

Human Solidarity

This chapter aims to insert a little optimism into the gloomy matters of war and demonstrate that even the most tragic episodes in the history of mankind are not deprived of some humanity, that in the most chaotic war circumstances there were people ready to help, sometimes taking risks and putting their own safety and lives in danger.

Furthermore, this chapter contains several sources which deal with unusual and unexpected behaviour during everyday life in wartime. These sources illustrate situations which were not unambiguous from a moral point of view: they were not always clear, and it is precisely because of this, they have given us the opportunity to analyse and discuss (for example: IV-1 and IV-2). A useful approach to this is to encourage the method of identifying with the people involved, e.g. students can, by acting out the roles of the real people, try to predict their behaviour and understand their feelings in the situation described.

IV-1. Partisan-Ustasha conversation

“Why are you wasting my ammunition, you son of an Ustasha bitch!”

Basically, he regards Ustasha ammunition as already wasted, and regrets each bullet.

“Come and get it, don’t be afraid, you mother-fucker!”, replies the Ustasha.

But that’s only the introduction into a further substantial conversation of a mostly ‘political’ nature. (...) The Ustasha doesn’t believe that Partisans exist, he thinks we’re all Chetniks. Chetniks and outlaws, they are all the same, they all fight against the Croats to the benefit of the Serbs and the Jews. He (*the Ustasha*) asked Svrabo to curse King Petar and Queen Marija in order to prove that he wasn’t a Chetnik. Svrabo granted him his wish with the greatest delight, but he immediately asked the Ustasha to curse Pavelić. (...) At that moment, the Ustasha remained speechless given that he neither wanted nor could curse Pavelić, a provoker fired from the machine-gun. He didn’t hit him but interrupted him and Svrabo withdrew into the shelter.

“Are you hurt?” asked the Ustasha with concern.

“No, I’m not”, replied Svrabo.

“Why are you shooting at him, mother-fucker,

can’t you see that I’m talking to the man”, yelled the Ustasha at the man who interrupted their conversation. (...)

“If I had caught him, I would have let him go, I swear!” declared Svrabo generously. But in that statement of his, there was not a grain of truth. Pigs might fly before Svrabo would let an Ustasha go.

Šibl 2, pp. 203-204.



In quite a number of passages, Ivan Šibl describes the abrupt and unplanned respect among members of the warring armies fighting in Croatia. Violent fights took place in Slavonia at the beginning of 1943. At their bases near Voćin, the enemies (in this case, the Partisans and the Ustashes) were about 60 metres away by air, so that the soldiers of the two armies could communicate easily. Šibl’s Partisan comrade, Milan Svrabić-Svrabo, often talked to one of the Ustashes. This is one of their conversations, started by a shot heard from the Ustasha side.



In your opinion, were such conversations common on other battlefields, and in other wars, or was this just a freak occurrence of bored soldiers having fun? Do you approve of such conversations? What

do you think of the sympathy that arose between the two soldiers? Was it sincere? How far did this sympathy go? Do you think that the two soldiers would actually be prepared to do something to save the other's life? Is Šibl right when, in his final commentary, he claims that something like this is impossible?

► **v46. Romanian newspaper poster: *Help orphans***



„Universul”, no. 249, 12 September 1943.



This poster is asking people to help orphans. Why were there orphans? Did the politicians take any measures to stop the causes?

IV-2. Celebrating a name-day in the concentration camp

A couple of days before it, The Boss (*of the camp*) incidently told the cooks: “We will just see what he will

prepare for his name-day.” It was up to me to turn out to be a man or an old dodderer. (...)

I cleaned up my cell, cleared up the table, tidied up the space by the window, put some box cardboard and wood splinters into the stove and borrowed some glasses from the kitchen – if only I had put up Pavelić’s picture, the cell would have become the sort of room where a distinguished person could be received. (...) I agreed with Gaon that he would come after the special guests had left so that we could talk freely over a drink. As he was a Jew, those bastards would never have sat at the table with him. (...)

At about ten o’clock, the door opened and four of them entered with the ensign on their heads.

– “Spremnii! (*Readily!* – *Ustasha’s salutation*) My congratulations, Doctor!”

– “Thank you my dear Ante, my loving person, I am so glad, it is as if Sultan himself had come!”

(...)“It’s nice of you to come! It would be a poor name-day celebration without such great men! (...)”

I poured wine into glasses, we toasted, all in a strict Croatian manner. God help us meet in Zagreb next year, that we get drunk as lords and then drive from one inn to another.

– “Doctor, you like spending nights out and drinking, don’t you?”

– “And who doesn’t? The worst man is the one who is stingy with money. As long as there is money, spend it, enjoy yourself, fool around! My lord, I’ll never forget that you came. We must meet again next year and if possible not in this house. We’ll hire a Gypsy, he will sing and play. You always drink better when there’s music and singing.”

– “Where are the Gipsies, you devil? There are no more Gipsies”, said the Boss smiling.

– “What? You haven’t killed off the musicians, too, have you? I can’t agree to that. Irreplaceable people should be saved. Who can replace a Gypsy musician?”

So the conversation turned to the topic of genocide.

– “Why do the Gipsies bother you?” asked Jakovljević to his guests, “they aren’t politicians.”

– “Why should we need Gipsies?” answered one

of the guests, “they neither work nor serve in the army. If you really want to know, I would rather keep alive a Vlach (*a Serbian, in this case*). At least he would plow and work in the field... If we reduce them in number, they won't be of any danger.”

Then Jakovljević, as a man of literature, recited poetry to his guests. At the same time, noises could be heard from the cellar: the Ustashas were torturing one of the prisoners.

“I had to control myself, not to choke. While I was repeating the poet's sighs for freedom, I was deprived of it, and in the name of that same freedom, another crime was committed at that very moment. (...) I had to pretend, to make myself look stupid as if I didn't know what was going on in the room down below.”

Jakovljević, pp. 173-179.



The aforementioned Ilija Jakovljević, a prisoner in Stara Gradiška, had a special status in the camp. As a pre-war Croatian patriot who had “stepped out of line a bit” but who nonetheless might have joined the Ustashas in the future, he enjoyed privileges from his prison guards. Despite this, he could, nevertheless have fallen out of favour at anytime and would have been executed on the spot – as many others were. For this reason, he had to maintain a simulated friendship with the guards and the camp administration. On this occasion, he found himself in the position whereby he had to invite the complete camp administration to his cell to celebrate his name-day.



Do you find the behaviour of the “prison staff” unusual and unexpected? Did they, in your opinion, behave in the same way with the other prisoners? Why did Jakovljević have some privileges in the camp? What do you think of the “casual conversation” held between the prisoner and his guests? The points of view which were normal to the Ustashas, horrified Jakovljević, but he couldn't show it. What do you think of his behaviour? What would you have done in his place?

IV-3. *Memoir of the intellectuals addressed to I. Antonescu (April 1944)*

At this moment, when a terrible disaster threat-

ens our people, we, the members of the Romanian Academy and the professors at the Universities of Bucharest, Iași and Cluj, witnesses of the people's exodus and of the devastation of the Romanian villages and cities, transformed into battlefields, after a long consideration, have decided to address you this appeal.

In the present circumstances, to remain silent would be a crime. We have the duty of telling our honest thoughts in front of the leader of the State: we must put an end at once to our war with Russia, Great Britain and the United States ...

Mr. Marshall,

The bombing of the Capital, the destruction of other cities, the warnings received from London, Washington and Moscow, Moldavia's transformation into a battle scene are all signs of an imminent disaster. The Romanian people, exhausted of a war too long for its capacities, cannot fight any longer. Go down to the streets and ask the passers-by, go to the villages and the cities, listen to the voice of the people. Everywhere you will see the despair in people's eyes and the same answer: NO. What should we fight for? The vital interests of the State and of our people require an immediate end to the war, no matter how hard this thing might be. The sacrifices Romania would make by ending the war would be much smaller and less painful than those made if the war were to continue.

Scurtu et al., pp. 439-440.



The prevalent toleration politics of the political opposition motivated numerous political, cultural and other personalities to address protests to the Leader of the State, by means of which they manifested their discontent with the politics lead by the Government. These actions were, in general, not followed by repression.



What was the social status of the authors of this memoir? What was the position of these authors on the main political problems in Romania in 1944? Is this position solely that of the authors? Did the authors take any risks in writing this letter?

IV-4. Extract from a letter by the President of the Greek ministers (7/10/43) to the German authorities

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CABINET
Ref. no. E 312 1/10 CONFIDENTIAL
To H.E., the Reich's representative in Greece
Dr. G.A. Altenburg

Athens, 7 October 1943

Your Excellency,

The police commander of the SS in Greece has issued an order for all Greek citizens of the Israelitic persuasion to present themselves for registration. The news of this order gives me the impression that the measures taken by the Military Command in Thessaloniki against Jews are to be repeated here against Greek citizens of Jewish descent.

[...] The possibility of these Greek citizens, who have lived on Greek land from time immemorial, being removed from their country and resettled in unknown regions, fills both the Greek government and every Greek heart with mourning.

The Israelites of old Greece (i.e. of Greece as it was before the Balkan wars) are fully integrated, linguistically and historically, with the local population and have produced poets who stand out for their Greek spirit.

As lawful citizens, they have always fought for Greece in all cases, and many of them distinguished themselves in the battlefields.

Their diligence, ability and sense of duty have helped them to excel as civil servants, particularly as judges and military men. They have always handled successfully the difficult affairs of the state and fought dutifully to promote the interests of the country.

The Greek Church has always offered its protection to the Israelite community in Greece and inspired the Greek people with a spirit of tolerance and magnanimity in matters of faith. The Israelite community of old Greece constitutes a non-negligible minority with no political or cultural power whatsoever.

[...] The enforcement of such measures against

the Greek Israelites in old Greece would hurt the sentiments of a people whose soul has absorbed the great traditions of the Greek spirit. [...]

Enepekidis, pp. 50-51.



How did the President of the Greek Ministers explain his demand? Why didn't he directly say that the holocaust was a great injustice and crime? Did he take any risks in writing this letter? What would you have done had you been in the President's position?

IV-5. George Enescu⁵⁶ trying to protect the Roma

7 November 1942

NOTE

I was informed that, on behalf of the musician Gypsies, George Enescu himself intervened and spoke to Marshall Antonescu, saying that he would also go if he were to take his musicians to the Bug.

Minoritati etnoculturale. Marturii documentare. Tiganii din Romania (1919-1944), doc. 281.



In your opinion, why did Enescu intervene in favour of the Gypsies? Can you guess his reasons for having done so?

IV-6. Memorandum by a group of Bulgarian barbers and hairdressers to the Ministers concerning the Bill for the Protection of the Nation

11 November 1940

Dear Sirs,
Today, as we are living through these worrying times which demand the union of the whole Bulgarian na-

⁵⁶ George Enescu (1881-1955) was the greatest Romanian musician and one of the most prodigiously gifted musicians of the twentieth century: a great violinist and composer, a distinguished conductor, an accomplished pianist, able cellist and a famous violin teacher.

tion, some decisions against the Jews have been taken, which are not only against the will of the Bulgarian people, but are also pernicious to them. This is the reason for passing the Bill for the Protection of the Nation.

We do not know if you will listen to our just voice, which originates in the class that had given the most assets and victims for the welfare of our people. Today, together with our fellow-citizens Jews we are working and, if the time comes, we will die together at the front lines, as did our fathers and their fathers before them. We do not see anything wrong with them, and you want to tear them from our body by depriving them of all their rights. If the aim is to persecute the Jewish profiteers, you should persecute ours as well.

The Struggle of the Bulgarian People, p. 49.



Was there a similar document from your country? If you were a Bulgarian barber at that time, would you have signed the memorandum?

IV-7. Turkish help and support to Greece

THANKS FROM GREECE

Below you will find the translations of the letters of thanks I received, due to my efforts and attempts of the commission organised under my Presidency in our Ministry to send food and support to the people of Greece and the Aegean Islands who have been forced into a situation of hunger under the occupation during the Second World War:

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF MUNICIPALITY OF ATHENS

"I kindly request your accept this album of the city of Athens. I present it as a little gift for the various services you gave the people of Greece during the terrible times of the history of Greece".

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR OF CHIOS

"I have been informed with happiness by Mr. Courvoisier, a Representative of Red Cross and a good friend of our country, of all of the details of your decision to send flour to the Red Cross of Chios.

As Governor of this region, please let me express my excitement and thanks due to your kind help for the suffering people of this small Chios Island.

Also, I kindly request that you accept the thanks of the whole of Greece and the Government of Greece for sending support from the neighbouring coasts to our own coasts.

We become worked up when we see Lion (Arslan), the boat with Turkish National Flag coming into our harbour.

During their historical life, both of our nations have lived together for years. We have retained a close friendship and we honour memories of your nation from this cooperation. Because the Turkish Nation, in times of war and peace, in every meeting with us, has always regarded us as its brother, friend and a loved relative. During this cruel and terrible deprivation period, by giving us your hand; you confirm our opinion of the noble Turkish Nation.

I kindly request your acceptance of this little gift from Chios, which I present to you through the agency of Mr. Courvoisier".

Erkin, pp. 130-31.



Erkin was a member of the Turkish Foreign Ministry during World War II. In this first hand account he outlines the Turkish help and support that was given to the various parts of Greece, including its Aegean Islands which were suffering from food shortages. These are some of the letters of thanks and gratitude from the Greek authorities.



What do you know of the history of Greek-Turkish relations? Do these sources confirm the stereotype about the hatred between the two nations?

IV-8. Testimony of a retired Ambassador Necdet Kent regarding his rescue of Jewish Turks in Marseilles, France

One evening, a Turkish Jew from Izmir named Sidi Iscan, who worked at the Consulate as a clerk and translator, came to my house in a state of considerable excitement. He told me that the Germans had

gathered up about eighty Jews and had taken them to the railroad station with the intention of loading them onto cattle wagons for shipment to Germany. (...) I immediately tried to calm him and then took the fastest vehicle available to the Saint Charles railroad station in Marseilles. The scene there was unbelievable. I came to cattle wagons, which were filled with sobbing and groaning people. Sorrow and anger drove everything else from my mind. (...)

When the Gestapo officer in charge of the train station heard that I was there, he came to me and in a very cross manner and asked me what I was looking for. With as much courtesy as I could force myself to summon, I told him that these people were Turkish citizens, that their arrest had been a mistake, and that it should be remedied at once by their release. The Gestapo officer said that he was carrying out his orders and that these people were not Turks but were just Jews. Seeing that I would get nowhere by making threats which could not be carried out, I returned to Sidi Iscan and said, "Come on, let's board the train ourselves", and pushing aside the German soldier who tried to block my way, I boarded one of the wagons with Sidi Iscan beside me. This time it was the turn of the Gestapo officer to cry and even plead. I couldn't listen to anything he said, and amidst the crying glances of the Gestapo officer, the train began to move. Since it was a long time ago, I cannot remember too well, but I remember that the train came to a stop when we came either to Arles or Nimes. A number of German officers climbed onto the car and immediately came to my side. I received them very coldly and did not even greet them. They told me that there had been a mistake, the train had left after I had boarded, the persons responsible would be punished, as soon as I left the train I could return to Marseilles on a car that would be assigned to me. I told them that it was not a mistake, that more than eighty Turkish citizens had been loaded onto this cattle wagon because they were Jews, that as a citizen of a nation as well as the representative of a government which felt that religious beliefs should not be the reason for such treatment, there could be no question of my leaving them alone, and that was why I was there. The officers said they would cor-

rect whatever mistakes had been made and asked if all those in the wagon were Turkish citizens. All the people around me, women, men, and children, stood petrified while they watched this game being played for their lives. Most likely because of my refusal to compromise, as well as an order received by the Nazi officers, we all descended from the train together. (...) I will never forget what followed. The people who had been saved threw their arms around our necks and shook our hands, with expressions of gratitude in their eyes. (...)

Shaw, pp. 342-344.



Comment on the Ambassador's handling of the situation. Did he put his life in danger by trying to save the people? What would you have done had you been in his place?

IV-9. From the diary of a Bulgarian soldier in West Thrace, a Greek region under Bulgarian occupation

23 May 1941. We went to Ksanty (Xanthi) to take part in the parade.

The situation there was the same as in Gyumurdjina (Komotini). Wherever there is a soldiers' camp there are always children, old men and women coming with their plates in hand. Our food is neither much, nor various, but we can always give something away from the beans or the soldiers' soup to feed the hungry people.

At noon, many children gathered around the warehouse. Today's lunch was special, there was a second helping for the hungry ones, and many soldiers gave their food to the children.

I went upstairs to the second floor of the warehouse and opened the window. My eyes stopped on a young woman, maybe a girl, dressed all in black. She was standing at the nearby corner looking at the children, who were walking carefully, so that not to splash the soup they were carrying in their dishes.

I could easily guess why this woman was dressed all in black. Surely, someone dear had died in the

war, a father, a brother, a husband or a lover. But what was she waiting for there at the corner? Perhaps she was also hungry and she wanted a piece of bread, too?

Suddenly, as if she had decided not to pay attention to any obstacles, the woman started for the fence. Several boys from our company were standing in the yard near the metal fence. The woman went near them and I could hear her timid words:

“Kirie (Sir), bread...”

She was almost ready to cry and our boys realised that. One of them reached into his bag and gave her a loaf of soldier’s bread. This loaf was probably meant to be sold at the black market, where one could get everything for bread: from the devalued Greek drachmas to rings and bracelets.

The woman was already leaving, when a commanding voice made her stop:

“Achtung! Halt!”

Dobri⁵⁷ and Elena Djurov, pp.159-160.



Can you guess how this event ended?

IV–10. Stoyan Petrov-Chomakov, Bulgarian minister plenipotentiary in Bucharest, tells a funny and touching story about the relations between Romanian soldiers, Russian prisoners-of-war and the Bulgarian community in Romania during World War II

Several months after Romania had entered the war, the number of people present at the divine service at the church suddenly increased one Sunday, when a group of Russian prisoners-of-war came guarded by a Romanian soldier. He was, as expected, carrying a gun with the bayonet stuck into it. . . He had propped his gun up to a tree, and, as was common for all soldiers, was trying to draw the attention of a housemaid, who was obviously taking quite a long time on a nearby balcony to beat the dust out of a

⁵⁷ Djurov, Dobri (1916-2002) - Commander of a guerrilla brigade, Army General, Minister of Defence.

carpet. Perhaps he was pleased with the way his advances were going and assessed the chances for a final success as quite good, because instead of gathering the prisoners under his guard and taking them back to their camp, he let them mix with the congregation and talk to them.

Soon, it became clear that there were good common feelings and, as a result, the people started raising money for the prisoners-of-war and they also gave them a considerable amount of cigarettes. Obviously, the meeting was successful for all the participants, including the soldier and the girl, because the following Sunday twice as many prisoners came to church. The same soldier led them, but this time he had put on a new uniform and was smoothly shaved. The girl had also put on a new blouse and was carefully brushing some clothes on the same balcony. Once again, money was raised for the poor prisoners-of-war before they were taken away by their guard, who nearly forgot his gun, because he was busy sending farewell kisses to the blushing girl . . .

Finally, it became clear that our visitors would soon start coming in platoons, companies, or even battalions. The Board of the churchwardens unfortunately had to ask the Romanian authorities to restrict the number of the new churchgoers to no more than twenty, and only half of them could be smokers.

Petrov-Chomakov, pp. 346-347.



Why doesn't the war change ordinary human feelings? Did nationality play a role in this event?

IV–11. A Greek Jew describes the help provided to him and his family by Orthodox Greeks during the German occupation

Despite the threat of imprisonment, many non-Jews hid their Jewish friends in their apartments or helped them to flee. Alfred Cohen, an Athenian lawyer, records the spontaneous support from friends and neighbours:

“I shall never forget the terror we felt one night, when I had hidden my large family in one of those

houses, when it was announced that the Germans had issued an order to the effect that any Jews caught in hiding would be executed and those who sheltered them would be sent to concentration camps.

Then, one of us said that it was not proper to keep staying at that house and endangering the life and peace of aged people, even women. The answer was: "No, you must stay. Why would our lives be more valuable than yours, my son?"

Mazower, pp. 287-88.



Is there a similar example of kindness from your country? What would you have done in such a situation?

► **v47. Jewish Turks standing in front of the Turkish Consulate-General in Paris in 1943 to get passports and visas to enable them to return to Turkey**



The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic.

IV-12. A Romanian official's humane treatment of Jews

"I am first Sergeant Prisăcaru Gheorghe, Chief of the Băcani section which also includes the commune you are in at present, and on behalf of this section I tell you - welcome! I know the turmoil tormenting your souls and the pain in your hearts, when thinking that you are apart, in these times of war, from those you love, I know all about your suffering. And I advise you not to be discouraged, because actually, no matter how we pray, we all share the same God and nobody asked us if we wanted to be born Romanians, Jews, Turks or Bulgarians. We are all human beings and I want you to be sure of the fact that these times will pass and the madness that is now in the people's minds will also pass. You will all return to your homes and families and will remember these days as unpleasant ones. I will take measures for you to be accommodated by the people in the village, because you cannot possibly sleep on the ground and I will also take measures for the time you will stay in my section's territory to be able to stay connected with those back home. [...]"

After this unexpected speech, he listened carefully to all our discontent and, encouraged by such behaviour, I told him directly about all my discontent, among other things. I told him about the inhuman behaviour of the police in Huși, which, for justifying God only knows what kind of activities, qualified 12 of us as being "communist suspects" and, given the habits at that time, one knew what to expect. He promised me that after staying two to three weeks in his section, this categorisation would disappear.

It is to be understood that this wonderful behaviour immediately produced its expected effect, and both the authorities and the inhabitants of Bogdana acted as real brothers towards us. We were accommodated in houses, were given food, women washed and repaired our laundry, and when, after a few days, we received the order to leave Bogdana, the sorrow was general. The people walked us until Băcani, the destination village, and carried our

luggage in their wagons and refused to receive any payment in return for these services.

Istoria României în texte, pp. 339–340.



This excerpt shows that the Jews' deportation, in the context of the anti-Semitic policies put in place by the Antonescu government⁵⁸, did not necessarily result in the dissipation of human feelings amongst some officials, cadres of the army or of the Gendarmerie. There are numerous examples of officials who demonstrated humane behaviour towards those affected by the policies of the Romanian state. A group of Jews was gathered in the courtyard of the police station and taken away from Huși. After three days of walking, they arrived in the district of Tutova (20–21 June 1941) where they were presented to the Chief of the Gendarmes Section who addressed them with this speech.



Did Gheorghe Prisăcaru take any risks when helping the deported Jews? What would have happened to him had his superiors found out what he had done? How would you have behaved in his place? Do you think he could have done more?

IV–13. Bulgarian diplomat, Ivan D. Stanchov, tells of how a German officer saved him from the Gestapo in Bulgaria

At dawn, an unexpected visitor awakened me: a burly landing-troops German officer. He saluted and said that Herr Major had sent him to me with the following order: "You must leave Sofia immediately. The Brown ones – (that was what the people of the Gestapo were called because of their brown uniforms) are on their way to arrest you." I asked him why his Major, whom I knew was the resident of the military intelligence in Bulgaria, was so worried about me.

⁵⁸ The Antonescu government deported the Jews, mostly from Bessarabia and Bukovina, over the Nister (outside of inter-war Romanian territory), where it organised several deportation camps. In September 1942, the government started bringing the deported Jewish population back, and in the following period of time, it tried to support their emigration to Palestine. General Antonescu considered that the Jewish population had to be eliminated from Romanian territory, but this didn't necessarily include the physical extermination; hence, emigration was considered to be the proper solution.

"Weil Sie doch ein Offizier und ein Herr sind!" (Because you are an officer and a gentleman!), answered the man, who then saluted sprightly and disappeared.

I caught the first train to Varna, and while travelling, I thought about how lucky we were that there was such hostility between the Wermacht and the Nazis... Later, the doorman told me that an hour after I had left, a group of Germans came looking for me.

Stanchov, p. 172.



Is it necessary and correct to always equate "German" with "enemy"? Why did some Germans operate against other Germans? What argument did the German officer have for helping Ivan D. Stanchov?

IV–14. Alfonz Baron, a commissioner for the candy and chocolate factory "Union", to the Ustasha police headquarters, 9 July 1941

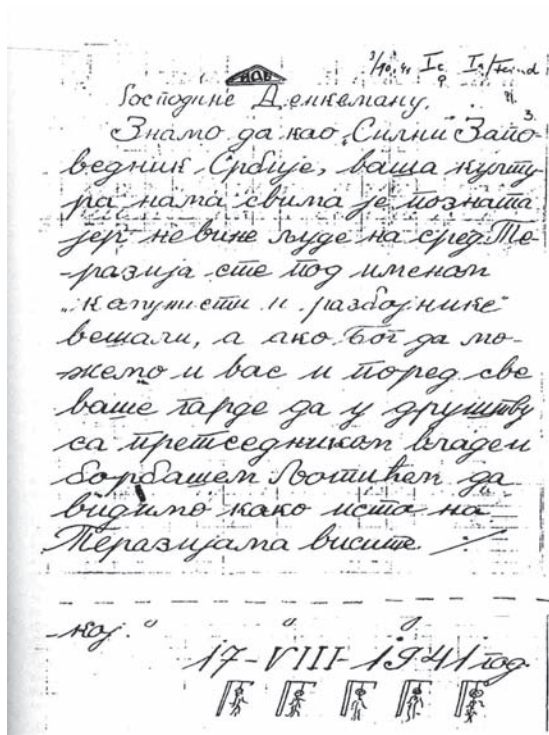
Draga Gerber, from 7/III Ivkančeva street, a Jew, was taken away today. The stated Draga Gerber is a cashier in this firm. She was given notice and one of these days, she is supposed to hand-over the cash-office to the clerk who is coming back to work after the end of her leave, and then she will have to leave the firm. As Draga Gerber was taken from her flat after our working hours, she didn't have time to hand in the keys of the cash-office, nor could she settle the accounts. There's a risk that the keys might get lost and we'll be in trouble if we can't open our cash-desk tomorrow when people come. Therefore, we're asking you to enable Draga Gerber to hand in the keys of the cash-desk to our firm as soon as possible.

Goldstein, p. 370.



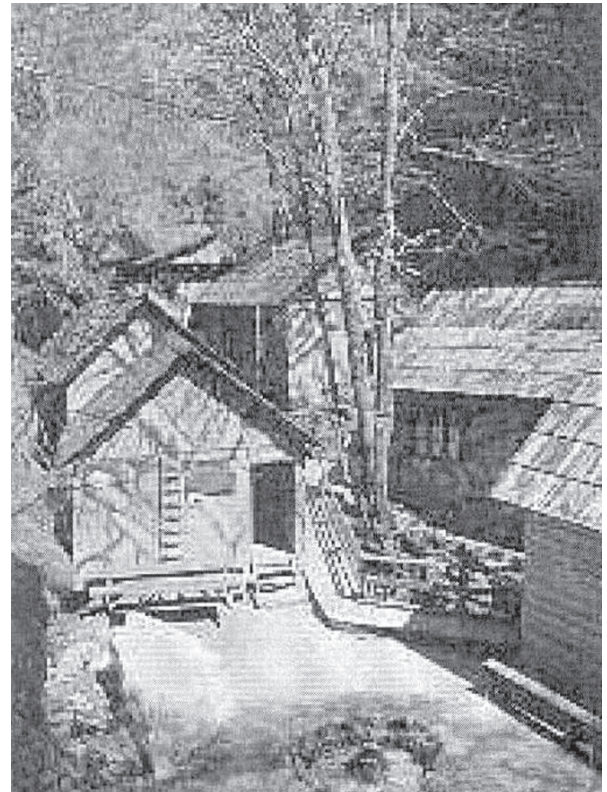
What did Baron want to achieve by writing and sending this letter? Did Baron, in your opinion, really want the prisoner to be released for the stated reason? Was it perhaps a trick (or simply an attempt) considering that the ISC authorities would not even consider any other reasons? Why does Baron write about the prisoner who wants to be released (at least temporarily) with contempt?

► **v48. Secret partisan hospital 'Franja', near Cerkno in Slovenia**



Illegal medical service within the Liberation Front. It was probably the most humanistic mission during the war. It was very well organized, despite the extremely hard conditions. In January 1945, it had 281 secret hospitals and six legal hospitals (another 62 were under construction) and 2,260 beds. During the war, 11,321 wounded and ill people were under the medical care of thirty doctors, 652 nurses and other members of staff. 19 doctors lost their lives.

► **v49. A letter from an anonymous Belgrader to the German military commander in Serbia**



Istorijski Arhiv Beograda, Uprava Grada Beograda [Historical Archive of Belgrade, Belgrade City Administration], SP III-48, k 157/15, 25th September 1941.



This is the letter to the German military commander in Serbia, General Heinrich Dankelman, on the occasion of the hanging of hostages on the Terazije, central Belgrade Square, on 17 August 1941, with a warning that he and his assistants will eventually meet the same fate.



Would you say that the writing of this letter is an act of heroism? Explain your position.



Overall questions on chapter IV

In your opinion, are humanism and solidarity qualities held by generous and brave individuals or is everyone capable of having them?

Can a person act as a war criminal in one situation and as a generous humanist in the other? Explain your position. Bearing in mind that people often portray themselves as better individuals than they actually are, how reliable are some of the sources (memoirs)?