

Koldobika López

The Spanish Civil War in
the Basque Town of Barakaldo
ELEVEN MONTHS OF RESISTANCE

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Translated by Maria Dolores Power



Koldobika López Grandoso



MARIA DOLORES POWER

The translator: Maria Dolores Power (née Jones Suñé).

Although born in London, Maria Dolores lived in Bilbao for most of her first 8 years, so that her mother tongue is Spanish. She then lived and was educated in England. Maria Dolores studied languages at Trinity and All Saints Colleges, Department of Education of Leeds University, specializing in Spanish. Part of her training was at Madrid University. She is now retired, a grandmother and lives in Gloucestershire. She continues to teach Spanish to the local U3A.

M^a Dolores maintains close ties with her family on her mother's side in Bilbao. Her mother Josefina Suñé came on the *SS Habana* as an *auxiliar*, an adult helper for the nearly 4,000 refugee children who came to Britain from the Basque Country during the Civil War.

Her father John Jones was a former merchant navy officer who was involved in taking food to the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War. Later he graduated from Leeds University as a linguist and went on to become a lecturer.

M^a Dolores' parents met in Hereford at one of the *colonias*, as the group homes of Basque refugees were called.

More recently M^a Dolores became involved with the BCA'37 UK - the Association for the UK Basque Children, whilst writing about the life of her mother.



KOLDOBIKA LÓPEZ GRANDOSO

The author was born in Barakaldo in 1978, and after studying at the Ibaibe Community School and the Beurko Institute, he graduated in History at the Basque University UPV/EHU. Since 2006, he has been teaching at secondary and baccalaureate level at the school La Inmaculada M.S.J.O. in Barakaldo.

He was part of the Committee for the Recovery of the Historical Memory of Barakaldo.

Since his university days, he has been researching the events connected directly to the Civil War in Barakaldo.

He has published works collaborating closely with various communication links and publications whether local or online; K Aldizkaria, Herrikolore, Barakaldo Digital and Ezagutu Barakaldo.



The Spanish Civil War in the Basque Town of Barakaldo: Eleven Months of Resistance is a book that attempts to reconstruct the events which took place between July 1936 and June 1937 in this industrial town. The history begins with Barakaldo during the Republican period and continues through to the first years of the post-war era.

Facts and figures have been presented that have never before been published, forming a global work that will seek to clarify a number of enigmas such as the surrender of Barakaldo without a single shot being fired and the handing over of the factories to the enemy intact. More than 600 people died during the war in Barakaldo who were from the town or directly connected to it. Barakaldo was attacked from the air more than 18 times causing the loss of life of 57 people. The number of children evacuated was 1,180. Many of these children did not return until much later and many others remained in the countries that had taken them in.

The location and industrial nature of Barakaldo was of greatest importance and may have been one of the main reasons for the defeat of the Republicans when the town fell into the hands of the Francoist troops on the 22nd June 1937.

This book is the culmination of more than 14 years of research. Twenty-seven testimonies, newspapers of that time, documents, archives and books helped the author bring these events in Barakaldo to our attention.

Lastly, this work has various appendages with the names of the fallen in the war and at the beginning of the post-war era, lists of evacuated children, etc.

“The war began in full swing of the Fiestas del Carmen. (...) As many witnesses recall, the voice of the mayor Eustaquio Cañas sounded from the loudspeakers in the Plaza del Carmen, explaining that there had been a coup d’état but that it was all under control (...). After the intervention of the mayor, Fueros Avenue began to fill with trucks and groups of people that were setting out tables and chairs all along it in order to organise the voluntary enlistment of the young men of Barakaldo”.

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