

IN THE LAST FEW DECADES, there are few concepts that have rivaled "collective memory" for attention in the humanities and social sciences. Indeed, use of the term has extended far beyond scholarship to the realm of politics and journalism, where it has appeared in speeches at the centers of power and on the front pages of the world's leading newspapers. Seen by scholars in numerous fields as a hallmark characteristic of our age, an idea crucial for understanding our present social, political, and cultural conditions, collective memory now guides inquiries into diverse, though connected, phenomena. Nevertheless, there remains a great deal of confusion about the meaning, origin, and implication of the term and the field of inquiry it underwrites.

*The Collective Memory Reader* presents, organizes, and evaluates past work and contemporary contributions on collective memory. Combining seminal texts, hard-to-find classics, previously untranslated references, and contemporary landmarks, it will serve as a key reference in the field. In addition to a thorough introduction, which outlines a useful past for contemporary memory studies, *The Collective Memory Reader* includes five sections—Precursors and Classics; History, Memory, and Identity; Power, Politics, and Contestation; Media and Modes of Transmission; Memory, Justice, and the Contemporary Epoch—comprising ninety-one texts. A short editorial essay introduces each of the sections, while brief capsules frame each of the selected texts.

An indispensable guide, *The Collective Memory Reader* is at once a definitive entry point into the field for students and an essential resource for scholars.