

Title: Survival and Community in Memoirs of the Holocaust in Poland
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In his book *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camp*, which examines both the Soviet GULag and the Nazi Concentration Camps, Terrence Des Pres notes that no one survived the camps without help (37). As described in memoirs of the Holocaust in Poland, this help often came in the form of informal communities. This paper examines the portrayal and the role of the community as it relates to survival in several memoirs and diaries of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz.

These unsanctioned, informal communities replaced the official organizations in survivor accounts of the Warsaw Ghetto, such as Alexander Donat's *The Holocaust Kingdom* and Vladka Meed's *On Both Sides of the Wall*, whereas those who did not survive, such as Chaim Kaplan in *Scroll of Agony*, find no alternative to the Nazi-backed *Judenrat* and extensions of their power, such as the Jewish Police. In the portrayal of Auschwitz, the role of community determines not only survival, but how the author relates to the fact that he survived while others did not. Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity* focuses on his relationships with other camp inmates and how they helped each other. Paul Steinberg's *Speak You Also: A Survivor's Reckoning*, written in response to Levi's portrayal of Steinberg, examines how Steinberg used Jewish, criminal and SS communities as they benefited him, and is largely a justification to the reader of why saving himself, instead of helping others, was an acceptable course of action.

Works Cited

Des Pres, Terrence. *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camp*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1976.