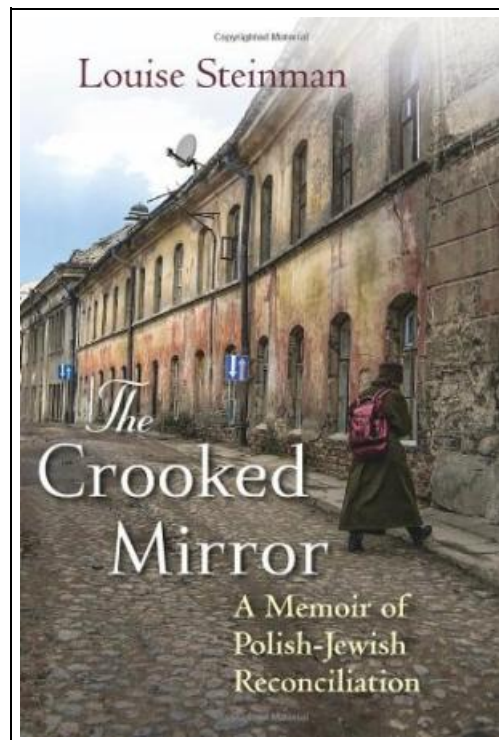


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Reviews

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Beacon Press, United States, 2013. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 236 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. A lyrical literary memoir that explores the exhilarating, discomfoting, and ultimately healing process of Polish-Jewish reconciliation taking place in Poland today I d grown up with the phrase Never forget imprinted on my psyche. Its corollary was more elusive. Was it possible to remember--at least to recall--a world that existed before the calamity? In the winter of 2000, Louise Steinman set out to attend an international Bearing Witness Retreat at Auschwitz-Birkenau at the invitation of her Zen rabbi, who felt the Poles had gotten a bum rap. A bum rap? Her own mother could not bear to utter the word Poland, a country, Steinman was taught, that allowed and perhaps abetted the genocide that decimated Europe s Jewish population, including members of her own extended family. As Steinman learns more about her lost ancestors, though, she finds that the history of Polish-Jewish relations is far more complex. Although German-occupied Poland was the site of horrific Jewish persecution, Poland was for centuries the epicenter of European Jewish life. After the war, Polish-Jewish relations soured. For Poles under Communism, it was taboo to examine or discuss the country s Jewish past. Among Jews in the Diaspora, there was little acknowledgment of the Poles immense suffering during its dual occupation. Steinman s research leads her to her grandparents town of Radomsko, whose eighteen thousand Jews were deported or shot during the Nazi occupation. As she delves deeper into the town s and her family s history, Steinman discovers a prewar past where a lively community of Jews and Catholics lived shoulder to shoulder, where a Polish Catholic painted the blue ceiling of the Radomsko synagogue, and a Jewish tinsmith roofed the spires of the...

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