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Physicians held in Miranda de Ebro
“campo de concentración”: 1937-1947

Dissertation

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Dedication

To the doctors who were forced to leave their country, their language and start over in other lands.

To my parents, always present, who helped me to review the more than 15,000 records in the Guadalajara archive.

To Heiner Fangerau, who encouraged me to take the long way in this doctoral thesis.

To colleagues and friends with whom I spent many hours discussing aspects of this work: they always gave me their time, gave me advice, and critiqued ideas and texts. My special thanks go to Stephen Laufer and Jan Ciechanowski.

To my partner Maciek Stasinski.

To Paul Mirat and his family, who taught me the courage and warmth of hospitality.

Summary in German

Spanien spielte während des Zweiten Weltkriegs eine zweideutige und pragmatische Rolle und seine Politik entwickelte sich im Laufe des Krieges. Das franquistische Spanien war zwar freundlich zu Nazideutschland, erklärte den Alliierten aber nie den Krieg, auch wenn es die División Azul zum Einmarsch des Reichs in die Sowjetunion beitrug. Die spanische Neutralität ermöglichte es seinem Territorium, vorübergehend ein sicherer Hafen für Flüchtlinge zu werden die vor dem Naziterror in Europa flohen.

Miranda de Ebro war ein Konzentrationslager, das 1937 eingerichtet wurde, um Republikaner und Ausländer zu inhaftieren, die mit den Internationalen Brigaden im Spanischen Bürgerkrieg gekämpft hatten. Ab 1940 wurde das Lager nur noch dazu genutzt, inhaftierte ausländische Flüchtlinge ohne gültige Papiere zu konzentrieren. Mehr als 15 000 Menschen, die meisten von ihnen aus Frankreich und Polen, wurden dort bis zur Schließung des Lagers im Januar 1947 festgehalten.

Das faschistische Spanien, das auf beiden Seiten der internationalen Kluft spielte, erlaubte zu verschiedenen Zeitpunkten die Durchreise und war ein Zufluchtsland sowohl für diejenigen, die vor dem Nationalsozialismus flohen, als auch für Nazis und Kollaborateure, die am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs der Justiz entkommen wollten. Die Behandlung der einzelnen Gruppen, die durch Miranda reisten, war sehr unterschiedlich: Die Mitglieder der Internationalen Brigaden wurden streng unterdrückt, während diejenigen, die vor dem Nationalsozialismus flohen, toleriert wurden und ehemalige Nazis und ihre Kollaborateure Schutz und aktive Mitarbeit erhielten. Zum ersten Mal wurden im Militärarchiv von Guadalajara (Spanien) Daten über ausländische Ärzte, die in Miranda de Ebro inhaftiert waren, eingesehen. Von 1937 bis 1947 waren 151 Ärzte inhaftiert, die meisten von ihnen in den Jahren 1942 und 1943, was etwa 1 % der Gefangenen entspricht. Zweiundfünfzig der Ärzte wurden dank diplomatischer Bemühungen freigelassen, zweiunddreißig durch das Rote Kreuz, und zehn wurden in andere Gefängnisse geschickt, direkt entlassen oder konnten fliehen. Alle von ihnen haben überlebt. Nach Konsultation privater und öffentlicher Archive konnten einige Biografien rekonstruiert und die bisher bestehende Lücke in der Geschichte der Migration und des Exils von Ärzten während des Zweiten Weltkriegs geschlossen werden.

Summary (English)

Spain played an ambiguous and pragmatic role during the Second World War and its policy evolved over the course of the war. Francoist Spain was friendly to Nazi Germany but never declared war on the Allies, even though it contributed the Azul Division to the Reich's invasion of the Soviet Union. Spanish neutrality allowed its territory to become a temporary safe haven for refugees fleeing Nazi terror in Europe.

Miranda de Ebro was a concentration camp set up in 1937 to imprison republicans and foreigners who had fought with the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War. From 1940, the camp was only used to concentrate imprisoned foreign refugees without valid papers. More than 15,000 people, most of them from France and Poland, were held there until the camp closed in January 1947.

Fascist Spain, playing on both sides of the international divide, allowed passage at various times and was a country of refuge both for those fleeing Nazism and for Nazis and collaborators seeking to escape justice at the end of the Second World War. The treatment of each group travelling through Miranda was very different: members of the International Brigades were severely repressed, while those fleeing Nazism were tolerated and former Nazis and their collaborators were given protection and active cooperation. For the first time, data on foreign doctors imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro have been consulted in the military archives of Guadalajara (Spain). From 1937 to 1947, 151 doctors were imprisoned, most of them in 1942 and 1943, representing about 1% of the prisoners. Fifty-two of the doctors were released thanks to diplomatic efforts, thirty-two through the Red Cross, and ten were sent to other prisons, released directly or managed to escape. All of them survived. After consulting private and public archives, it was possible to reconstruct some biographies and fill the hitherto existing gap in the history of the migration and exile of doctors during the Second World War.

List of Abbreviations

AMG Militar Archive Guadalajara

BD Blue Division

IB International Brigades

PRC Polish Resettlement Corps

SCW Spanish Civil War

WWI First World War

WWII Second World War

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1. Introduction

“European history has been one of long marches” (Steiner, The Idea of Europe).

1.1 Overview of the topic

Despite its imposing solemnity and the impression it gives of being an impregnable fortress, the Pyrenees were a permeable barrier. With peaks over 3,000 meters high, small glaciers and numerous valleys and canyons (e.g. Fig 1), it acts as a natural border between France and Spain and stretches east-west for nearly 500 km. In the last days of the SCW, some 440,000 Spaniards crossed it, including 170,000 civilians, seeking refuge in France (Alted Vigil 2012). The migratory flow was reversed a year later, after the partition of France into two: Vichy France and the German-occupied zone.

An estimated 80,000 people crossed the border clandestinely into Spain, fleeing from the Nazis and their allies (Calvet 2014). And it was the Nazis and collaborationists who, from the summer of 1944, when France was liberated by the Allies, escaped across the mountains seeking the refuge of an Axis-sympathetic country like Spain.

Hardly any one of those who crossed clandestinely into Spain could make the journey alone, as the passes were controlled by the French and German authorities. The *passeurs* acted as guides in the mountains and hid the groups during the day in huts and shelters along the route (Eisner 2004). Some were intercepted once they arrived in Spain, and those of military age who did not have the proper documents, including an exit visa, were retained, held in prisons and sometimes sent to the concentration camp at Miranda de Ebro until their documents could be arranged.

Miranda de Ebro is located in the province of Burgos, in the north of Spain, and today has just over 35,000 inhabitants. It is hardly known that 85 years ago, in the summer of 1937, a prison camp (e.g. Fig 2-7) was set up there during the SCW to house Spaniards and foreigners taken prisoner by Franco’s rebel troops (International Brigadists). After 1940, the camp was used to house foreign men whose documents were not in order in Spain. More than 15,000 people of different nationalities passed through it. It continued to operate until January 1947 (Pallarés 2005).

It is not possible to speak of a prototypical prisoner of the Miranda de Ebro camp: first, there were Spaniards who fought against the “national” side of the military rebels against the Republic and International Brigadists. Later, there were foreigners fleeing forced labour in France or deportation to Nazi camps; men who sought to join the Allied armies

in Britain or North Africa or who wanted to go into exile in America and, finally, in the last years, Nazi collaborationists and Axis soldiers who preferred to surrender to a government of tolerant neutrality towards fascism rather than be in the hands of the victorious Allies.

In the role played by Spain during the WWII, some authors distinguish three levels of action: the military, which was practically non-existent apart from the BD and the planning of a defensive contingency; the political-diplomatic plane, where external events marked the turns of neutrality and non-belligerence, with phases of greater or lesser convergence with fascist causes; and an economic plane where the real collaboration really took place (Gil Pecharromán 2022: pp. 112-133).

Within Franco's successive governments, there were several currents. Some, such as Serrano Suñer or the Count of Mayalde, were openly in favour of an active alliance with the Axis and entering the WWII. Others, such as Jordana or General Varela, advised Franco to remain neutral and not to enter the world conflict. Formally, Spain was not an Axis ally and did not enter the war, declaring itself neutral in September 1939, non-belligerent on 12 June 1940 and neutral again as of November 1942. In fact, Franco's attitude in the international arena can be described as strongly pragmatic and his Foreign Affairs Ministers had no other alternative but to obey his orders. In the theory of the three wars, Spain held a contradictory political position, which was the official doctrine of Spanish diplomacy until the end of WWII: pro-Nazi with the sending of the BD¹ to fight against the Soviets, neutral in the West and pro-Allied in the Pacific war between the USA and Japan (Gil Pecharromán 2022: pp. 116-117).

On the other hand, Spain welcomed and sheltered, in its territory, former Nazis such as the Waffen SS general Gerhard Bremer or the Austrian SS colonel Otto Skorzeny and collaborationists such as the Belgian Leon Degrelle, treating them favourably. At the end of the 1940s, Franco's regime tried to ingratiate itself with the Allies by selling internationally the conjunctural thesis of "Spain as a country that saved Jews", which can be firmly questioned (Correa-Martín Arroyo 2013).

¹ In the summer of 1941 a unit of civilian volunteers, whose officers were professionals, was created to fight against the Soviet Union in World War II. In Spain it was called the Spanish Volunteer Division (better known as the Blue Division because of the color of the uniform) and in Germany 250 Infanterie-Division. It was part of the army of Nazi Germany. Between 1941 and 1943, about 45,000 Spanish volunteers and officers participated in various battles mainly related to the siege of Leningrad.

1.2. Aims and objectives

During the existence of the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp, some articles appeared in newspapers informing readers about its existence and living conditions (*Daily Mirror*, 2 March 1942; *Weekly Dispatch (London)*, 21 October 1945; and *L'Humanité*, 7 December 1946). Some prisoners wrote their memories down, such as the “Otto Eidlitz diaries” written between 1940 and 1943.

Some years later, oral testimonies which mention the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp were recorded for the USHMM archive and in 1983 André Pérechereau published his memoirs describing his time imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro.

In recent years, two events have occurred that have fostered research and general interest in the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp, which until recently was barely known: the opening of archives in Spain after the promulgation of the 2007 Historical Memory Law, which allowed access to documents not available until then and the declassification of documents from other international archives because more than 50 years have elapsed since they were created, such as documents related to diplomatic issues. Divulgate articles can be found in more recently published newspapers (García Cuartango 2021 or Calvo 2022), when the subject becomes more topical again and piques the interest of the general public. However, the first specific, historical and comprehensive publication on the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp was written by Fernández López in 2004 (Fernández López 2004). In the years that followed, material was published mainly by the Eiroa and Pallarés, including articles in scientific and historical journals (Eiroa 2014), chapters of books (Eiroa 2005) and doctoral theses (Pallarés Morano 2009).

Material that contextualises the topic of the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp topic in repressive system of Franco's regime is also available, among them books written by Javier Rodrigo (Rodrigo 2005) and more recently Carlos Hernandez (Hernandez 2019), both in Spanish or culture of memory (Alvarez Junco 2022).

A book about the Poles interned in Miranda de Ebro has recently been published in Polish (Ciechanowski 2022). On the flight of people across the Pyrenees, the works of Calvet (Calvet 2014) stand out. On the foreign policy of Franco's government, a recent publication by Gil Pecharromán (Gil Pecharromán 2022) and a joint work on Franco's Spain (Brenneis and Hermann 2020) stand out. On the IB, two publications stand out: one on the brigades in general (Tremlet 2020) and another on the brigade doctors (Braso Broggi 2022).

After the WWI, doctors became very important in armed conflicts: their role in healing the wounded and making them available again to fight at the front in a war in which the soldier was the main focus made them indispensable. They could also prevent the troops from getting sick and stop epidemics among the civilian population and troops that would potentially deplete troop numbers. Doctors became very valuable (Brasó Broggi 2022: pp. 29-30). Spain played an ambivalent and paradoxical role during the WWII: while it retaliated against some Spanish doctors who had not shown sympathy for the “national” side during the SCW, it allowed other foreign doctors fleeing from the Nazis to take refuge in Spanish territory. While Spanish volunteer doctors were fighting in the Soviet Union under the Nazi flag alongside the German army, Spanish diplomats abroad were saving Jewish doctors from being deported to extermination camps. The major objective of this work is to shed light on the migratory journey of some European doctors, of which until now, the starting and finishing point was known, but very little information about the route taken was available. The study follows the hypothesis that Miranda de Ebro, as a long-term concentration camp in a country declared neutral during the WWII, constitutes a point of intersection of histories, unique in the world, from which it is possible to reflect on the fate of doctors and, in general, on migrations in European territory before, during and after the WWII. Throughout this dissertation, the relevance of the study of the biographies of the foreign doctors who were interned in Miranda de Ebro will be proven.

1.3. Research questions

This hypothesis is subdivided into further questions:

1. Throughout the more than 10 years in which the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp existed, more than 15,000 foreigners were interned there, of whom more than 150 were doctors of various nationalities. Who were these foreign doctors?
2. In Spain, there were hundreds of camps within the Francoist repressive system during and after the SCW. The largest of all was Miranda de Ebro. What did Spain do with its own national doctors after the Civil War? Was there any repression of this group?
3. The texts refer to Miranda de Ebro as a concentration camp. This term carries connotations of extreme repression, violence and extermination. Was Miranda de Ebro a concentration camp similar to those of the Nazis?
4. Given that the successive Francoist governments developed a changing and

pragmatic policy during the WWII, following the international war events and without losing their ideological connections with the Axis countries, it could be expected that the treatment of the foreign doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro reflected this position. Can biographies of the doctors in Miranda de Ebro be reconstructed? What was their fate? Can it be considered that they all received equal treatment?

5. The diplomatic world played a very important role during the WWII and many Spanish embassies or consulates were able to save thousands of people by issuing passports, visas or safe-conducts. In what way did the Franco regime act abroad with regard to doctors during the existence of Miranda de Ebro?

2. Physicians imprisoned in Franco Spain's Miranda de Ebro "Campo de Concentración" (2022)



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ARTICLE

Physicians imprisoned in Franco Spain's Miranda de Ebro "Campo de Concentración"

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Abstract

Miranda de Ebro was created in 1937 to imprison Republicans and foreigners who fought with the International Brigades in Spanish Civil War. From 1940, the camp was used only to concentrate detained foreign refugees with no proper documents. More than 15 000 people, most of them from France and Poland, were kept there until the camp was closed in January 1947. Playing both sides of the international divide, fascist Spain at various points in time allowed passage and was a country of refuge both for those escaping Nazism and for Nazis and collaborators who, at the end of World War II (WWII), sought to escape justice. Treatment of each of these groups passing through Miranda was very different: real repression was meted out to the members of the International Brigades (IB), tolerance shown towards those escaping Nazism, and protection and active cooperation given to former Nazis and their collaborators. For the first time, data about foreign physicians imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro were consulted in the Guadalajara Military Archive (Spain). From 1937 to 1947, 151 doctors were imprisoned, most of them in 1942 and 1943, which represents around 1% of the prisoners. Fifty-two of the doctors were released thanks to diplomatic efforts, thirty-two by the Red Cross, and ten were sent to other prisons, directly released or managed to escape. All of them survived. After consulting private and public archives, it was possible to reconstruct some biographies and fill the previous existing gap in the history of migration and exile of doctors during the Second World War.

Keywords: Miranda de Ebro; Franco; Concentration Camp; Doctors; Exile; Emigration

As with personnel of every other profession, medical personnel found themselves on both sides of the divide when the Nazis came to power, and so it is perhaps unsurprising that health professionals were not the least among those interned in such concentration camps as Dachau, Buchenwald or Sachsenhausen. At the other end of the National Socialist spectrum, health professionals played a pre-eminent role in justifying ideology, supporting extermination strategies and more broadly advising on the planning and implementation of Hitler's racist project. In a symbiotic relationship between the state and the profession such as a few in the history of medicine,¹ many doctors were actively involved in the exclusion of colleagues, the murder of the chronically ill and the disabled, in experiments devoid of ethics, in advising on methods of torture and murder and, ultimately, in the medicalisation of extermination.

Trying and thereby bringing these crimes into the open, the 1947 Doctors trial was among a number of tribunals at Nuremberg under the jurisdiction of United States following the major trials of Nazi leaders under the jurisdiction of the victorious wartime allies. It saw twenty-three Nazi doctors charged with atrocities committed during the twelve years of National Socialism. Several publications, both academic and informative, have since grappled with the ideology and driving force behind such Nazi medical experiments as those conducted by Josef Mengele in Auschwitz.²

¹Esther Cuerda, 'Medicina y Totalitarismos', in *El delirio nihilista. Un ensayo sobre los totalitarismos, nacionalismos y populismos* (Málaga, Spain: Última línea, 2018), 413–441.

²One of the first books published on the topic was Alexander Mitscherlich, Fred Mielke, *Doctors of Infamy: The Story of the Nazi Medical Crimes* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 1949). Other classic books are, for example George J. Annas, © The Author(s), 2023. Published by Cambridge University Press.

Conversely, there were many medical professionals in Nazi Germany and in countries occupied by Germany during World War II (WWII) who did not cooperate with or even actively resisted the policies imposed by National Socialism.³ A unique feature of the Miranda de Ebro camp in Spain is that both victims and perpetrators from the Nazi era were interned in the same place, and sometimes at the same time.

Historians continue to debate who originally invented the internment system operated in Miranda de Ebro and somewhere between 103 and 189 other camps in Franco Spain: did imperial Spain build them first in Cuba in the late 19th century or was it British imperial forces during the Anglo Boer South African war between 1899 and 1902? Irrespectively, both occupying forces explicitly called their internment facilities “concentration camps”. These were places in which non-combatants were forcibly concentrated under appalling conditions, resulting in hundreds of thousands of innocent deaths in Cuba and in South Africa, and giving rise internationally to the more generally used term “concentration camp.” This concept is different from the Nazi German “*Vernichtungslager*” or extermination camps such as Auschwitz or Treblinka, whose explicit purpose was systematic mass murder. Upon coming to power, the National Socialists initially followed the historic lead, creating concentration camps in which they imprisoned, maltreated and frequently also murdered their political opponents, members of racial minorities, prisoners of war or people with diverging sexual identities, but their task was not mass annihilation.

At the end of WWII, testimonies and memoirs by doctors who had worked as prisoners in ghettos and in Nazi concentration camps emerged in which the deplorable sanitary conditions, the systematic killing of the weakest, the use of prisoners in experiments and the ethical dilemmas they faced as captive medical practitioners were described.⁴ Not all doctors persecuted by National Socialism ended up in ghettos or concentration camps. Many of them, along with those who wanted to flee the conflict or join Allied armies, sought to escape. Much is still unknown about the people who had to flee from Nazi Germany and the occupied countries. Their migration routes are often opaque, and what is known often only briefly opens a window on the fate of a relatively limited and specific group.

Between 1933 and the second half of the 1940s, there were several reasons, including economic, ideological and political, for doctors to migrate. Among them were those who joined the International Brigades (IB) in support of the Spanish Republic against the Franco fascists, those persecuted for reasons of race, religion or sexual orientation, and, later, those trying to escape Allied justice. Their countries of destination varied before, during and after WWII depending on the progress of the war, who controlled the ports and frontiers, and the chances of getting visas or permission to practice their profession in the countries offering refuge.⁵

Playing both sides of the international divide, fascist Spain at various points in time allowed passage and was a country of refuge both for those escaping Nazism and for Nazis and collaborators who, at the end of WWII, sought to escape justice. Treatment of each of these groups passing through Miranda was very different: real repression was meted out to the members of the IB, tolerance shown towards those escaping Nazism, and protection and active cooperation given to former Nazis and their collaborators.

As a neutral country, Spain, which was non-belligerent and again neutral during WWII, never hid its sympathies for the Axis. Nevertheless, it became an important way station for many seeking to escape the

Michael A. Godrin, *The Nazi Doctors and the Nuremberg Code. Human Rights in Human experimentation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), or Götz Aly, Peter Chroust, Christian Pross, *Cleansing the Fatherland. Nazi Medicine and racial Hygiene* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1994).

³Bruno Halioua et al., ‘Righteous among the Nations: Doctors and Medical Students’, *BMJ*, 349 (2014), g7657.

⁴See, for example, Janusz Korzak, *Ghetto Diary* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003) or the memories written in 1946 by Miklós Nyiszli, *I was Doctor Mengele's Assistant: The Memories of an Auschwitz Physician* (Oswiecim, Poland: Frap-Books, 2000).

⁵Two medical specialisations, which included a lot of Jewish practitioners, were dermatology and urology. For urology see: Matthias Krischel et al., *Urologen im Nationalsozialismus. Zwischen Anpassung und Vertreibung*. Vol. 1. (Berlin: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2011); Paul J. Weindling, ‘Refugee urologists coming to or through the UK, 1933–1946’, *Urology under the Swastika* (Antwerpen: Davidfonds Uitgevers, 2018), 186–191. For dermatology see: Albrecht Scholz, ‘Institutionalization in Germany’, in *History of German language Dermatology* (Germany: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 3–138; Wolfrang Weyers, *Death of Medicine in Nazi Germany. Dermatology and Dermatopathology under the Swastika* (Boston, USA: Madison Books, 1998).

Nazis. After the invasion of the part of France not yet occupied by the Wehrmacht in November 1942, there was no other option for those fleeing the Nazis than to cross the Pyrenees, hoping to transit Spain and reach such ports as Lisbon in Portugal or Gibraltar, from where they could escape continental Europe. During WWII, over 120 000 people crossed the Pyrenees while fleeing Nazi terror. After the Allied victory in May 1945, some prominent doctors were among those senior Nazis able to escape via Italy. Others reached Spain, one of the two primary “Rat Lines” via which Nazi leaders and high-ranking collaborators from other countries fled to South America after WWII. Many stayed in Spain for good, reshaped their lives and even maintained their ideas, as Leon Degrelle.⁶ The Spanish routes were protected by some Catholic priests and groups of Falangists.⁷

Whether victims of the Nazis or perpetrators, many fleeing doctors were over time interned by the Spanish authorities in Miranda de Ebro until their documents had been checked. The Nazi doctors were treated with deference, they were allowed to leave the camp and use municipal facilities such as the public swimming pool. Many were released expeditiously, making intervention by the International Red Cross unnecessary. Some of them even found permanent refuge in Spain until their deaths years later.

In this paper, I seek to examine foreigner physician inmates in Miranda de Ebro in order to present the camps as an intersection of stories, those trying to escape from Nazism in the same place as those trying to avoid the Allied justice.

This way I hope to be able to contribute to the body of literature concerning the paradoxical role of Spain during WWII: ideologically close to the Axis and also a place of saving people persecuted by Fascism. To achieve this goal, I will first review the changing role of Spain during WWII and define Miranda de Ebro as a concentration camp. Then I will present and analyse the data obtained on foreigner physicians imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro and finally I will reconstruct some biographies.

Spain: “neutral” country in a continent at war

Spain played an important role during WWII because of its unique geographic, politico-economic and social position.⁸ Geographically, Spain was a strategic link between Europe on the one side and the Americas and Africa on the other. Its location on the far southwest edge of Europe was of utmost interest to the Nazis, because of its access to Gibraltar, a strategical point for Mediterranean Sea control. Since Spain had borders with the occupied France along the Pyrenees, for Republicans fleeing after their defeat in the Spanish Civil War (SCW) in 1939, the mountain range offered many escape routes. In the west, Spain had borders with Portugal, which under the Salazar dictatorship stayed neutral although friendly towards Great Britain and the USA.

At the beginning of WWII, Spain was a country devastated by the civil war. Franco implemented a system of harsh internal repression while rebuilding the country. In foreign policy, Spain acted in an opportunistic way according to the changing tide of the war from neutrality (September 1939 to June 1940), through non-aligned status (June 1940 to November 1942), back to neutrality (November 1942 until the end of WWII) with a differing degree of sympathy towards the Axis.⁹ Economically ruined and treated coldly by major countries, Spain was susceptible to influence by external elements, accepting help (e.g., oil or food) from Britain, USA and The Third Reich in return for the benevolent treatment of its nationals.¹⁰

⁶Violeta Friedman, *Mis memorias* (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 2005), 179–208.

⁷In Eric Frattini, *La huida de las ratas. Cómo escaparon de Europa los criminales de guerra nazis* (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 2018), 13–27. See also Clarita Stauffer, la dama que escondía nazis en España. Available at: <https://www.lavanguardia.com/historiayvida/historia-contemporanea/20200702/482024554759/clarita-stauffer-seccion-femenina-primo-rivera-falange-espanola-red-huida-nazis-otto-skorzeny-leon-degrelle-espana-argentina-peron.html>, accessed June 2022.

⁸Two Canadian authors edited and published recently an extense monography about the role of Spain during the SWW and the Holocaust: Sara J. Brenneis and Gina Herrmann, *Spain, The Second World War, and the Holocaust. History and Representation*. (Toronto-Buffalo-London: University of Toronto Press, 2020).

⁹Julio Gil Pecharrmán, *Estrategias de supervivencia. Franquismo y política exterior (1939–1975)*. Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2022), 113.

¹⁰About Francoist politics and SCW see: Josep Calvet, *Huyendo del Holocausto. Judíos evadidos del nazismo a través del Pirineo de Lleida*. (Lleida: Editorial Milenio, 2014); Haim Avni, *España, Franco y los judíos* (Madrid, Altalena, 1982); Manuel

The occupation of France by the Germans in 1940 multiplied the number of foreign refugees in Spain,¹¹ forcing the Francoist authorities to establish the first set of norms to regulate the situation of the refugees as well as rules for their custody. Refugees were classified into two groups according to their origin: those coming from belligerent countries (whose custody was managed by the Defense Ministry), and civil or military refugees from neutral or non-belligerent countries, who fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior. The links established before the SCW became closer when the Germans and Italians gave military support to the Francoist forces during the war's first phase, but waned from 1943 onwards when Franco, who began having increasing doubts about victory by the Third Reich, tried to ingratiate himself with the Allies. The treatment received by foreign prisoners mirrors this development.

Significantly, Spain's shifting position on the treatment of refugees allowed it to be an escape route for both sides: those fleeing war and Fascism and those fleeing the consequences of their pro-Nazi affiliation. Despite being one of the Axis' main informal allies in the Western Mediterranean, Spain allowed anti-Nazi civilians and Allied military personnel to seek safe haven, accepting the refugees from the very country the Franco government was friendly towards.

Miranda de Ebro – a concentration camp?

On 5 July 1937, the official Spanish government gazette [Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE)] published an announcement by the Secretariat of War with General Franco's order to create a commission for the establishment of concentration camps for prisoners ("campos de concentración para prisioneros") to imprison Republicans and IB members captured on the front lines during the SCW and later as a system by which the regime could abuse its opponents.¹² The Franco government did not need foreign help or advice to design or run its concentration camps. Some publications wrongly pointed to the Paul Wizner, official at the German embassy in Madrid, as the director of the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp. Although Franco's regime maintained a close relationship with German National Socialists and Italian fascists, and its officials even visited Nazi concentration camps,¹³ there is no evidence that Nazis helped organise or run the camps in Spain.¹⁴

Miranda de Ebro was the biggest and the only camp that stayed opened until 1947. Nevertheless, although Miranda de Ebro is commonly described as a concentration camp, it should not be equated either to Nazi or Communist or to the other Francoist concentration camps. This is because, after 1940, it was used as an internment centre for foreign citizens without the required or any documentation who were neither prisoners subject to punishment nor forced labourers.¹⁵

Vázquez Montalbán, *Diccionario del Franquismo* (Barcelona: Anagrama, 2019); Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War. A Very Short Introduction* (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹¹The routes will be explained later in the text. Some early memories and testimonies about these routes can be found in: Eduardo Martínez Alonso, *Memoirs of a medico* (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1961); Airey Neave, *Les Chemis de Gibraltar* (Paris, France: Empire, 1972).

¹²Javier Rodrigo, 'Introducción. Las líneas de demarcación', in *Cautivos. Campos de concentración en la España franquista, 1936–1947* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2005), XIX–XXX.

¹³Félix Santos, *Espanoles en la Alemania Nazi. Testimonios de visitantes del Tercer Reich entre 1933 y 1945* (Madrid: Ediciones Endymian SL, 2012).

¹⁴Despite the assessment of some authors who claim that the camp was designed by the Nazis (see e.g., Patrik von zur Mühlen: Miranda de Ebro. In: *Der Ort des Terrors*, Band 9, 2009, S. 597–601), no documents have been found that probe this theory and quite unlikely according with the information and documents available from these times. It is a common mistake, repeated by some authors and published by a journalists and writers that Miranda de Ebro was led by the Nazis: in a journal in the 1970s. Miranda de Ebro was entirely designed and led by the Francoist government. The camp was led by the Spanish authorities (Guardia Civil). During the first years of existence of the camp, some Gestapo members pressed the Spanish authorities to give some prisoners but they did it in only very few cases. On these occasions the Gestapo visited the camp, but they were not members of the camp staff.

¹⁵Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski, 'Los campos de concentración en Europa. Algunas consideraciones sobre su definición, tipología y estudios comparados', *Ayer*, 1 (2005), 51–79.

The camp's history can be divided into two phases. The first ran from its opening in 1937 to the summer of 1940. During this period, it served as a "concentration camp" for Spanish Republicans and members of the IB. The IB represent a complex historical phenomenon that has sometimes been oversimplified. These volunteers are presented either as "Stalin's army" or as a group of heroic and romantic fighters drawn from leftist movements around the world, including Germany. Both approaches are too simple. They seek to establish clear opposing ideological lines, right versus left, and thereby distort the purpose and deeper reasons that made thousands of men and women from all over the world join the IB. The political right seeks to discredit the Brigades, all that matters is that it was Soviet leader Josef Stalin who on 15 September 1936 ordered communist parties all over the world to recruit volunteers to fight against Fascism in Spain during the SCW. The left, on the other hand, attempts to maintain an impeccable image of the members of the Brigades where all that counts is the supposedly noble impulse that inspired all the volunteers.¹⁶

The IB consisted of units of volunteers from eighty-six countries, colonies and protectorates. Many were Communists, but there were Anarchists as well, and many others with no defined ideological position except their wish to fight against Fascism. The first volunteers arrived in Spain in October 1936, and recent studies estimate their total number at around 32 500 men and women. Peak figures were reached in the spring of 1937.¹⁷ The volunteers came from all over the world, but they were generally either Europeans or sons and daughters of Europeans who had migrated to America and elsewhere. A quarter of them were Jewish.¹⁸ Among the volunteers in the IB were many physicians from different countries. Most of them came from Poland (fifty-six), Germany (thirty-nine), the United States (thirty-six), Hungary (twenty-six), and France and Romania (twenty-five each).¹⁹ During the SCW and after it had ended some members of the IB were taken prisoner. Between the end of 1936 and November 1941, most of them were imprisoned in the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, in Castrillo del Val (Burgos). Some prisoners were sent to Miranda de Ebro. However, during the first years of its existence, the camp's registration system was not accurate. Towards the end of 1941, most of the IB members still in other prisons and camps were moved to Miranda de Ebro.

Miranda de Ebro's second phase combines an initial period between mid-June 1940 and 1942, and a second from 1942 to its final closure in 1947. After the end of the SCW and until 1942 the inmates were mostly Spanish Republican prisoners who, after the armed conflict had ended, were serving sentences or awaiting a court verdict. They shared their fate with members of the IB waiting for repatriation, or foreigners who had come to Spain after 1940, fleeing the war in Europe.

From 1942 to 1947, Miranda de Ebro was a camp exclusively for foreigners. They were separated into two groups representing the two sides fighting in WWII: German and Austrian Nazis and collaborators from other countries on the one hand and Allies on the other.²⁰ The Miranda de Ebro concentration camp has been the subject of several broad investigations published as books,²¹ doctoral theses, scientific articles and book chapters.²²

¹⁶Recently published see Giles Tremlet, *Las brigadas internacionales. Fascismo, libertad y la guerra civil española* (Madrid: Debate, 2020); a classic reference about IB Andreu Castells, *Las Brigadas Internacionales de la Guerra de España* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1978).

¹⁷Andrés Viñas, 'La creación de las Brigadas Internacionales', in *Las Brigadas Internacionales: nuevas perspectivas en la historia de la Guerra Civil y del exilio* (Tarragona: Universitat Rovira i Virgili, 2015), 15–22.

¹⁸Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War. A Very Short Introduction* (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁹Francisco Guerra Pérez, *La medicina en el exilio republicano* (Alcalá de Henares: Universidad Alcalá de Henares, 2003).

²⁰José Antonio Fernández López, *Historia del campo de concentración de Miranda de Ebro: 1937–1947* (Miranda de Ebro: J. A. Fernandez, 2004).

²¹Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski, *Czarna legenda Mirandy: Polacy w hiszpańskim obozie internowania w Miranda de Ebro 1940–1945* (Warszawa: Rytm, 2021).

²²Concha Pallarés Morano, *Desplazados y refugiados políticos en España, 1940–1947: el papel de las embajadas* (Madrid, Spain: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia Facultad de Geografía e Historia, 2009); Javier Rodrigo, *Cautivos. Campos de concentración en la España franquista, 1936–1947* (Barcelona: Crítica, 2005); Matilde Eiroa San Francisco, 'Refugiados extranjeros en España: El campo de concentración de Miranda de Ebro', *Ayer*, 57, 1 (2005), 125–152.

Data from Miranda de Ebro and imprisoned Physicians

The main sources for this paper are files from the Guadalajara Military Archive [Archivo General Militar de Guadalajara (AGMG)]. The archive keeps 104 boxes containing documents concerning all foreigners imprisoned in the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp. The Historical Memory law approved by the Spanish Parliament in 2007 allowed for the declassification of many files unavailable until then, making it possible to examine their contents.

All 15 238 documents held by the AGMG referring to foreign prisoners in the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp were reviewed. The identification clue was medical profession, students of medicine being discarded. All of the information about the 151 physicians registered as prisoners there has been thoroughly analysed.²³

The most common documents included in the admission records are forms with personal data and records of interrogations, including questionnaires. In addition to these records, in some cases, inmates' private correspondence and their translations by the military censors, personal documents confiscated during arrest, and the claims submitted to the Red Cross, have been preserved.

The personal files exist in the form of index cards. Usually, though not always, they contain the name and surname of the prisoner, parents' names, date and place of birth, last address, profession, nationality, date and place of detention and date of internment in Miranda de Ebro. The back of the card sometimes shows the date of transfer or release and who released the prisoner. The cards themselves present some methodological problems. Doctors generally did not lie about their profession, but many prisoners provided false names. Furthermore, the transcription of foreign names is not always correct, which makes subsequent search for data difficult. The nationality provided was, on many occasions, deliberately falsified, as prisoners hoped to be repatriated more easily, or their real nationality had changed because their country of origin had ceased to exist when occupied by the Germans or the Soviets.

On their arrival in the camp, the index cards with the prisoners' personal data were filled in by the Spanish guards or by prisoners employed in the registry. Some interrogations took place immediately after the arrest, in police stations or prisons. Most, however, were done when the arrested person arrived in Miranda de Ebro. The questionnaires were similar, but offer a broader view than the mere administrative procedure, allowing through a contextualised analysis the identification of patterns such as the order of events after the arrest.

The literature and other sources related to foreign prisoners in Miranda de Ebro, doctors serving in the IB, escape routes, and records of the statements of witnesses and trials have been examined. Documents regarding arrests at the Spanish border have been analysed (Archivos de Frontera, Gerona). Furthermore, in order to reconstruct the biographies of some of the interned doctors, additional files and archives have been consulted at the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in New York, the Central

²³ AGMA: DCME 305279, 12, 39, 73, 128, 143; DCME 305280, 217, 233, 255; DCME 305281, 359; 305282 518, 531; DCME 305283 616, 684; DCME 305284 749; DCME 305285 959; DCME 305286 1054, 1086, 1096, 1143; DCME 503087 1195, 1224; DCME 305288 1442; DCME 305289 1507; DCME 305290 1651, 1653, 1655; DCME 305291 1816; DCME 305292 1957; DCME 305293 2059, 2146; DCME 305294 2341; DCME 305297 2669, 2697, 2710, 2755; DCME 305298 2820; DCME 305299 3070; DCME 305300 3110; DCME 305301 3267, 3331; DCME 305303 3637; DCME 305304 3789; DCME 305305 3881; DCME 305307 4145; DCME 305308 4280, 4305, 4326; DCME 305311 4722; DCME 305312 4831, 4870, 4906; DCME 305313 4986, 5073, 5075; DCME 305315 5443; DCME 305316 5573, 5578, 5587; DCME 305317 5607; DCME 305318 5786; DCME 305319 5996; DCME 305322 6329, 6391; DCME 305323 6476, 6510; DCME 305324 6694, 6707; DCME 305325 6783, 6805, 6868; DCME 305327 7193, 7195; DCME 305328 7347; DCME 303331 7670; DCME 305332 7797; DCME 305335 8266, 8369, 8402; DCME 3053336 8486, 8561, 8550; DCME 303341 9222, 9238; DCME 303343 9550; DCME 303344 9608, 9621, 9627, 9654, 9665, 9721; DCME 303345 9834, 9850; DCME 303346 9977; DCME 30347 10089, 10155; DCME 303348 10210, 10241, 10254; DCME 303349 10358; DCME 303350 10494; DCME 303351 10629, 10707; DCME 303353 10942, 11025; DCME 303355 11289, 11349; DCME 303356 11439; DCME 303357 11522, 11541, 11544; DCME 303358 11744; DCME 303359 11920; DCME 303361 12154, 12201; DCME 303362 12317, 12351, 12357, 12379; DCME 303363 12484; DCME 303364 12634, 12641; DCME 303366 12864, 12949, 12966; DCME 367 13069, 13110; DCME 303368 13159; DCME 303369 13295; DCME 303370 13535; DCME 303372 13829; DCME 303374 14051, 14052, 14055, 14126; DCME 303376 14412, 14438; DCME 303377 14579, 14588; DCME 303378 14627, 14628, 14721, 14727; DCME 303379 14777, 14808; DCME 303380 14926, 14984; DCME 303381 15080, 15099, 15137; DCME 303382 15153, 15189.

Military Archive in Warsaw, the National Archives in Kew (London), the Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de Santé, in Paris, the Guide Rosenwald, Archive National Pierrefite sur Seine in France, Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv in Vienna, University Saskatchewan College of Medicine in Canada, Archives of the Chaim Herzog Museum in Israel, Ancestry, the Memorial Archives at the Gurs internment camp, Archives Départementales du Pyrénées-Orientales in Perpignan, Archives Départementales du Pyrénées-Occidentales in Pau, the Albert Schweitzer Foundation Archive in France and the Bundesarchiv in Berlin, which provide personal data on the lives of doctors before and after their time at Miranda de Ebro. Some data are not yet available due to the personal data protection law. Some data have been obtained from the personal databases of Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski of the University of Warsaw and Paul Weindling of Oxford University. These we consider to be of great value.

The main methodological limitations relating to the files result from two facts: the data open only a small window of time and the authorities recorded only the information they considered relevant to themselves. So, the data were generated by a group of people with a specific interest, and that was the control. This is why this paper faces two challenges. First, archival data in Miranda de Ebro remain incomplete because many prisoners provided false information on arrival at the camp, for instance, some declared being physicians having completed a couple of years of study. Second, it is impossible to write the personal story of every doctor because we lack information about what they did before and after their confinement.

Physicians imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro and the special case of the IB doctors

According to the files, 151 doctors were interned in Miranda de Ebro, with an average age of 30 years old. The average time spent in prison before transfer to Miranda de Ebro was 61 days and the average stay in the camp was 11 695 days. The time an arrested physician spent in prison before being sent to Miranda de Ebro was in eighty-one cases under 30 days. However, in fifty-five cases, this extended to 1–6 months, and in nine cases, the prior imprisonment lasted over 6 months. No pattern equating the length of prior incarceration to the year of arrest or nationality could be established. On average, the total time spent under arrest was around 6 months.

In our research, we found documents relating to doctors imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro who had been members of the IB. The reasons for their imprisonment, time spent in the camp, dates of release and other data are quite different from those relating to doctors imprisoned after mid-June 1940, as they were considered prisoners of war (POWs). Nevertheless, this group is integral to the research, as it provides a wider perspective on the significance of the camp. Life for IB members imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro was not easy: there was not enough food, and the sanitary conditions were poor. In addition, the Gestapo frequently visited the camp looking for IB members or refugees who had fled occupied France. They demanded that the Spanish authorities hand them over in terms of the accord of 31 July 1938, agreeing that “the German and the Spanish police will surrender directly, systematically, and by the fastest means possible communists, Anarchists and others affiliated to tendencies that are dangerous to the State”.²⁴ For years, this agreement allowed extraditions that were legally questionable, but in fact, deportations were rare.²⁵ Seventeen physicians who had served in the IB were deported to Nazi Germany and interned in concentration camps there, but none of them had been in Miranda de Ebro.²⁶ The camp’s admission files record four physicians belonging to the IB, among them three Polish Jews²⁷ and one Latvian.²⁸

²⁴Hernández de Miguel, *op.cit.*, 1424.

²⁵For the relationship between Francoist Spain and Nazi Germany, see: Danielle Rozenberg, *La España contemporánea y la cuestión judía* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2010).

²⁶Esteban González-López and Rosa Ríos-Cortés, ‘Doctors and nurses in the international Brigades. From international solidarity with Spain to Nazi camps’, in *Medical Care and Crimes in German Occupied Poland 1939–1945. New findings, interpretations and memories* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2022), 158–174.

²⁷AGMA DCME 305335, 8266; DCME 305336, 8550; DCME 305378, 14628.

²⁸AGMA DCME 305308, 4305; Ignacio de la Torre, ‘Latvian Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War’, *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 24 (2016), 51–77.

From 1940 onwards, almost all fugitives from Europe reached Spain across the Pyrenees, mostly hiring guides known as *passeurs* who led them through the mountains in small groups.²⁹ There were several escape networks. Even though some authors tried to classify the routes,³⁰ testimonies and interviews on the ground prove that the refugees would choose different routes according to temporary and geographical convenience.³¹

The Pyrenees were pretty closely guarded by French, German and Spanish authorities: the French train route that carried fugitives to the Pyrenees was under surveillance by the German Gestapo. Controls and identity checks were frequent. The border at the Pyrenees was occupied by the Wehrmacht's 19th division. Around 10 000 men were tasked with preventing illegal border crossings. From 1943, this border was also under the control of German customs agents, and Gestapo agents also operated in nearby cities. The Spanish side of the border was guarded by the armed Guardia Civil, a police force and by agents of the Political and Social Brigade (Brigada Político-Social).³²

According to an order by the Ministry of the Interior, the Guardia Civil was in charge of checking personal documents from 1940 on. This order also established that all persons with a passport but no visa, those without documents, suspects regardless of nationality and deserters from Allied armies with or without valid documents must be interned in concentration camps. The order included a general ban on the entry of citizens from belligerent countries who were of military age (18–40 years old).³³ Henry Dupont,³⁴ for example, was arrested in Figueras on 8 April 1942, and handed over to the Guardia Civil.

According to the files consulted, forty-three physicians were confined in prisons in the Basque Country and Navarre, and forty-two in prisons in Catalonia, most of them in Figueras and Gerona. During the last years (from 1944) of the camp's existence, the physicians came from prisons in the Basque Country and Navarre.²⁰ The personal files of sixteen³⁵ of the forty-two physicians who crossed the Pyrenees on the Catalan route can be found in the archives of the border authorities. Seven of them were Jews and six were arrested together with other physicians, dentists, or students of medicine.

When physicians crossed the border with their wives, the women were separated and taken to other cities by diplomatic or consular missions, or international organisations, while the men were transferred to Miranda de Ebro. The Polish physician Silvain Zaks,³⁶ for example, was arrested together with his 26-year-old wife Claudine, and a fellow countryman and dentist called Michel Gelbart. The release of Zaks' wife was arranged by the Polish Red Cross, who took her to Madrid to deal with the exit formalities. The Polish Jewish physician Abraham Wiór³⁷ was arrested together with his wife Aline Wiór, who was also a physician, and three other Jews, Alfredo Levy, Jean Natap and Andres Fried.

Once they were sent from prisons to Miranda de Ebro, a file was filled up with inmate's information. Data were not checked by the Spanish authorities.³⁸ Inaccurate registration of personal data continued when refugees who had fled from the Allies and had been arrested in Spain began to arrive at the camp. Some of them were already being prosecuted by international courts because of their prominent roles within the Nazi hierarchy or as collaborators with the Nazi regime. A few tried to hide their real identity to avoid being brought to justice.³⁹

²⁹A project of European memory can be found in <http://www.perseguits.cat/en/>.

³⁰Pallarés Morano, *op.cit.*, 39.

³¹Pierre Sandahl, *Miranda ou l'évasion par l'Espagne* (Paris: La Jeune Parque, 1945); Marcel Vivé and Robert Vieville, *Les évadés de France à travers l'Espagne. Guerre 1939–1945* (Paris: Éd. des Écrivains, 1998).

³²Pallarés Morano, *op.cit.*, 499.

³³Pallarés Morano, *op.cit.*, 507.

³⁴AMGA DCME 305307, 4145; AHG 170-478-T2-29307.

³⁵AHG 170-478-T2 29282, 29301, 29385, 29425, 29430, 29428, 29430, 29438, 29458, 29459, 29467, 29471, 29557, 29669, 29704.

³⁶AGAM DCME 305381, 15099; AHG 170-478-T2-29428, 20-23, 27, 30.

³⁷AGAM DCME 305380, 14926; AHG 170-478-T2-29467, 12, 18, 20, 27, 28.

³⁸San Francisco, *op. cit.*, 138–139.

³⁹Wayne Jamison, *Esvásticas en el Sur* (España: Círculo Rojo, 2018).

So, in a further intersection in Spain, prisoners fleeing the Axis powers and prisoners sought by the Allies both tried to hide their true identities. Some also lied about their professions: in some cases, they claimed to be physicians when in truth they had not finished their degrees⁴⁰ or had not even studied medicine.⁴¹

The number of physicians arriving in Miranda de Ebro varied hugely over time. Between 1938 and 1940, only physicians belonging to the IB were imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro. Between September and December 1940, four doctors were inmates in prisons and later transferred to Miranda de Ebro in early 1941.⁴² Most physicians, a total of 127, arrived between 1941 and 1943, over half of them in 1942. This coincides with the period between 1942 and 1943 when the overall number of new inmates in Miranda de Ebro reached its peak. The number of new prisoners peaked in 1943 at 6 800, more than double the 3 200 prisoners arriving in the course of 1942. The number of inmates varied according to the events during the war: initial Nazi occupation of France, the increased persecution of Jews in France peaking in the operation Winter Velodrome, during which almost 13 000 Jews (among them 4 000 children) were rounded-up, transferred to transit camps and finally sent to German extermination camps in occupied Poland. German violence towards European Jews reached its peak in the summer of 1942.⁴³ From September 1943, the Nazis controlled all of Italy and persecution increased. The Italian border with Switzerland had already become impassable in Summer 1942.⁴⁴

In terms of nationality, the highest numbers of prisoners in Miranda were French (at least 6 500), Germans (around 2 000), “Canadians” (2 000)⁴⁵ and Poles (around 1 700).⁴⁶ As to the physicians, fifty-two were French, twenty-eight were Polish and twenty-five claimed to be Canadians.

The amount of time physicians spent in Miranda de Ebro is clearly related to the particular phase in the camp’s existence during which they were interned (Table 1). Reasons for this relate to a number of factors, including their origins or political affiliations.

The camp was overcrowded by the end 1942.⁴⁷ Georges Morin, a student of Medicine, was briefly interned in the camp in 1943, soon released and wrote his doctor’s thesis in Algiers in 1944. He gave the first testimony that allows us to understand the sanitary conditions in the fall 1943. General (filth) dirtiness, the lack of water and food, and the rudimentary conditions of lodging provoked mainly two diseases among inmates: scabies and the so-called “mirandite”, a colloquial term used for all the diarrheic diseases in the camp.⁴⁸

Once in Miranda de Ebro, most remained in the camp for between 1 and 6 months. In most cases (fifty-nine) it was the International, Spanish or French Red Cross who negotiated and managed their release. The International Red Cross had representatives in Francoist Spain. Some of the national sections, like the British and the Spanish committees, even shared the same office in Madrid.⁴⁹ The Red Cross played an important role in providing material aid, mediating, inspecting prisons and negotiating

⁴⁰ AMAG DCME 305335, 8266.

⁴¹ AMAG DCME 305313, 4986.

⁴² AMAG: DCME 305299, 3070; DCME 305299, 3070; DCME 305311, 4722; DCME 30368, 13159.

⁴³ Lewi Stone, ‘Quantifying the Holocaust: Hyperintense kill rates during the Nazi Genocide’, *Science Advances*, 5, 1 (2019), eaa47292.

⁴⁴ Switzerland turned away thousands of Jews at the border. See the Chapter about “Switzerland and refugees in the Nazi Era” available online at <https://www.uek.ch/en/> as part of the final report of the Independent Commission of Experts Switzerland – WWII, Switzerland, National Socialism and WWII. Final Report, Zürich 2002.

⁴⁵ Although around 2 000 refugees claimed Canadian citizenship, there were few or no genuine Canadians at all in the camp. Almost all claiming Canadian citizenship in fact came from France, Poland and England.

⁴⁶ Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski, *Czarna legenda Mirandy. Polacy w hiszpańskim obozie internowania w Miranda de Ebro 1940–1945*, p. II, Oficyna Wydawnicza RYTM, Warszawa 2019, p. 853.

⁴⁷ Pallarés Morano, *op.cit.*, 509.

⁴⁸ Héraut, Louis-Armand, ‘Miranda de Ebro: Medical Condition of the Concentration Camp in the Autumn of 1943’, *Historie Des Sciences Médicales*, 42, 2 (2008), 205–214.

⁴⁹ Red Cross & Order of St John, *The official record of the humanitarian services of the war organization of the British Red Cross Society and the Order of St John of Jerusalem 1939–1947*. Compiled by P.G. Cambray and G.G.B. Briggs. Printed in Great Britain by Sumfield and Day LTD, 55–64.

Table 1. Years of imprisonment and liberation

	Number of doctors imprisoned	Number of liberations
1938	2	0
1939	2	0
1940	4	1
1941	6	0
1942	77	3
1943	44	79
1944	8	8
1945	2	1
1946-47	5	8

the release of prisoners. The French Red Cross appointed the French priest André Boyer-Mas as its main representative in Spain. His mission was to free and evacuate the almost 10 000 French citizens imprisoned in Spain. In June 1943, Boyer-Mas appointed Jean Pierre Bourbon as his official delegate for Miranda de Ebro. When Bourbon was replaced in August 1944, he had done a very efficient job: twenty-four French physicians had been released in a little more than a year.⁵⁰

Embassies mediated the release of twenty-five physicians from Miranda de Ebro, twelve of whom were British. The British embassy took charge of prisoners considered important or useful for the war effort, like physicians, pilots, or engineers.⁵¹ Pablo Lang was the representative of a Glauberite mine in Burgos. He was appointed to negotiate the release of French inmates in Miranda de Ebro by the embassy of the Vichy Government in 1941⁵² although he never stood out for his sympathy for the Pétain regime. After the end of WWII, the International Red Cross asked him to represent the German and collaborationist refugees detained in Miranda de Ebro while awaiting repatriation.⁵³ He managed to ensure the release of seven physicians, all of them French⁵⁴ except for one, who was from the USA.⁵⁵

After the Allied landings in France in 1944 and the liberation of France, those who had participated in the Vichy government's persecution of members of the *Resistance* and in the extermination of the Jews feared themselves being put on trial and tried to escape across the Spanish border. Those who were arrested were brought to Miranda de Ebro.⁵⁶ They arrived together with Belgian SS members and members of the Belgian Walloon and Flemish Legions who had collaborated with and later fought for the occupying Germans, including, for example, Maurice de Mayer. He was interned for a month from

⁵⁰AMAG: DCME 305366, 12864; DCME 305281, 359; DCME 305282, 518; DCME 305286, 1096; DCME 305287, 1195; DCME 305288, 1442; DCME 305291, 1816; DCME 305297, 2669; DCME 305297, 2755; DCME 305303, 3637; DCME 305319, 5996; DCME 305324, 6694; DCME 305335, 8402; DCME 305341, 9238; DCME 305343, 9550; DCME 305353, 10942; DCME 305366, 12949; DCME 305367, 13069; DCME 305374, 14051; DCME 305376, 14412; DCME 305378, 14727; DCME 305379, 14777; DCME 305380, 14984; DCME 305381, 15080.

⁵¹Pallarés Moraño, *op.cit.*, 233.

⁵²BOE 15 March 1941, 1824.

⁵³Fernández López, *op.cit.*, 278.

⁵⁴AMAG: DCME 305280,233; DCME 305292, 1957; DCME 305297, 2697; DCME 305313, 5073; DCME 305335, 8369; DCME 305335, 8369.

⁵⁵AMAG: DCME 305372, 13829.

⁵⁶Matilde Eiroa and Concha Pallarés, 'Uncertain fates: Allied soldiers at the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp', *Historian*, 76 (2014), 26–49; Concha Pallarés Moraño, 'El reencuentro de antiguos correligionarios: colaboracionistas franceses en el campo de Miranda de Ebro 1944–1947', *Hispania Nova*, 14 (2016), 246–264.

September to October 1946 in a hospital in Vitoria-Gasteiz, south of Bilbao in the Basque country. From there, he sent a letter of greeting to General Franco. Information about him can be found because he was a member of the Flemish National Union and collaborated with the Nazis. He was sent back to Belgium by the Spanish authorities.⁵⁷ Eventually, collaborators from other countries also arrived, for example, Friedrich von Freienfels, a native of the Netherlands.⁵⁸

By the end of WWII, admissions to Miranda de Ebro had dropped sharply: only 400 new prisoners were interned in 1945, and 600 in 1946. This development is paralleled by the diminishing number of physicians admitted during the last 2 years of the camp's existence. From 1944 until its definitive closure on 1947, only fourteen doctors were interned in the camp, seven of them French.⁵⁹ Almost all French citizens imprisoned in those years had collaborated with Nazi Germany⁶⁰ and four were Germans, POW of the Allies in caps in the South of France.⁶¹

Fate, exile or return home: what did the doctors do after Miranda de Ebro?

Not all biographies could be reconstructed.

Józef Leitner, a 32-year-old Polish Jew, was taken POW on 13 March 1938 in Belchite. He was interned in a number of concentration camps and served in working Brigades until he was transferred to Miranda de Ebro on 10 December 1941.⁶² He went to the URSS, where he was fighting with the Soviet troops until the end of the WWII.⁶³ After WWII, he returned to live in Poland.⁶⁴ In 1950, he was the chief medical officer in a military hospital in Wrocław with the rank of Colonel.⁶⁵

Artur Lilker, a Polish Jew, had studied medicine in Vienna and had not yet finished his degree in Paris when he decided to join the IB. On his arrival at the IB base in Albacete, in May 1937, he was appointed lieutenant of the medical battalion within the 35th International Division. Later, he served in the 13th International Brigade, the Drombowski Battalion. He was taken prisoner during the battle of the Ebro on 13 March 1938, and interned in the San Pedro de Cardena camp. On 10 December 1938, he was transferred to Miranda de Ebro. He was not freed by the Spanish Red Cross until 23 March 1943.⁶⁶ After the WWII, he came back to Poland.⁶⁷

Following pressure exerted by the Allies and in connection with increasing overpopulation of the camps due to the arrival of a large number of refugees from France, the foreigners imprisoned for being IB members left Miranda de Ebro in 1943. Artur Lilker was one of them. The evacuation took place in several groups. The groups were taken by train to Madrid, from there to Málaga and Gibraltar, and later to North Africa. There, many of them took the opportunity to join the Allied military campaign against the Wehrmacht army.⁶⁸

Most of the French physicians returned to France.⁶⁹

After being arrested at the Spanish border in Navarre, the French doctor Bryan Courtenay Meyers was imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro on 26 May 1943. He declared himself to be Canadian and his release was

⁵⁷ AGAM DCME 305344, 9608.

⁵⁸ AGAM DCME 305313, 4986.

⁵⁹ AMAG: DCME 305282, 518; DCME 305324, 6694; DCME 305325, 6805; DCME 305341, 9238; DCME 305341, 9238; DCME 305353, 10942; DCME 305378, 14727; DCME 305378, 14727.

⁶⁰ Concha Pallarés and José María Espinosa de los Monteros, 'Miranda, mosaico de nacionalidades: Franceses, británicos y alemanes', *Ayer*, 57, 1 (2005), 153–187.

⁶¹ AMAG: DCME 305313, 4986; DCME 305362, 12357; DCME 305364, 12634; DCME 305366, 12864.

⁶² AGMG DCME 305335, 8266.

⁶³ <http://sidbrint.ub.edu/es/printpdf/content/leiner-josef>, accessed June 2021.

⁶⁴ Guerra, *op. cit.*, 427–428.

⁶⁵ Jan Ciechanowski database.

⁶⁶ AGMG DCME 305336, 8550.

⁶⁷ <https://sidbrint.ub.edu/ca/content/lilker-arthur>, accessed June 2022.

⁶⁸ Fernández López, *op. cit.*, 1972.

⁶⁹ Héraut, *op. cit.* (note 48), 205.

negotiated in June 1943 by the British embassy.⁷⁰ In 1946, he published his doctoral thesis in Paris on "Etude sur les splénomégaties neutropéniques: syndrome agranulocytaire d'origine splénique".⁷¹ Roger Benichoux entered Spain on 10 June 1943, crossing the border in Navarre. He also declared he was Canadian and was released 2 months later, on 17 August 1943, following an intervention by the French Red Cross.⁷² He published his doctoral thesis in medicine in Paris in 1955. He became Chair of Heart Surgery at Nancy University where he had a successful career and died in 2003.⁷³

Some of the physicians who were held in Miranda de Ebro appear in the Guide Rosenwald of French physicians published in 1938, 1939, 1943 and 1945–49. This is, for example, the case of Benjamin René Zissmans, who worked as a general practitioner in Le Caylar (Montpellier),⁷⁴ or Pierre Joseph Zerbib, who in 1946 worked as a forensic pathologist and psychiatrist in Toulouse.⁷⁵

Pierre Broch was a French physician who was mobilised and appointed captain in the French Army medical service in 1940. On 2 February 1943 he was ordered to stand in for an imprisoned physician, but a few weeks later he decided to desert and escape to Spain.⁷⁶ After his release from Miranda de Ebro in October 1943, he went to Morocco, and on 13 April 1944, embarked with his regiment in Oran bound for England. Months later, on 1 August 1944, he landed in France with the Free French forces to fight against Axis powers. In Morocco Broch had proved penicillin effectiveness, where the US Military Health System had put it at the disposal of physicians of the French Army. Broch learned how to manufacture the antibiotic and proposed to the French Army the creation of the "Centre militaire de fabrication de la Pénicilline" in a former Wehrmacht garage in Paris. He also invented the "pipeline", a technique that allowed the recovery of penicillin from the urine of American soldiers who had been treated with it. In 1949, Pierre Broch founded a company for the production of antibiotics (Société d'exploitation des produits, SOBIO). By 1965, it was employing 350 people. Pierre Broch died a wealthy man in September 1985 at his home in Paris.⁷⁷

Another physician who returned to Europe, though not to his country of origin, was Stanislaus Seidner. Born in Czernowitz, a city that at the time belonged to Romania but since the end of WWII was part of the Soviet Ukraine, he was interned in Miranda de Ebro in December 1942 under a false identity, Paul Alavouette.⁷⁸ He had studied medicine first at the University of Clermont-Ferrand and finished his studies in Paris. In September 1939, he was mobilised by the French Army and assigned to a surgical ambulance until the captain in charge decided to withdraw Jewish doctors from service because he thought Jews were "not real physicians". Thanks to useful contacts, in August 1940, he was released from the POW camp at Baccarat, where he had been interned. In July 1942, following massive pressure from the Nazi authorities, Jewish doctors were prohibited from practicing by law in France. Seidner decided to flee France under a false identity and with his medical degree hidden in a roll of toilet paper. On 18 November 1942, he crossed the Pyrenees on foot. He was arrested six days later and was sent to Pamplona prison. On 16 December, he was moved to Miranda de Ebro. On 13 June 1943, after his release from Miranda de Ebro following intervention by the British embassy, he went to Gibraltar, where he joined the Giraudists, a group resisting the German occupation of France led by General Henri Giraud. He later went to Casablanca as an army physician. A year after he had left his home he was in Algeria. In

⁷⁰AMAG DCME 305300, 3110; NLE HO 334/248/FZ175.

⁷¹Bernard Bryan Courtenay-Mayers, *Etude sur les splénomégaties neutropéniques: syndrome agranulocytaire d'origine splénique* (Thèse: Médecine; Paris, 1946).

⁷²AMAG DCME 305286, 1054.

⁷³In http://www.professeurs-medicine-nancy.fr/Benichoux_R.htm.

⁷⁴AGAM DCME 305382, 15189 and Guide Rosenwald 1939 pages 752 and 990 in <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9797629q?rk=21459;2> and Guide Rosenwald 1946 pages 768 and 1272 in <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb344120051/date1946.liste>.

⁷⁵AGAM DCME 305382, 15153 and Guide Rosenwald 1946 pages 1007 and 1272 in <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb344120051/date1946.liste>.

⁷⁶AGAM DCME 305292, 1957.

⁷⁷The biography of Pierre Broch can be found in <http://fr.slideshare.net/frogerais/pierre-broch>, accessed 25 November .2020.

⁷⁸AMGA DCME 305279, 143.

November 1943 he embarked on an American military convoy bound for Naples. At the end of June 1944, he arrived in Rome with the US Army and in May 1945 Seidner went back to Marseille, where he worked as a physician until his death.⁷⁹

Other physicians, mainly of Polish origin, tried their luck in the UK. Leon Potaschmayer, for example, was one of them. The first thing we learn about him is that he travelled together with another Polish physician, Marian Goldszajn. They crossed the border into Spain on the Catalan route and were arrested together with Robert Perret, also from Poland, and a Canadian called Jacques Vircaudel.⁸⁰ When Potaschmayer arrived in Miranda de Ebro on 14 December 1942, he declared that he was Canadian, although his record states he was born in Poland. He was released on 16 January 1943, and taken to a residence for army officers in Jaraba, Zaragoza.⁸¹ In the National Archives in Kew, we read that he obtained British citizenship and lived in Essex.⁸² For many years Potaschmayer worked in the department of microbiology at the Southend General Hospital in Essex. He published a number of papers about cefuroxime, an antibiotic that is still used.⁸³

Another Polish physician, Władysław Mrozowski, was born in 1888 in Jesa and was a colonel in the Polish army medical service. He entered Spain illegally, was first imprisoned in Lérida, and taken to Miranda de Ebro on 27 December 1942.⁸⁴ Once he had been released, he moved to the UK and joined the Polish Armed Forces in the West and after the war the Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC).⁸⁵

When the communist government increased the persecution of the Polish Resistance and of soldiers who had fought in the West, most of whom were loyal to the western oriented Polish Government in Exile, Polish soldiers saw themselves forced to choose between returning to their country and facing repression or staying in Western Europe. Of the more than 250 000 Polish soldiers who were in the West in 1945, 105 000 returned to Poland. The formation of the PRC was announced on 22 May 1946 by the British Government, and the recruitment of former Allied soldiers from countries now behind what became known as the Iron Curtain began in September 1946. The members of this Corps were volunteers, retained their status as military personnel and were subject to British army discipline and military law. They lived in army camps, were paid according to their rank, received English lessons and learned a trade or profession. The Corps was disbanded in 1949. Around 150 000 Polish soldiers and their families took up residence in Great Britain and became an important part of the Polish community in the UK. Doctor Mrozowski did not have time to complete his two-year period in the Corps. On 18 November 1947 he died of a cerebral stroke in Edinburgh.⁸⁶

Before the war, Stanisław Warszawski had been a physician in Paris. He served in the IB and was interned in Miranda de Ebro until 1941.⁸⁷ He is listed in the London Gazette as a medical practitioner.⁸⁸ Additional data relating to his family and prior life is also available. Like his father, Warszawski was born in the Polish city of Łódź, the second of five children of a Jewish family. His three younger siblings, Florette, Tea and Heinrich, were probably born in Germany, since the family moved to Berlin in 1903. All five siblings left Germany from 1933 when measures discriminating against Jews were implemented by the Nazis and were able to survive.

⁷⁹<https://www.facebook.com/docteur.seidner/photos/>.

⁸⁰AHG 170-478-T2 29461, 7–8, 24.

⁸¹AMAG DCME 305355, 11349 and Francisco Javier López Jiménez, “Generales, jefes y oficiales de los ejércitos beligerantes en la 2ª Guerra Mundial, internados en los balnearios de Jaraba (Zaragoza),” *Boletín Informativo del Sistema Archivístico de la Defensa, Segunda Época* 13 (2007), 12–15.

⁸²NAL HO 334/331/8176.

⁸³Leon Potaschmacher and Jefferson KA, ‘Antibacterial Activity of Cefuroxime’, *BMJ*, 1, 6122 (1978), 1279; Leon Potaschmayer *et al.*, ‘A Survey of the Sensitivity of Fresh Clinical Isolates to Cefuroxime and Other Antibiotics’, *Journal of Clinical Pathology*, 32, 9 (1979), 944–950.

⁸⁴AMAG DCME 305347, 10089.

⁸⁵NLE HO 405/37431.

⁸⁶Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe, X 6857.

⁸⁷AMAG DCME 305378, 14628.

⁸⁸<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/38454/page/5955/data.pdf> and HO 334/221/47514.

For unknown reasons, Stanisław's father returned to Łódź in 1934. There, he lived with his sister, and both were confined in the city's ghetto. Later, they were taken to the Warsaw Ghetto and from there deported to Treblinka, where they were murdered. Stanisław's mother, Regina, decided to stay in Berlin. The German authorities took her to a so-called *Judenhaus* in the same neighbourhood, a building in which Jews evicted from their own apartments were forced to live under increasingly cramped conditions. In January 1942 she was moved to a synagogue and on the 25th of that month, together with another 1 043 Jews, she found herself on platform seventeen at Grunewald station, boarding a train that took them to Riga, where she was murdered. Only thirteen deported that day survived.⁸⁹

These biographical accounts of fleeing Jewish physicians and their families, filled with hardship and death, stand in sharp contrast to the treatment and biographies of the doctors who, as Nazi sympathisers or members arrived in Miranda de Ebro during the last years of the camp's existence. Many Nazis who fled Germany after the collapse of the Third Reich sought refuge in Spain, making use of false documents and protected by the tolerant Spanish regime.

This was, for example, true in the case of Friedrich von Freienfels, who falsely claimed to be a physician renaming himself Luis Gurruchaga Iturriaga, claiming to have been born in San Sebastián. After leaving Miranda de Ebro, he was immediately appointed director of the Santa Clara hospital in Cádiz. This treatment differs markedly from the difficulties most physicians faced regarding recognition and acceptance by the Spanish authorities of their medical degrees. Very soon, Luis Gurruchaga became his patients' favourite even though he had never studied medicine. It is not clear how Luis Gurruchaga eventually ended up in Madrid. He married a very religious woman, and was in private practice, serving a refined clientele until he died in the 1970s.⁹⁰

Wolfgang Schäffer was mobilised into the German Army in April 1940 and was appointed as a Captain in the Medical Corps in October 1943. He practiced at the Military Hospital in Paris and then in Lorient, where the German Navy had a major U-Boot base and a military hospital. He was taken prisoner by the French Army in May 1945, when the base finally surrendered. He crossed the Spanish border in September 1946 after escaping from the Reims POW camp which was under the control of the US Army. He fled to Spain, as he stated in his declaration at Miranda de Ebro, in the hope of being "repatriated to Germany". He was interned in Miranda de Ebro immediately, and transferred to the Provincial Prison of Salamanca in February 1947. From there, it appears almost certain, he was repatriated to Germany.⁹¹

Franz Schwarzweller, was a Member of the Nazi Party (NSDAP). From 1934 to 1935, he was working in Berlin with Eugene Fischer and in 1936 and 1937 with Verschuer in Frankfurt, where he was working with Josef Mengele, always in projects related to Rassenhygiene and Erbbiologie. From 1937 to 1939, he was working as Traumatologist in Frankfurt.⁹² As a Captain in the German Army Medical Corps, he was captured by French troops in Tübingen while working on a hospital train on 22 March 1945. He was held in several POW camps until he escaped from Bayonne in May 1946 and crossed the border in order to "be repatriated to Germany from Spain", according to his declaration of entry to Miranda de Ebro. On 9 June 1946, he embarked in Bilbao for Germany.⁹³

Maurice de Meyer was a Belgian doctor who joined the SS, seeing action on the Eastern Front. Fleeing westward to Toulouse, he joined the French Army's 23rd Infantry Regiment in an effort to hide under an assumed name. On 18 February 1945, he was demobilised from the French Army. Shortly before, he had married a young Swiss woman, through whom he again obtained Swiss identity papers using his real name and they resided in France. On 12 July 1946, a French security agent came to his home with a summons to the police station, as de Meyer had been sentenced to death in Belgium. He crossed the

⁸⁹<https://www.stolpersteine-berlin.de/de/biografie/3235>, accessed 25 November 2020.

⁹⁰Extensive research about von Freienfels was recently published by Wayne Jamison, *Dr. Pirata: Un médico nazi en la España de Franco* (Madrid: Kailas Historia, 2020).

⁹¹AGMA DCME 303364 12634.

⁹²Bunderarchiv R 9361-III/556033; R9361-II/921306.

⁹³AGAG DCME 305366, 12864.

border into Spain 3 days later, explaining this course of events in a statement to a camp guard at Miranda de Ebro. On 3 January 1947, he was released.⁹⁴

Conclusions

The Miranda de Ebro concentration camp was closed in January 1947, and the remaining inmates were sent to regular prisons. Some of the physicians were moved to the prison in Valladolid. The camp was dismantled, and until very recently, there was hardly anything left indicating its existence.⁹⁵ Now a memorial is being built on the location.⁹⁶

Thanks to Spain's 2007 Law of Historical Memory (Ley de Memoria Histórica),⁹⁷ many of the archives directly or indirectly related to the concentration camp in Miranda de Ebro have been declassified and are available for research. Because this is a relatively recent development, not much research has so far been done, meaning it remains largely incomplete. Still, the access to historical archives has opened up the possibility of exploring and writing about a period of the recent past in Spain and Europe that had almost been forgotten. It is the story of the physicians who during the war were forced to flee westward through Europe, not in search of a better life, but simply hoping to stay alive at all.

In a still relatively little-known historical episode, around 120 000 refugees, including members of the French and Allied Resistance against the Nazis and Jews from across Europe, sought freedom crossing mountain passes in the Pyrenees helped by *passeurs*. Reaching Spanish territory did not guarantee freedom or well-being, they were treated unequally, often facing forced repatriation to France or, in most cases, detention, imprisonment or permission to live in inns and hostels.

Miranda de Ebro was a camp where a large number of European citizens were concentrated, and where the difference in treatment of inmates by the Spanish authorities is visible: from lenient to active support and assistance. Difficulties faced by interned doctors leaving Miranda were also very different, depending on where they came from and who they were: while Nazis and collaborators were repatriated, protected, or welcomed into Spanish society, those loyal to the Spanish Republic or the Allies faced many more obstacles and complications.

Spain was a barrier, host or transit country for thousands of refugees fleeing WWII. The foreign policy of Spain, expressed in the way Franco's regime treated foreigners during the war, can be described as an attempt to survive in changing circumstances, where the strategies aimed at preserving the authoritarian regime required complicated balance between powers and permanent pragmatism.⁹⁸

The situation of refugees changed over the years from relative ease in obtaining transit visas together with a boat ticket for destination countries in early 1940 to a more complicated system when the Nazi occupation of Europe produced an avalanche of fugitives towards the south, which aroused suspicion and resistance on the part of the Spanish authorities.

Many European refugees were interned in Miranda de Ebro, where they shared the lot of other foreign prisoners captured since the SCW as IB soldiers. In 1943, the camp took on international significance, leading the Francoist government to issue regulations favourable to the Allies, following which the authorities began emptying the camp of inmates.

The Miranda de Ebro camp was unique in Franco's Spain, as it was the only one designated to hold foreign refugees lacking proper documentation. The study of the archives opens up the possibility of at least partially reconstructing the history of the flight and fate of the doctors held there who make up a coherent and at least in professional terms heterogeneous group among the camp inmates.

⁹⁴AGA DCME 305344, 9608.

⁹⁵A very interesting book about Memory in Spain also published in German is by Walther L. Bernecker and Sören Brinkmann, *Memorias divididas. Guerra civil y Franquismo en la Sociedad y la política españolas 1936–2008* (Madrid: Abada Editores, 2009).

⁹⁶<https://mirandamemoria.es/?lang=en>, accessed June 2022.

⁹⁷BOE 2007 in <https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2007/BOE-A-2007-22296-consolidado.pdf>.

⁹⁸Gil Pecharrorán, *op.cit.*, 13.

The interment of doctors in Miranda de Ebro has a qualitative and quantitative relevance. Doctors played a preponderant role in belic conflicts from the beginning of 20th century: as they could take preventive measures to avoid contagious diseases in the troops, cure already declared infectious diseases or war wounds, so that the combatants could join the front again and as collective were very active in volunteering.⁹⁹ In Miranda de Ebro, of nearly 15 000 detainees who passed through the camp, 151 were physicians, which represents almost 1% of the internees' professions, much more than the normal percentage in a random population.

It is correct that when we look at the biographies of the physicians who passed through Miranda de Ebro, we find only survivors. This, however, should not lead us to construct an optimistic story. A glance at the biography of the Polish Jewish physician and member of the IB, Stanisław Warszawski for example, reveals the tragic context of his family's fate: the parents were murdered, the mother in Riga, the father in Treblinka, and their five children were separated by exodus and exile.

Physicians coming from friendly countries or from countries with political regimes similar to that of Francoist Spain were treated quite differently to those seen as loyal to enemies of Franco Spain, particularly supporters of the Spanish Republic. Foreigners from friendly countries held in Miranda de Ebro were allowed to leave the camp, visit the cinema and use the swimming pool and other facilities. Perhaps more significantly, they were offered a way out, given new identities, their degrees were recognised, and they were even appointed as hospital directors. This was completely different treatment compared to that meted out to the physicians of the IB or, years later, to physicians fleeing to Spain to save their lives.

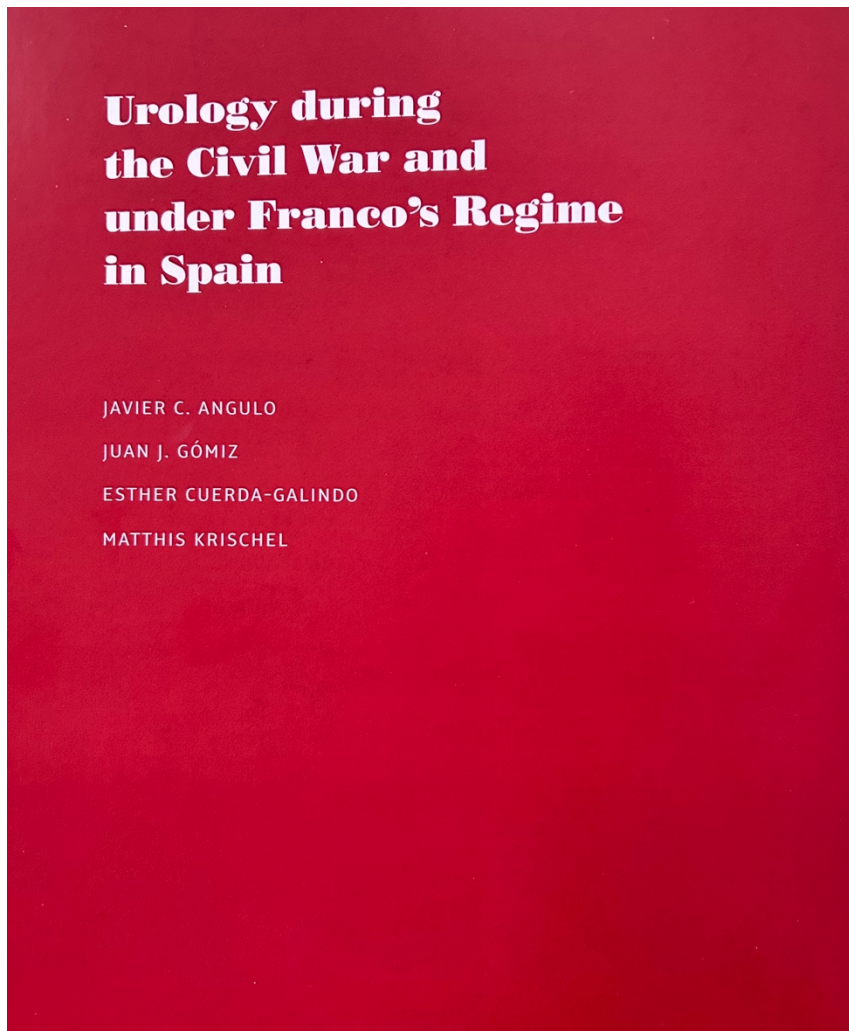
For this reason, even when looking at the later lives of the physicians interned in Miranda de Ebro we find tales of survival and, in some cases, even of success like that of Pierre Brosch, who became a successful businessman, or Leon Potaschmacher, who became a head of department in an English hospital, we should never forget the terror and suffering of those who had to cross the Pyrenees with the help of a guide whom they often could not trust, often equipped, even in winter, with just a woollen coat.

Competing interest. The authors have no competing interests to declare.

⁹⁹Carles Brasó Broggi, *Los médicos errantes. De las brigadas internacionales y la revolución china a la guerra fría*, (Crítica: Barcelona, 2022), 29–33.

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3. Urology during the Civil War and under Franco's Regime in Spain,
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The political situation in Spain before the Civil War

Alfonso XIII of Spain (1886-1941), known as 'the African', was king of Spain from his birth until the proclamation of the Second Republic in 1931. He assumed power when he reached sixteen years of age, on 17 May 1902. Spain experienced several problems of major importance during his reign, problems that would see the end of the liberal monarchy. These problems included the Rif War (Morocco, 1921-1927), Catalan nationalism, the lack of political representation for large social groups and the terrible living conditions of the working classes. The growth of political and social turbulence began with the Disaster of 1898 and ultimately led to the establishment of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1870-1930) between 1923 and his resignation in 1930. At this point, Alfonso urged for a return to democratic normality, with the intention of regenerating his regime. However, he was abandoned by the entire political class, which felt betrayed by the King's support of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship. Alfonso XIII voluntarily fled into exile after the municipal elections of April 1931, which were effectively a plebiscite to decide between the monarchy or a republic. He died ten years later in Rome, still considered by most of his subjects as nothing more than a 'puppet' king (Figure 1).¹

The Second Spanish Republic was the democratic political regime that existed in Spain from 14 April 1931, the date of its proclamation in place of the monarchy of Alfonso XIII, and 1 April 1939, the date of the end of the civil war, which led to Franco's assumption of power. The use of the term 'Second' is to distinguish this new republic from its predecessor, the First Spanish Republic of 1873-1874. Between April and December 1931, a Provisional Government drew up and approved



FIGURE 1. A French postcard showing the puppet 'Caramba XIII, a bourgeois king' (referring to Alfonso XIII). This card belonged in 1931 to Pedro Cifuentes (document donated to *Asociación Española de Urología*).

the so-called 1931 Constitution. Three periods can be distinguished during the years (1931-1936) when the Second Spanish Republic was 'at peace'. The first period was the Biennium of 1931-1933, during which the republican-socialist coalition headed by Manuel Azaña (1880-1940) carried out several reforms intended to modernize the country. During a second period (1933-1935), often referred to as the Black or Dark Biennium, the radical republican Lerroux Alejandro (1864-1949) ruled with the support in parliament of the Catholic right, united in the Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights (CEDA), which aimed to

'rectify' the reforms of the first biennium. This provoked serious protests and even outbursts of violence, such as the anarchist and socialist insurrection known as the Revolution of 1934, which was finally quelled by the government with military support. The third period started with the victory of the leftist coalition known as the Popular Front in the general election of 1936. However, the Front only governed for five months, until the army-sponsored coup of 17 and 18 July 1936, which eventually led to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).^{1,2}

Officially, the Second Spanish Republic continued throughout the civil war years, with three separate governments. The first was chaired by the republican leftist José Giral (1879-1962), although during his short tenure of office (July to September 1936) real power was in the hands of hundreds of local committees that were formed when the Spanish social revolution of 1936 finally erupted. The second was headed by the socialist Francisco Largo Caballero (1869-1946), leader of the General Union of Workers (UGT). The third ruled under the mandate of the socialist Juan Negrín (1892-1956) and lasted until early March 1939, when the coup led by Colonel Segismundo Casado (1893-1968) effectively ended Republican resistance in the Civil War, paving the way for the victory of General Francisco Franco (1892-1975).

The Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War was fought from 1936 to 1939. It was essentially a conflict between the Republicans, who were loyal to the democratic and left-leaning Second Republic, and the Nationalists, who were led by General Franco. After a bitter struggle, the Nationalists eventually won and Franco

ruled Spain for the next 36 years, from April 1939 until his death in November 1975. The war began after a declaration of opposition to the republican regime of President Manuel Azaña was proclaimed by a group of nationalist generals in the Spanish Armed Forces, initially under the leadership of José Sanjurjo (1872-1936). The Nationalists were supported by a number of conservative groups, including the CEDA, monarchists like the religiously conservative (Catholic) Carlists, and the *Falange Española Tradicionalista y de las Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista*, a fascist group usually known simply as the Falange. Sanjurjo was killed in a mysterious aircraft accident while attempting to return from exile in Portugal, following which Franco emerged as the Nationalists' leader. The military coup was supported in Morocco (which at that time was a Spanish protectorate) and in several Spanish provinces, such as Burgos, Cadiz, Cordoba, Valladolid, Pamplona, Seville and Zaragoza. However, other provinces and capitals, such as Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Valencia and Malaga, remained under the control of the Republican government. Spain was thus left militarily and politically divided.^{3,4}

The Nationalist forces received munitions and soldiers from Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, while the communist Soviet Union and socialist Mexico supported the Republican side. Other countries, such as the United Kingdom and France, operated an official policy of non-intervention, but often provided substantial unofficial aid to the Republicans. As a result, the political divisions that later split Europe and the world during the Second World War first became evident in Spain.⁵

The Civil War was to become notorious for the many atrocities committed on both sides. Organized purges occurred in territory captured by Franco's forces, in order to consolidate the future of his regime. The Nationalists also besieged Madrid for much of the war. After large parts of Catalonia were captured in 1938 and 1939, the conflict ended

with the victory of the Nationalists and the exile of thousands of leftist Spaniards, many of whom fled to refugee camps in southern France. Those associated with the defeated Republicans were cruelly persecuted by the victorious Nationalists. With the establishment in the aftermath of the war of a dictatorship led by General Franco, all the right-wing parties were fused into the structure of the Generalissimo's regime, which survived until his death in 1975.⁶⁻⁸

Only two countries openly and fully supported the Republic during the civil war years: Mexico and the USSR. It was from these sources, especially the USSR, that the Republic received diplomatic support, volunteers and the opportunity to purchase weapons. Other countries remained neutral, although this neutrality was greatly distressing to the intelligentsia in the United States and the United Kingdom (and, to a lesser extent, in other European countries) and to Marxists worldwide. This intellectual distress led to the formation of the International Brigades, in which thousands of foreigners of many different nationalities went to Spain to fight for the Republican cause. These brigades gave a huge boost to the Republic's morale but were not significant militarily. The Republic's supporters within Spain ranged from centrists who supported a moderately-capitalist liberal democracy to revolutionary anarchists who opposed the Republic but sided with it against the coup forces. Their base was primarily secular and urban but also included landless peasants and was particularly strong in industrial regions like Asturias, the Basque country and Catalonia.⁸

The Spanish Civil War exposed political divisions across Europe. The right and the Catholics supported the Nationalists as a way to stop the expansion of Bolshevism. On the left, which included the labour unions, students and intellectuals, the war was seen as a necessary battle to stop the spread of fascism. Anti-war and pacifist sentiment was strong in many countries, leading to warnings

that the Civil War had the potential to escalate into a second worldwide conflict, as a result of growing instability throughout Europe.

German involvement in the Spanish Civil War was considerable. Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) quickly sent powerful support to assist the Nationalists, most notably the Condor Legion, a unit composed of volunteers from the German Air Force (*Luftwaffe*) and the German Army (*Heer*).⁹ This German involvement began just days after the fighting broke out in July 1936. The Condor Legion was closely involved in the Battle of Toledo in 1936 and in the terrible bombing of Gernika (Guernica) on 26 April 1937, when some 300 civilians were killed. German efforts to move the Army of Africa to mainland Spain proved successful in the war's early stages. The war also provided combat experience for German troops and pilots, as well as a testing ground for the latest German military technology. However, the intervention also threatened to escalate into a new world war, a war for which Hitler was not yet ready. He therefore decided to limit his aid, and instead encouraged Benito Mussolini to send Italian units to help the Nationalists. Even so, the Condor Legion was instrumental in many of the Nationalist victories. It has been calculated that approximately 50,000 Nationalist soldiers were trained by German detachments, and also that some 16,000 German citizens fought in the war, of whom around 300 were killed. In addition, Germany provided the Nationalists with 600 planes, 200 tanks and huge amounts of financial aid. After the end of the Civil War, Franco's regime had to repay this help to Hitler in the shape of tungsten, iron, and workers sent to Germany to replace the shortfall of men in the German industry. Even so, the bulk of the debt remained unpaid, but notwithstanding this and notwithstanding the fact that Franco was by and large pro-Nazi, he still managed to keep his regime officially neutral during the Second World War.^{10, 11} Mussolini was more generous and rescinded the Civil War debt.⁵

In October 1937, Nationalists troops launched a major offensive towards Madrid. As a result, on 6 November the Republican government was forced to move to Valencia, outside the combat zone. However, the Nationalist attack on the capital was repulsed after fierce fighting, in which the International Brigades and their 3,000 foreign volunteers were heavily involved. Having failed to take the capital, Franco bombarded it from the air and surrounded it on the ground. So began a siege that would last for almost two years.⁷

Elsewhere, the Republican cause fared less well. The Republican Army in the Basque Country surrendered and Franco progressively won ground in the north. Nationalist troops closed in on Valencia and the Republican government had to move again, this time to Barcelona. But it was postponing the inevitable. Franco's troops also conquered Catalonia during the first two months of 1939. The United Kingdom and France recognized Franco's regime as the official government of Spain on 27 February. On 28 March, the Nationalists occupied Madrid and Franco proclaimed victory in a radio speech broadcast on 1 April, when the last Republican forces surrendered.⁸

Spanish Fascism after the Civil War

The political organization known as the *Falange* was founded by José Antonio Primo de Rivera in 1933. Unlike other members of the Spanish right, the Falange was initially republican and modernist, similar to the original spirit of Italian fascism. Its uniform and its aesthetics were comparable to other contemporary European fascist and national socialist movements. Later, the leadership of the

Falange was taken over by General Franco, who consolidated it with the Carlists. The Falange kept many of the external aspects of fascism, but ceased to have a fascist character. Although he was a dictator, Franco was also a monarchist and carefully prepared the young Prince Juan Carlos (later King Juan Carlos I) to succeed him. National socialism was truly revolutionary, and this held no interest for Franco.¹¹

In part for this reason, Franco did not officially bring Spain into the Second World War on the side of Nazi Germany. However, he did permit volunteers to join the German Army (*Wehrmacht*), on condition that they would only fight against the Soviet Union on the Eastern Front, and not against the Western Allies or any of the occupied populations of Western Europe. In this way, he was able to placate the Allies, whilst at the same time not only showing his gratitude for German support during the Spanish Civil War, but also providing an outlet for the strong anti-Communist sentiments of many Spanish nationalists. These nationalist volunteer corps were grouped together in the *División Azul* (the Blue Division: a reference to the blue shirt of the Falangists) and more than 18,000 men, including 2,612 officers, served in their ranks. About half of the officers were professional soldiers, veterans of the Spanish Civil War, and many others were members of the Falange (Figure 2). In the field, these soldiers wore the German Army's grey uniform, but with a shield on the upper right sleeve bearing the word *España* and the Spanish national colours, so that they could be easily identified if they were taken prisoner (Figure 3).¹²

The Allies and the Nazis both worked hard to gain Franco's direct support, although they used different strategies. The large group of German citizens in Spain, principally in Madrid and the major provincial capitals, were the initial target of the sophisticated Nazi propaganda, but in a later phase the ideas of the Third Reich were aimed indiscriminately at the Spanish population in general, empha-



FIGURE 2.. The Fascist salute raised in farewell to the volunteers of the Blue Division in Madrid, summer 1941.



FIGURE 3.. The insignia of the Falange (left), the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP) or Nazi Party (centre) and the Blue Division (right). The military symbols of the Blue Division clearly share the aesthetics of the other two.

sizing the apparent similarities with the doctrine of the Falange.^{10, 11}

At the beginning of the Second World War, there were some 12,000 Germans officially registered in Spain, but the actual German presence is estimated at about 80,000. Taking into account people with dual nationality, it is possible that this figure might actually have exceeded 120,000, with significant concentrations in the major urban centres. Even so, official membership of the Falange reached its peak of almost a million in 1942, slowly declining thereafter. Despite the formal unification of the various nationalist factions within the party in 1937, tensions continued between die-hard Falangists and other groups, particularly the Carlists.

By the middle of the Second World War, Franco and leading Falangists were keen to distance themselves from the European fascists, preferring to profile themselves as a unique Spanish Catholic movement. However, when relations with the United States started to improve, the Falange gradually fell into decline and a group of relatively young technocrats began to rise to prominence within the Spanish government. Sustained economic support from the Allies, particularly the US, proved to be more powerful than ideology. This was something that Franco understood. He had been clever enough not to enter the fascist Axis, because he realized that he was probably considered by the Allies as being the lesser of two evils.¹³⁻¹⁵ This meant that in spite of the relatively strong position of the German nationalists before the Civil War and during the Second World War, once Germany was defeated the Nazis did not feel comfortable in Franco's Spain and often only came to the country in transit on their way to Argentina, Brazil or Chile.¹⁶⁻¹⁸ This neutral stance on Franco's part is reflected in the fact that there is no evidence of the Spanish persecution or deportation of Jews by the Franco regime. Decisions to grant or refuse aid to Jews were taken with knowledge of the true threats facing these people. In general, Spain's position was characterized by a

willingness to give them transit visas, often through Gibraltar or Portugal, in order to avoid a more lasting stay. The number of Jews who crossed Spain, either legally or illegally, on their way to other and safer destinations is estimated at as many as 20,000, including those who fled to North Africa with the help of Jewish associations.^{19, 20}

In this respect, one special case worth mentioning was the Miranda de Ebro Camp in Burgos, which was created by the Franco regime during the Civil War and continued to operate until 1947. The camp was initially a holding centre for Spanish Republicans, but was used later for refugees from Europe and, from 1943 onwards, for Germans and Italians who tried to escape from their impending defeat in the war. Any doctors who were refugees were obliged to spend lengthy periods in the camp, since at the time doctors were scarce in Spain. Relatively few Jews were detained in Miranda de Ebro. They received good treatment and were protected by the British Embassy and the Spanish doctor Eduardo Martínez Alonso (1903-1972), who collaborated with the British secret services to help secure their freedom.²¹ We have not been able to find evidence of any German urologists among these doctors or refugees.

How the Civil War and Franco's Regime affected Urology in Spain

When studying this period of Spanish history in the context of urology, it is perhaps appropriate to start by mentioning the repression suffered during the Civil War by doctors on both sides. This included imprisonment, demotion or dismissal, and, in extreme cases, even death. 165 doctors were

killed during the conflict in the areas under the control of the Nationalist forces, mainly in 1936 and 1937. After the formal end of hostilities in 1939, another 103 doctors were shot between 1 April 1939 and 30 June 1944, according to the official records of the Franco regime's Ministry of Justice. An unknown number of doctors were also killed by the Republicans.²²

In other words, many urologists and medical practitioners, whether Nationalist or Republican, were severely affected in one way or another by the consequences of the Civil War. For example, the urologists Manuel González Ralero (1901-1978) and Alberto Montalvo Blanco (1904-????) both served as soldiers and were made prisoners, although they survived. Salvador Pascual Ríos (1887-1938) was less fortunate. Ríos was a founder of the *Asociación Española de Urología* (Spanish Urological Association or AEU), its vice-president from 1928 to 1932, and holder of the Chair of Urology in the Cruz Roja (Red Cross) Central Hospital in Madrid from 1926 onwards. When the Civil War started, he moved to Burgos to run the laboratories in the campaign hospitals there, but unfortunately he died of sepsis acquired in the course of his medical duties.²³

After Franco's victory, many doctors went into exile. In essence, there were two different types of exile. The first was external exile, which saw doctors flee mostly to other Spanish speaking countries. The second was internal exile, where doctors chose to remain in Spain and face the consequences of possible repression. This resulted in many cases in the doctors in question losing their job and their social position, sometimes temporarily (until they were rehabilitated) and sometimes permanently. Conversely – and in stark contrast to the persecution of Republican medics – the majority of urologists and doctors who had worked closely with the Nationalists during the Civil War received advancement after 1939. We will look later in more detail at those who were exiled or who lost their positions.

Franco was advised by his coterie of intellectuals and lawyers that a general amnesty was not the best way to 'forgive' professionals who had offended by serving against the Nationalist cause. Instead, on 9 February 1939 he promulgated the Law of Political Responsibilities for the Purification of the Public Services. This Law punished all 'improper' activity before 18 July 1936, which effectively meant any opposition to the National Movement, even passively.^{24, 25}

Those who worked on the Republican side but also served in Nationalist areas or those who escaped because they felt their lives were in danger were easily 'purified' and allowed to practice again after the Civil War.²⁶ Josep Maria Bartrina Thomàs (1877-1950) was one of the early promoters of urology in Catalonia. A member of the Barcelona Royal Academy of Medicine and a pupil and friend of Joaquín Albarrán (1860-1912), in 1911 he became professor of surgery but was purged by the Republican authorities, before eventually being rehabilitated and reappointed in February 1938. Salvador Gil Vernet (1893-1987) was another famous Catalan anatomist and urologist. In 1933, he was appointed professor of urology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. A few weeks after the outbreak of the Civil War, he was dismissed by the left-wing Catalan government because of his conservative ideas and was relieved of all responsibilities. He eventually decided to live in exile in Italy but after the war was rehabilitated by Franco's authorities and achieved international recognition for his work in the field of urogenital, anatomical and clinical research.

Other professionals who were always on the Nationalists' side were openly favoured by the Franco regime, either because of their political ideas or the positions they had held during the conflict. Rafael Alcalá Santaella (1896-1959) was a delegate of the Falange for Valencia, Enrique González Rico de la Grana (1882-1953) was President of the College of Physicians in Oviedo, Pedro Ordis Llach (1913-2000) was mayor of the city of Girona



FIGURE 4. Pedro Ordiz Llach swearing the oath of the Presidency of the Provincial Deputation of Gerona in 1967.

(Figure 4), José Muñoz Ávila (1923-2011) was mayor of the city of Burgos.²⁷ It would have been impossible for them to reach such high political office during Franco's time without sharing his ideology.

Professor Leonardo de la Peña (1875-1957), President of the AEU from 1923 to 1928, was appointed director of San Carlos Hospital Clinic in 1940 as reward for having participated actively in the 'debugging' process of the famous internist Carlos Jiménez Díaz (1898-1967), as well as other noted professors from the faculty board, such as the pharmacologists Teófilo Hernando Ortega (1881-1976) and Isidro Sánchez-Covisa (1879-1944).²⁵⁻²⁸ His son (and later successor), Alfonso de la Peña Pineda (1904-1971), had served as a surgeon in the Republican hospitals at Arganda and Morata

de Tajuna, but possibly as a result of his family connections he did not need to obtain his certificate of purification until he was appointed to replace his father in 1946. He was then promptly issued with his 'certificate of cleanliness' by ministerial order.^{27, 28}

Pedro Cifuentes Díaz (1881-1960) was one of the outstanding figures in modern Spanish urology. A man of great correctness and great personality, he had both a profound scientific knowledge and an excellent surgical technique, although from the scientific point of view his reputation has been partially eclipsed by that of his son, Luis Cifuentes Delatte (1907-2005).²⁹ Pedro Cifuentes was appointed head of the surgery department at the Hospital de la Princesa (Princess's Hospital) in 1910, after first visiting the Necker Institute and the Lariboisière

Hospital in Paris. He devoted himself fully to the further development of urology in his home country, until his unit was officially recognized in 1918 by ministerial order as the Department of Urology. Pedro Cifuentes was also one of the most important men in the history of the AEU, serving as treasurer (1911–1914), secretary general (1914–1923), vice-president (1923–1928) and president (1928–1932). He was appointed to reorganize the AEU after the war in 1945, his appointment being confirmed by a ministerial order that was ratified by the Director General for Health on 21 June. In this capacity, he became president of the AEU for a second time (1945–1952).^{23,30}

Before the Civil War, Pedro Cifuentes was openly liberal. In 1921, he toured Belgium, Germany

and France to visit hospitals and he possibly even considered living abroad permanently. In 1922, his family stayed in France with their maternal grandparents for a year. However, he decided to remain in Spain and later stood for election as a deputy for the province of Avila, representing the Liberal Republican Right party. Once the Civil War erupted, Cifuentes was denounced as an “individual who, because of his ideology, may end up as a murderer of workers and must therefore be purged”. When held at the Directorate of General Security, he was fortunate to be recognized and released by a policeman, a grateful former patient. With his morale at a low ebb, he was evacuated to Valencia and forcibly transferred via Gibraltar to Valladolid, where he worked as a surgeon in a military hospi-

C. N. T. A. I. T.
SINDICATO DE LA ALIMENTACION E INDUSTRIA GASTRONOMICA
COMITE ADMINISTRATIVO DE LAS INDUSTRIAS SOCIALIZADAS

CERTIFICADO DE TRABAJO

El compañero Pedro Cifuentes Diaz
 de 58 años, domiciliado en Monte Esquinza
número 20.
 y que durante los últimos cinco años ha habitado en
 el mismo domicilio

trabaja como Médico en
 la Policlínica, de Monte Esquinza desde
 las 9 y 4 hasta las 1 y 1/2 y 7 y 1/2 tarde.
 Madrid, 20 de Octubre de 1937

Firma del interesado.

EL VICE-SECRETARIO.

FIGURE 5. In October 1937, the anarchist syndicate CNT/AIT licensed Pedro Cifuentes for private medical practice in his home (document donated to Asociación Española de Urología).

tal from March to October 1937.³⁰ He was subsequently allowed to return to Madrid, licensed by the Republic for professional practice throughout Spanish territory, and allowed by the Spanish anarchist-syndicalist group *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (National Labour Federation or CNT/AIT) to restart his private practice in his house at Montesquiza (Figure 5). He also regained his job in the Hospital de la Princesa, but under the supervision of the Republican Dr. Plácido González Duarte (1897–1986), who always showed him respect and friendship.³¹ In November 1936, Cifuentes transformed his home into the Paraguayan embassy, hoping in this way to give added protection to himself and his family, while at the same time providing a secret refuge for Nationalist rebels and deserters trapped in Republican areas. As a result of these actions, the political winds were favourable for him once the Civil War ended.^{30,31}

After 1939, many urologists took part in a structure called the *Obra Sindical 18 de Julio* (18th of July Syndicate). This was an element within the only permitted political party, the Falange, and served as a bastion of Francoism in the medical world, working alongside the compulsory health insurance scheme (*Seguro Obligatorio de Enfermedad* or SOE), which was originally an initiative of the Republican government. The *Obra Sindical 18 Julio* continued to exist until April 1971, when it was integrated by a decree issued by the Ministry of the Presidency into the wider social security structure. The number of people participating in the *Obra Sindical* was very small and they often resorted to the referral of cases to private clinics, whose fees for the health care provided were often paid separately. Table I lists a number of urologists who worked in these centres in different provinces.²⁷ All of them were, for one reason or another close, to Franco's regime and openly benefited from their professional and political status.

Urologists Prosecuted by the Franco Dictatorship

Those who openly worked for the Republic or public servants who abandoned their public office during the Civil War were prosecuted and punished once the conflict came to an end. Some were executed, some were imprisoned and some – the majority – were not allowed to resume their pre-war work. The law made possible political and professional revenge on a large scale. In the medical field, the so-called *Tribunal Depurador de Responsabilidades Políticas* (Court for the Purification of Political Responsibilities) was established in Madrid. Dominated by the Falangists, it was tasked with identifying who should be rehabilitated and who should be publicly punished for their previous behaviour. The court asked the college of physicians in each Spanish province for a list of doctors who “during the preparation or during the development of the red subversion were distinguished by their high-level positions, senior administrative functions or outstanding managerial roles” (Figure 6).³² Purification committees were often composed of physicians who had supported the Nationalist cause. As a result, the investigations conducted by the court and its committees affected nearly all the urologists who, for one reason or another, did not side with Franco and the coup ‘rebels’ during the Civil War.

Once those who had remained faithful to the Republic or had voluntarily chosen exile decided to return to their homeland at the end of the conflict, they first needed to obtain a certificate of exemption of political responsibility. This was an indispensable condition for anyone aspiring to academic positions or wishing to work as a public health care professional.²⁵ The applicants for the certificates were required to swear loyalty to the fundamental principles of the National Movement. Even leading

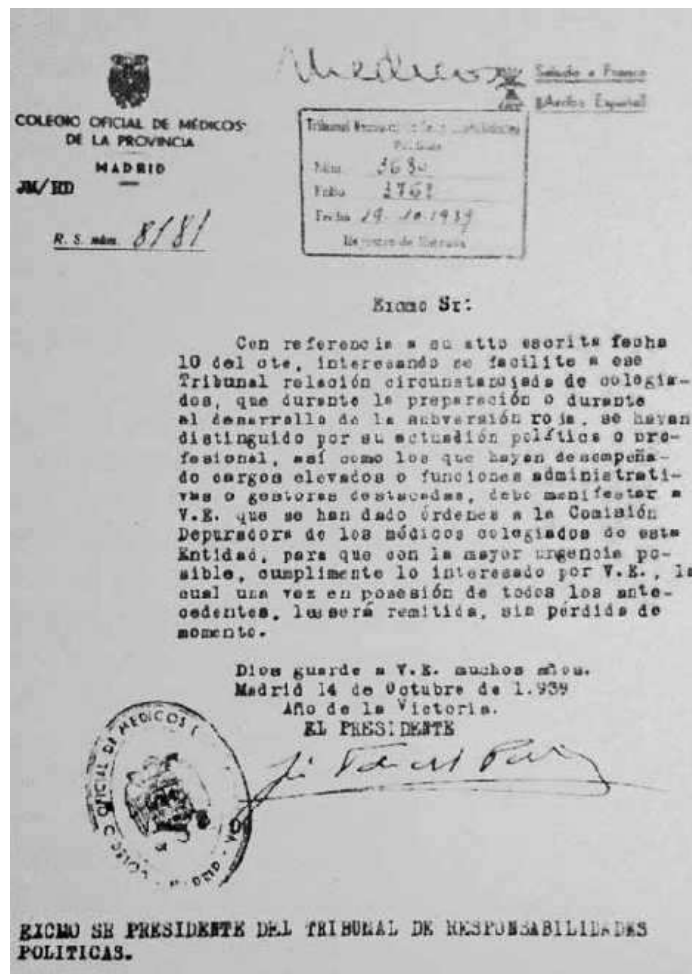


FIGURE 6 Letter from the President of College of Physicians in Madrid to the President of the Court of Political Responsibilities, stating that the requested list of medical professionals who had worked for the Republic in the province before 1939 would be sent as soon as possible.

professionals in their field were obliged to follow this process if, for whatever reason, they were out of sympathy with the Franco regime. Those who chose not to present themselves before the court were condemned to exile.²⁶ Other professionals linked to the Basque or Catalan movements, and therefore far more closely aligned with the Republican cause, were also prosecuted and often exiled to Mexico or Venezuela. In particular, the Mexican Republic never recognized Franco's dictatorship as a democratic government.

The names and biographical sketches of some of the most well-known urologists prosecuted by Franco's regime are presented below in alphabetical order.^{27, 31-36}

Gonzalo de Aranguren Sabas (1905-1975)

He was born in Bilbao, where he later worked in the Hospital Civil de Basurto. During the Civil War, he ran the Republican military hospital in Amorebieta. After the surrender of Bilbao to the Nationalists, he was exiled to France, where he was appointed by the Basque government-in-exile as director of the Hospital Roseraie in Biarritz.³⁷ This hospital was also known as the 'Hospital of the Mutilated and Home of the Euzkadi' ('Euzkadi' being the word used by the Basques to indicate their region of origin). The hospital – housed in what was once a famous casino – provided health care for the Basque evacuees in Laburdi (the region straddling the Franco-Spanish border), with an emphasis on rehabilitation, maternity and surgery. This care was of such quality that on 19 February 1939 the sick and wounded patients organized a tribute to Gonzalo de Aranguren (Figure 7). After the Civil War, he moved to Caracas (Venezuela), where he remained until 1958.^{27, 36}

Salvador Arias Manén (1909-1976)

This Catalan nationalist was a pupil of the urologist Salvador Gil Vernet (1892-1987) and was affiliated to *Macià Estat Català*, a political party founded in 1922 to secure Catalan independence. He was an anti-fascist committee member and director of the Medical Trade Union of Health in the Republican era. He also fought in the Civil War in the northern sector of Aragon in the militia ranks of Valentín González's *El Campesino*, taking part in the famous Battle of the Ebro in July 1938. At the end of the Civil War, he went to France, from where he tried to return to Spain via Marseille. However, he was arrested and imprisoned in San Sebastian. In April 1939, he was transferred to the concentration camp at San Pedro de Cardena (Burgos). When his purification trial started, there was insufficient evidence to establish his political responsibility and he was released without charge in August 1939.²⁷

Jesús de Arrese y Aspe (1879-1943)

A native of Ochandiano (Vizcaya) and one of the founder members of the AEU in 1911, he graduated in medicine and surgery from the University of Barcelona in 1902 and later worked as a urologist in Bilbao, where he was director of the Basurto Hospital. Along with Benigno Oreja Elósegui (1880-1962), he was a pioneer in the treatment of syphilis with arsphenamin. After the Civil War, he was exiled to Venezuela where he worked as a doctor in the coal mines between 1939 and 1943. He died shortly after his return to Bilbao in 1943.^{27, 32, 36}

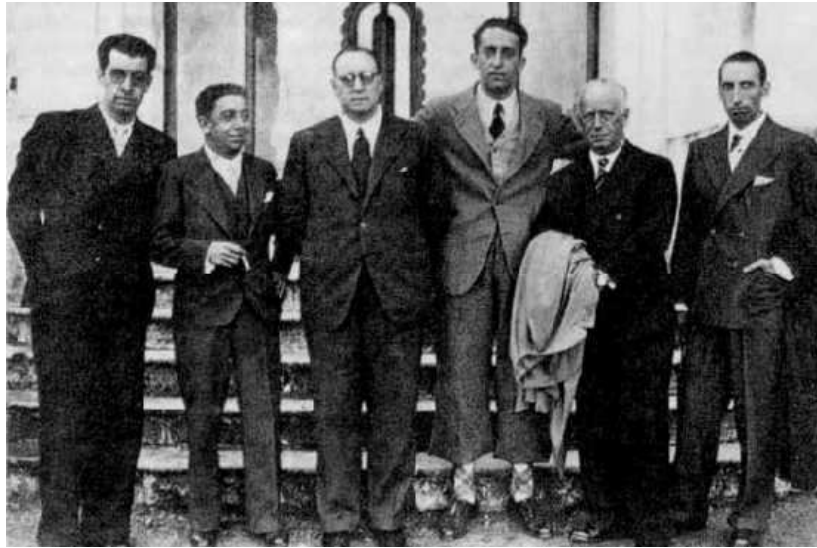


FIGURE 7. Medical staff in the Hospital de La Roseraie (Biarritz), administered by the Basque government-in-exile in France; from left to right, Doctors Garaigorta, Otxandiano, Aranguren, Astorki, Pereiro and Aguirretxe.

Pedro Bejarano Lozano
(1893-1965)

A specialist in dermatology and a member of the AEU, he was an assistant professor of dermatology and served in the provincial and municipal charities associated with the venereal dispensary of Madrid. He was appointed General Director of Health for the Republican Government in 1933 and President of the Madrid College of Physicians in 1937. After the Civil War, he was exiled to Mexico, where he directed a leprosy centre in Zoquiapan. He died in Mexico City in 1965.²⁷

Fulgencio Cano Soria
(1884-1977)

He was a pioneer of urology as a specialism in Murcia, training with Rafael Molla Rodrigo (1862-1930) in Valencia and Madrid, and George Jean Baptiste Marion (1869-1932) in Paris. He was deputy editor of the *Journal of Medicine and Pharmacy* (1912) and medical editor of *Medical Murcia* (1916). He worked as a urologist at the Queen Victoria Red Cross Clinic in Murcia, becoming medical director of that institution in 1932. As the clinic was part of the Republic's health system and because he remained in office during the Civil War, he was disqualified from the further exercise of urology when the conflict ended. He was later purified but was only allowed to work as a gen-

eral practitioner in home care until his retirement in 1954.²⁷

**Carles Carbó Campillo
(1910-1955)**

Born in Girona, he was medical student at the University of Barcelona during the Civil War, eventually becoming a deputy for the military health of the Republican Army of the East. After the conflict, he went into exile in El Salvador, where he continued his profession as a urologist and also pursued his interest in anthropology.

**Joan Civit Belfort
(1895-1956)**

Another Catalan urologist, he graduated in Barcelona in 1919 and trained at the *Hospital Clinic*. He was a member of the Republican Union and a delegate to the Catalan Government. During the Civil War, he served as a captain-doctor, but fled to France before finally reaching Veracruz (México) in July 1939. Thereafter, he worked as a doctor in Mexico City. In 1947, he suffered a brain haemorrhage.

**Julián Guimón Rezola
(1898-1980)**

This Basque urologist was a native of Bergara (Guipúzcoa), studied medicine in Valladolid and graduated as a doctor in Madrid in 1927. In that same year, he took up his first appointment as a surgical intern in the Hospital Civil de Basurto (Bilbao) and went on to complete his training in Berlin, Vienna and Berne. His studies were sponsored by several doctors in Eibar, the town where his father was mayor. He was appointed head of



FIGURE 8. Photograph of Julián Guimón Rezola

urological surgery in Basurto Hospital in 1935 and in 1936 he helped to promote the creation of the Basque University, as well as being appointed to the Chair of General Surgery and Urology (Figure 8).^{27, 33, 36, 38} He was President of Bilbao Academy of Medical Science (1934-1936) and a political militant in *Eusko Abertzale Ekintza/Acción Nacionalista Vasca* (ANV), a Basque independence party (1930-1936). When Franco's Nationalists force entered Bilbao in June 1937, the Basque University project was closed down.^{35, 38}

Julián Guimón was arrested, accused of being a military rebel and sentenced to death. This was later commuted to life imprisonment and professional disqualification. He was incarcerated in the prison at Puerto de Santa María (Cadiz) until he was pardoned in 1940, as a reward for his humanitarian services to the prison community. Nevertheless, the Board of Administration of the Hospital Civil de

Basurto stripped him of all his medical functions. He therefore decided to emigrate to the United States of America, where he collaborated with the famous professors Oswald Swenney Lowsley (1884-1955) in the Brady Foundation (New York) and Reed Miller Nesbit in Ann Arbor (Michigan). He returned to Spain in 1947, where he very successfully resumed his career in private practice and founded the *Sanatorio Médico Quirúrgico in Bilbao* (Bilbao Medical Surgical Sanatorium), over which he presided from 1951 to 1957. He later became president of the Bilbao Academy of Medical Science for a second time (1967-1968) and the clinic he founded, the Clínica Guimón, still operates in Bilbao. His son Jesús Guimón Ugartechea was also an eminent urologist, while his other son, José Guimón Ugartechea, was a professor of psychiatry.^{27, 39}

José María Gutiérrez Barreal
(1890-1944)

He first specialized in urology in the Hospital de la Princesa under Pedro Cifuentes Diaz and completed his training with George Jean Baptiste Marion at the Hospital Lariboisière in Paris. In 1914, he joined the Civil Marine Corps, eventually becoming a professor at the nautical training college in Gijón and Director General of Health from 1933 to 1934. After the 1936 coup, he was forcibly removed from these positions and transported to Zaragoza, where he worked as a surgeon until the end of the Civil War. He later returned to Oviedo where he was allowed to resume his activity as a urologist. Pedro Cifuentes was the main witness of his correct behaviour, which was key for his professional rehabilitation.^{25, 27}

Jerónimo Gutiérrez Garroño
(1913-1999)

Having studied medicine in Valladolid, he later trained as a urologist in Bilbao's Hospital Civil de Basurto in the department led by Francisco Perez Andres (1886-1951), eventually becoming Julián Guimón's surgical partner. During the Civil War, he served as a medical captain and ran the Republican hospital in Abadiano. For this reason, he was heavily fined and professionally disbarred. He was not rehabilitated until the early 1950s.^{27, 36}

Josep Maria Massa Servitja
(1901-2000)

The Catalan Jose María Massa Servitja was born in Girona. He graduated as a doctor in Madrid in 1925 and was later appointed as head of urology in the Provincial Hospital in Girona. He was also President of the Urological Association in Barcelona before the Civil War. During the conflict he served on the Republican side in the military hospital at Vallcarca and was in charge of urogenital surgery at the front during the Battle of the Ebro. After the war, he was forced to stand political trial and lost his medical license. He was exiled to France and from there emigrated to Venezuela, where he founded a prosperous pharmaceutical company (LETI Caracas). It was not until 1988 that he was able to return to Barcelona.⁴⁰

Carles Parés Guillèn
(1907-1973)

He was born in Barcelona and became a lawyer in 1932. He was also an urologist in the Hospital de Sant Pau in Barcelona and a member of Catalanian Republican Action, a party which favoured independence for the region. During the Civil War, he

reached the rank of major of medical health in the Army of the Spanish Republic and served as medical director of the VIII Group of hospitals, as well as running the military hospital in Figueres. After the Nationalist victory, he went into exile, first in France, where he worked in Paris until the threat of the Second World War later forced him to seek refuge in Mexico, where he was accepted as a political refuge and was able to work as a urologist in Hospital General de México, as well as in the American British Cowdray Hospital, a charitable institution providing help to Spaniards (amongst others). He published clinical papers on his specialism and also wrote the book *Operatoria Urogenital* in 1951.⁴¹

**Francisco Pérez Andrés
(1886-1951)**

A native of Zaragoza, he was a pupil of Joaquín Albarrán y Domínguez (1860-1912) at the Necker Institute in Paris. He later moved to Bilbao as an assistant surgeon, where in 1919 he organized the first urology department in the Hospital Civil de Basurto, as an independent section dedicated to the treatment of diseases of the urinary tract.³³ This centre went on to become one of the most advanced in the country. Fifteen years later, a school for postgraduate training, known as the Institute of Medical Specializations, was established. He collaborated with Julian Guimón Rezola (1898-1980) in developing the curriculum for teaching urology at the *Universidad del País Vasco* (University of the Basque Country).³⁶ For this reason, he was dismissed from his post after the Civil War in 1937 (Figure 9). He started his own clinic in Bilbao, where he worked until his death. His son Julio Pérez-Irezábal y Andrés (1918-2008) was a president of AEU and his grandson Juan Carlos Pérez-Irezábal is also an eminent urologist.^{23, 27, 42}

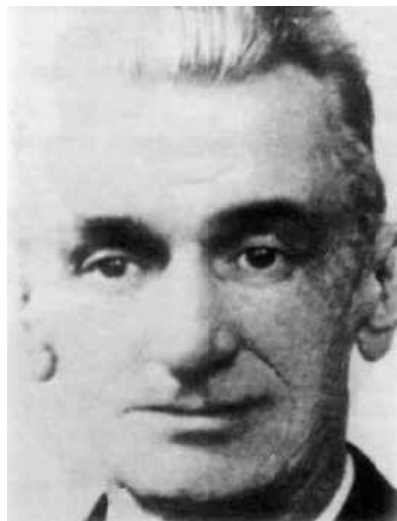


FIGURE 9. Photograph of Francisco Pérez Andrés

**Francisco Martino Sabiño
(1916-1989)**

Born in Ubeda (Jaen) as the son of Italian parents, he enrolled as a urology student at the Hospital Clínico San Carlos in 1937 and subsequently worked in the Proletarian Sanatorium 'Francisco Rojas'. During the Civil War he was a military nurse in Hospital de la Sangre de Torrebaja (Valencia). He tried to leave Spain with the remnants of the International Brigades disguised as an anti-fascist Italian, but was taken prisoner and sent to the concentration camp at San Pedro de Cardeña (Burgos). He was later expelled from the country, but was soon allowed to return to complete his urological studies, as he had always wanted, with Leonardo de la Peña. He later pursued his career in the Red Cross Hospital in Madrid.^{25, 27}

Joaquín Rovira Rosell
(1913-1982)

This Catalan urologist was born in Barcelona. He was responsible for first developing urological practice in the city's Hospital Clínico, together with Salvador Gil Vernet (1893-1987), with whom he also worked in the Department of Anatomy. During the Civil War, he was condemned to death for serving as a commandant-physician in the Republican Army in Montserrat. He was spared as a result of his public defence by his mentor Salvador Gil Vernet, but was exiled to South America. He was later exonerated by the College of Physicians in Barcelona but could not recover his medical license and was forced to live more than 100 kilometres away from the city. He worked for many years as a charcoal transporter in Lérida. He was finally 'purified' in 1967 and was appointed as a urologist with Francisco Javier Solé Balcells (1924-2014) in the Francisco Franco Municipal Sanatorium, now known as the Vale of Hebron Hospital in Barcelona.²⁷



FIGURE 10. Photograph of Isidro Sánchez-Covisa

Isidro Sánchez Covisa
(1879-1944)

Isidro Sanchez-Covisa was, without prejudice to his many other illustrious colleagues, probably the most influential urologist during the period of the Second Republic. He was not only President of the AEU from 1932 to 1939 (Figure 10), but also director of the Madrid Provincial Hospital, a position he had held since 1914. This medical centre, one of the most modern and well funded in Spain was later renamed the Francisco Franco Hospital.^{23, 31} Here, Sanchez-Covisa created the best and most progressive urological school of the day, staffed with dozens of highly regarded professionals.^{43, 44}

He moved to France during the Civil War, only returning to Spain in 1941. However, he was condemned by a commission of the College of

Physicians in Madrid and punished with perpetual disqualification from positions of trust, as well losing his teaching job at the Faculty of Medicine. The same happened to his brother, one of the most prestigious dermatologists of his time, who shared his sibling's political ideas.²³ German Asua Campos (1879-1937), not one of Sánchez-Covisa's best pupils, but one closer to the Nationalist ideology, was appointed in his mentor's place.²⁷

Francesc Serrallach i Juliá
(1899-1986)

Born in Barcelona as the son of the pioneering urologist Narciso Serrallach Mauri (1875-1951), he graduated as a doctor in 1924 and went on to specialize in urology at the Hospital Necker in Paris under Georges Jean Baptiste Marion (1869-

1960). After returning to Barcelona, he worked with his father in Clínica Balmes and with Salvador Gil Vernet as an assistant professor of urology in the Barcelona Hospital Clinic. He took over academic responsibilities at the clinic during the period of the Civil War, when Salvador went into exile in Italy. He was relieved from his functions at the end of the war in 1939, and was not able to return to work as an urological assistant until the academic year 1954-1955. Nevertheless, he continued to write many articles and books, and eventually became a board member of *Asociación Española de Urología* in 1966 and *Asociación Catalana de Urología* in 1980. He received the highest AEU award, the Francisco Diaz Medal, in recognition of a lifetime devoted to his specialization.^{45, 46} He was also father of the equally eminent urologist Narcís Serrallach Milá (1934-2010).

Manuel Valera Radío (1873-1962)

Born in Pontevedra, he studied medicine at Santiago de Compostela and graduated as a doctor in Madrid in 1898. He later specialized as a gynaecologist in Germany and developed an expertise in treating urinary fistula and other urological problems. He was one of the first surgeons to perform ureterosigmoidostomy.⁴⁷ He became professor of obstetrics and gynaecology in 1905 and founded the Surgical Sanatorium in Galicia in 1908. In 1931, he was elected as an independent deputy for the Republican courts in Pontevedra. This resulted in his exile to France and Switzerland during the Civil War. His professorial chair was revoked and it was not until 1943 that he was rehabilitated, by which time he had already retired. He was, however, permitted to work in private practice for the rest of his life.⁴⁷

Tab 1

UROLOGISTS PRACTICING FOR THE OBRA SINDICAL
18 DE JULIO IN DIFFERENT CITIES *

1. Vicente Calero Herrero (1920-), Jaen
2. Jesús Fraga Iribarne (1930-1980), Madrid
3. Francisco Gómez Pérez (1912-1992), Córdoba
4. Julio Grande Rodríguez (1939-), Salamanca
5. Antonio Gras Richart (1926-2005), Murcia
6. Laureano Guitián Carballal (1899-1973), La Coruña
7. Juan Martínez García (1913-1981), Murcia
8. Pedro Antonio Martínez Rodó (1913-1996), Ciudad Real
9. Leopoldo Navarro Mínguez (1909-1994), Murcia
10. Eulogio Renedo Ruiz (1910-), Burgos
11. Pedro Luis Sicre de la Casa (1899-1972), Cádiz
12. Manuel Villar Blanco (1909-1994), Santiago de Compostela

* Pérez Albacete M. *Diccionario histórico de urólogos españoles*. Oficina de Historia. Asociación Española de Urología

Dedicated to Mariano Pérez Albacete for the enormous work he has done for the History Office of the Spanish Urology Association in writing '*Diccionario histórico de urólogos españoles*' (The historical dictionary of Spanish urologists).

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4. Study of deaths by suicide of homosexual prisoners in Nazi Sachsenhausen concentration camp, (2017)



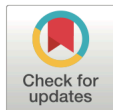
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Study of deaths by suicide of homosexual prisoners in Nazi Sachsenhausen concentration camp

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Abstract

Living conditions in Nazi concentration camps were harsh and inhumane, leading many prisoners to commit suicide. Sachsenhausen (Oranienburg, Germany) was a concentration camp that operated from 1936 to 1945. More than 200,000 people were detained there under Nazi rule. This study analyzes deaths classified as suicides by inmates in this camp, classified as homosexuals, both according to the surviving Nazi files. This collective was especially repressed by the Nazi authorities. Data was collected from the archives of Sachsenhausen Memorial and the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen. Original death certificates and autopsy reports were reviewed. Until the end of World War II, there are 14 death certificates which state "suicide" as cause of death of prisoners classified as homosexuals, all of them men aged between 23 and 59 years and of various religions and social strata. Based on a population of 1,200 prisoners classified as homosexuals, this allows us to calculate a suicide rate of 1,167/100,000 (over the period of eight years) for this population, a rate 10 times higher than for global inmates (111/100,000). However, our study has several limitations: not all suicides are registered; some murders were covered-up as suicides; most documents were lost during the war or destroyed by the Nazis when leaving the camps and not much data is available from other camps to compare. We conclude that committing suicides in Sachsenhausen was a common practice, although accurate data may be impossible to obtain.

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Data Availability Statement: All relevant data are within the paper. Original data of this study are available from the archives of Sachsenhausen KZ and Bundesarchiv (Berlin). The researchers meet the criteria for access to these data. To consult the original data is necessary to request authorization from those responsible for both files. German Federal Archives of Berlin: berlin@bundesarchiv.de. Sachsenhausen, Astrid Ley; ley@stiftung-bg.de.

Introduction

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations (LGBTB) have been identified as being at high-risk for suicide for over last decades [1, 2]. Recent studies show that individual, social and institutional discrimination against LGBTB people may increase risk of mental diseases, substance abuse and suicide [3]. This is collected, in LGBTB people, in the Meyer minority stress

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model, including experiences of prejudice, expectations of rejection, hiding, concealing, internalized homophobia and ameliorative coping processes [4].

National Socialism in Germany was a period during which people were persecuted if they did not conform to social norms. This is particularly true for homosexual men who were strongly repressed [5, 6]. Homosexual women were not usually legally prosecuted, even though in some cases they could be imprisoned as “anti-social individuals” [7]. We can identify discrimination of this population at three different levels: institutional, social and personal.

a) Institutional. From 1871, male homosexuality was illegal in Germany according to article 175 of Penal Code [8]. During the Nazi period, this law remained in effect and the persecution of this group increased. Ideologically, the Nazis believed that homosexuality was a contagious disease and that homosexual persons were a threat not only on the ideal of Aryan race, but on the social policy which needed them as reproductive elements and serve in the armed forces [9]. In the 1930s and 1940s the government presented homosexuality as legally, socially and morally deviant. Numerous films with this view of homosexuality were produced for propaganda purposes [10]. A central Reich Agency to Fight Homosexuality and Abortion was opened at Gestapo headquarters in Berlin in 1936. The first group of men convicted as “homosexuals” had been sent as early as 1933 to Fuhlsbuttel concentration camp for a “re-educational process” [7]. The total number of people classified and imprisoned as “homosexuals” during the Nazi period is estimated between 5,000 and 15,000 [8]. These prisoners were identified in concentration camps with a pink triangle and were treated, together with Jewish prisoners, as the lowest of the groups. They obtained the worst labor assignments, were punished, tortured and often rejected by their fellow prisoners.

Since 1939, ordinances allowed men imprisoned as homosexuals to be released from prisons and concentration camps, if they consented to be castrated. In light of the abuse and high death rates in the camps, it becomes clear that many of the “volunteers” were coerced by the circumstances [11–13]. Homosexuals were also subjected to medical experiments in camps [14], including injections of male hormones in Buchenwald and Neuengamme camps, for testing experimental vaccines in Buchenwald camp [15], or experiments with several psychotropic drugs [16]. It has been confirmed that pink-triangle prisoners had an above average lethality rate: 55% died in the camps, a significantly higher rate than other inmates who were imprisoned for “re-educational purposes” as political prisoners (40%) [17].

b) Social. At the popular level, homosexuals were viewed as “inferior men with animal instincts” [18]. The persecution of homosexual men carried the traditional religious and psychiatric stigmata [19]. The topic of homosexuality as an aberration appeared frequently in the German press, literature and film of the day.

c) Personal. At the individual level, homosexual men continued to be persecuted and isolated. They often had no family support and when they were sent to prisons or concentration camps (*Konzentrationslager*, KZ), families did not visit them and often hid the fact that their relatives were imprisoned as “homosexuals”. Among the prisoners themselves, they were considered morally and socially deviant and nobody wanted to associate with them for fear of also being considered homosexual. These factors made the conditions in the camps especially hard for prisoners detained under Paragraph 175.

Research suggests that the rate of suicides committed by homosexuals is higher than in the population at large and that these rates are increased because of situations of social exclusion [2, 20]. We consider how this hypothesis may translate to an especially dramatic situation of repression in concentration camps, where the incidence of suicides has been described as 10–30 times higher than in the general public in Germany at the time [21, 22]. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the suicide rate among men imprisoned as “homosexuals” in Sachsenhausen was higher than among the general prisoner population of the camp [23]. Perhaps, according to

Meyer minority stress model [4], and despite the extreme conditions of the KZ, homosexual prisoners may have experienced additional minority stress, too (i.e., social rejection within inmates), and it might be inferred that suicide rates of homosexual prisoners should be higher.

Sachsenhausen was a concentration camp near Berlin that operated under Nazi rule between 1936 and 1945, mainly for political prisoners. More than 200,000 people were incarcerated there (Sachsenhausen concentration camp web page; available at URL <http://www.stiftung-bg.de/gums/en/index.htm>). It is estimated that ca. 1,200 prisoners were held as “homosexuals” [24]. Initially, the camp was used to confine political opponents of the Nazi regime, but later also other groups considered as inferior by the Nazis, including Jews, Gypsies and homosexuals [25]. After 1939, more and more citizens of occupied Europe were deported to Sachsenhausen KZ, where they were forced to work as slave laborers in companies of the SS (*Schutzstaffel*) in approximately 100 satellite camps, mostly for military goods factories (see Sachsenhausen concentration camp web page; available at URL <http://www.stiftung-bg.de/gums/en/index.htm>).

The aim of our study is to analyze historical sources from the archives of Sachsenhausen memorial of suicides committed by prisoners classified as homosexuals. To our knowledge, this is the first time that archival data, including death certificates issued by the Nazi authorities, is analyzed.

Methods

Material from the archives of Sachsenhausen KZ, where documents concerning the victims imprisoned are conserved, was reviewed. The names and data of all concentration camp prisoners registered as homosexual who committed suicide were examined.

Literature and archives containing data related to suicide and homosexual men were reviewed, including testimonies and trials. Material regarding autopsies performed in case of suicide was studied [26]. Additional files were consulted to reconstruct some biographies at Bundesarchiv (Berlin).

This contribution faces two major methodological challenges: first, archival data remain incomplete, as many documents were systematically destroyed during the “Third Reich” or lost during the war. Second, the data contains different systematic biases. The first bias is one of false negatives: Witness accounts describe some concentration camp prisoners committing suicide by means of stepping into demarcation zones and subsequently being shot or flinging themselves onto electrified fences. None of these cases are registered as suicides; most likely they are filed as prisoners killed trying to escape. The second bias is one of false positives: It is possible that some prisoners were murdered by SS guards or kapos and their deaths filed as suicides. We are aware of these limitations of data and caution the readers against putting too much value on the absolute numbers. Nonetheless we believe that comparative numbers to other concentration camp prisoner groups are valuable.

Results

From 1936 to the end of the Second World War, 222 suicides are documented in the official files of Sachsenhausen concentration camp (including 17 of them in the pre-war period). Dividing the number of 222 suicides by 200,000 prisoners, we calculate a rate of 111 per 100,000 over the period of eight years. 14 of these total number of 222 registered suicides were of prisoners classified as “175er” (“homosexuals”), which represents 6.3% of registered suicides, and a suicide rate of 1,167 per 100,000 (over the period of eight years) for this population of 1,200 “homosexual” men, 10 times higher than for global inmate population.

Table 1. Data on suicide cases committed prisoners classified as homosexuals in Sachsenhausen camp.

Name	Year of birthday	Age	Religion	Profession	Date of imprisonment	Data of suicide	Suicide type	Block
KB	1881	59	Protestant	Baker	23/03/1940	25/05/1940	Hanging	35
DHB	1884	56	Protestant	Salesperson	12/07/1939	03/05/1940	Hanging	14 / 35
AG	1890	49	Protestant	Laborer	18/04/1940	01/06/1940	Hanging	35
PG	1902	40	Catholic	Physician	27/10/1938	08/07/1942	Hanging	14
WH	1905	55	undenominational	Salesperson	27/06/1940	02/07/1940	Hanging	35
PJ	1897	34	Protestant	Laborer	09/06/1940	11/06/1940	Hanging	35
RK	1901	46	Protestant	Waiter	04/05/1940	09/05/1940	Hanging	35
WK	1889	42	Protestant	Bank employee	14/01/1940	05/05/1940	Hanging	35
WM	1913	47	Catholic	Milker	07/05/1940	09/05/1940	Hanging	65 / 35
EKP	1899	32	Protestant	Cook	08/03/1941	17/07/1942	Hanging	14
LR	1885	57	Catholic	Laborer	28/12/1939	14/04/1940	Hanging	35
KS	1903	23	Protestant	Baker	21/03/1940	21/03/1940	Hanging	11
HW	1904	47	Protestant	Salesperson	11/04/1940	16/05/1940	Hanging	35
PW	1894	47	Protestant	Artist	30/05/1940	17/07/1940	Hanging	35

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From a demographic point of view (Table 1), suicides classified as “homosexuals” were men from 23 and 59 years old (average 45 years old), with a majority of protestant religion ($n = 10$) and fewer Catholics ($n = 3$). For one man, undenominational is stated. They were from different social classes and occupational groups (among them one famous artist and one physician). All of them were German citizens, but some were arrested in foreign cities like Prague and Vienna, where the men might have tried to escape persecution. The cause of arrest and imprisonment was the transgression of article 175 of the German Penal Code applicable at that time [7].

Suicides were recorded between March 1940 and July 1942 and the average time from imprisonment date to suicide was 228 days, although data shows a divergent pattern with one prisoner who committed suicide one day after imprisonment and another inmate who committed suicide after 3 years and 10 months of being in the concentration camp. Five inmates committed suicide in their first internments week, 6 of them before the end of the first year and the other 3 experienced more than one year in the camp. Method for committing suicide was hanging in all the cases. Eleven of the prisoners were incarcerated in Block 35, two in Block 14 and just one in Block 11. Blocks 35 and 11 were part of the “isolation section”. In these separated blocks the men were deprived of contact with the rest of the camp and were also subjected to harsher conditions of detention and constant abuse by especially brutal SS block leaders.

There are 2 autopsy forms from 1940 of corpses that were examined by Dr. Gustav Ortman, who was the SS camp doctor. He confirmed the cause of death as suicide by hanging and describes the typical external marks of it (Bad Arolsen Archives) [26].

Discussion

Several studies have revealed a significantly higher rate of suicidal thoughts and actions in homosexually oriented males than in heterosexual males [2, 27]; i.e., they are up to 13.9 times more at risk for a serious suicide attempt, according with Bagley and Tremblay [20]. The mechanisms underlying this increased risk are sufficiently clear [4, 28, 29], and high levels of depression may play an important role [30]. Other important contributory factors are social and personal exclusion. Homosexual men were strongly discriminated against in Nazi Germany and imprisonment in concentration camps was one of the strongest forms of

discrimination at the time, including forced labor, torture and incidences of murder. These higher rates of suicidal ideation could become consummated suicides in situations of great vital pressure, as happened with homosexuals interned in Nazi concentration camps [31, 32].

Suicide rates calculated in Sachsenhausen KZ according to our data represent 1.16% of homosexual prisoners: 14 suicides in a calculated population of 1,200 homosexuals imprisoned in Sachsenhausen [24], i.e. a suicide rate of 1,167 per 100,000 (over the period of eight years). This is significantly higher (10 times) than the rate—also calculated from the official files, with the same restrictions—for the general camp population (111 per 100,000). Other authors, such as Lautmann [17], have stated that suicide rates of homosexual inmates were not significantly different from those of the other inmate groups studied in Nazi KZs. The rate we calculated might not be completely accurate, taking into account the methodological challenges discussed above: Examples include prisoners who attempted to escape from the camp, knowing that they would be electrocuted by the electric fence or shot by guards. At the same time, some registered suicides may be murders covered up by the SS guards or might have been committed on orders of the guards or kapos. Nonetheless, we argue that our numbers based on official camp files are comparable with other numbers obtained from official camp files.

Lautmann, using a similar method of calculation [8], estimated the rate of suicides among homosexual prisoners in Buchenwald as 1,000 per 100,000, comparable with our numbers for Sachsenhausen. Some witnesses argue that suicide among prisoners classified as homosexuals in Sachsenhausen was extremely common [23, 33]. Their accounts include methods other than hanging, which were not classified as suicide in the official files.

The higher number of men imprisoned as “homosexuals” can be explained by the especially hard repression that they suffered in Sachsenhausen KZ. Working conditions for homosexual inmates, who worked at the satellite camp at the brick works (*Klinkerwerk*) are described as even worse than in the main camp. Reports include repeated shootings (more than 200 in total) of forced laborers who were flung beyond camp borders and then shot for attempting to escape [23], as well as housing in specific isolation units. This might indicate that even under generally inhumane conditions, a mistreatment of some prisoners beyond the norm of the concentration camp significantly increased the suicide rate in this population.

Prisoners who committed suicide were of all age range and from different social classes and occupations. No official statistics about the age of people who committed suicide in Nazi concentration camps are reported, but in our study we found that the majority was more than 40 years old (78.5%). Compared to the whole inmate population, they are quite old, as the average age, especially of the Polish and Czech prisoners was much lower. But compared to the group of the German inmates (which they were) they match the age.

Among them was one famous singer and cabaret artist named Paul O'Montis, pseudonym of Paul Wendel (Budapest, April 3, 1894—Sachsenhausen KZ, July 17, 1940), who was persecuted by the Nazis. After the annexation of Austria in 1938, he fled to Prague. Montis was arrested in 1939 and deported first to Zagreb and later to Lodz. He was deported to Sachsenhausen in late May 1940 and died six weeks later at the age of 46 years. Even when his death was reported as suicide, witnesses stated that this was a covered-up of a murder by the kapo of the block he was interned. Another suicide was Paul Grundmann (Berlin, April 24, 1902 – Sachsenhausen KZ, July 8, 1942), who had studied medicine from 1921 to 1933. After receiving his MD, he practiced medicine in Berlin. He was sent to Brual/Rhede (Ems) internment camp in the North-west of Germany (during or after November 1938), was stripped of his license to practice medicine by the Nazis in July of 1939 and sent to Sachsenhausen KZ in November 1941. A third prisoner who is stated to have committed suicide was Emil Pfensig who was assigned to the cement plant. The commander Rudolf Hess was convinced that sexual orientation could be changed through hard labor [34]. The homosexual prisoners labored quarrying

clay and making bricks in the camp [10]: two-thirds of them died within two months [35]. LD von Classen-Neudegg [36], Leo Clasen pseudonym, describes the death of some 300 homosexuals laboring in the cement plant. Under these extremely hard conditions, 9 inmates committed suicide based in testimonies [23]. Emil Pfensig was one of them, the names of the others are not known.

The data shows that the majority of suicides were committed in the first years of imprisonments, which is in agreement with other authors [37]. Almost 30% committed suicide during the first days, which is in agreement with those authors who attribute this high rate to initial shock of imprisonment [38]. However, in our sample, the average time of internment until the commission of suicide was 7.5 months. Especially in the period after 1939, such a long period of imprisonment in a concentration camp might eliminate most of the survival protective factors, such as fear of suicide or social reprobation, moral or religious values [39, 40]. In the case of homosexual inmates, some of these protective factors, as familiar responsibility or presence of relatives, did not exist [41, 42]. Other factors, such as separation from family, suspicion of death by the relatives, physical suffering, illness, hopelessness or certainty of extermination could also contribute to eliminate survival capacity [43, 44]. In these harsh circumstances of repression, suicide could be perceived by some prisoners as the last way of escape from unbearable conditions [45].

The first homosexual prisoners deported to Sachsenhausen were hosted with other prisoner categories in all the blocks [46]. Homosexual prisoners were forced to sleep in nightshirts and hold their hands outside the covers to prevent masturbation [36]. From the late summer of 1939, the prisoners marked as "homosexual" with pink triangles were housed together in the "isolation section", among others: Block 35. This is in agreement with the data according to which most of the prisoners were housed in Block 35 when they committed suicide. They were isolated there to avoid "homosexuality propagation" and they were separated from the rest of the camp by a wall (Sachsenhausen concentration camp web page; available at URL <http://www.stiftung-bg.de/gums/en/index.htm>). One inmate committed suicide when he was moved to the punishment block (Block 11): the conditions in this block were extremely hard [47], so that this suicide can be explained by fear or consequence of torture reported by some authors [37, 48]. From our data, we cannot conclude that suicides could have seasonal variation or possible contagion effects, including suicide of celebrities (see O'Montis), as some authors have recently found [49].

We could differentiate two forms of behavior when committing suicide in Nazi concentration camps; impulsive behavior (i.e., crossing SS guard lines to get shot or to touch electrified barbed wire fences) and premeditated suicide (by hanging or through poison) [50–52]. The method of suicide in all cases in our sample was by hanging, most likely because the other forms of suicide were not filed as such. These methods require more reflexion, and require isolated places [52, 53]. Some authors assess that the most common way of suicide was flinging oneself onto the wires [37], but they are based on witness reports and the testimonies could be influenced by the fact that death by flinging onto the electrified fence is more shocking than death by hanging in which the inmate commits suicide in a lonely place. Another important factor is that inmates killed on the fences or shot by guards would be classified as "killed in an escape attempt" instead of suicide. Our results are in agreement with authors [54] who assess that prisoners used methods available to them; guns and knives were banned in the camp for inmates, of course. Most of the suicides were committed during night hours, when vigilance was lower; eight suicides of our sample were made between 2:00 and 6:30 hours. As mentioned above, it remains unclear if or how many of the suicides were ordered by guards or kapos [52, 55].

After beginning of the war in 1939, SS guards could in practice kill prisoners without trial; they kept covering-up some murders as suicides [54]. In some cases of famous inmates they preferred to cover-up the murder avoiding one scandal. It could be the case of the famous international singer Paul O'Montis. There are some reports of witness who relate how they could differentiate when one prisoner had committed suicide or he had been killed by strangulation, observing the marks in the prisoner's neck when the corpses were stored in the infirmary before cremating [23].

Conclusions

In this paper, we present the first study of homosexual suicides in Sachsenhausen KZ. Camp experience for homosexual prisoners was especially harrowing, because of the special repression suffered by this group. We have found a higher number of suicides in this camp when compared to the general prisoner population at Sachsenhausen under Nazi control and under Soviet rule [21]. The number is also higher than available rates of suicides of prisoners classified as homosexuals at Buchenwald, where the conditions were comparably less atrocious. However, our study has several limitations: not all suicides are registered; some murders were covered-up as suicides; most documents were lost during the war or destroyed by the Nazis when leaving the camps and not much data is available from other camps to compare. Nonetheless, our study contributes to an important field of research in which much work remains to be done. We conclude that higher rate of suicides among homosexual inmates can be correlated with the higher degree of repression against this group in Sachsenhausen KZ.

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5. Polish Physicians held in the Miranda de Ebro “Campo de Concentración”, (2022)



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Polish Physicians Held in the Miranda de Ebro “*Campo de Concentración*”

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Abstract

Spain played an ambiguous and pragmatic role during the Second World War and its policy evolved as the war progressed. While Francoist Spain was friendly towards Nazi Germany, it never declared war on the Allies, even if it contributed Division Azul to the Reich's invasion of the Soviet Union. Spanish neutrality allowed its territory to become a temporary safe haven for refugees fleeing the Nazi terror in Europe. Miranda de Ebro concentration camp (1937–1947) saw the internment of soldiers from the International Brigades who had fought on the Republic's side in the Spanish Civil War, and of European refugees escaping from the Nazis. After the French, Poles represented the second biggest national group at Miranda and it is the Polish doctors on whom I focus in this paper because of Poland's situation during and after the war. Most of the Polish doctors held in Miranda were Jews who had come to France before the war, where they had studied while keeping Polish citizenship. After release from Miranda, many joined the Allied forces fighting against the German Reich. But when the war ended, Poland – though formally independent – became a satellite country of the Soviet Union. Only one of the physicians ever returned to Poland. The rest continued their careers in Great Britain or the USA despite all the difficulties this entailed.

Keywords

physicians – exile – Second World War – Poland – Spain – Miranda de Ebro

1 Introduction

In 1919, Rubin Baranholtz and his wife Rachel, both born in Poland, emigrated to France, where their three children were born. Jean Zelig Baranholtz, the eldest, studied medicine in Paris. Fearing deportation after the German invasion in 1940, the whole family sought refuge in Prades, roughly 60 kilometers from the Spanish border in the Pyrenees. Jean and his father crossed the Pyrenees in the Spring 1943.¹ His mother and two younger sisters stayed in France, where they were hidden and helped by Angele Laurier, later declared Righteous Among the Nations.² While his father managed to avoid captivity, Jean Baranholtz was imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro, a Francoist concentration camp in northern Spain.³ When he was released by the International Red Cross at the end of 1943, he and his father returned to France with the Liberation Army of General Jean de Lattre de Tassigny. After the end of the war, Rubin Baranholtz was able to reclaim the family business in Paris. Jean died at the age of 94, in Pontault-Combault, east of Paris.⁴

This article recounts many such stories, each framed within a complex historical context. But they all have three points in common: all deal with physicians; each of the physicians in question had Polish roots; and each of them was at some time interned in Miranda de Ebro “campo de concentración.”

2 What Was Miranda de Ebro?

During and after the Spanish Civil War (scw), the government of General Francisco Franco put in place scores of camps all over Spain in which to incarcerate prisoners of war (POWs) and its opponents. There were around 1,000 such camps of different sizes.⁵ Located at the important railway crossing between Madrid and the north of Spain, Miranda de Ebro was the biggest. Built in 1937 to hold prisoners taken on the Aragon front, the camp was transformed in 1940 into a detention center for foreigners who had just entered or who were

1 AHA 170-478-T2-29704, County Archives, Girona, Spain.

2 https://righteous.yadvashem.org/?search=angele%20laurier&searchType=righteous_only&language=en&itemId=12785772&ind=0, accessed 7 November 2022.

3 Archivo Militar de Guadalajara (AMAG), Spain: AMAG DCME 305283, 684.

4 Fichier des personnes décédées, France: <www.data.gouv.fr/fr/datasets/fichier-des-personnes-decede>, accessed 7 November 2022.

5 Javier Rodrigo, “Introducción. Las líneas de demarcación,” in *Cautivos: Campos de concentración en la España franquista, 1936–1947*, ed. J. Rodrigo (Barcelona, 2005), XIX–XXX.

illegally resident in Spain.⁶ Most of these were Jews or opponents of the Nazis. The camp continued to operate until 1947, although its role and *modus operandi* changed again at the end of World War II (WWII), when it came to be used primarily for the internment of Nazis fleeing Germany.⁷ The camp at Miranda de Ebro was in operation for ten years in total, during which time it had housed over 100,000 prisoners, more than 15,000 of whom were foreigners.

All armed conflicts result in human migration and problems for neighboring countries forced to cope with refugees. Given its geographic location, Spain during WWII was strategically located at the junction between Europe, Africa and the Americas. Although Spain never concealed its preference for the Axis powers,⁸ it was a crucial destination for those fleeing Nazi Germany or the countries it had occupied, first of all as a neutral country at the beginning of the WWII, a non-belligerent after 12 June 1940, and again neutral after November 1942.⁹

After the occupation of three-fifths of France by Nazi Germany in 1942, the land routes across the Pyrenees into Spain were among the last open to those trying to escape war and persecution or joining the Allied army. Escape routes used earlier such as the port of Marseille were now blocked. Meanwhile, the rules at the border between Spain and France changed quickly and erratically, depending on Spanish, French, and German regulations at any given time. Legal entry into Spain was an option for at least some refugees until 1942, but most of them entered the country clandestinely. The hidden and often treacherous paths across the Pyrenees came to serve as a common stage upon which were played out the interlinked dramatic stories of the SCW, WWII, and flight from the Holocaust.¹⁰

Thus, some 120,000 refugees crossed the Pyrenees in search of safety and hoping to reach the British colony of Gibraltar at the southern tip of the Iberian Peninsula on the Mediterranean, or the capital of neutral Portugal on

6 José Antonio Fernández López, *Historia del campo de concentración de Miranda de Ebro: 1937–1947* (Miranda de Ebro, 2004).

7 For a recent publication about Francoist concentration camps, see Carlos Hernández de Miguel, *Los campos de concentración de Franco* (Madrid, 2019).

8 Félix Santos, *Espanoles en la Alemania Nazi: Testimonios de visitantes del Tercer Reich entre 1939 y 1945* (Madrid, 2012).

9 For a recent publication covering this topic, see Sara J. Brenneis and Gina Herrmann, eds., *Spain, the Second World War, and the Holocaust: History and Representation* (Toronto, ON–Buffalo, NY–London, 2020).

10 Tabea Alexa Linhard, “Routes of the Renowned and the Nameless: Clandestine Border-Crossing at the Pyrenees, 1939–1945,” in Brenneis and Herrmann, *Spain, the Second World War, and the Holocaust*, 164–179.

the Atlantic coast, Lisbon.¹¹ Their hope was that they would be able to flee to the United States of America or the United Kingdom, or that they would be able to join the Allied forces in North Africa.¹² At least 15,000 foreigners lacking proper documents were intercepted by Spanish border guards at or near the frontier and were sent to Miranda de Ebro concentration camp. There they remained for months, sometimes years, before being released following diplomatic efforts by governments or the International Red Cross. Detention numbers in Miranda de Ebro reached their highest point in 1942. On average, inmates spent around four to five months in the camp.

Pre-established links to German and Italian fascists grew stronger during the first phase of the Spanish Civil War through military support for the Francoist forces, but waned from 1943 onwards when, with a German victory increasingly in doubt, Franco tried to ingratiate himself with the Allies. The changing nature of the treatment of foreign prisoners in Miranda de Ebro mirrors this strategic realignment.¹³

3 A Brief Note on the Term “Concentration Camps”

Miranda de Ebro was referred to in Spanish as a “Campo de Concentración,” translatable as concentration camp. Historians continue to debate who originally invented the internment system operated there and at somewhere between 103 and 189 other camps in Francoist Spain: did imperial Spain build them first in Cuba in the late nineteenth century, or was it British imperial forces during the Anglo–Boer War in South Africa between 1899 and 1902? Either way, both occupying forces explicitly called their internment facilities

¹¹ Like Italy and Germany, Portugal was also a fervent supporter of Spanish rebels. President Salazar sent soldiers (the so-called *Viriatos*) and military equipment. Portugal was also a safe rearguard and a safe pass of goods for the rebels during the Civil War. The Estado Novo (New State) in Portugal headed by President Salazar, was an authoritarian regime with conservative measures and laws, establishing Family, Religion and State as its pillars. Nevertheless, Portugal became also a safe haven for Jews and anti-fascists escaping from the Nazi regime. As a British overseas territory, Gibraltar too was another destination for Jewish people and anti-fascists fleeing the Nazis. Miranda de Ebro was one of the stopping places on the route to both Portugal and Gibraltar; see the recent publication Alberto Pena Rodríguez, “«El país más feliz de Europa»: La recepción de la Guerra Civil española en Portugal,” *Ayer: Revista De Historia Contemporánea*, 127 (2022), 192–217.

¹² Josep Calvet, *Huyendo del Holocausto: Judíos evadidos del nazismo a través del Pirineo de Lleida* (Lleida, 2014); Haim Avni, *España, Franco y los judíos* (Madrid, 1982).

¹³ Matilde Eiroa San Francisco, “Refugiados extranjeros en España: El campo de concentración de Miranda de Ebro,” *Ayer*, 1 (2005), 125–152.

“concentration camps”; and either way, these were places in which noncombatants were forcibly concentrated under appalling conditions, resulting in hundreds of thousands of innocent deaths in Cuba and in South Africa, and giving rise internationally to the more generally used term “concentration camp.” This concept is different to the Nazi German “*Vernichtungslager*” or extermination camps, a term applied to places such as Auschwitz or Treblinka whose explicit purpose was systematic mass murder. When they first came to power, the National Socialists initially followed the historic prototypes, creating concentration camps in which they imprisoned, maltreated, and frequently also murdered their political opponents, members of racial minorities, prisoners of war, homosexuals or people with physical disabilities. But the specific function of these camps was not mass annihilation.

Although Franco’s sympathies clearly lay with the Axis powers, not least because of the German and Italian military support for his putsch against the Republican government, he was pragmatic in his approach to the international community, understanding his need to survive and act on the global stage.¹⁴ Ramón Serrano Suñer was Spain’s Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1940 to September 1942, when he was replaced by Francisco Jordana, who served until 1944, when he was replaced by José Félix Lequerica. These three men were central to the crafting of Spanish policy towards Nazi Germany. With differing levels of autonomy and success, they orchestrated Spain’s continued dual flirtation with the Axis and Allied powers under Franco’s aegis.¹⁵

Despite the fact that it was also the site of a proxy war between Nazi Germany on the one side and the Soviet Union together and its leftist allies internationally on the other, the SCW was primarily a bloody internal struggle, with Franco’s forces brutally repressing all opposition wherever it held the balance of power. It is in this context that the establishment of the concentration camp at Miranda de Ebro must be seen. On 5 July 1937, the Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE), Spain’s official gazette, published an announcement by the Secretariat of War of General Franco’s order to create a commission for the establishment of concentration camps.¹⁶

¹⁴ Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, 2005); Danielle Rozenberg, *La España contemporánea y la cuestión judía* (Madrid, 2010); Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, *Diccionario del Franquismo* (Barcelona, 2019).

¹⁵ Sara J. Brenneis and Gina Herrmann, “Introduction,” in *Spain, the Second World War, and the Holocaust*, 15.

¹⁶ www.boe.es/datos/pdfs/BOE/1937/258/A02219-02219.pdf, accessed 3 October 2021.

4 Why Focus on Physicians?

The internment of doctors in Miranda de Ebro has a qualitative and quantitative relevance. The importance of the health factor in the military and political events of the twentieth century was evident from the beginning. The role of doctors in conflict situations became increasingly important: they could take preventive measures to avoid the outbreak of contagious diseases amongst troops, and they could cure already declared infectious diseases or war wounds, so that sick or injured combatants could rejoin the front as quickly as possible. Doctors as a collective, moreover, were very active in volunteering.¹⁷ Of the nearly 15,000 detainees who passed through the Miranda de Ebro camp, 151 were doctors, which represents 1 percent of the internees' professions, much more than would be the normal percentage in a random population.¹⁸

5 Why Poles?

A quarter of the physicians interned in Miranda de Ebro self-identified as Poles, making them the second largest nationality group behind the French. In itself, this would be enough to justify a study on this specific group, but the vicissitudes surrounding Polish nationals are also of enormous interest because they illustrate the problems of identity and emigration that this group experienced against the backdrop of changes in their homeland.

After more than a century of fragmentation under the Austro-Hungarian, German and Russian Empires, Poland regained its independence after World War I (wwI). The newly revived state, whose independence was confirmed in the Treaty of Versailles, distinguished between citizens who lived in Poland and nationals who may have lived outside the country but who still had the right to a Polish passport because of their roots in the country. Poland's inter-war years were notable for the stumbling of its fledgling democracy, massive economic problems, and increasing antisemitism. As a largely agricultural country, peasants were amongst the worst hit by the economic crisis of a capital-starved country further hit by the Great Depression from 1929 onward. For many agricultural workers and Jews, including those with medical training and other skills, the solution appeared to lie in emigration. One third of

¹⁷ Carles Brasó Broggi, *Los médicos errantes: De las brigadas internacionales y la revolución china a la guerra fría* (Barcelona, 2022), 2933.

¹⁸ Author's own data obtained from the archive of Miranda de Ebro, located in Archivo Militar de Guadalajara, Spain (AGMG).

all Polish citizens in the 1920s were not ethnic Poles. At the same time, many Poles living abroad did not actually speak Polish, but could apply for citizenship despite having been born in France, Germany or elsewhere. Between 1918 and 1951, citizenship of a foreign country or having served in foreign armed forces was legally incompatible with Polish citizenship. In 1932, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimated that 115,000 Polish Jews lived in Germany and 70,000 in France.¹⁹ With the Nazi occupation of Poland, Polish cultural and intellectual life was suppressed. The Polish Government had fled the country and was based in London during the war years.²⁰

6 Polish Doctors and Others Recruited to Work in France

Many Polish doctors living in France had studied medicine at French universities, and many had received PhDs. Still, their situation was far from easy. After WWI, France had a severe manpower shortage and recruited scores of industrial and agricultural workers from different Polish regions. Organizations such as the Société Générale d'Immigration or the Confédération des Associations Agricoles des Régions Dévastées recruited workers from Lwow (today's Lviv in Ukraine), Poznan, Cracow (Kraków), Kielce or Lodz.²¹ For many of these workers, France represented a land of prosperity and freedom. In 1931, Poles accounted for 16.7 percent of foreign residents in France, the second largest group of foreigners after Italians, who accounted for 29.8 percent. As France's labor requirements grew, the number of foreigners went from 1.5 million in 1921 to 2.5 million ten years later.²²

As the Great Depression engulfed France, prejudice against foreigners grew as they were increasingly perceived as rivals to French workers. Between 1934 and 1936, steps were taken to give preference to local manpower, and quotas limited foreign workers to 10 percent of the workforce. Under a 1917 law,

19 Włodzimierz Borodziej, “Der Diktator, die Juden und die Rechte,” in *Ausgewiesen! Berlin, 28.10.1938: die Geschichte der „Polenaktion,”* ed. Alina Bothe, Gertrud Pickhan and Christine Meibeck (Berlin, 2018), 45–53.

20 To know more about the interplay of Jewish and Polish tragedies and its ramification beyond Poland's borders, Ander's Army and the Polish medical presence in Palestine, see Avni Ohry, Karin Ohry and Kenneth Collins, “Jews in the Polish Army, 1939–1945: Medical aspects,” *Korot: The Israel Journal of the History of Medicine and Science* (2019–2020), 323–338.

21 Laurence Prempain, “Polonais-es et Juif-ve-s polonais-es réfugié-e-s à Lyon (1935–1945): esquives et stratégies. Histoire” (PhD thesis, Université de Lyon, 2016).

22 Ibid, 72.

foreigners could apply for French citizenship, but obtaining it became increasingly difficult. Citizenship could be withdrawn if the applicant became unemployed. This resulted in the deportation from France of 20,731 Poles in 1935, and another 14,867 in 1936.²³ Doctors were also victims of the nationalist furor occasioned by the Depression. Even though they were a small community, they were conspicuous for having answered the economic reasons for migration with the encouragement of their parents, and their French colleagues considered them unpatriotic and saw them as ruinous competition.²⁴ Doctors in France complained that their profession was overcrowded with foreigners and naturalized citizens. Several laws made it more difficult for those doctors born in foreign countries or those who had a foreign title to work as physicians in France.²⁵ A 1933 law, for example, sponsored by Senator Raymond Armbruster, made it imperative for new physicians to have a state doctorate and French nationality. At the time, there were 70,000 university students in France, of whom 2,121 were Poles and 1,810 Romanians. By the spring of 1935, the anti-foreigner movement ended up in the Cousin-Nast law which reaffirmed the Armbruster law and added more restrictions and had retroactivity.²⁶ Under the Cousin-Nast law, it was now the case that those who had not performed military service would have a waiting period before they could begin to practice, and would have to wait longer still before receiving a government appointment.

The Polish government did not want those citizens who lived abroad to return to Poland because it suspected them of having links to communism or of being Jews. Between 1920 and 1937, laws were passed limiting the number of Jews at universities via a quota (*numerus clausus*) and segregating Jews by means of separate seating in lecture halls (*ghetto benches*).²⁷

23 Alina Nisiobecka, "Niepożądani – Francja wobec emigracji polskiej w latach 1930–1944" ["Undesirable – French Attitudes Towards Polish Immigration in the Years 1930–1944"], *Studia Historyczne*, 3 (2017), 63–86.

24 For the author Julia Fette, three motivations explain this exclusionary movement: prejudice, economic protectionism and instinct, and professional identity-formation. For more details about exclusion in law and medical careers in France, see Julie Fette, *Exclusions: Practicing prejudice in French law and medicine, 1920–1945* (Ithaca, NY–London, 2012).

25 Alain Jardin, Bernard Lobel and Bruno Halioua, "Urology in France and German National-Socialism," in *Urology under the Swastika*, ed. Dirk Schultheiss & Friedrich H. Moll (Leuven, 2017), 146–161; see Loi du 21-4-1933 relative à l'exercice de la médecine (J.O., 23-4-1933) and Loi du 26-7-1935 relative à l'exercice de la médecine et de l'art dentaire (J.O., 27-7-1935).

26 Fette, *Exclusions*, 44, 56–59.

27 Roman Sosnowski, Thadaeus Zajackowski, Maria Ciecelska, Ewa Wiatr, Agnieszka Zajackowska-Drodzdz, Adam Dylewski and Boleslaw Kuzaka, "A brief History of the

Passports could no longer be renewed by people who had lived in Poland for fewer than five years after 1918. This was taken a step further in 1938, when Polish embassies were instructed to cancel the passports of citizens living in foreign countries. As a result, some were imprisoned by the French authorities because they lacked valid documents.²⁸

Such was the rather unfriendly prospect facing Polish doctors in France by the late 1930s: wanted neither by their country of origin nor of residence. Things went from bad to worse after Nazi Germany invaded France and Poland, annexing parts of the latter and enforcing increasingly hostile measures against Jews, including a ban on treating non-Jewish patients which had come into force in Germany in September 1938.

The question of whether Polish non-Jews did all they could to help Jews during the war continues to be the subject of research, debate, and controversy. Following the actual governing party's (Law and Justice) line, there was an element within Polish society and amongst Polish scholars that tended to portray Poland – before, during, and after the WWII – as a victimized country and all Poles as having helped and saved Jews from Nazi extermination. It is obvious that Poland as a country suffered from external aggression and violence. But it is also beyond doubt that antisemitism was an essential part of Polish nationalism and that, since the beginning of the twentieth century, Jews were perceived by large sectors of Polish society as an alien and hateful element of the population. At the same time, it is indeed true that most of the Righteous among the Nations are from Poland.²⁹ A current of rethinking, critical reflection and, at times, political point-scoring from the greatest tragedy of the twentieth century in Europe runs through all the countries of the continent. We do not propose in this paper to polemicize about this complex issue, but to point to the controversy and to encourage the reader to explore some of the literature.³⁰

Polish Urology at the turn of 19th and 20th Century,” in *Urology under the Swastika* (Antwerp, 2018), 95–96.

28 Prempain, “Polonais-es et Juif-ve-s polonais-es réfugié-e-s à Lyon (1935–1945)”.

29 <https://righteous.yadvashem.org/?/search.html?language=en>, accessed 7 November 2022.

30 To give some examples from the literature: on the pogrom in Kielce in 1946, see Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, *Pod Kłatwą. Społeczny portret pogromu kieleckiego* (Warsaw, 2018); on the press and antisemitism in Poland from the early twentieth century, see Grzegorz Krzywiec, *Polska Bez Żydów Studia z dziejów idei, wyobrażeń i praktyk antysemickich na ziemiach polskich początku XX wieku* (Warsaw, 2017); on the pogrom in Lviv in 1918, see Grzegorz Gauden, *Lwów kres iluzji: Opowieść o pogromie listopadowym 1918* (Kraków, 2019); on the Jedwabne massacre, see Jan. T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton, NJ, 2000). See also Jan Grabowski, *Hunt for the Jews: Betrayal and Murder in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington, IN, 2013) and Jan

7 Material and Methods

The main sources for this article were files from the Guadalajara military archive (Archivo General Militar de Guadalajara [AGMG], Spain). These documents had remained classified until 2007, when the Spanish Parliament approved the Historical Memory law, opening access to many files unavailable until then. The archive holds 104 boxes containing documents concerning all foreigners imprisoned at Miranda de Ebro.

For this study, all 15,238 documents held in the AGMG referring to foreign prisoners in the Miranda de Ebro concentration camp were reviewed. A review was conducted of all files referring to an inmate as “nationality Polish” or “place of birth Poland” plus “physician.” Medical students, such as the later famous Polish psychiatrist Antoni Kępiński were excluded.³¹ One methodological limitation was that some inmates declared that they were physicians, even when they had not completed their studies. Applying these criteria, twenty-seven Polish physicians were identified, and their information analyzed.³²

The most common documents included in the extant admissions records in most files are index cards containing personal data and records of the questioning of the inmates. In addition to these records, private correspondence belonging to the inmates and translated by the military censors, personal documents confiscated when they were arrested, and the claims of the Red Cross, have in some cases been preserved.

The personal index cards usually, though not always, include the name and surname of the prisoner, parents' names, place and date of birth, last fixed address, profession, nationality, date and place of arrest, and date of internment in Miranda de Ebro. The back of the card sometimes shows the date of transfer or release and identifies by whom the prisoner was released.

Grabowski and Barbara Engelking, *Night without End: The Fate of Jews in German-Occupied Poland* (Bloomington, IN, 2022); and, further, some memories and essays: Jarosław Piekalkiewicz, *Dance with Death: A Holistic View of Saving Polish Jews during the Holocaust* (Lanham, MD, 2019); Géraldine Schwarz, *Los amnésicos* (Barcelona, 2019).

³¹ Zdzisław Jan Ryn, “The concentration camp syndrome in Miranda de Ebro survivors,” transl. T. Bałuk-Ulewiczowa, *Medical Review – Auschwitz*. January 2019: <www.mp.pl/auschwitz>. Originally published as “KZ-syndrom u więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Miranda de Ebro,” *Przegląd Lekarski – Oświęcim* (1987), 34–44.

³² AGMA: DCME 305283, 684; DCME 305289 1507; DCME 305293 2146; DCME 305297 2710; DCME 305308 4326; DCME 305311 4722; DCME 305316 5587; DCME 305323 6476; DCME 305325 6868; DCME 305327 7195; DCME 303344 9627; DCME 30347 10089, 10155; DCME 303349 10358; DCME 303355 11349; DCME 303357 11522; DCME 303368 13159; DCME 303374 14052, 14055, 14126; DCME 303378 14627, 14628, 14721; DCME 303380 14926; DCME 303381 15099.

The cards themselves present some methodological problems. First and most important is that in many cases some data are missing. Not all index cards, for example, include the date of liberation or who requested the prisoner to be released. Generally speaking, doctors seldom lie about their profession, but many prisoners provided false names. Furthermore, the Spanish transcription of foreign names was not always correct; this is especially the case with Slavic names. These factors make the search for additional data difficult. In many cases, the nationality provided was deliberately false, if prisoners believed that such obfuscation would enable them to be transferred more easily to a safe country, or because their real nationality had changed after the borders of their country of origin had been redrawn or simply ceased to exist following occupation by Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union.

On their arrival at the camp, the prisoners' personal data index cards were filled in by Spanish guards or by other interns entrusted by the authorities with clerical tasks. Some of the questioning that was carried out took place upon arrest, at police stations or in prisons. Most, however, was conducted when a prisoner arrived at Miranda de Ebro. The questions asked and the answers recorded offer a broader understanding of the individual prisoner than can be gathered from the index cards, filled out more as merely an administrative procedure. Comparing both index cards and interrogation records allows a contextual analysis for the identification of patterns such as the order of events following arrest.

Two main methodological limitations become apparent: the data offers just a small time-window on a prisoner's biography, and the authorities recorded only the information they considered relevant. Data was recorded for specific and essentially quite narrow interests. Thus, there were two key challenges for compiling our research. The first is that archival data from Miranda de Ebro remains incomplete, because many prisoners provided false data on arrival.³³ Secondly, it is impossible to write a comprehensive biography of each doctor because we lack information about what they did before and after their confinement. In some cases, we have very few data points about the doctors imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro.

33 After World War II, name changes were frequent and for several reasons: people wanted to forget or hide the past, or to adopt a name more common or easier to spell in their new country of residence. In some cases, people used their new Americanized/anglicized names in official documents and the Polish version between friends or kin, others Sovietized or Polonized their names. These changes occurred after their arrival in Miranda de Ebro.

Literature and other sources related to foreign prisoners in Miranda de Ebro, including doctors serving in the International Brigades who fought on the side of the Spanish Republic against Franco's putschists, descriptions of escape routes, and records of statements by witnesses during trials have been examined. Documents regarding arrests at the Spanish border have been analyzed (Archivos de Frontera, Girona). In an effort to further enrich some biographies, additional files and archives held at the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in New York, the Central Military Archive in Warsaw, the UK National Archives in Kew (London), the Bibliothèque interuniversitaire de Santé, in Paris, the Guide Rosenwald in France, Archive National Pierrefitte-sur-Seine in France, the Stadt- und Landesarchiv in Vienna, University Saskatchewan College of Medicine in Canada, Archives of the Chaim Herzog Museum in Israel, Ancestry, the Memorial Archives at the Gurs internment camp, Archives Départementales du Pyrénées-Orientales in Perpignan, Archives Départementales du Pyrénées-Occidentales in Pau, France, the Albert Schweitzer Foundation Archive in France, and the Bundesarchiv in Berlin were consulted. Many hold personal data on the lives of doctors before and after their imprisonment at Miranda de Ebro.

Some highly valuable data was obtained from the personal holdings of Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski, historian at the University of Warsaw and former Head of the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression (UDSKIOR), and from Paul Weindling, medical historian at Oxford University. Personal data was also obtained from relatives and descendants of those Polish doctors imprisoned at Miranda de Ebro.

8 Polish Physicians in Miranda de Ebro

Of the twenty-seven physicians who either gave Poland as their country of citizenship or origin when they were interned, twenty-one were Jews. Most of the twenty-seven, eighteen in total, had been living and working in France before fleeing to Spain. Ninety percent were aged in their thirties on arrival.

During the SCW, members of the International Brigades (IB) were held as prisoners of war by Franco's army on Spanish territory. Then, from 1940 onward, fugitives from Nazi-controlled Europe reached Spain across the Pyrenees via numerous routes. Many well-organized escape routes were in operation during WWII.³⁴ Refugees were passed along the chain by a succession of local helpers

34 Claude Laharie, *Les-Basses-Pyrenees-dans-la-Seconde-Guerre-Mondiale* (Cairn, 2021).

who clothed, fed, and hid them, often supplying false identity papers. The local guides, called *passeurs*, led them through the mountains in groups of about twenty to twenty-five people.³⁵ Crossing took about five days and they walked at night. Once they arrived in Spain, the group split into smaller groups of about four to five people.³⁶

Even though some authors have tried to classify the routes through which people were smuggled out of France into Spain,³⁷ testimonies and interviews on the ground prove that the refugees would choose different routes depending on temporary and geographical convenience.³⁸

The French train route that carried the fugitives to the Pyrenees was already under Gestapo surveillance before Germany occupied three-fifths of France in November 1942. Controls and identity checks were frequent. The Pyrenees border was occupied by the 19th division of the German army. Around 10,000 men were tasked with preventing illegal border crossings. From 1943 the border was also controlled by German customs agents, and Gestapo agents were deployed in nearby cities. The Spanish side of the border was guarded by the armed Guardia Civil, a paramilitary police force, and by agents of the Political and Social Brigade (Brigada Político-Social).³⁹

According to an order by the Ministry of the Interior, the Guardia Civil was in charge of checking personal documents from 1940 onwards. This order also established that all persons with a passport but no visa must be interned in concentration camps, along with all those without documents, suspects regardless of nationality, and deserters from Allied armies with or without valid documents. The order also included a general ban on the entry of citizens from belligerent countries who were of military age (18 to 40 years old). In some cases, the checking of personal documents was carried out by the combined frontier guard and customs force known as the Carabineros.⁴⁰

Refugees were usually intercepted on the roads or in small frontier villages in northern Spain and were thereafter subject to military jurisdiction. When medical doctors crossed the border with their wives, the women were separated and taken to other cities by diplomatic or consular missions or international

35 A project of European memory can be found archived at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20200921224620/http://www.perseguits.cat/en/>.

36 Lisa Fittko, *Mein Weg über die Pyrenäen. Erinnerungen 1940/41* (Munich, 1985).

37 Concepción Pallarés Morano, “Desplazados y refugiados políticos en España, 1940–1947” (PhD thesis, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, 2009), 39.

38 Pierre Sandahl, *Miranda ou l'évasion par l'Espagne* (Paris, 1945); Marcel Vivé and Robert Vieville, *Les évadés de France à travers l'Espagne. Guerre 1939–1945* (Paris, 1998).

39 Pallarés Morano “Desplazados y refugiados políticos en España,” 499.

40 *Ibid.*, 507.

organizations, while the men were transferred to Miranda de Ebro. The Polish physician Silvain Zaks,⁴¹ for example, was arrested together with his 26-year-old wife Claudine, and a fellow countryman who was a dentist called Michel Gelbart. Zaks's wife was released after an intervention by the Polish Red Cross and was taken to Madrid to deal with exit formalities.

The Polish Jewish physician Abraham Wiór⁴² was arrested together with his wife Aline, who was also a physician, and three other Jews: Alfredo Levy, Jean Natap, and Andres Fried. Wiór was released after an intervention by the Polish Red Cross and transferred to Barcelona. All five were helped by the Joint Distribution Committee, an aid organization founded by U.S. Jews and widely known as the JOINT.⁴³

One of the key data points recorded in Miranda de Ebro's file was nationality. During 1942 and 1943 nobody wanted to declare French nationality, because nobody wanted to be returned to occupied France. This is the reason why the French most often declared themselves as being "Canadians," whereas the Poles were able to take a more pragmatic approach and revealed their nationality. Seemingly this pragmatism paid off, as the Polish doctors remained imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro for one to two months, less than the other prisoners who stayed for four to five months.

Conditions for interns in Miranda de Ebro were not easy: hunger, a lack of water, and non-hygienic conditions all combined to produce epidemics such as what became known as the "Mirandita."⁴⁴

9 The Liberation of Miranda de Ebro

The release of most of the Polish doctors held at Miranda de Ebro was secured by the Spanish, British or International Red Cross; in two cases, by the British Embassy. Information on the fate of nine of the twenty-seven doctors is lacking (see Table 1). Of the eighteen about whom information is available from after their time in Miranda, fifteen resumed their work as doctors, nine of them in England and four in the USA. One, a former member of the IB, returned to Poland. Only one went to work as a doctor in France despite not having lived there before the war.

41 AGAM DCME 305381, 15099; AHG 170-478-T2-29428, 20-23, 27, 30.

42 AGAM DCME 305380, 14926.

43 AHG 170-478-T2-29467, 12, 18, 20, 27, 28.

44 Louis-Armand Héraut, "Miranda de Ebro: Medical condition of the concentration camp in the autumn of 1943," *Histoire Des Sciences Médicales* (2008), 205.

TABLE 1 Polish doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro

	<i>Surname and name</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Studies</i>	<i>After WWII</i>
1.	AJZENMANN/AJZINNAN, GERSON ☆	1900	France	Unknown
2.	BARANHOLTZ, JEAN ZELIG ☆	1923	France	France?
3.	BOBAK, ANTONI	1917	Poland	UK
4.	CHICHESKI/ CHYCZEWSKI, BRENISLAO	1909	Unknown	Unknown
5.	EFROS, ABRAHAM JUDKO ☆	1910	Unknown	USA
6.	FETHKE, NORBERT	1904	France	USA
7.	GOLDSZTAJN, MARIAN ☆	1908	France?	Unknown
8.	HOCHHAUSER, JERUCHEN/JEHUDA ☆	1911	France	UK
9.	JASKARZEC, SLAMA/ CHARLES ☆	1903	France	USA
10.	KAZ/KAC, SAMUEL ☆	1914	France	UK and USA
11.	*LEITNER, JÓZEF ☆	1909	France	Poland
12.	*LILKE, ARTUR ☆	1911	France	UK
13.	MEYER, SIGFRIED ☆	1902	Germany	Unknown
14.	MROZOWSKI, WŁADYSŁAW	1888	Poland	UK
15.	NACHTIGAL, JACK/ JACEK ☆	1902	Unknown	Unknown
16.	NOTTMAN, NAFTALI CHAIM☆	1911	Unknown	UK?
17.	POTASCHMAYER, LEON OSIAS ☆	1906	Unknown	UK
18.	PURISMAN, LOZAR ☆	1914	Unknown	Unknown

TABLE 1 Polish doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro (*cont.*).

	<i>Surname and name</i>	<i>Born</i>	<i>Studies</i>	<i>After WWII</i>
19.	SLUPINSKI, LEON	1914	Vilnius, UK	UK
20.	TUCHMAN, SENDER ✱	1903	Unknown	Unknown
22.	TUCHWERGER, MICHAL/ MICHEL ✱	1908	France	France?
23.	ULRYCHT/ULRICHT, LEW	1901	Unknown	Unknown
24.	*WARSCHAWSKI, STANISLAW ✱	1898	France	UK
25.	WARSAWSKY/ WARSAWSKI, SERGIUSZ ✱	1905	Germany	Unknown
26.	WEISSBERG, BERTHOLD ✱	1905	Austria	France, Gabon
27.	WIÓR, ABRAHAM/ GEORGE ✱	1911	France	Canada
28.	ZAKS, SYLVAIN/ SULVAIN ✱	1912	France	UK

*International Brigadists.

Released prisoners generally left Miranda de Ebro by train and, prior to their final departure from Spain, were housed in hostels or other residences provided by embassies or aid organizations. The Franco government provided no assistance during this interim period. Most of those released traveled to Gibraltar, whence they departed for the UK or North Africa, or Lisbon, if they were on route to the U.S. Although they had been resident in France prior to fleeing the Nazis, most doctors chose to go from Spain to third countries; this, despite such disadvantages as the need to learn a new language or to have their degrees validated in another country. The UK required further study of between six months and two years for full registration as a medical doctor, in the U.S. it was necessary to undertake medical training once again from scratch.⁴⁵

45 Paul Weindling, "Refugee urologists coming to or through the UK, 1933–1946," in *Urology under the Swastika*, ed. Dirk Schultheiss and Friedrich H. Moll (Leuven, 2017), 187–189.

10 From North Africa to Miranda de Ebro

Although the most common route to Miranda de Ebro involved a foot march through the mountain passes of the Pyrenees, the case of Avram Judko Efros was different. Born in 1910 near Lublin in Poland, he was detained in Malaga in southern Spain in 1942. Upon his arrest he declared he was working as a doctor in Tangier. An international administration on the Moroccan coast since 1923, with France having a hegemonic position, Tangier was administered by Spain during WWII, after occupation by the Franco regime in June 1940.⁴⁶

Efros claimed he had been fishing with four friends, but a heavy storm pushed their boat towards Malaga where they were picked up by a Spanish fishing vessel and handed to a Navy patrol.⁴⁷ All five had their identification cards and medical certificates with them. It is possible that they hoped to find refuge in Gibraltar because they were afraid of the falangist troops who had taken power in Malaga, and who were notoriously anti-Semitic;⁴⁸ it is possible that they wanted to volunteer for the British army to fight Nazi Germany. Efros was sent via Madrid to Miranda de Ebro. Released in March 1943, he stayed in Spain for three months, after which evidence of his whereabouts is lacking until his death. His death certificate states that he passed away at the age of 83 in Hillsborough, in the U.S. state of Florida.⁴⁹

11 The Brigadists

The first Polish doctors interned in Miranda as POWs were members of the IB. The Brigades represent a complex historical phenomenon that has sometimes been oversimplified.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Susana Sueiro, “España en Tánger durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial: La consumación de un viejo anhelo,” *Espacio, Tiempo y forma, Serie V, Historia Contemporánea* (1994), 135–163.

⁴⁷ AMAG: DCME 3053008, 4326.

⁴⁸ When the Spaniards occupied Tangier, the Jewish community there had between 12,000 and 14,000 Jews. The Spanish occupation adversely affected the Jewish lower middle classes, with heavy taxes and the refusal of new trade licenses. Tangier’s elite, by contrast, continued to enjoy a privileged place; see Isabelle Rohr, “The Franco regime and the Jews of North Africa during the Second World War,” in Brenneis and Herrmann, *Spain, the Second World War, and the Holocaust*, 132–150.

⁴⁹ Florida Death Index, 1877–1998, Florida Department of Health, Office of Vital Records, 1998.

⁵⁰ For a recent publication, see Giles Tremlet, *Las brigadas internacionales: Fascismo, libertad y la guerra civil española* (Madrid, 2020); for a classic reference about the IB, see Andreu Castells, *Las Brigadas Internacionales de la Guerra de España* (Barcelona, 1978).

The IB consisted of volunteer units from eighty-six countries, colonies and protectorates. Many were communists, but there were anarchists as well, and many others with no other definite ideological position except their determination to fight against fascism. The first volunteers arrived in Spain in October 1936, and recent studies estimate their total number over the entire period of the SCW at around 32,500 men and women.

Peak numbers were reached in the spring of 1937. Volunteers came from all over the world, but they were generally either Europeans or the sons and daughters of European migrants. A quarter were Jewish. Among them were many physicians, most of whom came from Poland (fifty-six), Germany (thirty-nine), the United States (thirty-six), Hungary (twenty-six), and France and Romania (twenty-five each). During and after the Civil War, some Brigade members were taken prisoner. Between the end of 1936 and November 1941, most were initially imprisoned in the monastery of San Pedro de Cardeña, in Castrillo del Val, Burgos; others were sent straight to Miranda de Ebro. While the camp's registration records were not accurately kept during the first years of its existence, it appears that towards the end of 1941, most of the Brigade members remaining in other prisons were moved to Miranda de Ebro.

Three Polish doctors who had served in the IB were interned in Miranda de Ebro: Józef Leitner, Artur Lilke, and Stanislaw Warschawski. The first two were members of the Dombrowski Battalion, a unit of the IB made up mainly of volunteer Polish miners who had been living and working in France and Belgium.⁵¹

The third, Stanislaw Warschawski, a 41-year-old Polish Jew, was arrested in Valencia on 25 March 1939 and transferred to Miranda de Ebro twelve days later.⁵² Before the SCW he had been living in Paris. In Miranda, he worked as a doctor together with the head of the physicians of the Polish group, Leon Slupinski. He was released in 1941.⁵³ He later appears in the *London Gazette* as medical practitioner in Essex (England).⁵⁴

Józef Leitner studied medicine in Paris and served in the IB during the SCW as doctor in the rank of lieutenant in the Dombrowski Brigade. He was taken prisoner in Belchite on 13 March 1938. He was imprisoned in Alcañiz

51 R. Dan Richardson, *Comintern Army: The International Brigades and the Spanish Civil War* (Lexington, KY, 1982).

52 AGMG, DCME 305378, 14628.

53 Jan Ciechanowski's personal documents about Poles interned in Miranda de Ebro, University of Warsaw.

54 www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/38454/page/5955/data.pdf, accessed 7 November 2022, and HO 334/221/47514.

(Teruel) until his transfer to Miranda de Ebro in 1941. It appears that he joined a communist underground organization in the camp, and he was released on 23 March 1943 following efforts by the Polish Red Cross.⁵⁵ He then went to the USSR where he fought alongside the Soviet troops until the end of WWII.⁵⁶ He was one of very few Poles to return to Poland after WWII, where in 1950 he was the chief medical officer in a military hospital in Wrocław with the rank of Colonel.⁵¹

12 Doctors Emigrated to UK

Like his father, after whom he was named and who had worked as an epidemiologist and specialist in internal medicine in the Austro-Hungarian army during WWI, Antoni Bobak was a physician. His file can be consulted in the military archives in Warsaw.⁵⁷ Born in Cracow in 1917, he crossed the Pyrenees in November 1942 and was captured together with two friends – also students of medicine – Władysław Olesinski, and Mieczysław Wojciechowski, as well as Wojciechowski's wife Eva.⁵⁸ In November 1942, the three men were sent to Miranda de Ebro⁵⁹ and Eva to the internment camp at Caldas de Malavella about 90 kilometers northeast of Barcelona. After his release from Miranda, Antoni Bobak lived and worked as a general practitioner in Birmingham in the UK, where he died in 2004.

Leon Slupinski was very popular among his fellow countrymen at Miranda de Ebro. He was born in 1914 in Dobrzyn and Wisła (northern Poland) as the son and grandson of medical doctors.⁶⁰ Slupinski studied medicine in Vilnius (in Poland at that time) and was drafted in 1939 into the Polish Army, serving in the Carpathian Mountains after the German Invasion of Poland in September. He fled through Romania and Greece to Marseille in France, from where he was sent on an Anglo-French expedition to Narvik (in Norway) in April/May 1940. On his return to France, he fought against the invading Germans and was interned in Miranda having crossed the Pyrenees in November 1940.⁶¹ In 1944 he arrived in Gibraltar and from there chose to retrain as a navigator at the Royal Air Force flight training school at Hucknall Airfield near Nottingham

55 AMAG, DCME 305335, 8266.

56 <http://sidbrint.ub.edu/es/printpdf/content/leiner-josef>, accessed 18 August 2021.

57 Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe, L481.B.8771.

58 AHA 170-478-T2-29346.

59 AMAG DCME 305289, 1507.

60 Most of this information was kindly provided by his descendants.

61 AMAG, DCME 305368, 13159.

in the English East Midlands. In 1947 Slupinski resumed his studies in medicine and clinical psychology at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. He practiced as a psychologist in the Prudhoe & Monkton Hospital for Mental Deficiency, remaining there as a head of department until his retirement in 1979. He died in January 2001.⁶²

Leon Potaschmayer was born in Poland and studied medicine in Paris, being awarded a medical doctorate at Montpellier University in 1942. After the German invasion of France, he moved at first to the free zone and later escaped to Spain in 1942. Potaschmayer travelled from France together with another Polish physician, Marian Goldszajn. They crossed the border to Spain on the Catalan route and were arrested together with Robert Peret and a Canadian called Jacques Vircael.⁶³ When Potaschmayer arrived in Miranda de Ebro he declared that he was Canadian, although his record states he was born in Poland. He was interned in Miranda de Ebro on 14 December 1942, released on 16 January 1943, and taken to a residence for army officers in Jaraba, Zaragoza.⁶⁴ Eventually made his way from Spain via Gibraltar to Britain. On his arrival he was enlisted in the Emergency Pathology Service and went to St Andrew's Hospital, Billericay, where he was later appointed pathologist. In the National Archives in Kew, we read that he obtained British citizenship and lived in Essex.⁶⁵ For many years, he pioneered the setting up of laboratory services over most of the Essex area. He published some papers about cefuroxime, an antibiotic that is still used to this day.⁶⁶

He died on 19 December 1988 at the age of 82.⁶⁷

13 From Miranda de Ebro to the Jewish Polish Armed Forces

Much less information is available about doctor Lozar Purisman. Of Jewish origin, he was born in 1904 in Kamianets-Podilskyi. He entered Miranda de Ebro

⁶² Most of these data were kindly shared by their descendants.

⁶³ AHG 170-478-T2 29461, 7-8, 24.

⁶⁴ AMAG DCME 305355, 11349 and Francisco Javier López Jiménez, "Generales, jefes y oficiales de los ejércitos beligerantes en la 2ª Guerra Mundial, internados en los balnearios de Jaraba (Zaragoza)," *Boletín Informativo del Sistema Archivístico de la Defensa, Segunda Época*, 13 (2007), 12-15.

⁶⁵ NAL HO 334/331/8176.

⁶⁶ Leon Potaschmacher and K.A. Jefferson, "Antibacterial activity of cefuroxime," *British Medical Journal*, 6122 (1978), 1279; Leon Potaschmayer, C.H. Dash, K.A. Jefferson and M.R. Kennedy, "A survey of the sensitivity of fresh clinical isolates to cefuroxime and other antibiotics," *Journal of clinical pathology*, 32 (1979), 944-950.

⁶⁷ Obituary "L.O. Potasmascher MD, FRCPATH," *BMJ*, 298 (1989), 315.

in 1942 and was discharged in 1943.⁶⁸ After his release from Miranda de Ebro he appears in a list of 357 Jewish officers in the Polish Armed Forces in Exile, created after the September 1939 defeat and under the authority of the Polish Government in Exile.⁶⁹ This means that after Miranda de Ebro, Purisman had managed to leave Spain and join the Allies. The number of Jews promoted to the rank of officer was exceptionally low, but Lozar Purisman was second lieutenant in the reserve and sent to Great Britain. In 1944 he appears in the UK Medical Register.

14 Polish Resettlement Corps

Władysław Mrozowski was born in 1888 in Jesa, Poland. He was a colonel and physician in the Polish army. He entered Spain illegally in December 1942, was first imprisoned in Lérida in western Catalonia, and then taken to Miranda de Ebro on 27 December 1942.⁷⁰ Once he had been released, he moved to the United Kingdom and joined the Polish Armed Forces in the West. Immediately after the war, he worked for the Polish Resettlement Corps formed by the UK government in 1946 to assist former Polish soldiers who had served with the British armed forces and wanted to settle in the West rather than returning to a Poland dominated by communists.⁷¹

The Polish Armed Forces in the West had fought alongside the Allies since 1939. However, after the decisions on the future of Europe taken at the Yalta Conference in February 1945 by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and the subsequent agreements amongst them, the Polish Government in Exile was no longer recognized. In Poland, a government strongly under the influence of the Soviet Union, the Polish Committee of National Liberation – initially known also as the Lublin Committee or Lublin Government – assumed control of the country. When this communist-controlled government started to persecute the Polish internal resistance and the soldiers who had fought in the West, most of whom were loyal to the anti-communist Polish Government in Exile, many saw themselves forced to choose between returning home or staying in Western Europe. Of the approximately 265,000 Polish soldiers in the West in 1945, 105,000 returned to Poland, but some 160,000 stayed in the West, mostly

⁶⁸ AMAG, DCME 305357, 11522.

⁶⁹ www.jwmww2.org, accessed 24 November 2021.

⁷⁰ AMAG DCME 305347, 10089.

⁷¹ NLE HO 405/37431.

in the UK. The Polish Resettlement Corps was constituted by a membership of volunteers who wanted to stay in the West. They continued to work as soldiers subject to military discipline and law, living in army camps in the UK while being paid according to their rank. They received English lessons and learned new skills. They were engaged in public projects useful to the postwar reconstruction of the UK and were often sent to work for private contractors. This, it was thought, would increase their opportunities to find a job in civil life. Many learned a trade or profession, or obtained a university degree. The Corps was disbanded in 1949. Around 150,000 Polish soldiers and their families took up residence in the UK and became an important part of the Polish community. Mrozowski did not have time to complete his two-year period in the Corps. On 18 November 1947, he died of a cerebral stroke in Edinburgh. His time in the UK is documented in detail through his widow Natalia Mrozowska's applications to the Polish government for financial support.⁷²

Some years before the creation of the Corps, a Polish School of Medicine was founded at the University of Edinburgh in 1941. The lecturers were Polish professors who emigrated after the German invasion of Poland in 1939. The school was closed in 1947, after more than 200 students had graduated as medical doctors. Most stayed in England, while some emigrated to the U.S., Canada, or Australia.⁷³

15 From Miranda de Ebro to the USA: a VIP Prisoner

Norbert Fethke was born on 25 August 1904 in Poland. With a doctorate in medical microbiology from the University of Paris⁷⁴ – on the subject of tuberculosis – he worked in the French capital from 1932 until 1939 at the Pasteur Institute and the Lariboisière Hospital. Between 1939 and 1940 he served as a doctor in the Polish Army in France. Having fled France after the defeat of Sikorski's forces, he was arrested in 1940 in Tarragona, Spain, and was taken to a prison in Irun and then in October to Miranda de Ebro.⁷⁵ There he was made to work as a censor of prisoners' letters.

⁷² Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe, X 6857.

⁷³ Wies Rogalski, *The Polish Resettlement Corps 1946–1949* (Warwick, 2019).

⁷⁴ Norbert Fethke, *Thèse pour le doctorat en Médecine, Substances lipoidiques et du bacille tuberculeux. Leur constitution chimique et ses rapports avec l'infection bacillaire* (Paris, 1938).

⁷⁵ AMAG, DCME 305311, 4722.

Fethke was released in July 1942 thanks to the efforts undertaken on his behalf by eminent French, British, and American scientists and universities as well as by Spanish missionaries and the Red Cross. The president of the Spanish Red Cross, El Conde de La Granja, took him personally from Miranda to Lisbon on 26 July 1942. He wanted to join the Polish Army in exile in the UK. The British considered him one of the most eminent bacteriologists and serologist. The fact that he was sent to the USA via Puerto Rico and not again to the Army was probably due to an agreement amongst the Allies. He arrived in the U.S. in 1942, where he became an ophthalmologist.⁷⁶ He had a successful career in this discipline in Amsterdam, New York.⁷⁷ He died on 10 August 1990.

16 A European Story: Austria–Belgium–France–Miranda de Ebro

A doctor who did not study in France but who ended up in France after WWII was Berthold Weissberg. He was born in 1905 in Lwow in Poland and was already a qualified medical doctor and a student of Philosophy at the University of Vienna when, after the annexation of Austria in March 1938 by Nazi Germany, he was expelled along with all other Jewish students and arrested by the Gestapo.⁷⁸

Weissberg was released by the Gestapo in August 1938 after he was able to obtain a Swiss visa. It is unclear whether he actually ever went to Switzerland because he emerges again in Antwerp in Belgium in 1939 as a refugee taken care of by the Catholic aid group “Aide International aux Réfugiés Catholiques”. On 10 March 1940, he was detained by Belgian police and deported to Saint Cyprien following Belgium's defeat by the Wehrmacht in May 1940.⁷⁹ This internment camp in southern France close to the Spanish border was initially established in February 1939 to house Republicans fleeing defeat by Franco's forces in the Civil War.⁸⁰

Weissberg was interned together with thousands of other European Jews in St Cyprien after the Vichy government, which collaborated with the Nazis, began sending to the camp Germans and Austrians living in France whom they

⁷⁶ Amsterdam Directory (NY) 1948, 190.

⁷⁷ *Naples Daily News*, 7 August 1977, 8F.

⁷⁸ Gedenkbuch für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus an der Universität Wien 1938, https://gedenkbuch.univie.ac.at/?id=index.php?id=435&no_cache=1&person_single_id=2457, accessed 23 July 2021.

⁷⁹ Archives départementales des Pyrénées-Atlantiques, 72 W 99.

⁸⁰ Marcel Bervoets, *La Liste de saint Cyprien* (Brussels, 2016).

deemed undesirables, either because they were leftists or Jews. Belgian Jews were sent there from May 1940 onwards. After floods destroyed major parts of the camp of St Cyprien in October 1940, prisoners were moved to Gurs or Rivesaltes, two other camps in southern France. From September 1940 until 22 and 23 August 1944, when the region was liberated by the Allies, 18,185 Jewish men, women and children were interned in Gurs.⁸¹ Beginning in August 1942, the Jews held in Gurs were transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau and Sobibor extermination camps, where most were murdered.⁸²

While often working as a doctor at the Gurs camp together with the chief physician, Dr. Julius Bachrach, Weissberg enjoyed sufficient freedom of movement to live, at that time, with a family⁸³ in the village of Meillon close to Pau.⁸⁴ He fled Gurs camp proper on 5 January 1943 and, aided by one of the local people smugglers known as *passeurs* , he crossed the Pyrenees. He was immediately detained and taken to Miranda de Ebro. He was released in December 1943 thanks to the efforts of a special French envoy.⁸⁵ No information has been found about his whereabouts or activities over the three years that followed. We know, however, that in July 1946, he was living in a hotel in Paris⁸⁶ and he became a naturalized French citizen in 1947. In 1956, the Austrian government paid Weissberg compensation for his expulsion from university and his imprisonment in Vienna. The money was sent to Lambaréné in Gabon,⁸⁷ a French colony until 1960. There, he worked for almost ten years at the hospital founded by the Franco-German doctor Albert Schweitzer.⁸⁸ Weissberg was the only medical doctor from the Polish group who had studied in Austria but later practiced in France. He died in Nice in 1978.

81 Hanna Schramm and Barbara Vormeier, *Vivre à Gurs: Un camp de concentration français 1940–1941* (Paris, 1971).

82 Claude Laharie, *Le camp de Gurs 1939–1945 un aspect meconnu de l’histoire du Bearn* (Pau, 1993).

83 Archives départementales des Pyrénées-Atlantiques, 4 W 102.

84 Meillon is a village in the foothills of the Pyrenees about 50 kilometers from Gurs. Many of its citizens rescued Spanish Republicans as early as 1937 and it later opened its doors to hundreds, and perhaps even thousands, of refugees from all over Europe: see <www.sudouest.fr/pyrenees-atlantiques/pau/meillon-les-visages-du-camp-de-gurs-etaient-immortalises-par-l-ancien-maire-9661722.php>, accessed March 2022.

85 AMAG, DCME 305378, 14721.

86 https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/letter-berthold-weissberg/4gETCA5m3_zqZQ, accessed July 2021.

87 Information provided by Vienna University.

88 Correspondence between Weissberg and Schweitzer found in the Schweitzer Archive in Gunsbach, France.

17 Conclusion

The Polish doctors who spent some time interned in Miranda de Ebro had been forced by the advent of World War II to break not only with their mother country but also with their adopted home, France, which had at least initially welcomed them, contributing in many cases to their education as physicians. After the end of World War II, those who had not already established themselves in third countries and who did not want to return to Poland found themselves looking for a new home which would allow them live and prosper as human beings and as professionals.

Many Polish doctors were unsure about where to go. Given the choice between Poland, to which they were bound rather weakly and which had become a Soviet satellite, and France, which had at first welcomed but later rejected them as foreigners and because they were Jews, many sought third country alternatives. Their family bonds shattered, with many of their kin murdered, missing, or scattered around the world, these Polish doctors were rootless. They had to learn a new language if they were to study, work, and become fully fledged members of a new society. Their chosen countries accepted them, allowing them to reinvent themselves, build new lives, and giving them the opportunity to contribute their professional skills and services.

Miranda de Ebro was in a certain sense a human crossroads. Prisoners came from all over the world, civilians and military, Jews, Christians and atheists, men from urban and rural areas, craftsmen, workers and professionals, people of different ages, and from different social, political, and religious backgrounds. Because of their profession, the twenty-seven Polish doctors interned at Miranda de Ebro shared a common identity beyond nationality and ethnic origin, political or religious background. The challenges and setbacks associated with building a new life in a third country notwithstanding, most of them went on to work as medical doctors again and, indeed, some had distinguished careers in medicine in their adoptive countries.

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6. Physicians in Miranda de Ebro: Franco's foreign policy

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Re. Medizin im Nationalsozialismus: Kulturen, Strukturen, Lebensgeschichten

Dear Dr. Esther Cuerda Galindo

As co-editor of a planned volume on medicine in National Socialist Germany, I am glad to accept your innovative paper "Physicians in Miranda de Ebro" for the Acta historica of the Leopoldina German National Academy of Sciences.

Unfortunately, production will take several months. The paper will be published with very slight attention to the English.

I am writing this letter so that the examiners of your dissertation will regard your paper as in press.

Yours sincerely

Paul Weindling, MA (Oxon), PhD (London), Dr hc (Fribourg)

7. The Physicians in Sanz Briz's List, "the Angel of Budapest", (2022)

Short article

Neurosciences and History 2022; 10(4): 186-189

The physicians in Sanz Briz's list, the "Angel of Budapest"

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ABSTRACT

Ángel Sanz Briz was a Spanish diplomat who worked at the Spanish Embassy in Hungary during the Second World War. After the Nazi invasion of Hungary in March 1944, a series of decrees persecuting the Jewish community were approved and, soon after, Jews began to be deported to extermination camps.

Thanks to Sanz Briz, many Jews, including a considerable number of physicians, received "letters of protection" and were sheltered in safe houses annexed to the Spanish mission, avoiding deportation.

We collected data on Jewish physicians named in the recently published list of Jews whose lives were saved by the Spanish diplomat.

The figure of Sanz Briz, known as the "Angel of Budapest," has received little recognition.

KEYWORDS

Ángel Sanz Briz, Holocaust, Hungary, Righteous Among the Nations, physicians

The idea that Spain was neutral during the Second World War and therefore played a secondary or negligible role in the conflict continues to be widespread. However, recent publications, studies, and conferences provide evidence to the contrary. Spain played a relevant role, displaying a clear affinity for Nazi Germany and other members of the Axis powers (the military coalition that fought against the Allies during the Second World War), such as Italy, while simultaneously providing shelter to refugees fleeing Nazi persecution. In addition to accepting refugees, Spain allowed several diplomatic actions, which resulted from the personal initiative of

individual diplomats but were not expressly prohibited by the Spanish government.¹

The deportation of all Hungarian Jews started on 15 May 1944 and, in less than two months, nearly half a million individuals (many of whom were physicians) were sent to the extermination camps.² Several diplomatic missions from neutral countries in Budapest protected Jewish citizens. In the case of Spain, we should highlight the role of the diplomat Ángel Sanz Briz (1910-1980) (Figure 1). Sanz Briz was born in Zaragoza on 28 September 1910. After studying law, he was admitted to the Diplomatic School of Spain, and his first posting was to Cairo as a

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Figure 1. Ángel Sanz Briz during his time as *chargé d'affaires* at the Spanish mission in Budapest, wearing the uniform of the Diplomatic Corps.

chargé d'affaires at the Spanish Embassy in Egypt. On 10 May 1942, aged 31 years, he was appointed second secretary at the Spanish Embassy in Hungary, and from June 1944 he was put in charge of the Spanish mission in Budapest as a *chargé d'affaires* when the Spanish government, which did not recognise the new puppet government, withdrew the Spanish Ambassador Miguel Ángel de Muguiro. Sanz Briz informed his superiors at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the dreadful situation of the Jews living in Budapest and the implementation of protocols for deporting them to extermination camps. In view of the advance of the Soviet troops, Sanz Briz received precise instructions from the Spanish government to leave Budapest, as Spain was an enemy of the communist Soviet Union, and he left for Switzerland on 6 December 1944. After the end of the Second World War, Sanz Briz was posted to the United States, Ecuador, Switzerland, France, Guatemala, the Netherlands, and Belgium. On 9 March 1973, at the age of 63 years, Sanz Briz inaugurated the Spanish

Embassy in the People's Republic of China, in Beijing, where he became the first Spanish Ambassador. He was finally posted to Rome in 1976, as Spanish Ambassador to the Holy See, and died on 11 June 1980 in the Palace of Spain, seat of the Embassy.

During the Holocaust, Sanz Briz wrote so-called "letters of protection" for Jews living in Budapest. At first, these letters were issued only to Sephardic Jews, by virtue of an old Royal Decree issued in 1924 during the Primo de Rivera dictatorship, but some time later they began to be issued to all persecuted Jews, whom Sanz Briz passed off as Sephardic Jews.³ To protect their lives, Sanz Briz sheltered the protected Jews in eight (and later eleven) buildings that he himself had rented in different locations in Budapest, arguing that they were annexes to the Spanish Embassy and were therefore considered to have extraterritoriality. He went so far as to persuade the International Red Cross to place signs in Spanish in hospitals, orphanages, and maternity clinics to protect the Jews in these places.

Table 1. List of the Jewish physicians saved by Sanz Briz, known as the “Angel of Budapest”

Surname, Name	Birth year	Specialty	Outcome
Antal, János	1869	Dentist	Died in 1945
Aszódi, Zoltán	1891	Internist	Remained in Hungary after the war (died in 1971)
Bálint, István	1912	Neuropsychiatrist	Remained in Hungary after the war (died in 1989)
Deutsch, Zoltán	1881	Pharmacologist	Died in 1944
Faragó, Pál	1900	—	Remained in Hungary after the war (died in 1945)
Farkas, Endre	1902	Psychiatrist	Died during the war (1945) (forced labour)
Fodor, Ferencz	1914	Pulmonologist	Exiled (died in New York)
Friedrich, László	1892	Internist	Remained in Hungary after the war (died in 1958)
Friedrich, Vilmos	1864	Internist	Remained in Hungary after the war (died in 1945)
Gábor, Gyula	1895	—	Unknown
Keleti, Arthur	1892	—	Died during the war
László, Iván	1903	Psychiatrist	Exiled
Liebmann, István	1886	—	Unknown
Miskolczy, Ferenc	1914	Internist	Died during the war
Posá, Imre	1901	—	Unknown
Székács, István	1907	Psychoanalyst	Remained in Hungary after the war (died in 1999)
Timár, Miklós	1914	Internist	Remained in Hungary after the war
Vas, György	1918	—	Died during the war

The list of Jews whose lives were saved by Sanz Briz, known as the “Angel of Budapest,” may be consulted online (Figure 2).⁴ We collected the names of the Jewish physicians saved by the Spanish diplomat and compared them against the list provided by the most comprehensive study of Jewish health professionals in Hungary published to date⁵; the results are presented in Table 1.

According to the available data, Sanz Briz saved the lives of 18 health professionals: eight of them remained in Hungary, one died as a consequence of forced labour, two took exile in the United States, and the whereabouts of the remaining seven is unknown.

In addition to the internists, we would like to mention the relatively high proportion of neuropsychiatrists who were saved by Sanz Briz, which reflects the considerable development of this specialty in Central Europe during the first half of the 20th century. Iván László emigrated to New York, where he worked as a psychiatrist. Although Endre Farkas is listed as one of the

individuals protected by the Spanish Embassy, he died due to sepsis in January 1945 while performing forced labour, according to a statement by his widow, kept at the Yad Vashem Archives.⁶ Another two psychiatrists remained in Hungary after the Second World War. One was István Székács, who was appointed dean of the Budapest School of Psychoanalysis; it was in Budapest that he died at the age of 92 years.⁷ The other was István Bálint, a neurologist, psychiatrist, and psychoanalyst who was imprisoned under the communist regime in 1955, and died in Budapest in 1989. He was chief of the State Protection Authority, the secret police of the People’s Republic of Hungary, in the final years of the 1940s, and subsequently worked as chief inspector of the Association for the Protection of Mental Health and became a member of the National Institute for Occupational Health.⁸

Ángel Sanz Briz issued letters of protection to nearly 5000 Jews and sheltered them in safe houses annexed to the Spanish mission to save them from deportation.⁹ On

LISTA DE LOS PERSONAS PRESENTES EN EL COMITÉ DE SEGURIDAD NACIONAL				
No. de	Nombre	Profesión	Lugar y fecha	N.º del
orden				registro
1.	Agustín Mendieta	comerciante	1914 66	66
2.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
3.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
4.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
5.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
6.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
7.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
8.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
9.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
10.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
11.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
12.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
13.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
14.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
15.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
16.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
17.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
18.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
19.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
20.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
21.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
22.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
23.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
24.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
25.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
26.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
27.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
28.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
29.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
30.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
31.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
32.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
33.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
34.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
35.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
36.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
37.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
38.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
39.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
40.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
41.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
42.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
43.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
44.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
45.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
46.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
47.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
48.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
49.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66
50.	Agustín Mendieta	Industri	1919 66	66

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8. Results

The research questions and methodological approaches of each publication are presented below, as they may differ slightly from the questions of the full publication. The results of each study and how the publication contributes to answering the above research questions are then briefly presented.

8.1. Cuerda-Galindo, E. Physicians imprisoned in Franco Spain's Miranda de Ebro "Campo de Concentración" in *Medical History* 2022, 66 (3): 264-279.

8.1.1 Question and relation to the main topic of the thesis

This first article forms the general framework: it historically positions and contextualizes what the camp of Miranda de Ebro was and describes the doctors who were interned there, so that the following articles can be better understood.

After some theoretical preliminaries concerning the foundation of the Miranda de Ebro camp and its place within the repressive system of Franco's regime, as well as the changes throughout its existence placing it in the European context, the study is dedicated to describing in particular the foreign doctors interned during the existence of the camp from 1937 to 1947: from the volunteer doctors in the IB to the "Nazi" doctors fleeing from the Allies, including most of them who had been captured when crossing the Pyrenees fleeing the Nazis and were now were prisoners in the camp.

8.1.2 Methodology

Methodologically, the article is based on the documents of the AMG, which stores the personal files of all the foreigners interned in Miranda de Ebro (15,238).

Each file consists of at least one sheet containing each person's name and surname, parents' names, place and date of birth, nationality, last city of residence, place and date of detention, place of imprisonment prior to being detained in Miranda de Ebro, date of admission to Miranda de Ebro and profession (e.g. Fig.8).

On this card, there are occasionally notes written on the back with some added information such as the date of release from Miranda de Ebro and the name of the person or institution that released them.

Sometimes, the file includes a page with the answers that the prisoner gave to a questionnaire he answered when he was interrogated by the Guardia Civil when entering Miranda de Ebro, which included several questions which can be classified into 3 types:

- Personal questions such as profession, employment, trade, if and where they were practising them at the time of their departure to Spain and documentation accrediting the previous question, money or other valuables or where he was when the European war broke out and which countries he travelled through before entering Spain.
- Questions regarding the crossing of the border: reasons, itinerary, who helped them cross it, place of arrest in Spain or details of the documentation that he had prepared to circulate in Spain and the means used to obtain it.
- News: the general situation of the forces of the territory of origin and especially of the border or political and social situation, supplies and their opinion on the development and outcome of the current war.

In addition, some files contain letters and other documents such as certificates.

In order to frame and reconstruct the way they arrived in Spanish territory and their previous time of internment in common prisons before being transferred to Miranda de Ebro, consulting the Historical Archive of Gerona, which can be done online, was of great help. This archive contains the collected documents of those intercepted by the Guardia Civil or Franco's secret police in the vicinity of the Pyrenean border and then arrested and sent to Miranda de Ebro.

As a third methodological tool, it is worth mentioning the consultation of certain archives, detailed in the manuscript, in an attempt to discover the origin of some of the doctors who passed through Miranda de Ebro and their subsequent career and to illustrate, as examples, some biographies as well as to try to reconstruct trends.

8.1.3 Responses to the thesis

As a text that introduces and summarizes the content of the topic, this first article responds categorically to the main research question. The 20th century is the century of the camps. The population displacements resulting from the European wars, first the SCW and then the WWII, make it possible for Miranda de Ebro to continue to operate for many years and experience different waves of internment. First, the camp is the solution of Franco's regime to accommodate prisoners of war, and, years later, to house people who are circulating in the country in a precarious and irregular way. The article shows Miranda de Ebro as a concentration camp of long duration, in which the doctors interned there, with their previous and later life trajectories, have great relevance (e.g. Fig. 9-10).

The foreign doctors who were interned in Miranda de Ebro can be classified into several groups:

- doctors belonging to the IB who suffered harsh repression and long periods of internment;
- doctors who fled from the Nazis because of their nationality, their political position, because they were Jewish or because they had seen their country invaded by the Third Reich;
- Nazi doctors or collaborationists who, being prisoners in the south of France or wanting to escape persecution and possible condemnation by the Allies, chose to flee to Spain across the Pyrenees in an attempt to find, as they did, a friendly country that would facilitate their escape to third countries or a return without consequences to Germany.

The fact that Miranda de Ebro took in all of them and acted as a quasi-neutral intermediate platform from whence they all left for different destinations (in some cases returning to their homeland and in others going into exile) demonstrates the very important role of this confinement centre, a point from which one can reflect on the migrations of doctors in Europe in the years around World War II.

8.2. Urology during the Civil War and under Franco's regime in Spain “Urology under the Swastika”, Angulo J, Gómiz J, Cuerda-Galindo E, Krischel M (2017) Urology during the Civil War and under Franco's Regime in Spain. In: Schultheiss D, Moll F (eds.) Urology under the Swastika. Davidsfonds Uitgeverij, Leuven, 76-93.

8.2.1 Question and relation to the main topic of the thesis

The chapter of the book, framed in the European perspective provided by the study of Miranda de Ebro, focuses on a group of Spanish doctors during and after the SCW, taking as an example the group belonging to the specialty of urology. The article deals with the treatment of urologists by the Franco regime during and after the SCW. The importance of this lies in the fact that a comparison can be made between the treatment of doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro and Spanish doctors who did not support Franco's regime.

8.2.2 Methodology

For this study, we examined articles published in scientific journals, memoirs and, as a novelty, we consulted the archives of the Medical Association of Madrid, where we found, in internal courts, the files relating to the purges through which members of the liberal profession and civil servants (including doctors) had to pass after the end of the SCW in order to show their adherence to Franco's regime and to be allowed to practise. Most of these files had never been consulted before.

8.2.3. Responses to the thesis

This manuscript provides a historical perspective on the political situation before, during and after the SCW and how the internal conflict affected urological physicians.

Especially after the end of the war, doctors, like other liberal professions, were treated according to their position before and during the conflict. They all had to prove their affiliation, their affections and contacts and, according to them, were assessed by tribunals set up for this purpose.

The chapter, as an important part of the dissertation to the extent that it puts into perspective the policy of the Franco regime with its own doctors, proves the existence of discriminatory treatment: some were excluded and outlawed, others were praised and promoted and yet others were ignored and forgotten, left in an administrative limbo. This fact was repeated and reflected in the different treatment that the foreign doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro experienced afterwards, depending on their affections and political affiliations.

8.3. Cuerda-Galindo E, López- Muñoz L, Krischel M, Ley A (2017) 'Study of deaths by Suicide of Homosexuals Prisoners in Nazi Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp', in *PLoS ONE* 12 (4), e0176007.

8.3.1. Question and relation to the main topic of the thesis

The article deals with the inhumane conditions in Nazi concentration camps that sometimes led prisoners to commit suicide. It deals in particular with the research question on the suicides of inmates imprisoned for being homosexuals in the Nazi concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, which operated between 1936 and 1945. There, more than 200,000 people were interned, of whom 1,200 were interned under the "175" crime of homosexuality, among them the Berlin doctor Paul Grundmann, who committed suicide in July 1942. Within the framework of the dissertation, it is considered important to include this article in order to attempt to compare the conditions between the camp of

Miranda de Ebro and a Nazi concentration camp.

8.3.2 Methodology

The archives of the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum and the Arolsen Archives were consulted, as well as the Federal Archives in Berlin and the existing literature in the form of memoirs of homosexual prisoners imprisoned in Sachsenhausen or in other Nazi camps.

8.3.3. Responses to the thesis

Miranda de Ebro is described as a concentration camp. Although at the beginning it was clearly a repressive camp for republicans and members of the IB during the time when it housed most of the foreign doctors, there were no deaths or punishments.

There is a widespread misconception that the Nazis were responsible for starting up and running Miranda de Ebro. This is false. Miranda de Ebro was a Spanish camp, planned and run by Spaniards. From the end of 1940 to early 1941, its purpose was to house foreigners with “irregular” papers. In this article, Sachsenhausen, as an example of a Nazi concentration camp, is shown to be a highly repressive camp in comparison.

This article aims to respond forcefully to the idea that Miranda de Ebro, even though it is officially known as a concentration camp, cannot be compared to the Nazi camps of high repression, violence and even extermination.

In its final years, Miranda welcomed Nazis and collaborationists, most of them escaped from internment camps in the south of France, but also some who had fled directly from Paris, through escape networks in search of the tolerance of Franco’s regime.

8.4. Cuerda Galindo, E. ‘Polish Physicians Held in the Miranda de Ebro “Campo de concentración”’ in *European Journal for the History of Medicine and Health* 2022: published online ahead of print, 1-25.

8.4.1 Question and relation to the main topic of the thesis

From a cross-sectional perspective, the study focuses on the Polish doctors who were interned in the camp of Miranda de Ebro. The focus on this group is due to several reasons:

- After doctors of French nationality, Poles made up the second largest group, which is striking due to the great geographical distance between Poland and

Spain.

- Most of them had Polish citizenship, but were residing in other countries, mainly in France.
- Poland ceased to exist as a sovereign or independent country in 1939 and was the geographical site of the extermination of millions of people.
- After the end of World War II, Poland became part of the Soviet sphere of influence.

8.4.2 Methodology

As with the first article, the methodology is based on the files of the foreign doctors imprisoned in the camp of Miranda de Ebro that are in the AMG. In addition, there are also many other archival sources scattered throughout Europe: in Spain, Poland, Great Britain, France, Austria, Germany and, beyond Europe, in Canada, Israel and the United States of America. These sources are detailed in the material and methods section of the manuscript. Archives and private sources have also been used.

8.4.3 Responses to the thesis

The first is the main hypothesis of the study to show that Miranda de Ebro, as a long-term concentration camp in a neutral country during World War II, constitutes a point of intersection that allows us to reflect on the biographies of foreign doctors, particularly Poles, who were interned there.

Although they all shared the same profession and nationality, the 27 Polish doctors in Miranda de Ebro had a very different religious, political and social background and profile.

In parallel, part of this article answers the fourth research question. It is possible to reconstruct many of the biographies of Polish doctors in Miranda de Ebro, their origin and destination: most of them returned to practise as doctors after the war, regardless of the adversities and difficulties they had to face.

8.5. Physicians in Miranda de Ebro: Franco's foreign policy (accepted in *Acta Historica Leopoldina*)

8.5.1. Question and relation to the main topic of the thesis

This article provides information on the extent to which Franco's government continued to exercise its benevolent neutrality towards the Axis during WWII and the years that

followed. Spain played a pragmatic and changing role during WWII, following the international changes. It allowed foreign doctors who were fleeing from the Nazis to take refuge in Spanish territory. At the same time, Spanish volunteer doctors were fighting in the Soviet Union under the Nazi flag alongside the German army. During WWII, some Spanish diplomats abroad tried to save Jews from being deported and then exterminated with or without the Spanish government's consent.

8.5.2 Methodology

This article is based on previous articles and publications, as well as related literature in the form of memoirs of divisional doctors. It compiles information about the doctors who volunteered for the BD to fight under the Nazi flag on the Soviet front in 1941 and data related to the Spanish diplomats' efforts to save Jews.

8.5.3. Responses to the thesis

This article partially answers the fifth question.

It shows the apparent incoherence of Franco's regime during World War II, which was, in fact, a strategy of surveillance in the international arena. While the regime gave shelter to foreign doctors persecuted by Germany and belonging to the allied and resistant troops within its territory, concentrating them in the camp of Miranda de Ebro, at the same time in the summer of 1941 it allowed and encouraged the voluntary enrolment of some of its own doctors in the BD framed in the 250th division of the German army, who had to swear loyalty to Hitler and fight against the Soviets. In April 1941, Greece was invaded by the Nazis and, with the Nazi sympathizer Serrano Súñer as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the attempts of several diplomats in Athens and Salonica to obtain help for Spanish Jewish citizens in Greece were thwarted by Madrid and these Jews were deported to extermination camps.

The article analyses the situation in Miranda de Ebro and foreign politicians some years later, i.e. in 1944. In the summer of 1944, Allied troops liberated France and some Nazi and collaborationist doctors who had been taken prisoners by the Allies escaped, crossed the Pyrenees clandestinely and arrived at Miranda de Ebro, from whence they were returned to their countries, where they continued their careers.

At the same time, Madrid, whose Minister of Foreign Affairs was now Lequerica, allowed the diplomat Sanz Briz in Budapest to issue Spanish passports, saving thousands of Jews from deportation and ultimate extermination

8.6.Cuerda, E, López-Muñoz, F. 'The Physicians in Sanz Briz's List, "the Angel of Budapest"', in *Neurosciences and History* 2022; 10 (4): 186-189.

9.6.1 Question and relation to the main topic of the thesis

The article focuses on the doctors who, among many others, were saved from deportation in Budapest in the summer of 1944 thanks to the efforts of the Spanish diplomat Ángel Sanz-Briz as an example of the foreign policy of Franco's regime in the last years of WWII.

On 15 May 1944, deportations of Hungarian Jews began, and in less than two months nearly half a million were sent to extermination camps in Poland, some of them doctors. The embassies and legations of the neutral countries in Budapest took measures to protect the Jews in the city. Sanz-Briz, together with his collaborators in the legation, provided letters of protection following the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: at first, to those who claimed Sephardic origins, by virtue of the Royal Decree of 1924, promulgated during the military dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera, and later to any persecuted Jew, passing them all off as Sephardic.

9.6.2. Methodology

This study was carried out using data from the archive of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which there are lists of residents of Jewish origin in Hungary to whom the Spanish legation in Budapest gave protection by issuing them Spanish passports. These data were crossed with the existing data of doctors of Jewish origin in Hungary.

9.6.3. Responses to the thesis

The article provides information on the extent to which the diplomatic world, especially that of the neutral countries, played an important role during WWII.

The idea that Spain during WWII was a neutral country and thus played a secondary or almost insignificant role in the conflict is still present in many media. However, recent publications show the opposite. Spain played a relevant role, in which, besides tolerating Jews and allies in its territory, it allowed the development of diplomatic activities that, although in some cases were initiated in a particular and personal way by various diplomats, did not run up against the express prohibition of the government in Madrid. The article partially answers the fifth question. In 1944, while Spain was saving collaborationist and Nazi doctors in Miranda de Ebro, in Budapest, thousands of kilometres away, it was allowing Jewish doctors to be saved.

9. Conclusions and discussion

(I) The main objective of this paper is to demonstrate that Miranda de Ebro, as a long-distance concentration camp in a neutral country, constitutes a singular point of intersection of histories that allows us to reflect on the migrations and fate of doctors in Europe during the WWII and the surrounding years (Cuerda-Galindo 2022).

However, while highlighting its uniqueness, Miranda de Ebro has to be framed in a political, geographical and temporal context. The camp was opened in the middle of the SCW, in a year in which totalitarian ideologies were already on the move in Europe: four years after the foundation of the Nazi concentration camp of Dachau and more than 13 years after the foundation of the Soviet concentration camp of SLON on the Solovetsky Islands in the White Sea (founded in 1923) and which was the first of the future GULAG network of Soviet forced labour camps.

Until the Battle of the Ebro, in the summer of 1937, no prisoners were taken in the SCW. From 1937 onwards, the army of the so-called national side was overwhelmed by the large number of prisoners of war. The creation of Miranda de Ebro was motivated by the exceptional situation of the massive capture of prisoners. After the end of the Spanish civil conflict, hundreds of penitentiary centres were established in Spain, such as Miranda de Ebro, which was one of many (Molinero 2003). At this time, the *raison d'être* of the camp was that of a prison, in which republicans and International Brigadists were included.

Other European camps, such as those created in the south of France, followed a similar evolution to Miranda de Ebro: the reason for their creation was the extraordinary situation of a displacement of civilians of almost half a million people in "the Retreat" and later the exclusion and captivity of people considered "undesirable". (Lahairie 1989).

The camp of Miranda de Ebro did not evolve, like the camps in the south of France, into a transit-deposit-extermination camp. When Franco's authorities wanted to close Miranda de Ebro in 1940, the justification of the exceptional situation was again applied. The forced displacements of the European population fleeing from the Nazis made Miranda de Ebro again part of the Francoist government's solution to accommodate those people who were in circulation after crossing the Pyrenees illegally and who lacked the corresponding documentation, whether it was a visa, a passport or a transport ticket to leave Spanish territory. The justification for keeping the Miranda de Ebro camp in operation again mentioned the exceptional situation, a position from which it would never waver until its closure in January 1947.

The Miranda de Ebro camp operated for 10 years and gathered foreigners from more than 50 nationalities. Throughout its existence, the reason for its being in operation and the treatment received by those imprisoned there changed: from the repression given to Republicans and International Brigadists, to the internment of fugitives from Nazi-occupied Europe, which was viewed with a certain lack of respect until the camp was overflowing in 1942 and 1943, and to the reception of other refugees from the Allies who were released and sent back to their country of origin within days of their imprisonment (Cuerda-Galindo 2022).

The doctors imprisoned in Miranda de Ebro represented 1% of the total. The medical profession was over-represented: in no country in the world do doctors make up 1% of the general population. In Miranda de Ebro, doctors from the IB, doctors from the Allied side and Nazi or collaborationist doctors sometimes coincided in time and space. The internment of doctors has not only a quantitative but also a qualitative significance. In the 20th century, doctors began to play a preponderant role in armed conflicts and were, together with other military elements such as pilots or mechanics, highly sought after within the army, as well as in civilian life. Doctors as a group are easy to trace, as the existing information on them is easy to track, due to the documents they generated by having to legalize their degrees and diplomas, their needing to be registered, or their inclusion in the registers of doctors in various countries. This information is also very valuable in establishing patterns of exile.

On an academic level, the importance of the existence of this camp contrasts with the scarcity of studies and the scanty and mistaken knowledge about it. The widely spread myth that Miranda de Ebro was a camp created, directed and controlled by the Nazis must be dismantled.

Until recently the site occupied by the Miranda de Ebro camp was poorly signposted, in poor condition and with a few panels with scant information that barely explained what it represented. This has changed in recent years with a memorial centre created by the local authorities.

(II) Who were the foreign doctors who were in Miranda de Ebro?

According to the data found in the AMG, the profession of “doctor” appears in 151 of the more than 15,000 files. The first article answers this question: the doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro reflect the mosaic of nationalities and origins.

The majority were French, which is explained by geographical proximity, and the second largest group was made up of Poles.

Miranda de Ebro was an internment camp for men. When a family was intercepted after crossing the Pyrenees clandestinely, only the males of military age were sent to local prisons (such as Irún or Figueras) and from there transferred by train to Miranda de Ebro. Curiously, their religion was not recorded in the files: for Catholic Spain, the religion professed by the prisoners was irrelevant.

Almost all of the doctors were around 30 years old, so they had previously practised in civilian and/or military life (Cuerda-Galindo 2022).

Some doctors had false names on the documentation they provided on arrival at the camp, sometimes provided by the escape networks. According to his file, one inmate claimed his name was Abraham Lincoln. At other times, the transcription of the name was so difficult that it was very garbled in the file.

The doctors in Miranda de Ebro may have had a common profession, but they differed in their origins, ages, political sensitivities, nationalities, citizenships, religions and social backgrounds. There were International Brigadists from dozens of countries, communists or fighters for the defence of democracy, French, Polish or British fleeing the Nazis and seeking to join the Allied armies in Britain or North Africa, and finally Nazis and collaborationists who had escaped from prisoner of war camps in the South of France.

(III) What did Spain do with its own national doctors after the SCW? Was there any repression of this group?

According to the official documents of the Ministry of Justice of Franco's government, after the end of the SCW on 1 April 1939 and until 30 June 1944, 103 Spanish doctors were executed. (Guerra 2003).

At the end of the SCW, liberal professions such as doctors, lawyers and civil servants had to submit to the judgment of the so-called "political purification tribunals" in order to prove their adherence to the "national" regime already during the military uprising.

Doctors had to go through this tribunal, whether they wanted to practise freely or in public institutions. There was a tribunal in each province and the central tribunal at the Colegio Oficial de Médicos in Madrid. In these administrative processes, it was decided who could be rehabilitated and who had to be punished for their previous behaviour. The committees were made up of Falangists and doctors who had supported Franco's cause.

In order to practise the profession, doctors had to have a certificate of exemption from political responsibility and an endorsement of adherence to the "national" spirit issued by the medical associations of each province (Angulo 2017).

To obtain the certificates, the doctors had to apply for them personally by means of letters addressed to the court and submit testimonies, membership cards of political parties or trade unions and letters of recommendation. Personal and professional quarrels, the desire to occupy the position held by the plaintiff before the SCW, or the rival's desire to overtake him in their scientific and prestigious careers often carried more weight in the court's decision than the reality of the political accusations.

Many doctors were unable to obtain a certificate of competence and never returned to practising medicine, swelling the ranks of the internally exiled.

While Spanish doctors were lost in a long and convoluted administrative tangle to prove their adherence to the "national spirit", the doctors interned in Miranda de Ebro faced similar difficulties trying to prove their origin or to obtain a visa to leave the country. For the Francoist authorities, foreign doctors only had to prove that another country was willing to take them in, while Spanish doctors had to prove their political loyalty.

(IV) Was Miranda de Ebro a concentration camp similar to the Nazis?

The further west the Holocaust fades, the more distant the "bloodlands" become.

The term "concentration camp" refers to facilities in which people are interned. It is unclear whether they were first used by the Spanish in Cuba in the late 19th century or somewhat later by the British imperial armed forces in the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa.

In any case, the conflicts that ravaged Europe in the 20th century resulted in the creation of concentration camps: although the logic behind their creation and their subsequent evolution are different.

To explain this phenomenon, Miranda de Ebro can be compared with two other concentration camps: Rivesaltes, located near Perpignan in the South of France, and Sachsenhausen, near Berlin.

Reason for creation:

Miranda de Ebro was created under the logic of exception when thousands of prisoners fighting on the Republican side were captured in the summer of 1937.

Rivesaltes was created in the same way, when in February 1939, in what was known as *La Retirada*, 440,000 Spaniards, many of them civilians, women and children, crossed the border into France and the French government was surprised and overwhelmed by the large number of people (Boitel 2005).

The Sachsenhausen camp was created in 1934 under the logic of exclusion: undesirable

citizens were interned in the camp: homosexuals, opponents, gypsies or Jews among others (Cuerda 2017).

Evolution:

Miranda de Ebro remained within the logic of exception applied in its creation, acting at times as a repressive element with republicans and International Brigadists. No prisoners were handed over to the Nazis from Miranda de Ebro. (Cuerda-Galindo 2022)

Rivesaltes underwent another evolution. After the German invasion, the Vichy state was created, in which its leader Marshal Petáin spoke of an “internal plot” of Jews, Freemasons, communists and foreigners who had weakened France and left it at the mercy of the Nazis. Centres of internment and repression were established. The Rivesaltes camp was one of them, applying the logic of exclusion and where all these “undesirable” elements were sent. As of the spring of 1942, the camps in France obeyed the objective set by the Nazis, and Rivesaltes became a transit and deportation camp for Jews to be exterminated in the East. In August 1942, the first trains left Rivesaltes for Drancy, from whence the Jewish prisoners were taken to Auschwitz and other camps and exterminated. (Boitel 2005).

The Sachsenhausen camp continued to apply its logic of exclusion.

Degree of repression:

Miranda de Ebro experienced repression in the form of forced labour at the time when brigade doctors, who were considered prisoners of war, were interned. Many of them, together with their Republican comrades, were included in a disciplinary battalion and forced to rebuild the town of Belchite, which had been the scene of great battles. Then, from 1940 onwards and in the years that followed, there were privations: hunger and cold; however, there were no physical punishments, no forced labour and no executions. (Ciechanowski 2005).

The Rivesaltes camp was initially a camp with a low degree of repression, sharing the poor food and sanitary conditions with Miranda de Ebro, but it became a centre of forced deportation from 1942.

The degree of repression in the Sachsenhausen camp, exemplified through the third article of this dissertation, cannot be compared with the repression found in Miranda de Ebro. From the start, the prisoners were mistreated, subjected to medical experiments and executed. (Cuerda 2017).

As previously mentioned, there are myths to dismantle about Miranda de Ebro. There is, for example, a serious error in its German Wikipedia entry that talks about the connection between Miranda de Ebro and the Nazis, even stating that the German, Paul Wizner, was the camp director. Miranda de Ebro was a Francoist camp, with a low degree of repression compared to Nazi camps and the Nazis had nothing to do with its design, construction, organization or administration.

(V) Can biographies of the doctors in Miranda de Ebro be reconstructed? What was their fate? Can it be considered that they received equal treatment?

Throughout these years of research, after consulting many archives and with the help of colleagues and descendants of the protagonists from Miranda de Ebro, we have managed to reconstruct numerous biographies of the doctors who passed through Miranda de Ebro. They can be found in the first and fourth articles that make up this dissertation.

In order to understand the fate of the doctors, it is useful to divide them according to the logic of their imprisonment:

- International Brigadists: the brigade doctors did not cross the Pyrenees clandestinely, but were taken prisoner during the SCW or later; they belonged to disciplinary battalions and were then sent to Miranda de Ebro. Many of them were of Polish and Jewish origin. They spent a long time in the camp until, thanks to international pressure and the overcrowding of the camp at the end of 1942, they were released. Some decided to return to Poland and others went into exile in Great Britain.
- Allied doctors: There were two large groups of Allied sympathizers interned at Miranda: some of French nationality and others of Polish nationality. Those of French nationality had studied in France and had not encountered difficulties in gaining access to a French university and obtaining a licence to practise as a doctor.
In the case of doctors of Polish citizenship, only a few of whom were born in France; their circumstances were different. Already during the 1930s, they had faced in France, for example, a wave of rejection that made it difficult for foreigners to enter university or obtain a licence to practise. In other countries, such as Austria, doctors faced outright anti-Semitism.

After the liberation of Miranda de Ebro, most of the French decided to enlist in the French Allied army and join the troops in North Africa. After the end of World War II, almost all of them returned to France and had more or less successful professional careers.

After being liberated from Miranda de Ebro, some Polish doctors chose to enlist in Jewish units fighting with the Allies, others in the Polish army in exile, and yet others in the French troops. There was no unanimity when it came to choosing their immediate comrade-in-arms, although they all opted for the Allied side.

What happened to both groups at the end of World War II? The Polish doctors had to choose between returning to their country of origin, now a Soviet-controlled Poland, or trying to return to France, a country they already knew. Even before the war, France had already complicated their professional and personal lives with, for example, the successive decrees of denaturalization that deprived them of the possibility of practising, or with the inclusion in lists of professionals to be watched because of their Jewish or foreign status. Faced with this reality, many opted for a second exile (remember that the first had been from Poland to France) and sought refuge in Great Britain and the USA, where many of them, despite the academic and linguistic difficulties, resumed a professional career and their family life. (Cuerda Galindo 2022).

- Nazis and collaborationists: their itinerary was simpler. They even arrived in Miranda de Ebro openly declaring in the interrogations that they had fled from this or that prison camp and that they were asking their “Spanish friends” to repatriate them to their place of origin.

And indeed they were. After a few days of captivity, weeks at most, they were sent by ship to Germany, where they developed successful careers. Only one Belgian doctor, who sought refuge in this way because he was sentenced to death in his own country, was lost in the numerous escape networks to third countries tolerant of the Axis, perhaps following in the footsteps of the German doctor Josef Mengele, who was never arrested. (Cuerda-Galindo 2022).

(VI) In what way did the Franco regime act abroad with regard to doctors during the existence of Miranda de Ebro?

It has already been mentioned throughout this dissertation, and it is a common point to be highlighted in many of the manuscripts that compose it, that there was a change in

criteria in Franco's foreign policy that followed the course of the events of the WWII. One example can be found in the summer of 1941. In July of that year, 43,242 soldiers, of whom 23,442 were volunteers, were sent to the front in the Soviet Union (Gil Pecharromán 2022, pp. 75-83) as part of the BD. The Francoist authorities allowed and instructed the recruitment of volunteers, many of them Falangists. All of them were sent off with honours at Spanish railway stations, crossed German-occupied France and arrived in Bavaria, where they received military training and swore allegiance to Hitler. They joined the German army as the 250th division and wore the German uniform. There were about 200 doctors in it. (Tamburri 2017).

Meanwhile, in 1941 and 1942, 82 foreign doctors arrived in Miranda de Ebro, many of them eager to join the Allied armies fighting against the German army itself, which included the 50,000 Spanish divisionaries.

Although, as explained in the fifth article of this dissertation, the Spanish divisional doctors did not take an active part in anti-Semitic actions and even protected some Jews who worked with them in hospitals in the rearguard, it cannot be overlooked that they gave medical support to the 50,000 soldiers who went on to reinforce the ranks of the army of the Third Reich.

This contradiction reinforces the idea that the Franco regime moved during the war according to its own convenience at the time.

Let us look at another example, taken from the last article that forms the backbone of this dissertation, centred on the year 1944.

In the summer of 1944, Allied troops liberated France and some Nazi doctors or collaborationists who had been taken prisoner by the Allies escaped and crossed the Pyrenees clandestinely. Several of these biographies can be found in the first article of this dissertation. On their arrival in Miranda de Ebro, the sincerity of their statements is striking: they claimed to be Nazis or soldiers of the German army who had escaped and openly requested that they be taken to safety in their country (Germany). These requests were quickly granted and the doctors were repatriated to Germany, where they continued their careers without any problems. (Cuerda-Galindo 2022).

At the same time throughout 1944, the Jews of Hungary were being deported to extermination camps. The embassies and diplomatic legations of neutral countries, including Spain, were not indifferent. At the Spanish embassy in Budapest, the Spanish diplomat Ángel Sanz Briz and his collaborators in the legation joined the rest of the neutral legations in the city to organize "protection houses" for the Jews. Sanz Briz promptly informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the living conditions of the Jews

in Hungary, and finally received the order to issue passports and letters of protection to the Jewish families, taking as a reference a decree of General Primo de Rivera by which Spanish nationality was granted to Sephardic Jews. In mid-November 1944, Sanz-Briz informed Minister Lequerica that he had issued provisional passports to 300 Jews with relatives in Spain and about 2,000 letters of protection to the rest of the Jews who were left in the charge of the embassy. (Cuerda 2022).

Thus, Franco's government was giving refuge to Nazi doctors and collaborationists, while at the same time saving Jewish Hungarian civilians, including doctors, from extermination. Franco's regime had no other criteria than what was easy and practical at the time.

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11. Appendix



Fig 1. Pyrenees, French Valleys





Fig. 2-5. Miranda de Ebro “campo de concentración” 1941, Archivo de la Diputación Provincial de Bruggos (ADPBU)



Dirección
Centro Cívico Raimundo Porres
República Argentina, nº 93 - Tfno. 947349131

Fotografías
CEGES/SOMA, Bruselas
Museo Militar Real de Bruselas
Archivo General de la Administración de Alcalá de Henares.
Fondo del Servicio Exterior en Italia
Fernandez López, José Ángel: 'Historia del Campo de Concentración de Miranda de Ebro (1937-1947)'
Archivo Municipal Miranda de Ebro
Google Maps, 2017

Diseño Gráfico
Departamento Municipal de Diseño



Ayuntamiento de Miranda de Ebro



**CENTRO DE INTERPRETACIÓN
CAMPO DE
CONCENTRACIÓN**
MIRANDA DE EBRO 1937 / 1947



El Campo de Concentración de Miranda de Ebro, de todos los que se construyeron durante la Guerra Civil a lo largo del territorio nacional, fue el que más tiempo permaneció en activo, desde 1937 a 1947.

Fue creado a partir de una Orden del Gobierno de Franco de fecha 5 de julio de 1937 con el fin de albergar a los numerosos prisioneros de guerra procedentes de la toma de Bilbao y del desmoronamiento del frente Norte.



Se emplazó, a las afueras de la ciudad, en unos terrenos requisados a sus propietarios y ubicados junto al río Bayas y a la línea férrea Castejón-Bilbao, en el término conocido como La Hoyada.

Ocupaba una superficie de 42.000 m² y en un primer momento sus dependencias y barracones fueron construidos con materiales pertenecientes al Circo de la familia Corzana, almacenados en la ciudad tras la suspensión de la gira a causa del inicio de la Guerra Civil. Con posterioridad estas primeras construcciones fueron sustituidas por otras más duraderas construidas con adobe.



En la treintena de barracones con la que llegó a contar se hacían, en condiciones inhumanas, más de 65.000 prisioneros de 58 nacionalidades distintas a lo largo de su dilatada historia, que constantemente eran vejados y sufrían maltrato físico y torturas.

Las principales fases en que podemos dividir la vida de este Campo de Concentración, dependiendo del tipo de prisioneros que llegó a albergar, fueron tres. Durante la primera (1937-1944) estuvieron prisioneros republicanos y miembros de las Brigadas Internacionales. En la segunda (1940-1945) se albergaron a internos extranjeros de los países aliados que entraban a España huyendo del avance alemán durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. La tercera etapa (1944-1947) destaca porque en él se instalaron oficiales y soldados alemanes que escapaban del hundimiento del Tercer Reich.

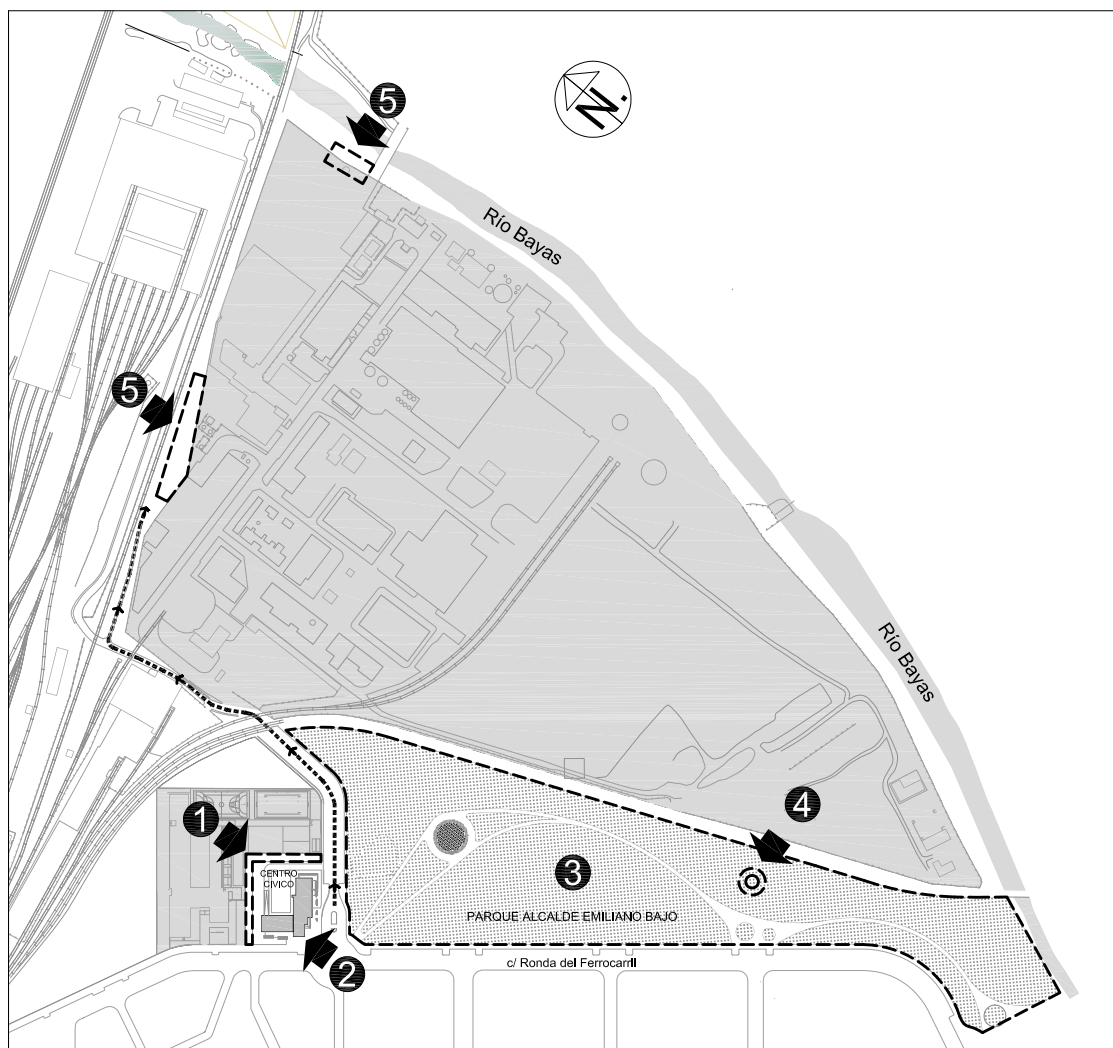


Una vez clausurado, de 1947 a 1953 sus instalaciones se utilizaron como Campamento para Instrucción de Reclutas. Tras ello se desmanteló el Campo de Concentración y a partir de 1960 los terrenos que ocupaba fueron recuperados por sus propietarios y en ellos comenzó la instalación de un complejo fabril.



De esta forma el Campo de Concentración de Miranda de Ebro desapareció totalmente, tanto físicamente como de la memoria de la población. Únicamente perviven pequeños restos que nos recuerdan su existencia: Depósito elevado de agua, Lavadero, Base de Torre de Vigilancia, Restos del muro de cierre perimetral y de un pequeño edificio (Caseta de Guardias), catalogados entre los bienes protegidos del Plan General de Ordenación Urbana a la espera de la concesión del título de Bien de Interés Cultural.

La apertura del Centro de Interpretación del Campo de Concentración en las instalaciones del Centro Cívico Raimundo Porres ha supuesto el reconocimiento a todos aquellos que aquí sufrieron tortura y perdieron su libertad y su vida.



1 Jardín de la memoria

2 Centro de Interpretación

Centro Cívico Raimundo Porres
Avd. Republica Argentina, 3

Horario:

Invierno: L-V 9:00 a 15:00 h. y de 17:00 a 21:00 h.

Verano: L-V 8:00 a 15:00 h.

3 Parque Emiliano Bajo

C/ Ronda del Ferrocarril, 100

4 Monumento y placas conmemorativas a las Víctimas de la Represión Franquista

5 Restos visitables

C/ Industria Río Ródano

Fig. 6-7 Miranda de Ebro Memorial

Apellidos WEISSBERG Paleo
 Nombre Rothold
 Naturaleza DROHOBYCZ (P.) 25-11-1905
 Edad 38 Estado Casado
 Residencia Polonia
 Oficio Médico
 Padres 89 años Guinapan
 Detenido en en la cárcel
 fecha 12 de mayo 1942
 Procedencia Bucarest
 Autoridad que ordenó la baja o el ingreso
 A disposición de
 Fecha de ingreso en Miranda de Ebro 30-11-42

Clasificación
 Oficio médico Dr.
 Prontuario - Desmoralizado
 Refugiado Civil
 Salio el 26-12-1945
 Sr. Bouvier

Fig 8. Personal index card provided by AMG, Spain



Fig. 9. Berthold Weissberg in 1965, courtesy Dominique Piollet.



Fig. 10. "Doctor pirate", courtesy Wayne Jamison

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