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Bryanna Caraballo

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SPATIAL AND COLLECTIVE MEMORIES OF JEWISH HERITAGE SITES:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY

by

BRYANNA CARABALLO

A master's capstone project submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts,
The City University of New York

2020

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Bryanna Caraballo

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the capstone project requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Spatial and Collective Memories of Jewish Heritage Sites: A Comparative Study

by

Bryanna Caraballo

Advisor: Christopher Schmidt

This paper is the first component of my capstone on the comparative study of the ghetto of Rome and Łódź ghetto in Poland. This project hopes to examine the importance of collective and spatial memory, and how these factors play a crucial role in our connection and understanding of identity, locations, and memory formation. The following paper will display the similarities between the occupation of the ghetto of Roman from 1555 to the unification of Italy in 1870, and the Łódź ghetto operation during World War II (1939-1945). The paper will also touch upon the differences between today's Roman Jewish quarter and the Łódź ghetto memorial. Both locations are essential to the collective memory of Jewish identity, while the spatial associations of each location are vastly different. The second component of the project is a website, which I have created on WordPress; through CUNY Academic Commons. A link to the website can be found here: <https://beyondtheghetto.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>. The website follows the historical background that is set up in this paper, while also providing visual representation to the locations and ideas that are presented in this paper.

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II. Project website

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Fig. 33. "Lodz, Poland. 1940. A Fence around the Ghetto". *Yad Vashem*. Interview with Dr. Michal Unger, Historian, <https://www.yadvashem.org/articles/interviews/michal-unger.html> . Accessed 27 Feb. 2020.

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NOTE ON TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Currently, all the components of the capstone project are accessible on the WordPress website. All of the external links below are used to support the historical narrative of the two heritage sites, while also supporting the thesis of the importance of collective and spatial memory.

The Roman Ghetto:

A brief history of the first ghetto, the ghetto of Venice.

Fig. 1. Wnet. “The World’s First Ghetto.” *PBS LearningMedia*, www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/sotj14.socst.world.worldsfirstghetto/the-worlds-first-ghetto/support-materials. Accessed 10 Feb. 2020.

Tour guide Rick Steves walks through the Roman Jewish quarter and gives a history of the quarter’s role as the former ghetto of Rome.

Fig. 7. “Rome, Italy: Jewish Quarter.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Rick Steves’ Europe, 23 July 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wupt9IAEh8c&feature=youtu.be.

The Afterlife of the Ghetto:

The official video of the Great Synagogue of Rome posted on the website of The Jewish Museum of Rome.

Fig. 15. “Home. Sito Ufficiale Del Museo Ebraico di Roma”, uploaded by *Sito ufficiale del Museo Ebraico di Roma*, 17 Dec. 2019, museoebraico.roma.it.

The Lodz Ghetto:

A brief interview with Photo Curator, Kristen Gresh, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; she discusses the important of Ross and his photographs.

Fig. 34. “Henryk Ross: Photographs from a Nazi Ghetto | History.” *YouTube*, uploaded by History, 5 Apr. 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbpEN_P0K-g&feature=youtu.be.

Yosef Neuhaus’ survivor testimonial about his experience in Łódź before the war.

Fig. 35. “Yosef Neuhaus - The Vibrancy of the Jewish Community in Łódź before the Holocaust.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Yad Vashem, 24 Feb. 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBi4arvA4Ws&feature=youtu.be.

Yad Vashem survivor testimonial to life in the ghetto during occupation.

Fig. 36. “Holocaust Survivor Testimonies: Daily Life in the Lodz Ghetto.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Yad Vashem, 10 Feb. 2010, www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnkKBb6C_yQ&feature=youtu.be.

Life After the War:

A collage of photos taken by Alan Heath during his trip to the Łódź Ghetto Memorial.

Fig. 47. “Radegast Station, Łódź Ghetto.” *YouTube*, uploaded by Alan Heath, 20 Sept. 2007, www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxstrzzkDJ0&feature=youtu.be.

Spatial and Collective Memories of Jewish Heritage Sites: A Comparative Study

This capstone hopes to broaden the understanding of spatial and collective memories tied to Jewish heritage sites through the comparison of the Roman and Łódź ghettos. These two sites show the difference in Jewish heritage sites through the memorializing of the Łódź ghetto, and the reclaiming of the space which was once the Roman ghetto. This is shown through the historical fates of the two ghettos, which now carry different spatial and collective implications for the current and future communities. These spatial and collective connotations will be compared and explored by examining the social dynamics of today's Roman Jewish quarter and the Łódź ghetto memorial. The juxtaposition of the two ghettos hopes to express the different social responses of both Jewish and non-Jewish visitors while experiencing these heritage sites. The comparisons between the ghettos will serve as a guide in understanding the trajectory of Jewish diasporic experiences that have been imbued in these two locations. Some of the topics that are discussed in this paper are spatial memory, which can be defined as memory translated through fixed locations or landscapes. Collective memory is the collective experience shared by a group; this experience starts on an individual level. Collective identity is shaped and formed through collective and spatial memory and can be expressed through heritage sites. Some of the topics which are discussed in this paper are spatial memory, which can be defined as memory translated through fixed locations or landscapes. Collective memory is the collective experience shared by a group that starts on an individual level. Spatial and collective memory shape collective identity, and this identity can be expressed through heritage sites.

The white paper component to the capstone will give the historical background of both ghettos while exploring the spatial and collective factors behind the making of memories and

feelings that are often experienced by those who visit the sites. The second component is a website, which I have set up on WordPress; through CUNY Academic Commons. The website will allow for further explanation and historical narratives from both ghettos that are expressed through visual representation. The navigation through the website is broken down into four main pages: 1) life in the Roman ghetto; 2) life in the Łódź ghetto; 3) the transformation of the Roman ghetto after its operation; 4) the creation of the Łódź memorial. The range of media on the website will help support the idea of transformative space and collective memory in these two locations.

While I was drafting this project I was often asked, what was my inspiration in picking these two locations and this topic? While in undergraduate school at City College (CUNY), I visited Italy and spent time in the Jewish quarter as part of a class assignment. The class was called “The Pope and the Jews”; the course focused on the history of Roman Jewry and the relationship of the community and the Popes throughout the centuries. Although there are centuries of history at your fingertips in Rome, the goal of the trip was to connect with Jewish culture and engage with the readings. While in the quarter, I met members of the community and learned how they navigated their Roman Jewish identity. I specifically remember our tour guide from the Jewish Museum of Rome, which is located in the basement of the Great Synagogue, telling us how her fiancée was Sephardic while she identified as a Roman Jew. Although they were both Italian and Jewish, their religious practices were different from each other and as a couple they had to navigate the differences within their own religion. Before my studies, I was unaware of the vast amount of differences within Judaism. My experiences within this

community during my trip exposed me to the ways in which Jewish identity is traversed for those who live in Rome.

While touring the Jewish quarter, it was quite noticeable that what was the community and scenery I was experiencing were vastly different from the ghetto I had read about. Of course, I was not expecting the quarter to be frozen in time, but I also was not expecting to walk off of a typical Roman city street and transition into the Jewish quarter with such little effort. And with the same ease that I had entered the quarter, I had exited. The quarter is a bustling cultural center, with not only Jews and Italians but dozens of other nationalities and religions who either live in Italy or who are visiting. However, during the tour of the museum and synagogue, specific details such as the arches in the museum are the original arches of the ghetto, brought back into perspective where I was and the history of this location. This blending together of past and present, Italian, and Jewish, sparked an interest and has been a passion of mine ever since. I am grateful to those I have met along the way and those who have supported this passion.

As for why I chose these locations, I chose Rome due to my own experience there, but also to show the transformative properties spatial locations can have. I also found it important to acknowledge the importance of heritage sites while the community is still around to enjoy and understand its importance. As for Łódź, I wanted to choose a location where the story was just as important, but its narrative may have been overshadowed by its proximity to Auschwitz. Often when the Holocaust is taught or mentioned specific images are associated with this historical event. I chose Łódź, to add to the commonly depicted narrative of striped pajamas and tattooed prisoner numbers. Łódź is also crucial as it helps in understanding the collective and spatial differences between the two ghettos. The Łódź ghetto memorial is not symbolic of the same

transformative identity that can be seen and felt in Rome. However, the Łódź ghetto memorial is a testament of memorialization and perseverance to those who perished during the war.

Jeffrey Blustein, philosopher, and former professor at the Graduate Center, works in the field of bioethics and the importance of ethics in memory. His theory regards memory as an ethical action and through memory, we can acknowledge human rights and abuses (Sodaro 16). The ethical responsibility in recognizing victims through memory is morally the correct and necessary response to violence, regardless of the outcome of remembering (Sodaro 16). His theory also states that memory is key for groups who have been victimized, silenced, or oppressed, and is considered to be a right for those who have suffered (Sodaro 16). Memory is an ethical obligation for those who have not considered the consequences of the lack of memory. Memory and memorialization are thus considered to be healing and restorative when rights have been abused.

Scholars have since expanded upon and challenged the idea of what collective memory is and can be. Collective memory is a shared memory of a group, which starts on the individual level. The collective memory is a means for perpetuating commonly held ideals and memories of the individuals within the group (Brown and Rafter 1028). These memories are essential to the continuity and identity of the group. Yet, collective memory is not a passive act rather it allows for past events to be maintained and endowed with personal reflection through the act of remembering (Brown and Rafter 1028). Memories and the act of remembering are a means of expression and are crucial for the group to understand their own history and identity (Brown and Rafter 1028). Collective memory is also central for those outside of the group to think critically about the history and experiences of the group in a way that the lack of memory may have denied them previously. Memory objects are items that can evoke memories of the culture, community,

or ideals of a specific place or group of people. Collective memory is a part of all social structures while being produced or denied by social systems through the institutionalization of memory objects such as the Great Synagogue of Rome and the Łódź memorial. These objects are examined and analyzed to help produce collective and spatial memories.

Psychologist Barry Schwartz refers to collective memory as the “representation of the past embodied in historical evidence and commemorative symbolism” (Beim 9). Newly experienced historical events take on new meanings and are constantly challenged and changed as they are compared to new historical events. This can be seen in the relationship between the residents of the Roman ghetto and Łódź ghetto. Though they are hundreds of years apart in time and thousands of miles away in distance, both locations allow for a collective understanding of diasporic experiences of Jews throughout the centuries, despite cultural differences. The two ghetto’s spatial differences enhance Jewish collective identity through a shared understanding of ghetto life in spite of time and place. Although, these two ghettos may seem unrelated, the slogan “never again,” and the collective memory of Jewish diaspora changes the way in which we look at the atrocities that anti-Semitism has led to. Campaigns against racial, genocidal, and religious, crimes are often infused with the slogan of “never again”. Through collective memory, we can ensure cultural continuity with the hopes and dreams of creating better and more inclusive societies. We hope for a future which lives in an everlasting state of reflection, learning from the mistakes of the past. The term “never again,” in relation to the Holocaust is thought to have originated with Rabbi Meir Kahane, in his 1971 book, *Never Again! A Program for Survival*. The term has taken on many other causes since 1971 and was once again seen in Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel’s, 2010 novel, *Hostage*. Wiesel states, “Never again” becomes more than a slogan: It’s a prayer, a promise, a vow. There will never again be hatred, people say. Never again

jail and torture. Never again the suffering of innocent people, or the shooting of starving, frightened, terrified children. And never again the glorification of base, ugly, dark violence. It's a prayer.”

Thus, the collective understanding of “never again” can bridge together the two ghettos. As for those who are outside of the Jewish narrative, the slogan “never again,” has taken on different cultural meanings. Individuals can connect with Holocaust memory and Jewish diaspora through the understanding and connection to similar experiences within their own culture. Historian Wulf Kansteiner has said, Holocaust memory was one of the first fully-fledged transnational collective memory (Kansteiner 305). Transnational memory is a key element in collective memory. This collectively creates a transnational identity and responsibly to feel involved in the collective belonging (Kansteiner 310). Collective memories permeate across and beyond national, religious, and political borders. Collective memory can address historical events from the perspective or imagined past of the victor and embed them into false narratives (Kansteiner 307). Yet, without memorialization, memory can be entirely lost (Brown and Rafter 1030). Collective memories are self-reflexive, as they tend to address events from the collective’s real or imagined past and present (Kansteiner 309). Self-reflexive memories thrive and combat false narratives (Kansteiner 310). Therefore, self-reflexive memories allow for self-critical thinking (Kansteiner 309). Self-critical memories are the product of questioning past failures and their ongoing relevancy in current society (Kansteiner 309). Self-critical thinking allows for a given group to be conscious of the ways in which it can prevent its members from becoming perpetrators (Kansteiner 310). In some cases, this self-reflexive and critical moment prevents a group from being the perpetrator again (Kansteiner 309).

Public memorials are conductors of self-reflexive and self-critical memories. Memorials transfer information to the visitors both domestic and international, by helping visitors to engage with the history of the community. Memorial spaces are never static as they can be reflective of the viewer's history, ideology, and emotions (Gould and Silverman 798). Memorials also can open up channels of empathy and allow for a connection to these spatial locations. Therefore, memorials can help the tourist to carry these emotions and understandings of events back to their own cultures. This is done through reflection and criticism of the current and past events within their own societies. For locals, built environments help in shaping individual and collective memory by being a part of the everyday collective narrative (Gould and Silverman 792). These experiences also allow individuals to create their own memories while in these spaces.

Collective memory which can be transnational reflects and produces a new form of global interconnectedness (Sodaro 19). With the Holocaust fresh in the minds of the Jewish immigrant communities in the United States, individuals stood alongside Civil Rights leaders to protest not only the oppression of African Americans but also to fight for their rights as an immigrant group (Sachar). Although the Jewish and African Diasporas are often studied as separate experiences, Jewish and African American activists used their diasporic histories to start a movement in an effort to change the American power dynamic during the 1950s and 60s. The Jewish community understood the years of enslavement and removal from a homeland; they fought to stop the inequality for not only African Americans but for all minority groups. Having just faced inequality, persecution, and mass killings in Europe during the Holocaust, Jewish immigrants identified with the struggles of African Americans. A large percentage of Jewish lawyers and teachers replaced non-Jewish lawyers and teachers, as a result of many non-Jewish whites not wanting to teach African Americans or take on Civil Rights cases during segregation.

Although many Jews tried to keep a low profile, this did not spare them from the Ku Klux Klan's anti-Semitic attacks (Sachar). The fight against inequality was now a personal one for the Jewish community. Jewish activism during the Civil Rights Movement demonstrated the influence of Transnational Holocaust memory. The transnational dynamics of memory impact not only memory but politics and social systems allowing for social change (Kansteiner 310).

Schwartz's theory also looks at how collective memory is imbued with symbolism, and how symbols awaken ideas and feelings of the past which they represent (Beim 10). Schwartz argues that collective memory reflects social reality as it interprets the past in terms of images related and relevant to present situations (Beim 10). An integral component of my capstone's website's function is to have the ability to visually interpret the past through images and show the connection to present experiences. When an object is produced or displayed effectively, it will not only bring together the spirit and identity of the group which it represents but can inspire new and transformed collective memories for all who experience it (Beim 20). Both the Great Synagogue of Rome and the Łódź memorial help in understanding the formation of collective memories through their spatial implications. This goes back to Schwartz's idea of an ever-changing and evolving understanding of historical events. When people of non-Jewish backgrounds visit these locations they often connect and understand Jewish diasporic experiences through the similar experiences of their own cultural identities. The interaction with Jewish heritage sites allows for visitors to add on to the collective memory of Jewish heritage sites. This in return creates new and different ways of thinking and remembering Jewish experience in both the Łódź ghetto and the ghetto of Rome (Beim 20).

The Jewish community has suffered anti-Semitism in Rome dating back to the 1st century as Catholicism rose to power and made Rome the seat of the church (Lerner 7). Rome is home to

the oldest community of Jews in Europe yet, anti-Semitism can be traced back to the creation of the first ghetto in Venice, which opened in 1516 (Stow 71). The Venetian ghetto was created in response to the 1492 Alhambra decree, which forced the conversion or expulsion of Jews from all Spanish territories. The Venetian ghetto operated until 1797 when the ghetto unified with the rest of the city of Venice, under French rule. The Venetian ghetto served as a blueprint for the ghetto of Rome. The ghetto of Rome was imposed by Pope Paul IV in 1555 and operated for 330 years under papal power until the unification of Italy in 1870 (Lerner 1). However, this was not the end of the ghetto, which was officially closed in 1885 when it underwent reconstruction to become the landscape that is now seen today.

The implementation of the ghetto was a strategic move on behalf of Pope Paul IV. During the early 1550s, Protestantism began to fall as the dominant religion allowing for the rise of Catholicism (Stow 69). With Pope Paul IV now in command he felt pressure to show his control and power over Rome. He felt mass conversion would not only strengthen his legitimacy as pope but would also strengthen and legitimize the power of the Catholic Church (Stow 70). Forced living in the ghetto was to compel Jews into mass conversion, in an attempt to purify and perfect society (Stow 68, 71). Prior to being cordoned off in the ghetto, Jews were allowed to live among Christians (Stow 71). The Roman ghetto functioned to keep Jews separate from the rest of the population and force unbearable living conditions upon them. The gates of the ghetto opened at dawn and closed at dusk. There were often shortages of food due to the high population and the lack of access to food outside of the ghetto (Lerner 7). Cramped, damp, and dirty conditions called for high mortality rates due to sickness and vermin. Due to the ghetto being situated on the bank of the Tiber River, during high periods of rain the river often flooded the ghetto homes. The flooding would force occupants to retreat to higher floors or having to leave their homes

altogether if possible (Lerner 6). It is said that Christians often equated the flooding of the river as a way to remove the filth from Jewish bodies but had no bearing on the filth that was on their souls, only the waters of baptism could truly cleanse them (Stow 72).

Under the leadership of King Victor Emmanuel, the new Italian kingdom nullified previous laws such as Jews living in the ghetto. In the wake of the unification of Italy in 1870, the Risorgimento was an attempt to remove the history of the ghetto as a stain on the new identity of Italy. With Rome now as the capital of Italy, the Risorgimento sought to erase “a source of epidemics and a disgrace to the capital” (Lerner 3). One of the public works that came out of the Risorgimento was the construction of the Great Synagogue of Rome, which was opened in 1904 (Lerner 4). This was an attempt to give Rome a new appearance through the revamping of undesirable areas, starting with the ghetto. The term *risanameto* was attributed to the remodeling of the ghetto. *Sano*, meaning to return to health, was a slogan for the ghetto as it moved from its former function into the role of a cultural and religious center for the Jews of Rome (Lerner 3). Thus, the synagogue was intended to mask the atrocities of the former ghetto, while also signifying the emancipation and inclusion of Jews as Italian citizens (Lerner 3, 5). Most of the original structures of the ghetto were demolished and raised to create higher elevation to avoid flooding from the river. The synagogue was built in its ruins and some of the ghetto’s architecture is still visible in the basement of the synagogue which houses a museum dedicated to the centuries of Jewish life in Rome. The synagogue was placed in the center of what used to be the ghetto, with a prominent view from the closest street located next to the Tiber River. Today’s visitor often does not know the history of the land on which the synagogue stands and what it symbolizes.

Although living conditions within the ghetto were deplorable; Jews relied on the safety and sanctuary of the ghetto's walls. The walls themselves were thought to have an aura of sanctity which were symbolic of the enclosing of the city of Jerusalem (Stow 72). This safety and peace were disrupted as disrespectful Christians came into the ghetto. During the occupation of the ghetto, Jews were rarely seen outside of the ghetto walls as many things such as jobs and education were off-limits to them. However, Christians were allowed to move freely throughout the ghetto during the day, which was often but not limited to conducting business (Stow 72). Although the Jews found solace behind the ghetto walls their space was not always respected. In 1731, the papal authorities confiscated Hebrew books in attempt to stop religious practices (Stow 73). Some years later in April 1753, papal authorities entered into the ghetto after the gates were closed and stole about 650 books which were deemed to be of value (Pugliese 246). These setbacks, however, did not damper the souls of those living in the ghetto. Despite having no formal "Italian" identity, Jews very much considered themselves Jewish and Italian (Stow 77). To see an example of Jewish Italian identity after the unification of Italy, please check *The Afterlife of the Ghetto* page of the website, figure 29.

From the mid-19th century through World War II, synagogues served as a public refashioning of Jewish identity in Western Europe. Synagogues built during this time are often known as monumental synagogues, which were countries attempts to show a re-emerging Jewish community in large and grand ways (Lerner 7). Monumental synagogues were ways to express the Jewish community as equal and worthy of the same rights and freedoms as the other members of society (Lerner 7). The Great Synagogue of Rome is symbolic of transformative space and the transformative identity of the Jews of Rome. Great Synagogue embodies the intentions and spirit of 1904 by being a testament to the emancipation and inclusion of Jews in

Rome (Lerner 10). Buildings are not only a compilation of period styles but are also monuments situated in place and time. They bridge together the past and establish continuity between the moments and sentiments of the past, present, and possibly the future (Lerner 10). The Great Synagogue is an integral part of the collective and spatial memory formed not only by Jews but non-Jews who visit this area. Today's Roman Jewish quarter is an example of how a culturally repressive location can be reclaimed and transformed into a positive collective memory site.

The similar yet different histories of the ghetto of Rome and the Łódź ghetto plays a large role in the way spatial and collective memories are formed by not only Jewish communities but others when visiting these locations today. Despite the Roman ghetto's closure and makeover decades prior to World War II, the conditions of the Łódź ghetto were similar to those of the Roman ghetto during its occupation. The city of Łódź was home to the second-largest Jewish community in Poland, after Warsaw ("The Lodz Ghetto" [*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*]). During the start of World War II, German troops occupied the city of Łódź in September 1939. In February 1940, the ghetto was established; months later in April 1940, it was sealed off with barbed wire (Löw 389). Łódź was one of the first ghettos to be established and it became the second-largest ghetto in Poland, once again second to the Warsaw ghetto ("The Lodz Ghetto" [*Echoes & Reflections* 108]). Approximately 200,000 Jews lived in a cramped 1.6 square mile area during the ghetto's occupation (*Memory Unearthed*). Around 164,000 Jews were Polish Jews and the population of the ghetto increased when almost 20,000 Jews from Western Europe were deported to the ghetto ("The Lodz Ghetto" *Echoes & Reflections* 108 and Löw 390). Numbers are thought to have been as high as 204,800 people by the end of 1942 ("The Lodz Ghetto" [*Echoes & Reflections* 108]). Similar to many ghettos, survival rates were low due to several factors within the ghetto. Almost a quarter of the ghetto's population was never

deported but died in the ghetto from disease, suffering, and starvation (Löw 399). By 1944, more than 45,000 ghetto residents died of hunger and disease (Löw 390). It was also one of the last ghettos in Poland to be liquidated (“The Lodz Ghetto” [*Echoes & Reflections* 110]). Less than 1,000 Jews survived living in the ghetto and were liberated in mid-January of 1945 by the Red Army (*Memory Unearthed*).

Nazi officials chose one Jewish man in each ghetto to lead the council of Jews, whose job it was to implement Nazi laws and regulations (Tiedans 48). Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, known as the Elder of the Jews, was appointed in October 1939. The leader and council were known as *Judenrat* (“The Lodz Ghetto” [*Echoes & Reflections* 108]). Aside from his official duties, Rumkowski secured jobs in the ghetto, created a mail system with its own postage stamp and once Jews were not allowed to use marks or zlotys, created his own currency system called Rumkies (Tiedens 60). Rumkowski and the council also created a school system for children up until the age of 18 (Tiedans 80). The idea was to keep educating the future lineage of Jews. Also, the schools kept the children under the age of 10 from being sent to their deaths, as schooling and factory work for a time kept children from being deported to death camps. Orphanages were set up within the ghetto and caring for the children became a group effort (Löw 40). Men, women, and children, within the ghetto worked in factories manufacturing equipment for the German army and producing textiles such as leather (Tiedans 46). Rumkowski assured the residents that if they could prove themselves as an economic benefit for the Germans that they could survive the war (Tiedens 60). He was often remembered by his slogan, “*Praca i Pokój*” translated as, work and peace (Tiedens 60). This slogan embodied the idea that hard work would keep them safe and prove useful for the Nazi’s economic outcome. Thus, he imposed harsh

punishments for those who did not want to follow under his leadership, often being compared to a dictator.

Due to the isolation of the ghetto, Rumkowski was unaware of the fate of Jews just miles from Łódź. Despite the naming of the ghetto, the sectioned which the Jews lived in was not located within the city of Łódź, but rather, was built outside of the city. This was because Łódź was still a functional city and continued to be populated by non-Jews. The ghetto was physically separated from the city and was completely isolated from other communities. It was often referred to as “no man’s land” and compared to an island. The strategic location of the ghetto made it one of the most isolated ghettos in occupied Europe (Löw 389). The ghetto’s location and forced labor created a false sense of security for the captives of the ghetto. Rumkowski’s false promises and hope given were based on the idea that if the ghetto continued to be a productive site then the Germans would continue to keep them alive (Tiedans 60). Despite the ghetto being used as a productive labor force, for an 8-month period between 1942 and 1943 over 75,000 occupants of the Łódź ghetto were transported to the Chelmno killing center (The Lodz Ghetto [*United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*]).

In 1942, the first wave of deportation was known as *Aktion* (“The Lodz Ghetto” [*Echoes & Reflections* 110]). Some 20,000 Jewish children under the age of 10, elderly, and sick, were deported and killed at the Chelmno camp over several days (“The Lodz Ghetto” [*Echoes & Reflections* 110]). Despite Rumkowski efforts to be seen as useful, he and his family were among those deported to Auschwitz in 1944. As if life in the ghetto was not hard enough, many of the remaining residents were assigned to the “*Aufraumkommando*” or clean up commando. This group of people was selected to clean up any trace of the ghetto however, unbeknownst to them they were going to be killed once their job was done (Löw 404). In the final days before the

ghetto was liberated those who remained hidden were uncertain of their fates after the war yet, were aware that if they were to be found they would be executed.

Diaries are often known to be a large part of documenting life in the ghettos or even life as a non-Jew during the war. What makes the Łódź ghetto different from the ghetto of Rome and even other ghettos during the war is the amount of photo documentation taken within the ghetto. Henryk Ross was living in Łódź before Nazi occupation. Ross was used by the Nazi party to take pictures in and around the ghetto which would later be used for propaganda material. The photos taken were used to show that life inside the ghetto was orderly and productive, allowing for a false narrative of Jewish life within ghettos throughout Nazi-occupied Europe (Löw 393). These false narratives were then collected and put into official ghetto albums (Löw 393). Nazi propaganda photographs were the reason that not only Germans, but the rest of the world did not realize the scale of mass killings going on in these camps and ghettos. Ghetto photographer's official duties also included taking Jewish i.d. photos and documenting work being done in the ghettos and factories (Löw 392). Although Ross was officially taking pictures for the Nazis and had access to a camera, he secretly took pictures of the conditions within the ghetto (*Memory Unearthed*). He wanted there to be photographic evidence of the life in the ghetto, a narrative that countered that of the Nazis. His photos, some posed, and some taken unbeknownst by the subject(s), captured a fleeting moment in time. They also captured some of the last moments in people's lives, preserving and honoring their memory for future generations. Ross began taking pictures of Jewish life and activities that continued during the early years in the ghetto (*Memory Unearthed*). He later took pictures of the horrors that afflicted the occupants of the ghetto.

Ross hid the negatives in the ground in fear of not knowing his day to day fate (*Memory Unearthed*). Fortunately, Ross was among those liberated by the Red Army (*Memory*

Unearthed). About half of the negatives Ross buried survived after the war, and he returned two months later to the site to recover the negatives. His pictures serve as some of the surviving proof of the atrocities that happened in camps and ghettos throughout Europe. Ross's photos will play a large role in the web component of my capstone project by helping to evoke the emotional response of the Jewish diasporic experience throughout Europe and different time periods.

Although the Jews were no longer forced to live in the former Roman ghetto, they were not exempt from the Nazi enforced laws during World War II. With Mussolini and fascism ruling Italy, in 1934 there was a spike in anti-Semitism (Pugliese 242). However, Mussolini and fascism were replaced by an even more regimented system when the Nazis occupied Rome in 1943 (Pugliese 241). Nazi-occupied Rome led to hardships faced by the Jews of Rome during World War II. Although the relationship between the Pope and the Jews has never been easy, some thought that Pope Pius XII would do more to intervene on behalf of "his Jews" (Pugliese 249). This is not to say that life after unified Italy was easy for the Jews however, Pius XII did very little to protect the Jews of Rome against Nazi deportation. By the fall of 1943, many of the Italian governing bodies and the Vatican were aware of the plans to deport the Jews (Pugliese 249). SS officer Herbert Kappler, who was the liaison between Rome and Germany, demanded 50 kilos of gold be paid in exchange for the Jews (Pugliese 242). Both Christians and Jews came together to produce the 50 kilos. Most of the pieces of gold were small everyday items such as jewelry (Pugliese 243). The 50 kilos were handed over to the Nazis in compliance with their demands, however, on October 6th, orders were sent to round up 8,000 Jews, who were to be transported to their deaths (Pugliese 249). In the early morning of October 16, despite having paid the 50 kilos 1,000 Jews were rounded up (Pugliese 249). The Jews were taken to railroad cars and were deported to Auschwitz (Pugliese 249). Of the over 1,000 Jews taken on October

16th, a little over a dozen Jews returned to Rome after the war (Pugliese 249). Pope Pius XII was criticized for not doing more to save the Jews of Rome.

Public spaces are preserved for the future by carrying the past to the present in order to aid in remembrance and prevent the lack of social acceptance and denial of historical events (Guler and Ozer 858). Although not all memorials and monuments reflect positive past experiences, these spaces are also a testament to the way society may have or may have not improved. Monuments and memorials are reflective of the time in which they are built. These spaces allow for self-reflexive memories and understanding of past events. Monuments which serve to memorialize victims not only honor them by preserving their memory, but also operate as a reminder of historical events for future generations (Gould and Silverman 792). This can be seen through memorials that were built on historic sites, as they go beyond the effort to persevere history. They allow for the space to become universal through sophisticated thought and design (Sodaro 23). This allows for these spaces to broaden the remembrance of past experiences (Sodaro 23). Public spaces hold together communal identities (Gould and Silverman 795). A society's memory is expressed through its beliefs and values, which shape monuments and memorials through the process of memorialization (Gould and Silverman 792).

Memory sites designed with commemorative symbolism can become living spaces outside of commemorative days and rituals (Guler and Ozer 863). The Great Synagogue can be thought of as a living space. Living spaces are often included within the community's daily life. Commemorative sites serve not only for remembering but can provide different functions in allowing these locations to become a part of daily life (Guler and Ozer 860). The Jewish quarter plays an active part of life in Rome today. Not only as a Jewish heritage sites but as a cultural center for Roman activities. The Łódź memorial, however, is not integrated into the city of Łódź

and therefore, is not engaged with in the same manner as the Jewish quarter. Living spaces can have positive effects on social memory and urban life and identity (Guler and Ozer 858). Again, the Jewish quarter comes to mind as both Jews and non-Jewish chose to celebrate and live in and around the quarter in the wake of its dark history. Jews were once forced to live within this gated location and now freely choose to live here. The renewed identity of the Jewish quarter refreshes collective memory and spatial association. The Łódź memorial does not speak to the current life of Jews rather, the memorial serves as a reminder to the millions of lives that were lost during World War II. Its space is suspended in time and serves as a gateway to the past.

The Łódź memorial consists of the Radegast Station and other commemorative features. The Radegast train station was the station in which thousands of Jews were transported in and out of the ghetto. The station was built in 1937, as the best form of transportation to and from the ghetto (Litzmannstadt Getto). In April 1940, with the official sealing off of the ghetto, the station, and its surroundings were also sealed off with barbed-wire fencing. People living in the neighboring area were forced to move out (Litzmannstadt Getto). A guardhouse, warehouses, and additional tracks were built to accommodate the high volume at the station. Once the ghetto was in official use, food and fuel for the ghetto were shipped in through the station. The materials needed for the production of clothes, shoes, and uniforms for the German military also arrived here. The Łódź ghetto had several factories which the Jews worked at to supply the war and Germany with materials. Ready-made goods then were transported out of the ghetto from this site. It is known that on August 29th, 1944 during the last days of ghetto operation one final group of Jews was transported to Auschwitz (Litzmannstadt Getto).

The Foundation Monumentum Iudaicum Lodzense is an organization that helps to preserve Jewish heritage in Łódź (History of Ghetto in Lodz). Their goal states that it, “tries to

rescue and to popularize the memory of the Ghetto Łódź, among others through her involvement in the commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Ghetto Łódź in 2004. It is to be one of the major historical sites that tells the tragic story of the Łódź ghetto” (History of Ghetto in Lodz). In 2002, the foundation proposed that a museum should be a dedication to the Łódź ghetto and be exhibited inside of the Radegast Station. In 2005, the Łódź ghetto memorial was opened to the public. It consists of the preservation of the Radegast Station and its original tracks; within the station, the names, and photos of those who were deported from the station are displayed. Outside of the station sits an original German train with 3 railroad cars (Seemann). The memorial is also made up of a chimney shaped monument with the inscription, “Thou Shall not Kill” (Seemann). There is an over 450-foot-long “tunnel of deportees,” which lists the names of deported ghetto captives. To add to the symbolic significance of this memorial, there are 6 large tombstone markers that have the names of concentration camps and are engraved with outstretched hands reaching towards the sky. To see images of the memorial please check the *Life After the War* page.

Memorials are built often become tourist destinations, showing that not only academics but the general public can engage in and express interest in the memory of past violence and triumph (Sodaro 14). Memorials are able to collect and display physical remnants of the past by persevering it and telling its story through exhibiting knowledge and the understanding of specific histories (Sodaro 23). Memorials that are built on sites of atrocities go beyond the goal of perseveration but are historical sites (Sodaro 23). Through built spaces such as memorials and exhibitions, these sites are an attempt to be collective spaces. Thus, through these built narratives, spatial memory can appeal to broader implications and can echo past experiences (Sodaro 23). Spaces such as these museums and memorials are vital in helping individuals learn

what it means to belong to a group or nation. These spaces also foster new and changing identities within these communities and nations (Sodaro 23). Museums have a legitimizing function by being imbued with authority, thus being seen as trustworthy sources of information (Sodaro 23).

Although physical representation is not the only interpretation of spatial memory, society tends to rely on physical reminders of the past as a way to move towards the future. In the 21st century, we are moving towards digital memory in place of spatial locations. New tools such as virtual reality allow for the continuity of place and space when the perseverance of time and a particular space are not always an option. Museums and memorials can provide a link between the new digital culture and the traditional acts of remembrance through creating digital Holocaust memory. This is necessary as we lose survivors, locations, and first-hand accounts of the Holocaust. This move to digital is in part as to why I chose to create a website. It allows for my research to be widely accessible, while also providing a visual representation to the thoughts I have formed in this paper. It can be hard to understand and connect with an experience you have not been a part of.

This paper serves as a historical and theoretical background for the ideas and topics that I have continued on the website. This project and paper have allowed me to see the interdependence of spatial and collective memory, and their effect on collective and individual identity. Memories and identities are built and shaped by social interaction on a global scale. We are influenced by everything around us on both a conscious and subconscious level. I hope that through my website individuals can connect to these two locations on a level they have never experienced before. The website serves as an expression of the ways in which spatial and

collective memory have influenced my understanding of not only Jewish experiences but of the history around me.

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