

La route vers les camps français : le cas des groupes roumains des Brigades internationales d'Espagne (1936-1939)

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The Road to the French Concentration Camps: the Case of the Romanian Groups from the International Brigades in Spain (1936-1939)

Abstract: Among the volunteers present on the Spanish front, many of them were already under the attention of State Security for communist activity or had been convicted in absentia. The most favourable way to avoid serving the sentence was to leave the country to go to Spain. The illegal status of the communist movement in Romania during the '30s, the acts of oppression made by the authorities against the members of the Communist Party of Romania (PCdR) and the desire to keep alive the ideal of the fight against international fascism, all these aspects have contributed to the decision of joining the republican army of the Popular Front in Spain, partaker in the Civil War.

The presence of a political respondent of the PCdR assumed the Comintern's strategy to strengthen its organizational structures on the front, through which contacts were made between the combatants and the communist leaders in Paris. Information on the social background and biographies that allowed a better understanding of those coming from countries such as Romania or France to fight against the "fascist enemy" on the Spanish front, represented relevant sources for the structures of the Comintern.

After the opening of the French borders, the pullback of the volunteers on French territory had occurred at the same time with the tough battles fought by the Republican troops on their way to the north of Spain. The mood of the volunteers was the main concern of the policy makers commissioned by the Comintern. The meeting of prisoners coming from the camps of Saint-Cyprien and Argèles in a camp, Gurs, marked an important moment in the organization of the Romanian volunteers in one group.

Keywords: Civil War, the Comintern, communist movement, concentration camp, Romanians.

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