

Eyewitness auschwitz

Science



During the attempted extermination of the entire Jewish population, many Jewish prisoners were ordered to assist in the killing of their own people. Sonderkommandos were a major part of this eradication. A sonderkommando aided in the disposal of the corpses that were victims to the gas chambers. Through the vivid testimony by Filip Muller, “ Eyewitness Auschwitz” allows the reader to fully understand the difficulties and graphic situations that occurred daily at Auschwitz. Filip Muller was born on January 3, 1922 in Sered, Czechoslovakia.

In 1942 at the age of 20, he was deported to the death camp. He was one of the few Sonderkommandos to have survived Auschwitz. The memoir greatly details the resilience of the human spirit, the choices individuals were faced with and decided to act upon and, the treatment of those who had succumbed. The personal choices that some made were extremely unmoral. ““ Every day we saw thousands and thousands of innocent people disappear up the chimney. With our own eyes, we could truly fathom what it means to be a human being.

There they came, men, women, children, all innocent. They suddenly vanished, and the world said nothing .. ” An example of an unmoral prisoner was the Kapo Mietek, who was trusted to discipline the working prisoners. According to Muller, it was not necessary for Mietek to treat his fellow prisoners as human beings but rather beat them mercilessly to gain appreciation from the Nazi leaders. Another theme that Muller presents in his testimony is dehumanization of the camp’s victims.

Approximately seventy percent of the prisoners that arrived at Auschwitz were immediately gassed. Their hair was shaven and their bodies were

exploited in order to find valuables for the Nazi's economic gain. A memoir is by definition “ a record of events written by a person having intimate knowledge of them and based on personal observation”. While Filip Muller's testimony could be extremely accurate, it could also be extremely flawed. As a prisoner at a death camp-watching people die daily, it can weigh heavily on one's conscious.

This in turn can alter one's memory and/or create an entire new memory that never happened. The validity of Muller's memoir could all be a figment of his imagination due to the emotional and physical stress and agony of being a prisoner although I highly doubt that the validity is compromised. “ Eyewitness Auschwitz” is a key document of the Holocaust. It is published with an association of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which is highly renowned. “ Eyewitness Auschwitz” is a personal testimony of the hell that resided within the death camps.

Filip Muller does an excellent job of describing the daily activities of a Sonderkommando, which few lived to tell about. At times it is extremely difficult to read due to the graphic nature of the text. Muller discusses themes that the entire camp system was set on such as dehumanization and the immorality of the soldiers as well as fellow prisoners. Filip Muller wrote a very powerful book that reaches deep within the reader and wrenches on their emotions.