

LARRIBITE, Pierre
France Documentation Project
French
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Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview, Pierre Larribité talks about witnessing the events in the camp of Gurs during the time of World War II. He was chosen for this interview due to the close distance between the camp and the farm he lived on. Larribité describes the organization and the facilities of the camp and life and daily routine there. In addition, he remembers some personal stories related to inmates and his family.

[01:] 00:48:00 – [01:] 07:02:00

He comments on his personal and professional background; talks about dealing with the subject of “Gurs” in his former function as mayor; discusses the duration of the construction of the camp, the different types of inmates and the location of the camp; comments on his watching people from outside the barbed wire; focuses on the role of the mobile units in the guarding of the camp; talks about the gender of the inmates; discusses the visiting rights for family members of the inmates; describes the arrival and the lining up of the visitors; comments on the status of the camp as a transit and internment camp; talks about inmates trying to escape over the barbed wire; focuses on the restaurants located across from the camp, their location, customers, owners and fate after the war; comments on correspondence and communication between people from inside and outside the camp.

[01:] 07:03:00 – [01:] 12:45:00

He discusses the duties of the Spanish inmates in administration and maintenance of the camp; comments on the location of his home close to the south entrance of the camp; focuses on how the civil guards were armed; talks about the structure of the blocks and the function of the facilities in the camp; remembers a story in which a woman rode hundreds of kilometers by bike to visit her husband in the camp; comments on his contact with inmates and visitors; talks again about the gender of the inmates; focuses on the status of the camp during the war and the fate of the inmates after liberation; discusses the arrival of Jewish women from Austria and Germany in 1940.

[01:] 12:46:00 – [01:] 22:14:00

He talks about naturalization; comments on the duration of the stay of Jewish families; discusses the departure of the Jews; comments on Jewish marriages with Spanish people; focuses on the history of his brother’s illness, describes the disease, the diagnosis and

consulting a German doctor named **Mayer** [**Meier; Maier; Mayr**]; discusses the origin of doctor Mayer, and his daughter marrying a local farmer and converting to Catholicism; focuses on the duration of the stay of Mayer's daughter in the town; talks about [*another?*] Jewish doctor not being allowed to perform surgery on his brother; comments on the arrival of German Jews brought to Gurs in trucks; discusses the living conditions of the Jews during the cold winter, without heating or windows; talks about the water supply for the Jewish inmates and the number of people living in one barrack.

[01:] 22:15:00 – [01:] 36:07:05

He comments on the contact between people from inside and outside the camp; focuses on his contact with the inmates after the arrival of the Jews; focuses on the entry and exit permission for the inmates and discusses their freedom of movement; comments on the smuggling of food into the camp and visiting rights; talks about the cultural events, music performances and art; focuses on the transfer of inmates from Rivesaltes to Gurs; discusses the construction of barracks for the guards and the facilities in those barracks; comments on the organization of Gurs after the arrival of people from Rivesaltes; focuses on the foundation of a school, the origin of the teachers and students and the organization of the timetable; talks again about Jews and visiting rights; comments on his education and professional career; remembers a story in which two Austrians were staying at his house for a couple of days in 1940, hearing of them and seeing them after years; focuses on their professions and their fate after leaving his house; mentions the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Box 1, Tape 2

[02:] 00:56:09 – [02:] 06:38:00

He mentions the name of one of the Austrians, Leo **Schild** [**Schildt; Schmied**], an Austrian writer; comments on the arrival of trains with German inmates; discusses the background and the origin of the inmates; focuses on several stories of inmates, their routes of emigration, the reasons for their internment and their later naturalization; analyzes the reasons for persecution and internment; focuses on the location of several camps, such as Mauthausen, Struthof and Poitiers; mentions Mr. **Johanneau** [**Johannot; Johannau**], a political prisoner in Gurs; focuses on the Nazis looking for Austrians and Germans who volunteered for the International Brigades; discusses these volunteers being taken to Mauthausen; comments on the fate of Spanish inmates in Mauthausen.

[02:] 06:39:00 – [02:] 19:52:23

He talks again about the Jewish inmates in Gurs and their deportation to extermination camps; discusses his ignorance about the deportations; focuses on other camps for collaborators in the French region of Basses-Pyrénées; comments on the barrack in which the Jews might have been rounded up before the deportation; discusses his entering this

barrack once; he focuses on the life in the camp after the deportations; talks about the closing down of the camp of Gurs; mentions the involvement of the French railway system, "Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français," (SNCF), and the public authority in charge of maintenance of buildings and ground facilities, "Ponts et Chaussées," (public works); comments on his not going to the camp after the liberation; discusses the cemetery, its administration and status during and after the war; remembers giving a tour to students on the occasion of a memorial for the inmates of Gurs and copying documents for them; discusses the unjustified enrichment of people through the camp; focuses on the itinerant grocers and their products at the time of the war; talks about his personal impressions of life during the time of the war and in the neighborhood of a camp like Gurs.