancestors. When memory lives, the departed live, too, but when memory dies, their departure is irrevocable. So I wondered: What should we do to keep their memory alive? In the Jewish Cemetery on Okopowa Street, mon-

uments that look like works of art tell the stories of rich and famous Jews, while near them (or across the alley) there is a nameless mass grave. Here lie some of the victims of the Holocaust. Others did not have mass graves. They are the ash underneath our feet when we visit Auschwitz-Birkenau.

We are our memory. Our own history is nothing else but another type of cultural memory. The relationship between cultural memory, remembrance, and culture itself has emerged globally as an issue of interdisciplinary research. Philosophy, theology, cultural history, psychology, literature and art, or sociology, are all involved in defining and explaining what cultural memory is and why this concept is so important for the humanities.

Stories dealing with the post-Holocaust life of survivors are as important as the stories of the Holocaust itself. I invited several researchers who work on Holocaust and memory studies to join me in this project dealing with memories of terror. I am grateful to those who accepted my invitation: Dr. Sonia Catrina, from the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania; Dr. Katharina Friedla, from the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, Paris; Professor Tuvia Friling, from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel; Professor Arleen Ionescu, from Shanghai Jiao Tong University; Eugenia Mihalcea, researcher and PhD student at University of Haifa, Israel; and Olga Ștefan, who managed to set up *The Future of Memory* platform, where stories about Holocaust survivors can be found.

The contributors to this volume worked independently, not knowing what the others were writing, or even who the other collaborators were. Thus, it is absolutely remarkable that their works complete one another and create a wonderful volume that covers the vast area of humanities and offer new documents regarding the situation of Holocaust survivors in Europe and beyond. Each chapter includes a well-documented bibliography, thorough notes, and thought-provoking analyses, making the volume indispensable for both the academic community (professors, students, researchers) focusing on Holocaust and memory studies, World

War II, and related topics, and also for those readers interested in Jewish history, in general. I thank all the contributors to this volume for their inspiring research papers and wonderful collaboration, as well as for their constructive discussions and openness.

I am very grateful to Professor Raphael Vago, from Tel Aviv University, Israel, for his willingness to write such a wonderful Introduction to this volume. Since 2014, we have met almost every year, in Tel Aviv, during my annual inter-academic exchange trips to Israel, or in Cluj-Napoca and Braşov, when he travels to Romania for conferences or lectures at summer schools, and I have always cherished his encouraging words and support for my academic trajectory. I am just as grateful to Professor Przemysław Urbańczyk, the director of the Polish Institute of Advanced Studies in Warsaw, Poland, for his warm support during my stay there and for his inspiring words regarding this collection.

In the end, I owe a debt of gratitude to all those who have helped me in various ways in this endeavor: Iulian Țanea, from CEEOL (Central and Eastern European Online Library), for suggesting the publishing house to me; Krisztina Kós, the director of CEEOL Press, for accepting this volume for publication and for the entire collaboration that transformed the manuscript into a precious book; Camelia Crăciun, from the University of Bucharest, for her insightful suggestions; and Professor Marius Turda, from Oxford Brookes University, for his wonderful words about this volume. In addition, I would like to thank my family for their support and unconditional love.

I am confident that this volume will inspire many researchers in the vast area of humanities and in Holocaust studies, in particular. The memory of all those who suffered and perished will live forever. My hope is that this volume will enhance the reader's appreciation of and sensitivity to different points of view regarding the persistence of memory in our post-Holocaust world.

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