

Djordje (Djura) Djura papers, 1941

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Supplemental material:

Below is a partial translation of the diary in the collection. The origins of the translation are unknown.

Cover page—not numbered

Homework for Jan .23, 1941

Page 6—empty

Page 7—“Lager” Written by Đura Rajs

Page 14—Moving to the “Lager”

After the entrance of the German troops to Petrovgrad all Jewish males between the ages of 18-60 were taken to a former elementary school and they were locked in there or... They went every day under guard to work at various places. My father was also among them. This is what was going on for a month's time. On May 2, 1941, a painful day for Jews, there came an order that all the Jews are to move to the former Honved army barracks. The moves began... Just to be safe we moved to my grandmother's house who was also alone because Grandpa was also in the school to await the day when we, too, would have to move out of our house. That day the school and

Page 8/9—Introduction

I have dedicated this book to “lager”. Readers will be surprised and will wonder what is a “Lager” and what kind of a word is that. This is a German word, which translated into Serbo-Croatian means camp. All the Jews of Petrovgrad were moved into that camp. The camp was earlier an army barrack which had been totally neglected and was full of lice and fleas. Before the Jews were moved into the barrack, it was a breeding place for diseases. The yard was full of various military things which the Yugoslav army left there in total disarray before retreating. In the rooms soldiers emptied their stuff from suitcases, containers, etc. Bed bugs promenaded among these things just as people promenaded on the

Page 10—main square. In a word, there ruled here in this building the greatest disorder and the only inhabitants were lice and bed bugs. We, the children, still lived relatively well because we were together and we were able to play to our hearts' content all day long. But the adults could not claim anything like

that. They worked very hard and when they returned the commissary began to harass them. And this is how it was all the time. This book will not have the form of a novel because it will not have any content, and therefore I am writing in the form of stories. The stories I am writing are not something imaginary but rather a complete truth which I lived through. Readers will see how a young boy of age 11 feels and imagines the “lager”. Because I am writing this book when I am 11 years old. So, let’s begin...

Petrovgrad, August 11, 1941

Đura Rajs

Page 10—came. On May 8 there arrived a so-called “strafkola” [a type of vehicle] with the auxiliary policemen armed to the hit. They showed us announcements which stated that we must move immediately to the barracks. Later Dad and Grandpa came to help us with the move. Along with them came my uncle Franja, a medical student from Zagreb, who immediately upon arriving in Petrovgrad went to the school and signed up for voluntary work. The police allowed us to bring along 2 beds, one sofa and one easy chair. Also we took 4 chairs, a wash basin, some food stuffs, and so on and so on. We loaded all of that on a cart, said farewell to our acquaintances, friends, and relatives, and we took off in a carriage to our future apartment, actually to our future jail.