

Continue. OK, the theme that I'm trying to create out of the manuscript, this one at least, is the extremeness between the tender side of humanity and the barbaric, cruel side of humanity. And let me preface that with two situations that always enter my mind when I think about it.

The Einsatzgruppen, which were approximately four large squads of men, approximately anywhere from 600 up to about 9,000 men in each squad, covering certain geographical areas all the way from Russia, down through Ukraine, to the Baltic countries, all the way down to Odessa in the Ukraine-- and a total of about almost 4,000 men-- and these people came from all walks of life. They were teachers, doctors, laymen--

One was a Protestant minister.

Yes, Protestant minister-- and he ran one of the squads. It was squads A, B, D, and C depending which [INAUDIBLE] He was one of the first heads of one of the squads. And their whole job was just to murder Jews of all ages, and all sexes. And between all four of them in under a year, they knocked off 1.2 million Jews.

In other words, that's the extreme that I'm trying to show in my pictures. We're taking people, basically, who have no intention of fighting, who didn't understand anything about what was going on, who were just normal-- people who just wanted to live out their lives in peace and quiet-- and then the other extreme where they're under these brutal living conditions, which was very short-termed, and then into death. And this was the whole life cycle.

Or, the other extreme, which is the Ustase, which were the Croatians in the Croatian part of Yugoslavia, who hated Serbians and Jews. And they had, I believe, three large killing camps. And these people used to have these special knives. I forgot what they call them-- they had these special knives, and they wouldn't go around shooting people, even humanely, or something like that-- they wouldn't shoot them quick with a bullet.

They'd cut their throats, kill them, and slash them up. And that's all they would do with hatchets, with pickaxes, with saws, with hammers. This is how they would go at these people, both Serbs and Jews. And I said to myself, I don't understand the extreme. What the heck is it all about?

I don't know. I haven't figured it out for myself yet. I guess I'm searching for an answer in here. I read a lot and I listen to a lot of people, but I haven't formed a final opinion of what it's all about to me. But I try to depict it in my drawings-- the human side of civilization as opposed to the barbaric side, or the implication as far as I'm concerned.

Because a minority is only a minority when it's 1 out of 100. When you're talking about out of 10 million, and talking 10%, and you have 1 million, the minority is a destructive minority. It is no longer a small minority that just disappears in the entire society. Those are the people who are coming out of the woodwork all over the place, with that barbaric entity that they live with.

That's the thing. I may sound a little cryptic, but I see this. It's not really one force fighting the other, this is almost like, all right, two forces in our society. One force, for some reason, doesn't have the capability or refuses to accept reasoning, judgment, humane-- it's compassion. There is no compassion on one side. That's what I mean by the drawings.

Even though most of the compassionate side of the drawings are the headless, arm-less, footless, or whatever-- there's something missing-- that's the way they had to go through the war, there's still a compassionate body there. There's still a compassionate part. And that's what this other side was destroying. Every part that was compassionate, they would just cut away-- kill.

My mother showed me the tattoo on the arms. They revolted me. I wanted to hold her. I don't know, I just wanted to hold her and protect her. But what do you do 10, 15 years after the war is over? How do you hold and protect her? I wasn't there when I was young.

You mentioned earlier that she, herself, seemed to become hardened by what--

Yes, she had a great zest of life. She wanted to live no matter what. Nothing was overwhelming to her anymore in any one life. And that's how she came out of the war. She wasn't cruel or anything like that. She wasn't hard. She was just strong-- a strength of life that just oozed from her.

She decided not to die. In other words, her philosophy was, if they're going to kill me, get it over with. Otherwise, you're not going to change me anymore. I've gone as far as I'm going to go. She took a stand in Gurs after she was there about a year, and said, the hell with all the rest of the rot that went on. She didn't want to die or give in.

Did most of the people who were in Gurs, to your knowledge, go to Auschwitz or to death camps?

Yes, most of them were shipped out. Yes, every Spaniard was gone. I think they had about 20,000 or 30,000 Spaniards there at the time. They were eventually all shipped out. Before the end of the war, that's what they were trying to do. The one thing they wanted to keep going, when the battlefield was getting smaller and smaller and coming down into the borders of Germany, they just wanted to keep all the smokestacks going.

Keep the smokestacks going. Draw the Jews in as much as possible. You got Russians? Put them in. You got gypsies? Put them in. Didn't make any difference, but at least you must have Jews. This was the criteria. Get them all in, get them all in.

And right up to the last day of the war, up to the last minute of the war, they kept burning the smokestacks. They didn't stop. And I think I basically said it.

Have you been able to carry over to your children some of your own feelings about this?

No. By the time I've come to where I'm at now, they were already grown. I didn't want to get them involved in an area I didn't even understand. I had pains. And can I transfer to them pains I really didn't understand to a great deal?

I had emotional problems. I was just confused in my young life-- very confused. I was groping all the time. It was a rootless home. My father worked seven days a week-- 6 and 1/2 days a week-- there was no home life, in a sense. It was a stopping place for food, and board, and everything.

But a full feeling of family, of love, of sharing-- all these things didn't exist in our home. The war removed it. There were four of us living in one apartment. We were going four different ways. That's still another horror. That's the horror after that.

So I talked it over with my brother and my sisters, and we're now going to work together and have the children understand that. So what I am telling them, basically, is-- I don't tell them in detail things like this, unless they come to a class-- but I do tell them, basically, our lives, basically, were ruined by the war, broken up. Now we're getting together again. I want you to get to know my sisters and my brother's family in Europe and them to know us.

We're exchanging not only letters, but also nieces, nephews, and, of course, close relatives, brothers, and sisters. That's what we're doing. We want to become a family again.

Thank you very much--

Thank you. It's been an honor, and for my mother too. Thank you very much.

Thank you.