

Speech at the memorial service for my father Marcel Reich-Ranicki, Paulskirche, Frankfurt, 1.6.2014

First I should like to thank Oberbürgermeister Feldmann and the Magistrat for initiating this memorial service in honour of my father. I would like to thank all the performers, who spoke so well about my father, read for him and played for him.

My parents lived in Frankfurt for 40 years, felt at home here, and ultimately in this country. At this point I should like to thank all those who contributed to their well-being: collaborators, friends, known and unknown. A special thanks are owed to the doctors, carers and nurses who treated my parents so lovingly, at home and in various hospitals. I should also like to thank my father himself. Of course, for all that he meant for my family, and all that he did for us. But there is something else.

The Haba Quartet played beautifully the music which my parents heard in the Warsaw Ghetto. At a particular Holocaust-related moment in time 16 years ago my father wrote: "The German question has been my main concern, at the centre of my moral and political existence, in both my personal and professional life." I should like to thank my father for managing in his unique way to convert German contempt and hate for him into respect and love.

Andrew Ranicki