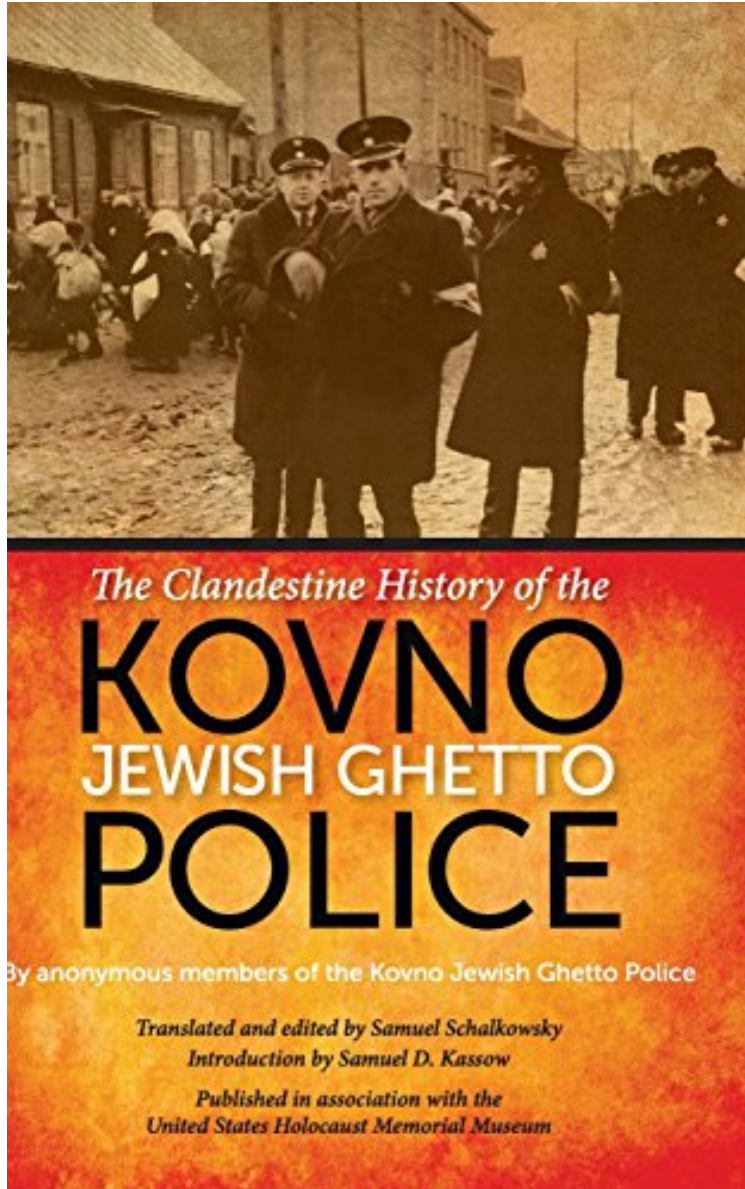


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Anonymous members of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police
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Anonymous members of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police : The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police By Myra

Sklarew This is a work of critical importance. Sam Schalkowsky, survivor of the Kovno Ghetto, of Kaiserwald, Stutthof Concentration Camp and Magdeburg, eventually found his way to the United States. He spent years translating the Jewish Ghetto Police Records and more years seeing the work into publication. It is a powerful record of the complex relationship between the Ghetto Police, the demands of the Germans, the needs of the Jewish Ghetto Community and the members of the Altestenrat leaders of the Community. It is rare that such a record should have been made in the first place, hidden and actually discovered. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. an enlightening piece of history By Mary C. translated and edited by a survivor of the Kovno horror. A must read for students and historians of the Holocaust 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great read By Melanie dalton Got this for my husband who loves war history, he said this was a great read

As a force that had to serve two masters, both the Jewish population of the Kovno ghetto in Lithuania and its German occupiers, the Kovno Jewish ghetto police walked a fine line between helping Jews survive and meeting Nazi orders. In 1942 and 1943 some of its members secretly composed this history and buried it in tin boxes. The book offers a rare glimpse into the complex situation faced by the ghetto leadership and the Jewish policemen, caught between carrying out the demands of the Germans and mollifying the anger and frustration of their own people. It details the creation and organization of the ghetto, the violent German attacks on the population in the summer of 1941, the periodic selections of Jews to be deported and killed, the labor required of the surviving Jewish population, and the efforts of the police to provide a semblance of stability. The secret history tells a dramatic and complicated story, defending the actions of the police force on one page and berating its leadership on the next. A substantial introduction by distinguished historian Samuel D. Kassow places this powerful work within the context of the history of the Kovno Jewish community and its experience and fate at the hands of the Nazis.

[A] remarkable book, *The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police*, provides a graphic and unparalleled description of the conditions under which the Jews of Kaunas tried to live and survive during this tragic period. (Jewish Daily Forward) Often, when reading about another episode of Holocaust horror, I instinctively pull back--I am unable to imagine myself in a similar situation. What would I do? What could I do? But I was in another place. They were there--this time, in Kovno: two groups on one side, two on the other, Jewish police and Jewish victims vs. Lithuanian partisans and German Gestapo. The Jews lost. There was never any doubt. No book I've read in recent time about the Holocaust has so moved me, evoking the utter helplessness of the Jew, the plight of the Jewish police and the cunning cruelty of the German. This is a gripping story, page by page, and it reminds us again that there but for the grace of God go we all. Read, remember and, if we can, cry. (Marvin Kalb Senior Advisor to the Pulitzer Center and Edward R. Murrow Professor, Emeritus, Harvard Kennedy School) The writers of this riveting document . . . were determined to provide a truly balanced history of the Jewish police as it interacted with ghetto inhabitants, the Nazi occupiers, and their Lithuanian auxiliaries. . . . Highly recommended. (Choice) The detailed content as well as the analytical and critical quality of the report, combined with the superb introduction by Samuel D. Kassow, make this book a landmark of Holocaust historiography. (Slavic) Without mentioning helping Jews leave the ghetto to join the partisans fighting the Nazis (for fear of their manuscript's discovery by the Germans), the policemen relate their struggles to implement directives of the elected Jewish council, hoping to buy time until liberation, nearly always following the demands of the German command while trying to keep their pledge to devote themselves "to the well-being of the Jewish community in the ghetto," a community doomed to annihilation. . . . Of interest to readers seeking to understand the actions of Jews during the Holocaust. (Library Journal) *The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police* is an unsettling document. It does not lead, at least for this reviewer, to compassion fatigue but to unsettling empathy: at the end of reading this document, we will look differently at the moral ambiguity in which the Jewish ghetto police found itself. (Holocaust Studies) Carefully and unobtrusively edited by ghetto survivor Schalkowsky, the material chronicles the removal of Kovno Jews to the ghetto, the savage beatings and rapes and thefts along the way, and the grave and brave attempts of those confined to organize and to maintain some sort of humanity in the eye of the Nazi hurricane. . . . The detail is extraordinary, and while the authors occasionally assail their tormenters (in print), the tone is otherwise grimly, wrenchingly expository. An introduction by Samuel D. Kassow tells what happened, and there is no light whatsoever in that dark story. . . . Amid all the unspeakable brutality, cruelty, fear, loss and despair, hope somehow lingers until the final gunshot. (Kirkus) *The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police* [is] a source not only for understanding a watershed period in Lithuanian history, the destruction of its historic Jewish population, but also as a guide for understanding Lithuanian history in the period since the end of World War II. (The Lithuania Tribune) *The Clandestine History of the Kovno Jewish Ghetto Police* is an exceptionally important work! (Martyrdom Resistance) If this had been published earlier, I would certainly have used it in my work. For me, [among] the most enlightening passages are, above all, what goes on in the minds of people who lose a third of their community in a single day and then face an uncertain future. Noteworthy are also the self-evaluations by the police of their role, the manner in which they struggle to justify their acts, and their realistic descriptions of confrontations with ghetto inmates. No less significant is their recognition of the ghetto jail as a prison within a prison, or their characterization of

the Jews as 'sheep.' (Raul Hilberg author of *The Destruction of the European Jews*) A comprehensive description of the origins of the ghetto police, its development, its leadership, and the relations of the police with the rest of the ghetto administration, with Nazi collaborators inside the ghetto, with German and Lithuanian guards and policemen in the ghetto area, and with the ghetto population generally. . . . Readers will be moved to reflections on the existential situation of the authors, their state of mind, psychology, and philosophical conundrums. It will clarify other questions about the policemen as a group: their social status prior to the war, their education, their ideological outlook, and their self-understanding. . . . We do not have a document of this kind, or such a full account of any ghetto organization, let alone the police despised and hated in most ghettos as collaborators. And despite the particularity of each ghetto, many phenomena covered in this book were universal to all. (Dalia Ofer *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*) Almost all ghetto memoirs, diaries, and histories describe the ghetto police in harshly negative terms, as a corrupt and brutal force whose members went to great lengths to save themselves by assisting the Germans in the destruction of their fellow Jews. . . . Individual policemen, both during and after the Holocaust, tried to justify their motives and behavior, but we have little in the way of sustained narrative of the police, much less one from the perspective of the police themselves. The history of the Kovno ghetto police is a unique historical document because it was written by the policemen while the ghetto was still in existence. Significant with respect to ghetto police forces in general, it illuminates the special case of Kovno. The Kovno ghetto police were by no means exempt from criticism by ghetto inmates, however, the behavior and attitude of the police aroused less of the bitterness and scorn one finds elsewhere. . . . No better source than this detailed history of the Kovno ghetto police can be imagined. (Solon Beinfeld *Washington University in St. Louis*)

About the Author The anonymous policemen who composed this secret history were members of a Jewish police force that served in the Kovno ghetto from August 1941 until the Nazis murdered the leadership of the force in March 1944. Samuel Schalkowsky, a survivor of the Kovno ghetto, is a volunteer at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Samuel D. Kassow is Charles H. Northam Professor of History at Trinity College and author of *Who Will Write Our History?* Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive (IUP, 2007).