

Finn Iunker

**Walter Benjamins død i Portbou**

Libretto

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*Librettoen inngikk i et operaprojekt av og med Bernhard Bornstein, Finn Iunker, Mikkel Fjeld Skorpen, Geir Strande Syrrist og John Wilbite, og hadde premiere på Kunsthøgskolen i Oslo 16. september 2017 under Ultima-festivalen.*

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*Marseille, september 1940*

## ARTHUR KOESTLER

The miracle of escape. Those  
who crossed the Pyrenees.  
Some were arrested by the Spaniards  
and sent back to France.  
Some were handed over to Gestapo.

Suicides.

Walter Benjamin, my neighbour in Paris,  
one of the most bizarre and  
witty persons I have known.  
He shared what he had with me,  
sixty-two tablets of morphium.

*Arthur Koestler: / Fluktens mirakel. De / som krysset Pyreneene. / Noen ble arrestert av spanjolene / og sendt tilbake til Frankrike. / Noen ble utlevert til Gestapo. // Selvmord. // Walter Benjamin, min nabo i Paris, / en av de merkeligste og / smarteste menneskene jeg har kjent. / Han delte det han hadde med meg, / sekstito morfintabletter.*

Pyreneene, 25. september 1940

WALTER BENJAMIN

Wissen Sie, diese Aktentasche ist  
mir das Allerwichtigste. Ich darf sie  
nicht verlieren. Das Manuskript  
muss gerettet werden. Es ist wichtiger  
als meine eigene Person.

LISA FITTKO

Benjamin faltered.  
José and I took him between us,  
with his arms on our shoulders  
we dragged him and the bag up the hill.  
He breathed heavily and kept squinting  
in the direction of the black bag.

*Walter Benjamin: / Denne vesken er / det viktigste jeg har. Jeg kan / ikke miste den. Manuskriptet / må bli reddet. / Det er viktigere / enn jeg er. // Lisa Fittko: / Benjamin klarer ikke mer. / José og jeg tok ham mellom oss, / med armene på våre skuldre / dro vi ham og vesken oppover åsen. / Han pustet tungt og skjelt hele tiden / i retning av den svarte vesken.*

Portbou, 25. september 1940

THEODOR W. ADORNO

Nach einer furchtbar anstrengenden Fußreise  
sind die Flüchtlinge in Portbou eingetroffen.

ANONYM

Aber seit dem 22. September dürften staatenlose  
Personen nicht durch Spanien reisen.  
Sie müssten zur Grenze zurück.

THEODOR W. ADORNO

Sie erbaten sich eine Nachtruhe.  
Während dieser Nacht  
hat Walter Morphium genommen.

*Theodor W. Adorno: / Etter en fryktelig anstrengende reise til fots / ankom flyktningene til Portbou. // Anonym: / Men fra og med 22. september fikk ikke papirløse / personer reise gjennom Spania. / De måtte tilbake til grensen. // Theodor W. Adorno: / De ba om å få hvile ut en natt. / I løpet av denne natten / tok Walter morfin.*

Portbou, 26. september 1940

WALTER BENJAMIN

Dans une situation sans issue,  
je n'ai d'autre choix que d'en finir.  
C'est dans un petit village dans les Pyrénées  
où personne ne me connaît  
ma vie va s'achever.

*Walter Benjamin: / I en situasjon uten utgang / har jeg ikke annet valg enn å gjøre det slutt. /  
Det er i en liten landsby i Pyreneene, / hvor ingen kjenner meg, / at livet mitt skal ende.*

Portbou, 28. september 1940

ANDRÉS FREIXA

Entierro de D. Benjamin Walter (q.e.p.d.). Por 5 años  
de alquilar de un nicho en el Cementerio Catolico: 75 pesetas.

ENRIQUE ESPADALÉ

Importe por una caja mortuoria para el difunto: 275 pesetas.  
Por conducir el difunto al sementerio, seis hombres: 30 pesetas.  
Por el trabajo del albañil de cerrar el nicho: 8 pesetas.

ANDRÉS FREIXA

Obra de la Iglesia, derechos parroquiales, monaguillas: 12 pesetas.  
Una misa en sufragio del difunto: 6 pesetas.

*Fader Andrés Freixa: / Begravelse for herr Benjamin Walter, hvil i fred. For leie av nisje i 5 år /  
på den katolske kirkegården: 75 pesetas. // Snekker Enrique Espadalé: / Pris for en kiste til den  
avdøde: 275 pesetas. / For transport av den avdøde til kirkegården, seks menn: 30 pesetas. /  
For murerens arbeid med å lukke nisjen: 8 pesetas. // Fader Andrés Freixa: / Kirkens  
omkostninger, prestegebyr, korgutter: 12 pesetas. / En messe, lest til minne om den avdøde: 6 pesetas.*

Portbou, 28. september 1940

KOR

Libera me, Domine,  
de morte aeterna,  
in die illa tremenda:  
Quando coeli  
movendi sunt et terra.  
Dum veneris  
iudicare saeculum per ignem.

*Fri meg, Herre, / fra evig død, / på den fryktelige dagen: / Når himmelen / og jorden skal riste. / Når du kommer / for å domme verden med ild.*

Kilder

Theodor W. Adorno, brev til Gershom Scholem datert 8. oktober 1940, i Erdmut Wizisla (red.), *Begegnungen mit Benjamin*, Leipzig 2015, s. 370

Anonym, brev datert 3. oktober 1940, i Erdmut Wizisla (red.), *Begegnungen mit Benjamin*, Leipzig 2015, s. 345

Enrique Espadalé, snekker, regning til Juzgado municipal de Port-Bou datert 2. oktober 1940, i Ingrid Scheurmann, *Neue Dokumente zum Tode Walter Benjamins*, Bonn 1992, s. 51 (dok. 7)

Lisa Fittko, «The Story of Old Benjamin», i Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Frankfurt am Main 1991, bd. V/2, s. 1184–1194; s. 1190

Lisa Fittko, *Mein Weg über die Pyrenäen*, München (1985) 2015, s. 143

Andrés Freixa, prest, kvittering for mottatt refusjon av utlegg fra Sr. Juez Municipal de Port-Bou datert 1. oktober 1940, i Ingrid Scheurmann, *Neue Dokumente zum Tode Walter Benjamins*, Bonn 1992, s. 49 (dok. 6)

Arthur Koestler, *Scum of the Earth*, London 1941, s. 246 f.

*Libera me* ble lest til minne om den avdøde (skjønt antagelig før begravelsen den 28. september); det fremgår av Lorenz Jäger, *Walter Benjamin. Das Leben eines Unvollendeten*, Berlin 2017, 341 f.

Walter Benjamin, brev datert 25. september 1940, i Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Briefe*, Frankfurt am Main 1995–2000, bd. VI, s. 483

**Tillegg**



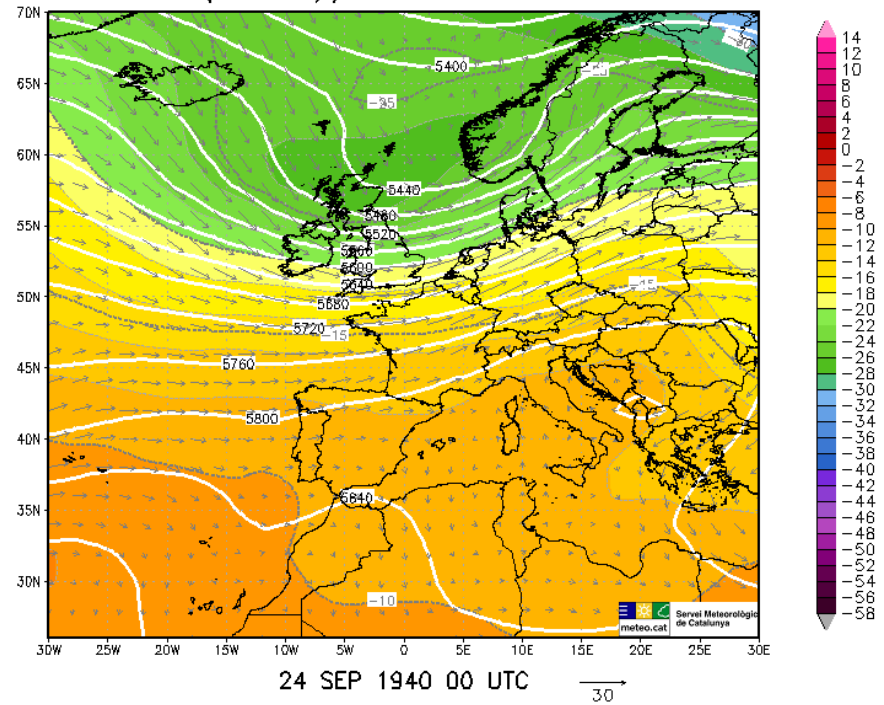
I forbindelse med et annet arbeid om Walter Benjamins død utarbeidet Servei Meteorològic de Catalunya (Barcelona) en rekke værkart for meg, med målinger av henholdsvis 500 hPa, 850 hPa og trykk ved havoverflaten, på fire forskjellige tidspunkter (00, 06, 12 og 18 UTC), og på fire forskjellige datoer (24., 25., 26. og 27. september 1940), i alt 48 kart (reanalyser). En stor takk til Montserrat Busto i Navines ved Servei Meteorològic de Catalunya.

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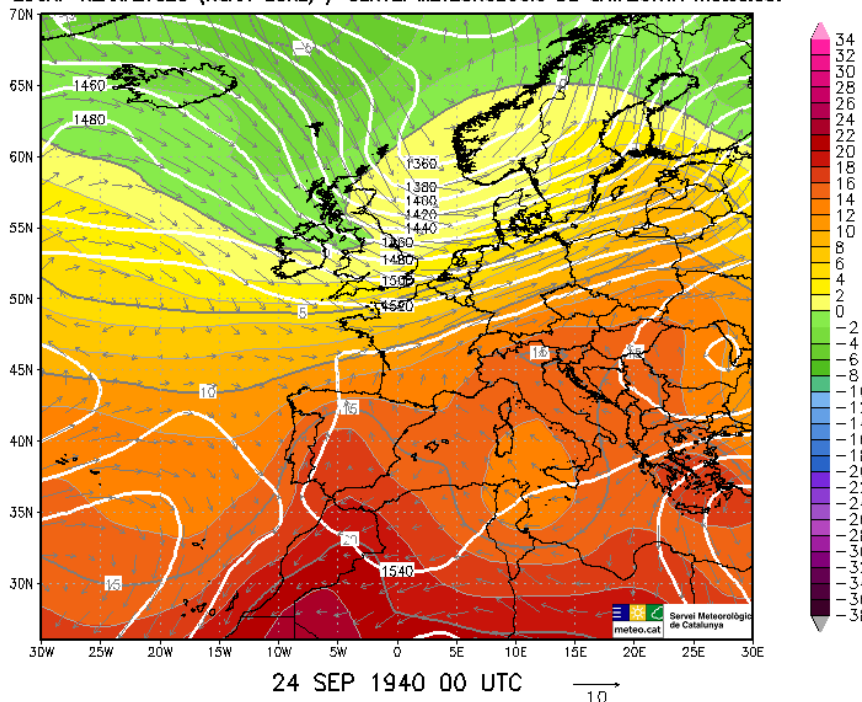
Lisa Fittko og Walter Benjamin møttes i Port-Vendres 24. september 1940 og dro til Banyuls-sur-Mer samme dag sammen med Henny Gurland og sønnen Joseph. De fire la i vei om ettermiddagen for å teste ruten. Benjamin ble værende i fjellene mens de tre andre returnerte til Banyuls for å få en god natts søvn. Neste dag gikk alle fire over fjellet. Det må ha vært fryktelig anstrengende, med høye temperaturer og høy luftfuktighet. Da de kom til toppen, returnerte Lisa Fittko til Banyuls for å hjelpe flere flyktninger. Benjamin, Gurland og Joseph gikk ned til Portbou og fikk følge av fire kvinner: Carina Birman og søsteren Dele, Sophie Lippmann og Grete Freund. Ved ankomst i Portbou ble de anholdt og fikk vite at de ville bli returnert til Frankrike. I løpet av natten inntok Benjamin en mengde morfintabletter. Neste dag, den 26. september, ble Birman og søsteren, Lippmann og Freund ført til grensen. Franske og tyske offiserer stod og ventet på dem. Et plutselig og voldsomt uvær gjorde at de måtte dra ned igjen til Portbou. De fikk nå innreisevisum til Spania, slik at de kunne fortsette til Barcelona og videre til Lisboa. Walter Benjamin døde i Portbou om kvelden den 26. september 1940.

GEPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 500 hPa

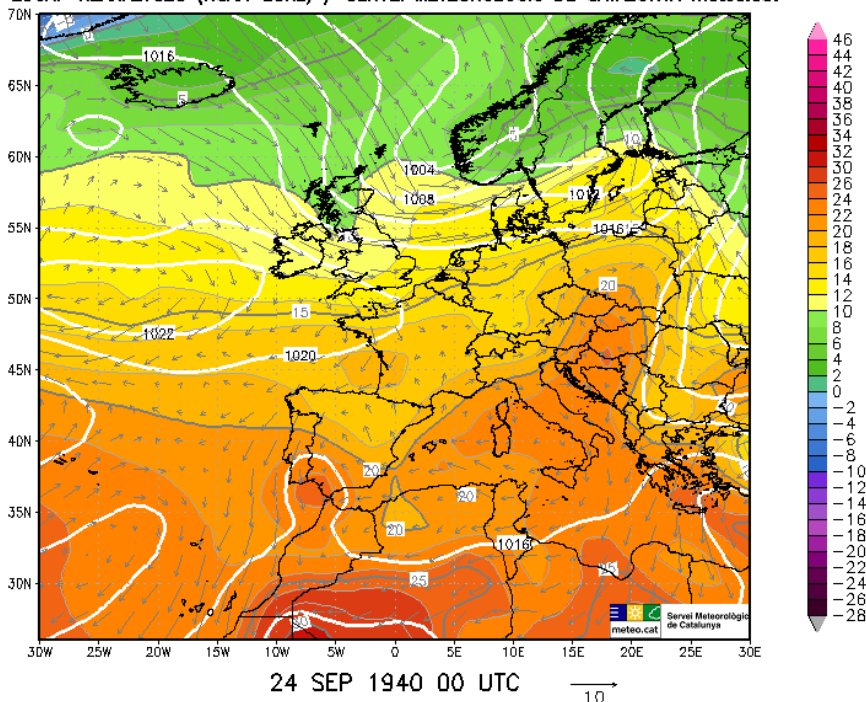
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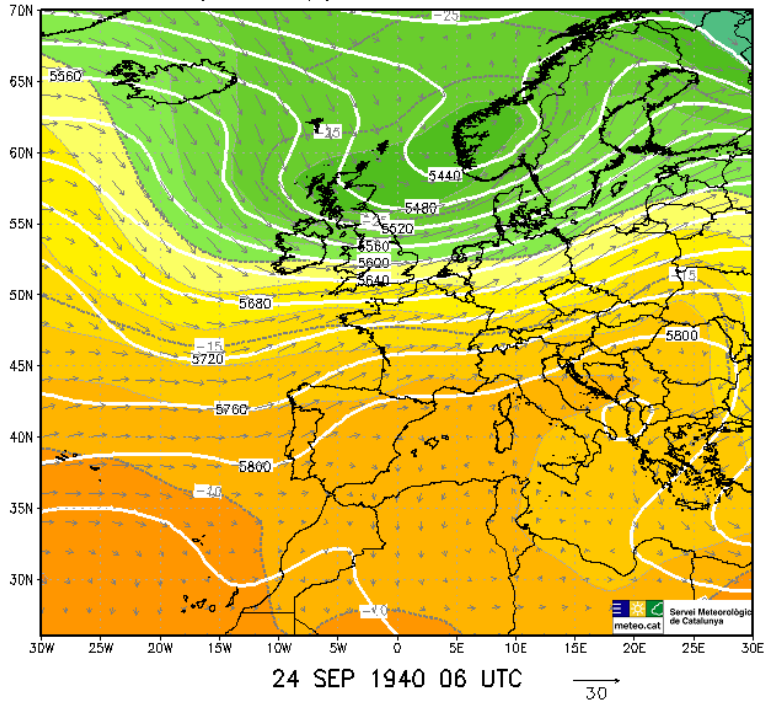
GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 850 hPa  
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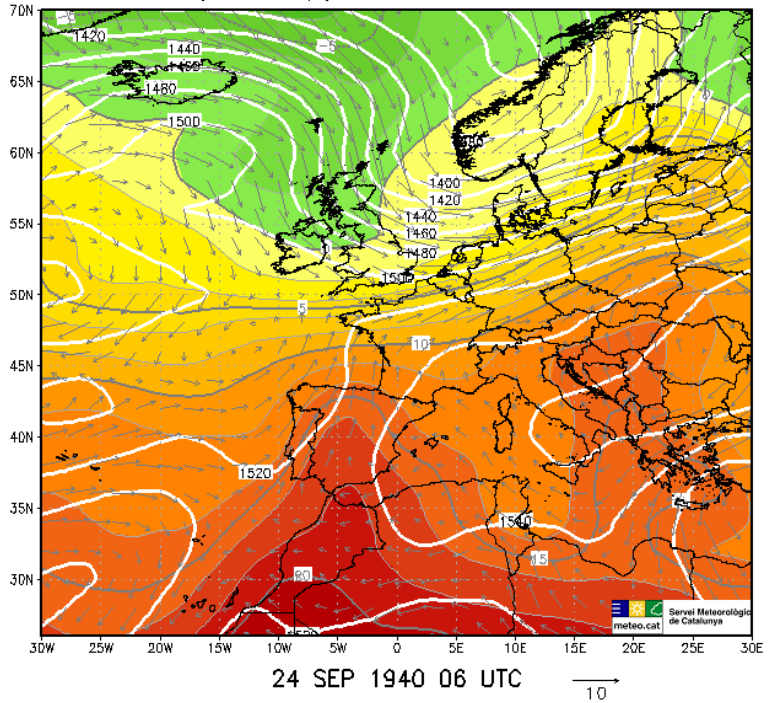
MEAN SEA LEVEL PRESSURE (hPa), 2-m TEMPERATURE (°C) & 10-m WIND (m/s)  
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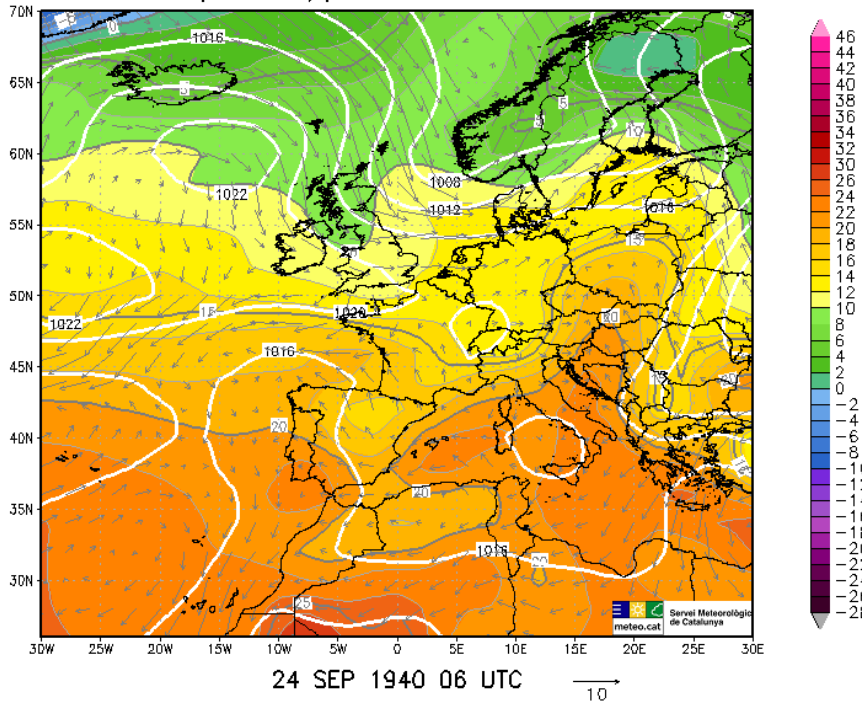
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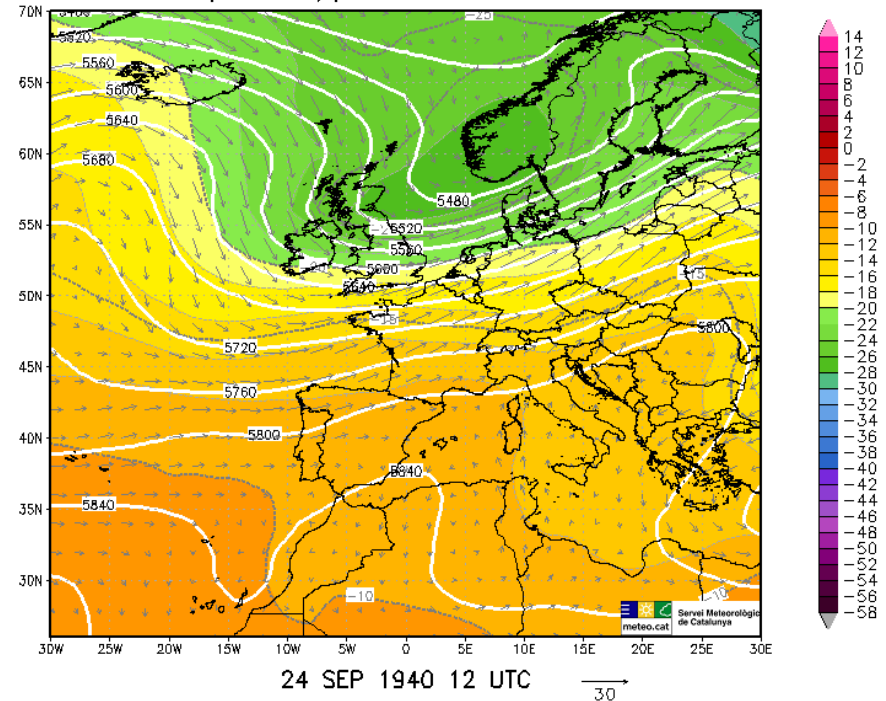
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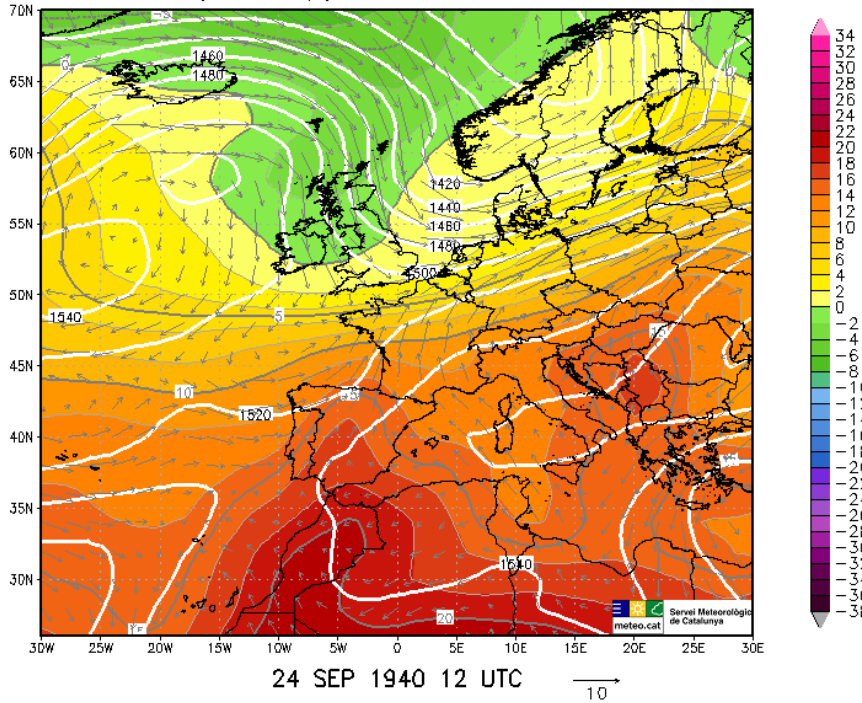


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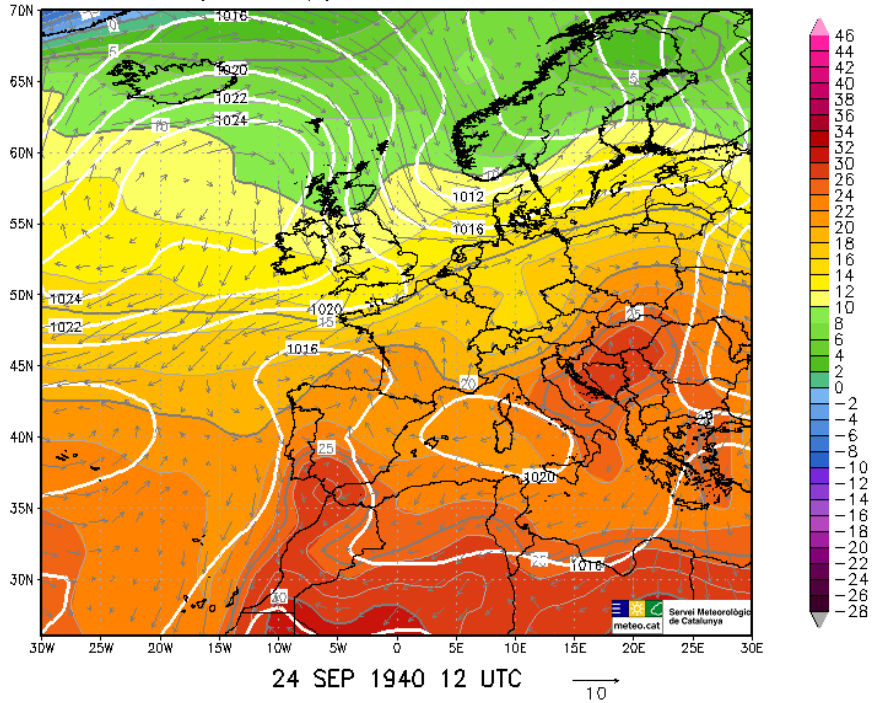




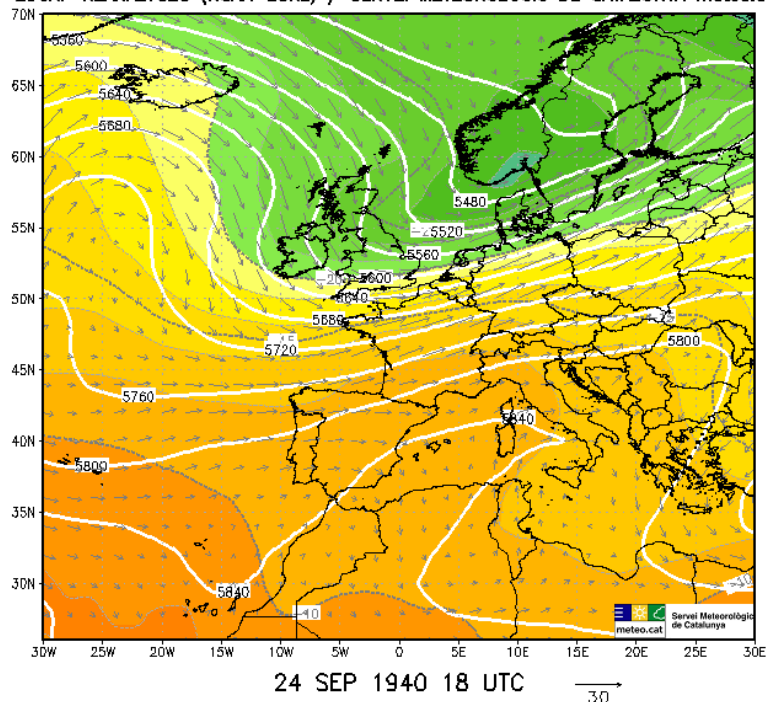
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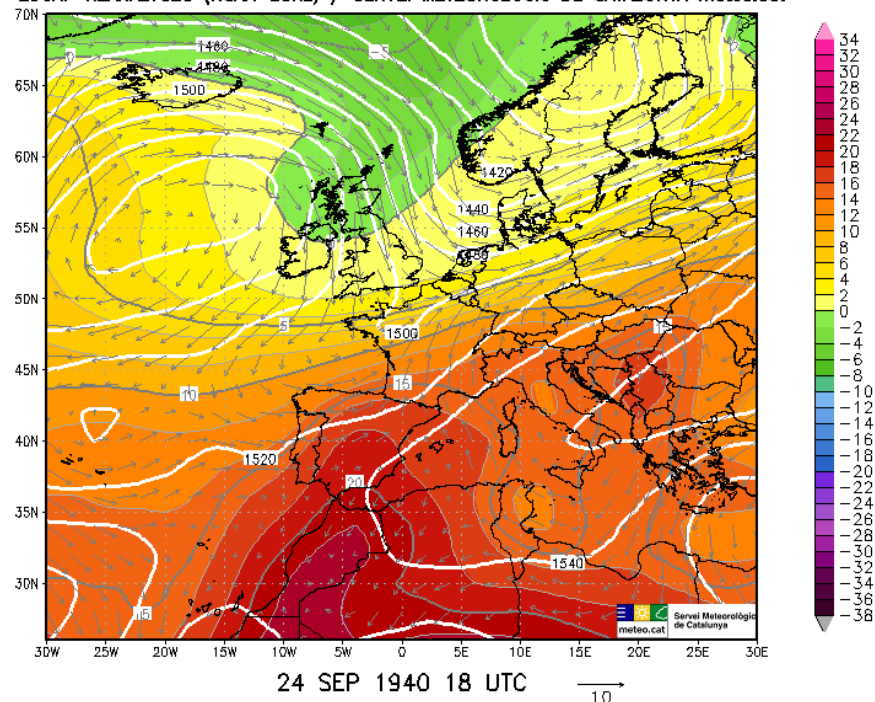
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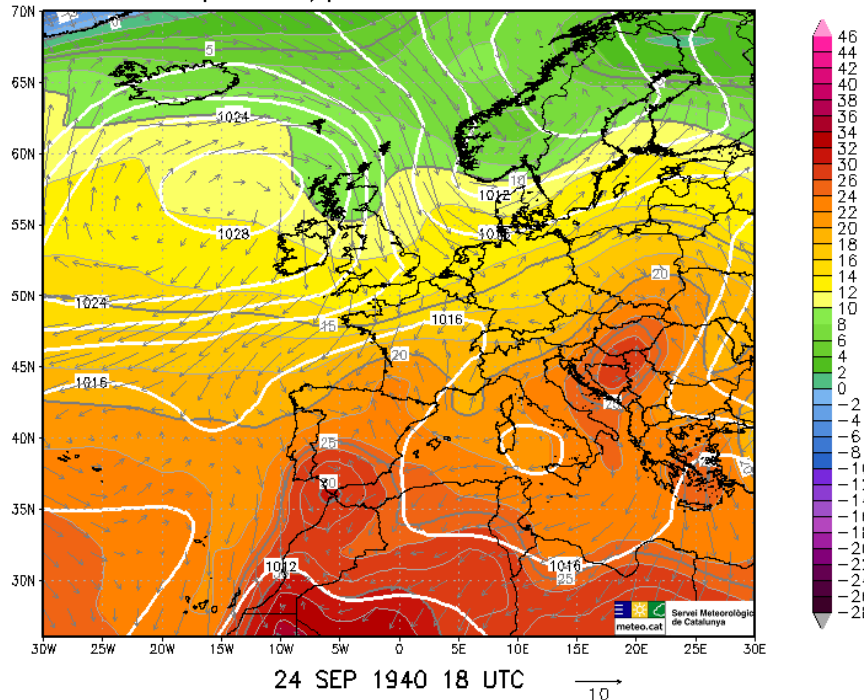
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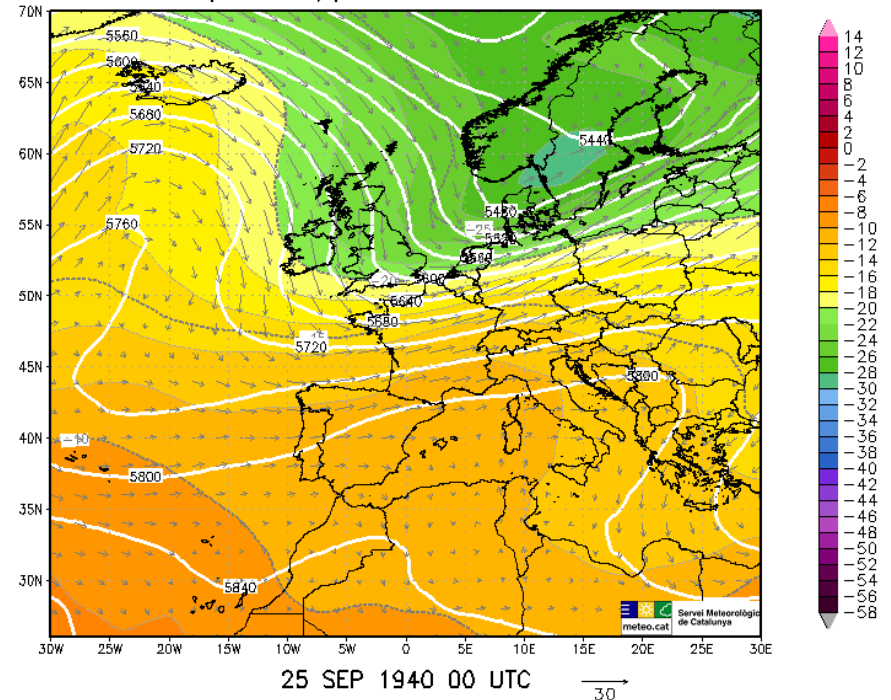
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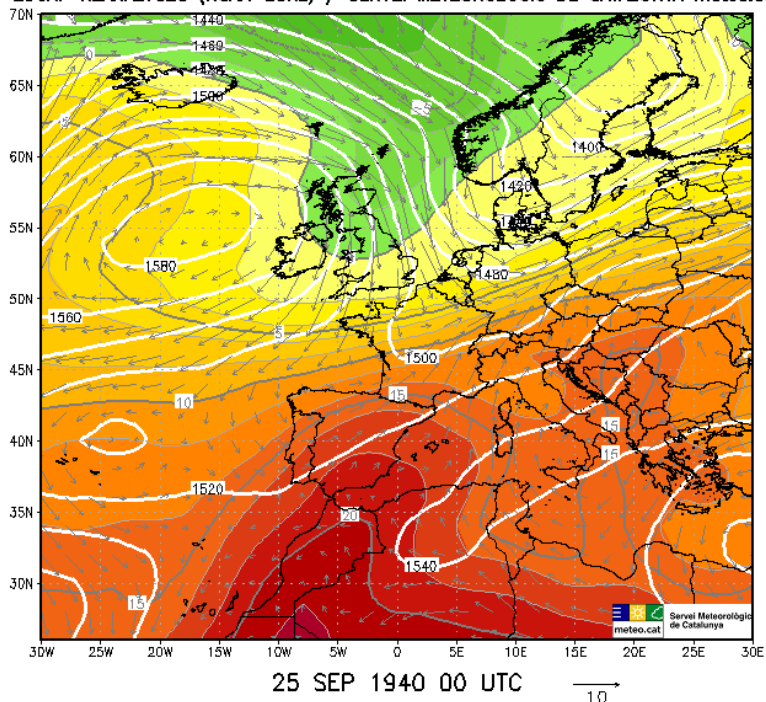


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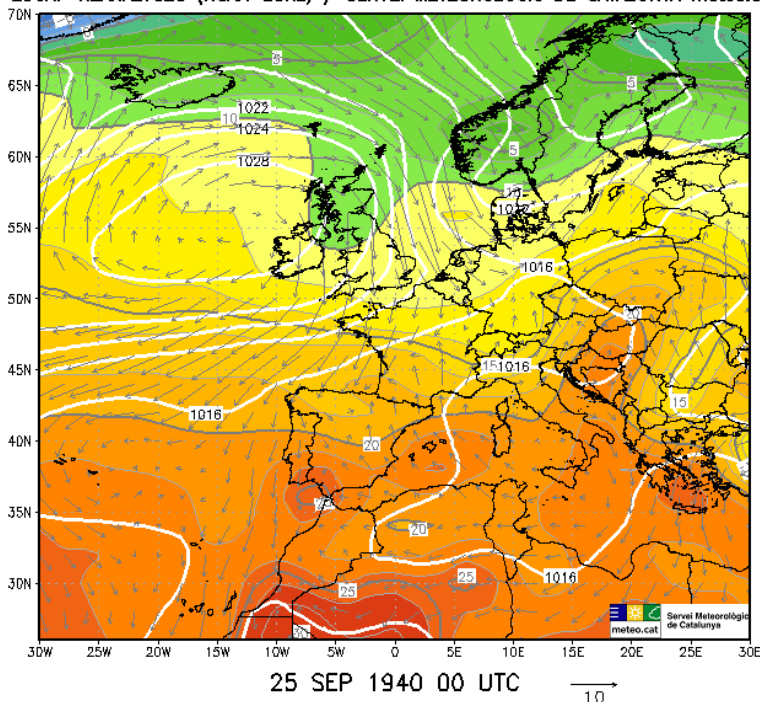




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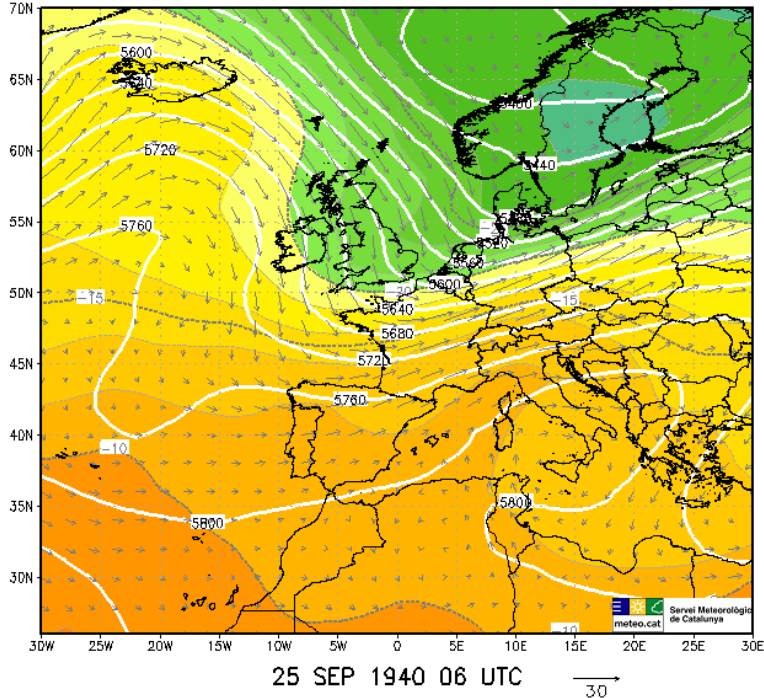


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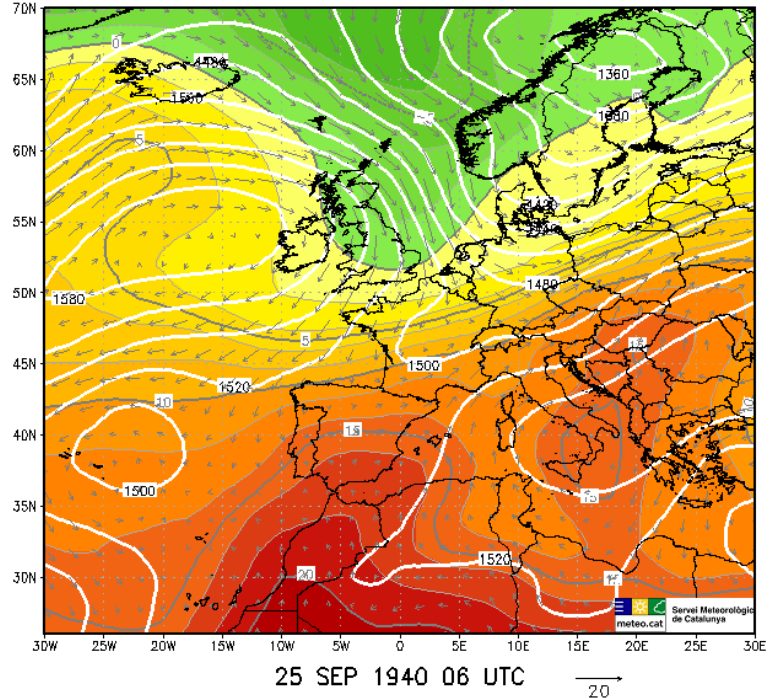
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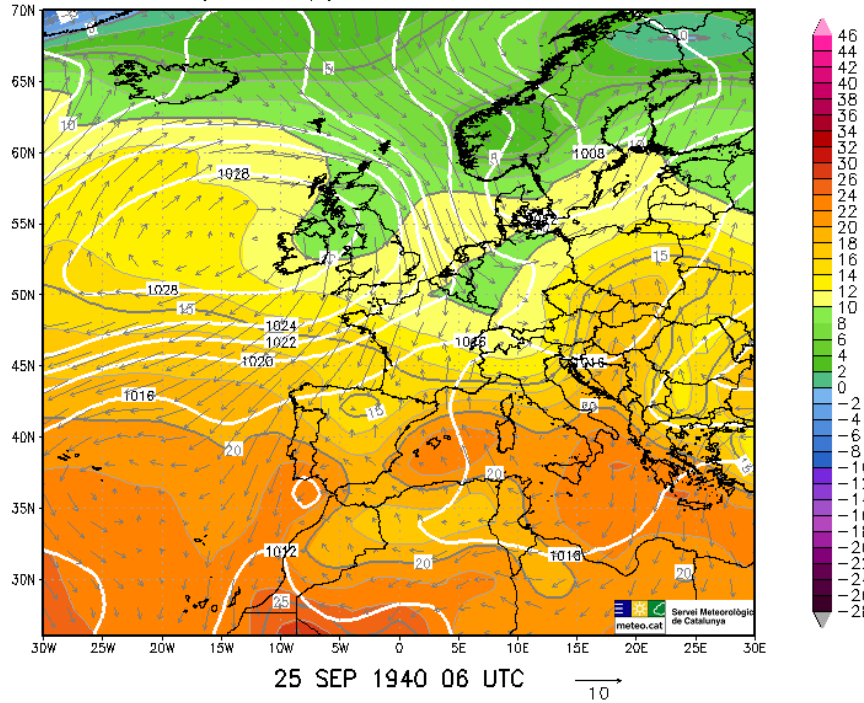


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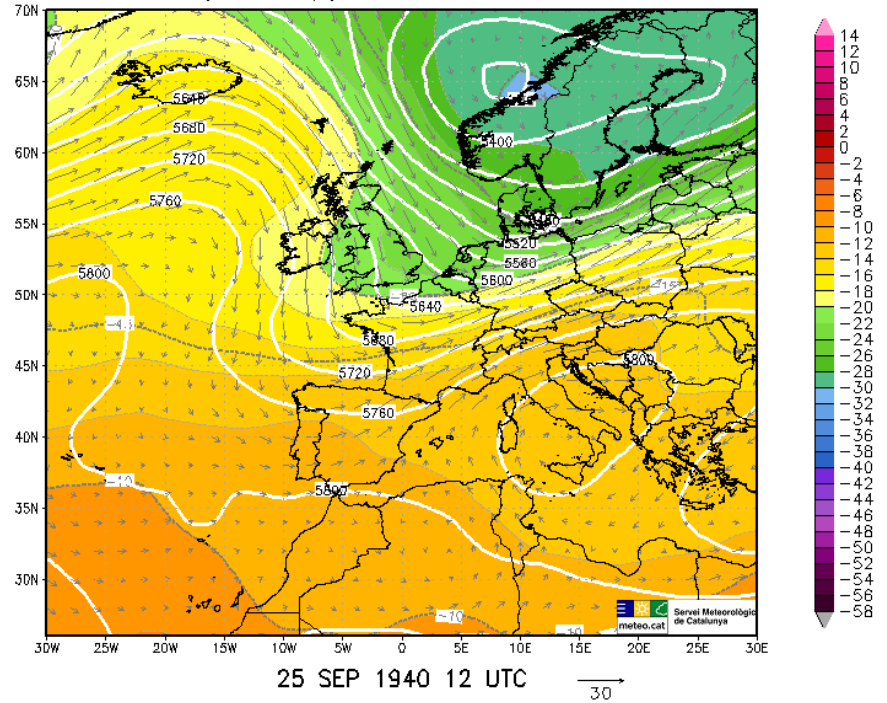
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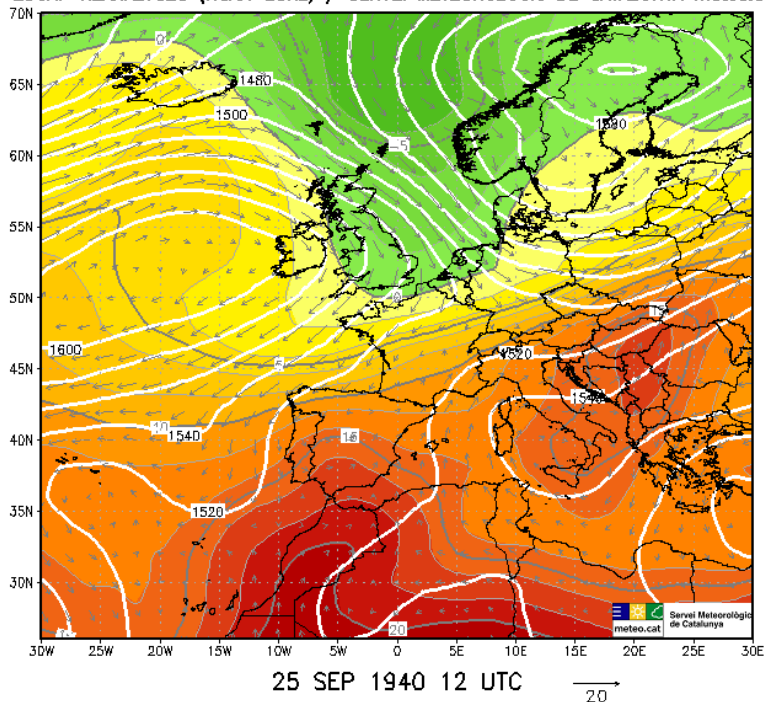
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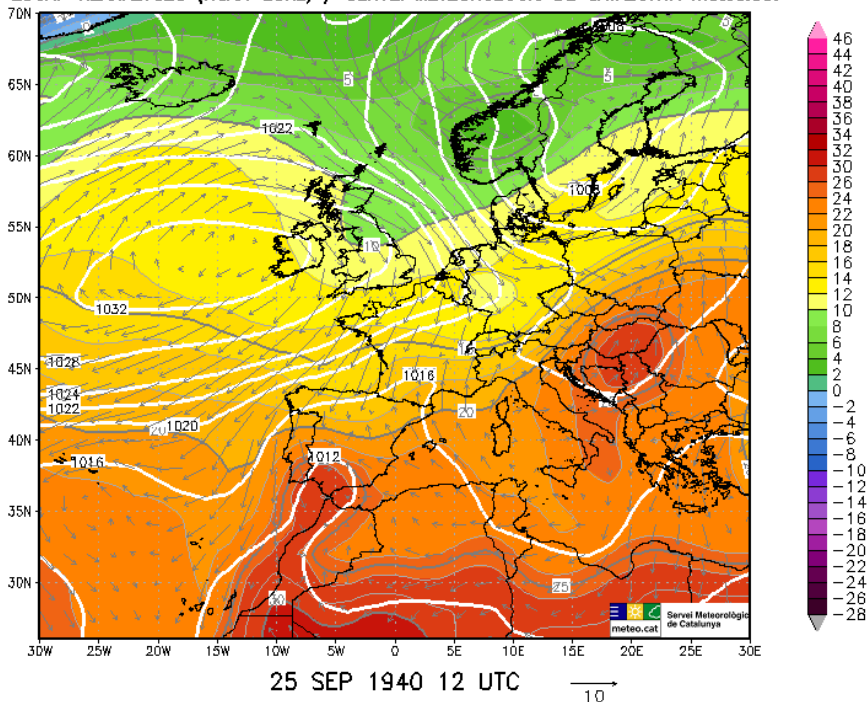
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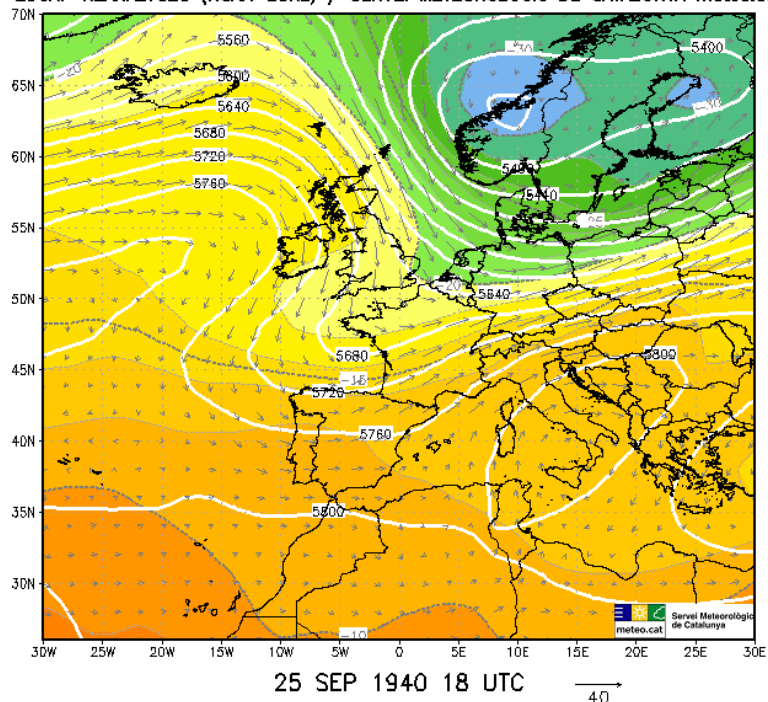
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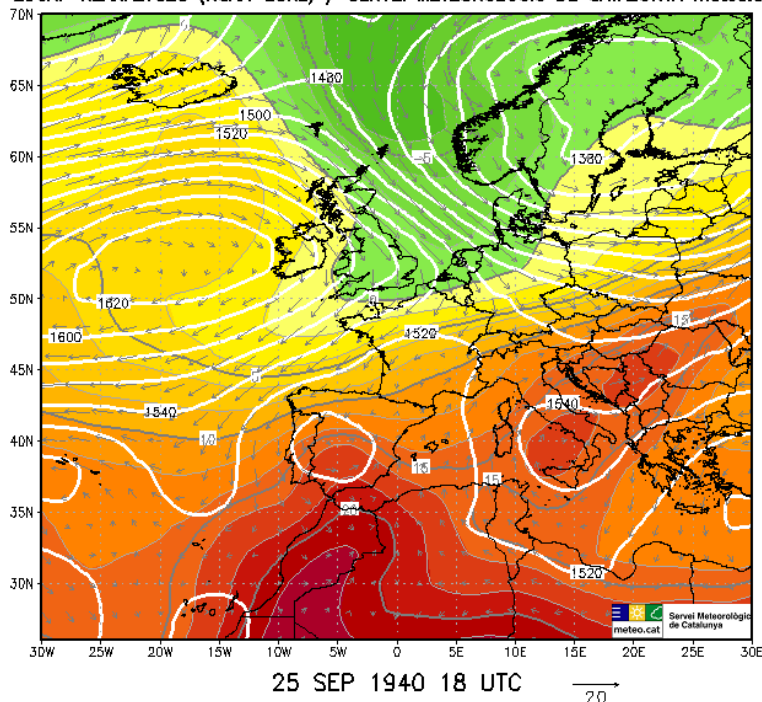
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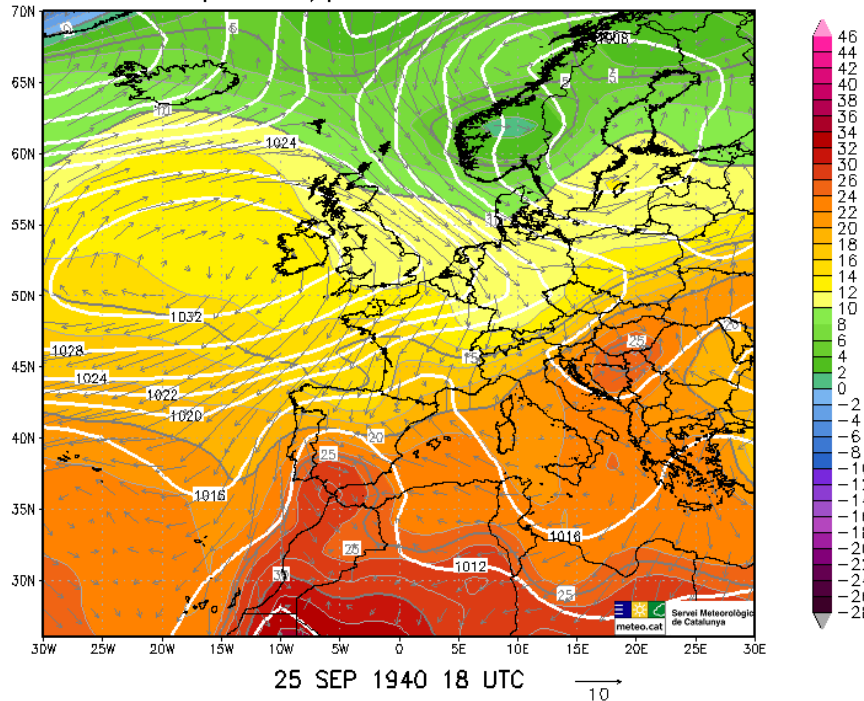


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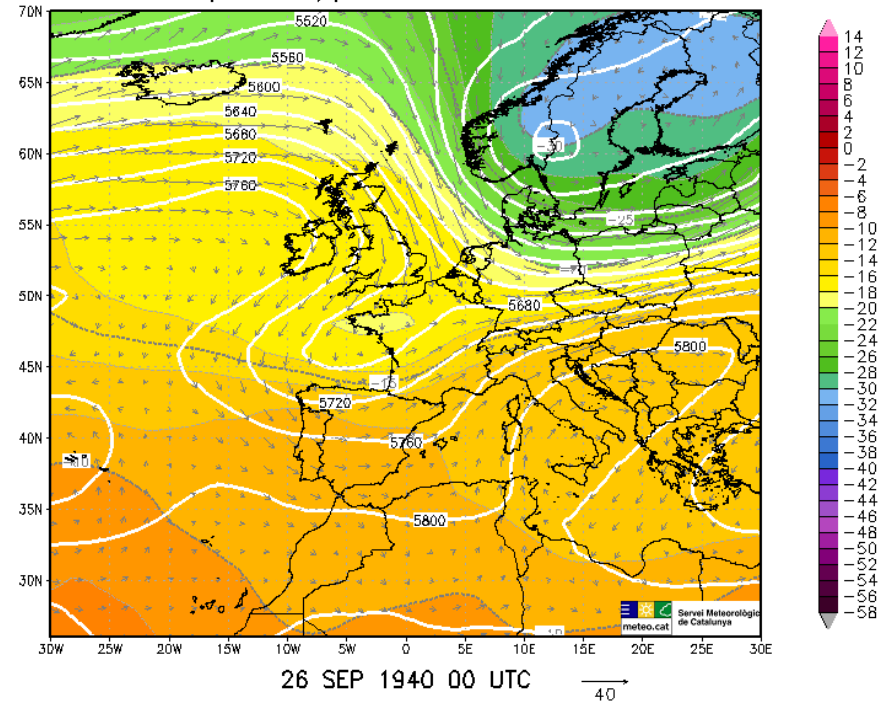
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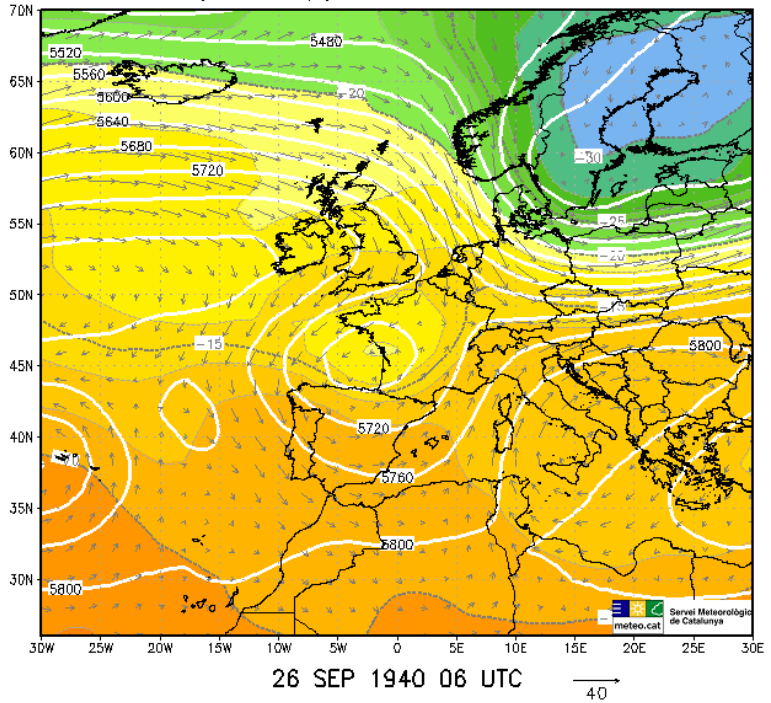


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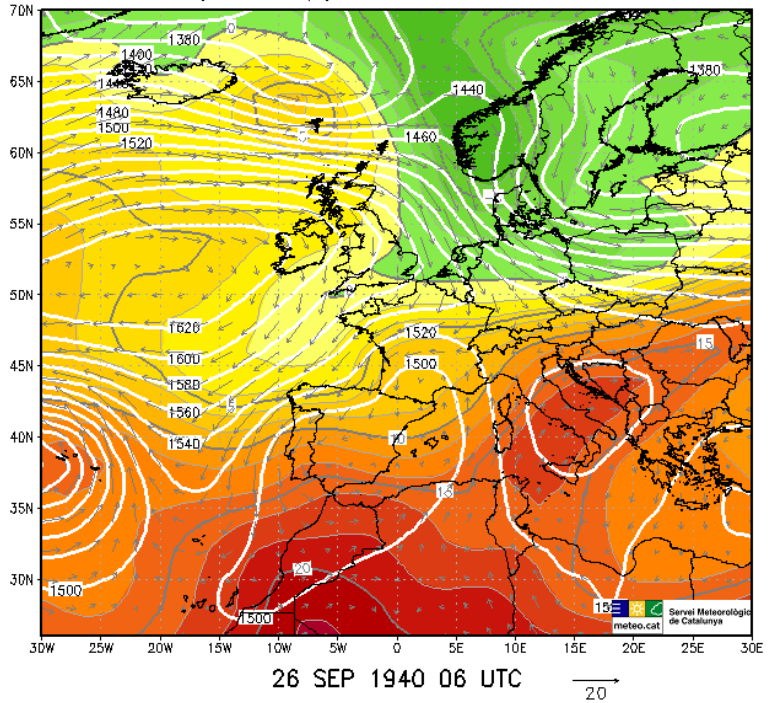




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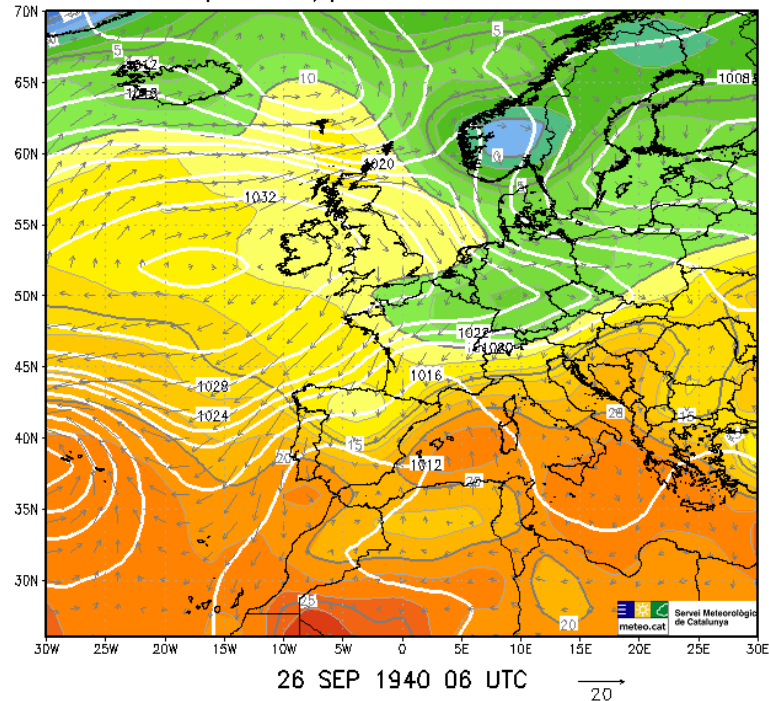
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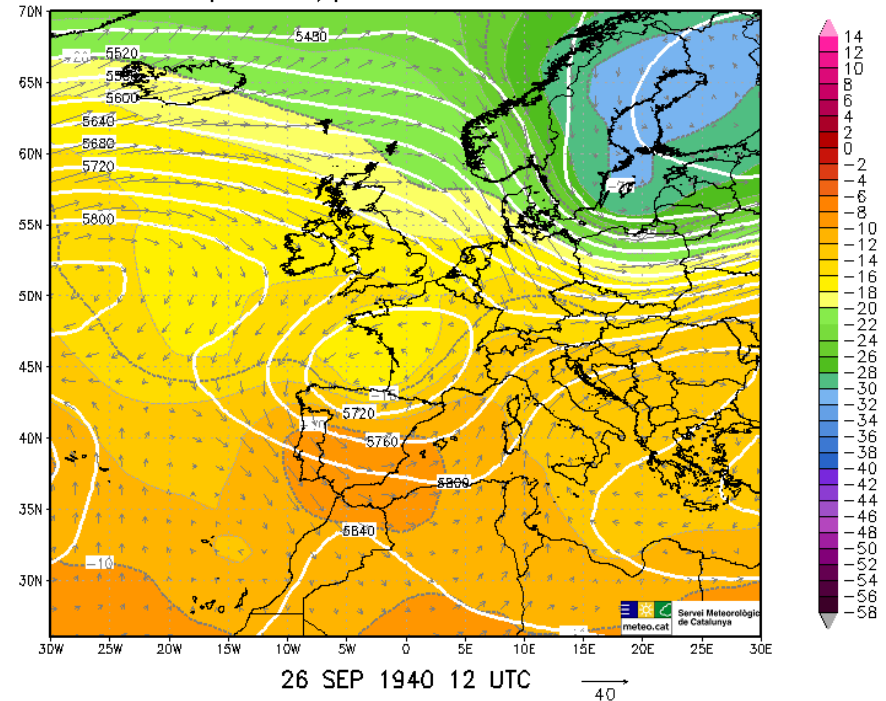
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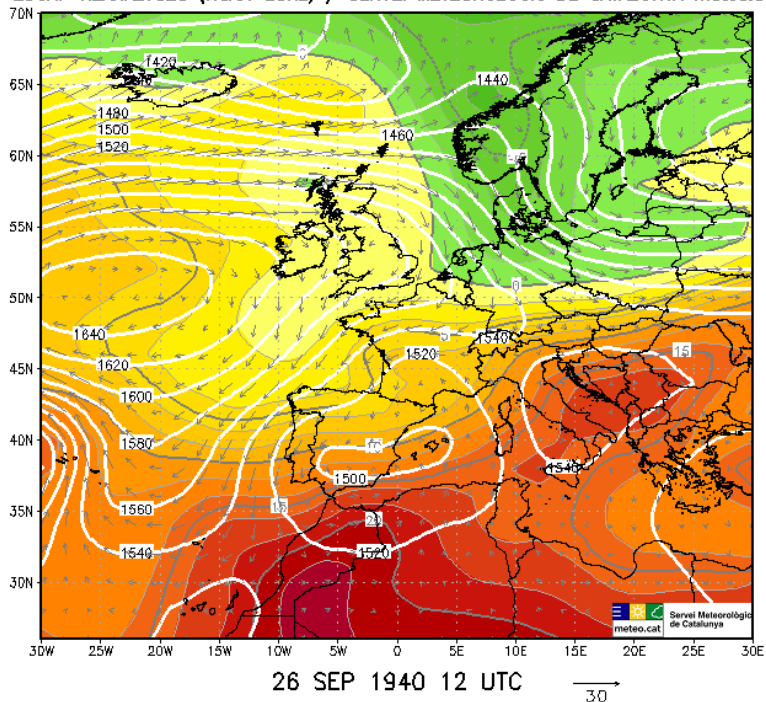


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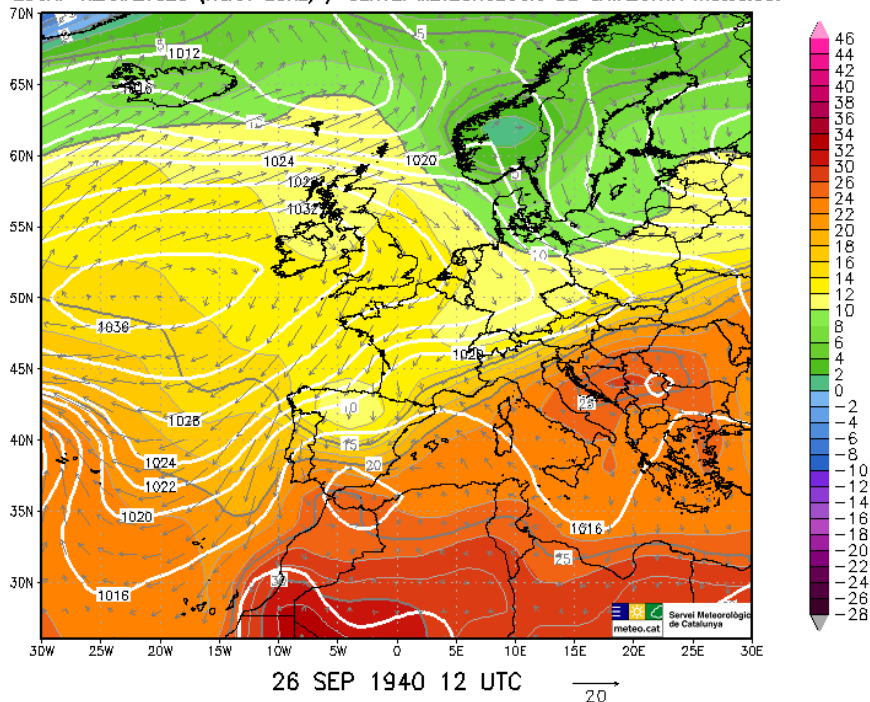
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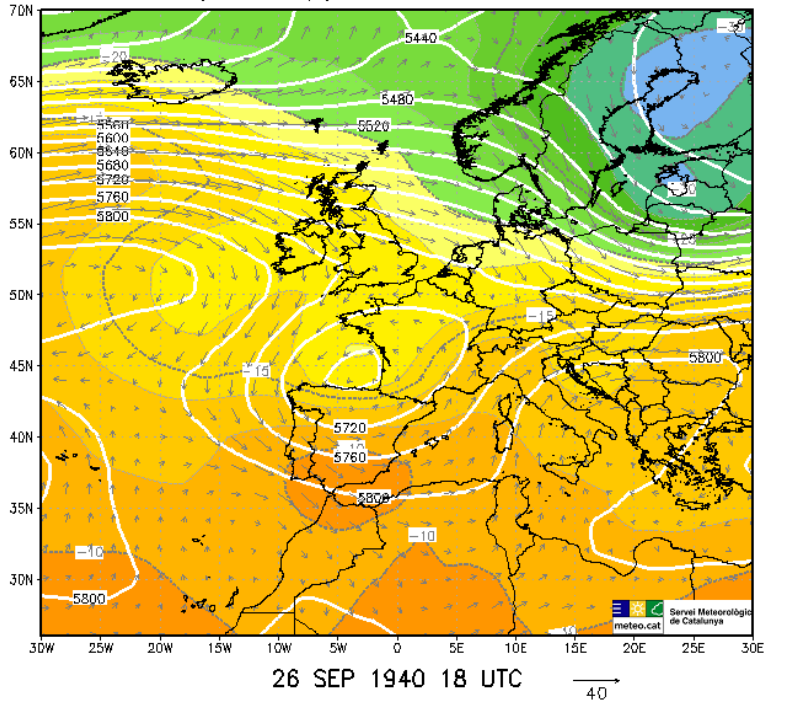
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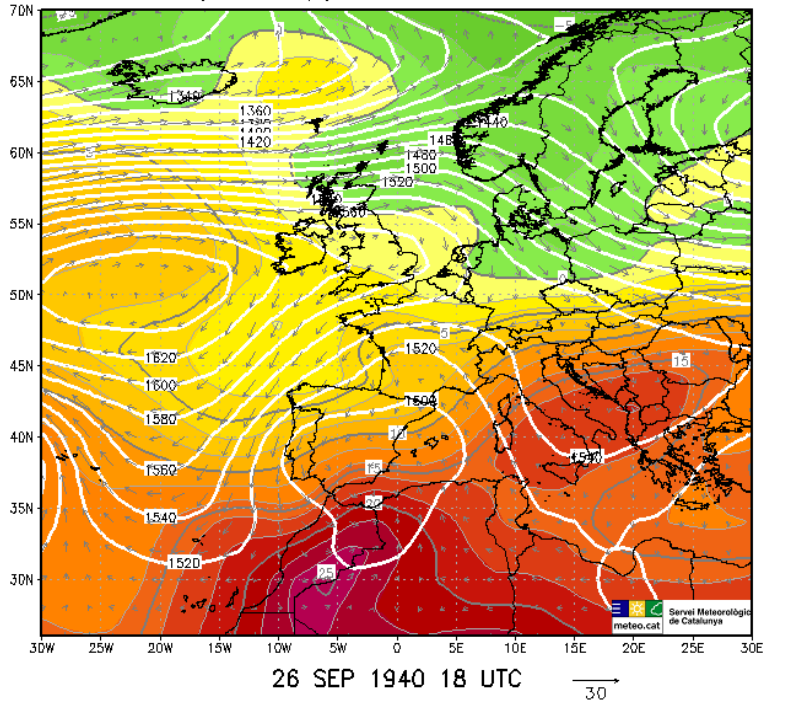
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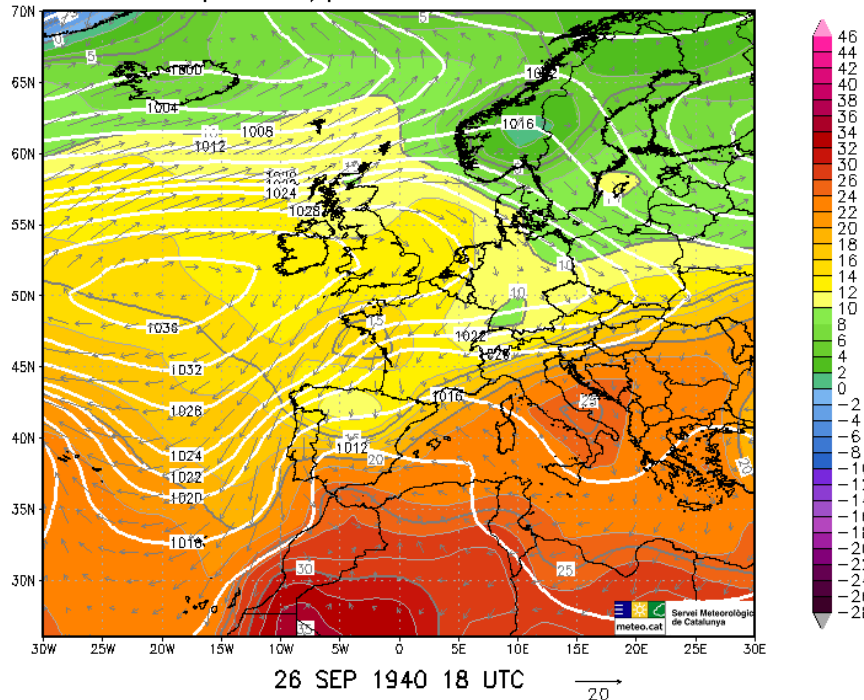
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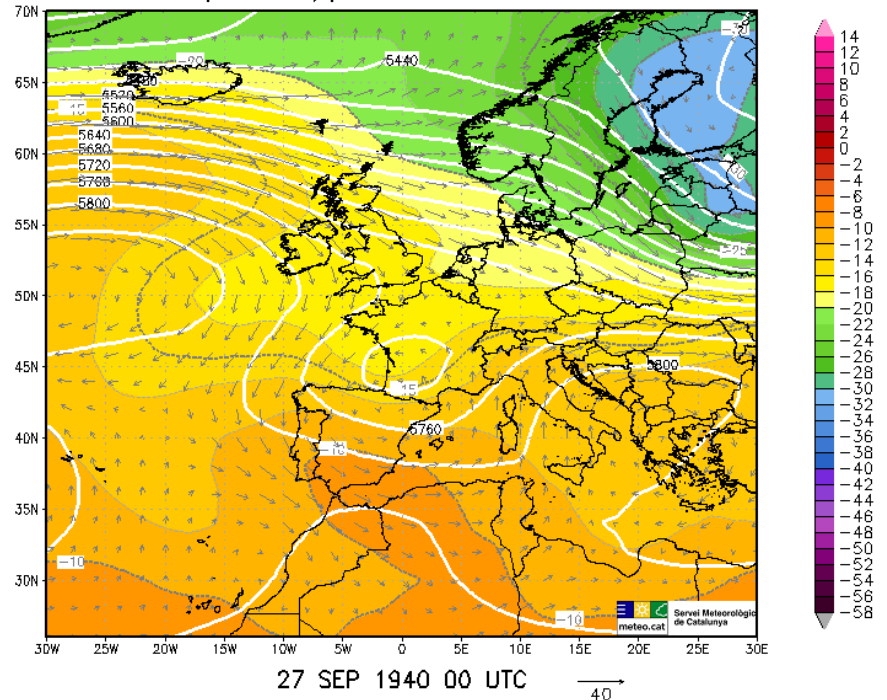
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MEAN SEA LEVEL PRESSURE (hPa), 2-m TEMPERATURE (°C) & 10-m WIND (m/s)  
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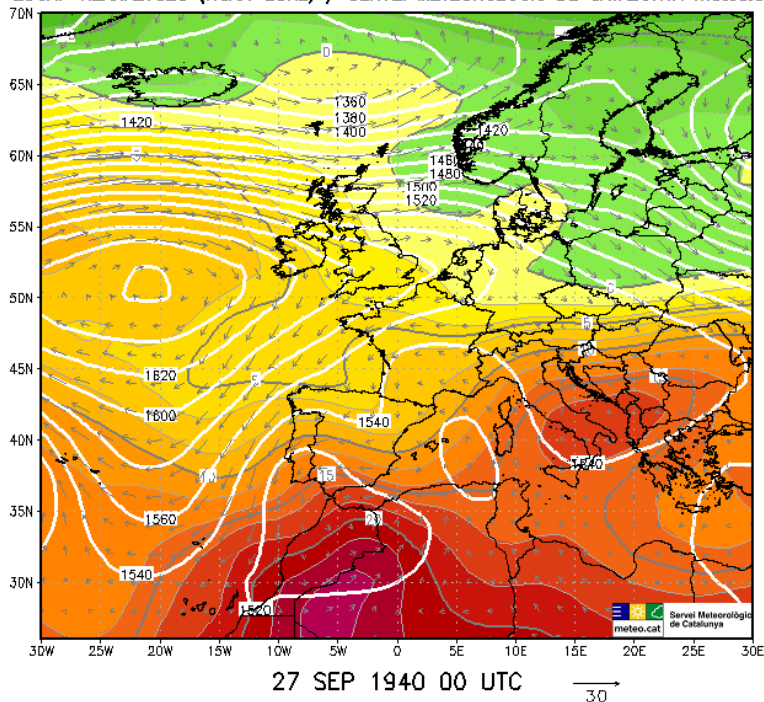


GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 500 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat

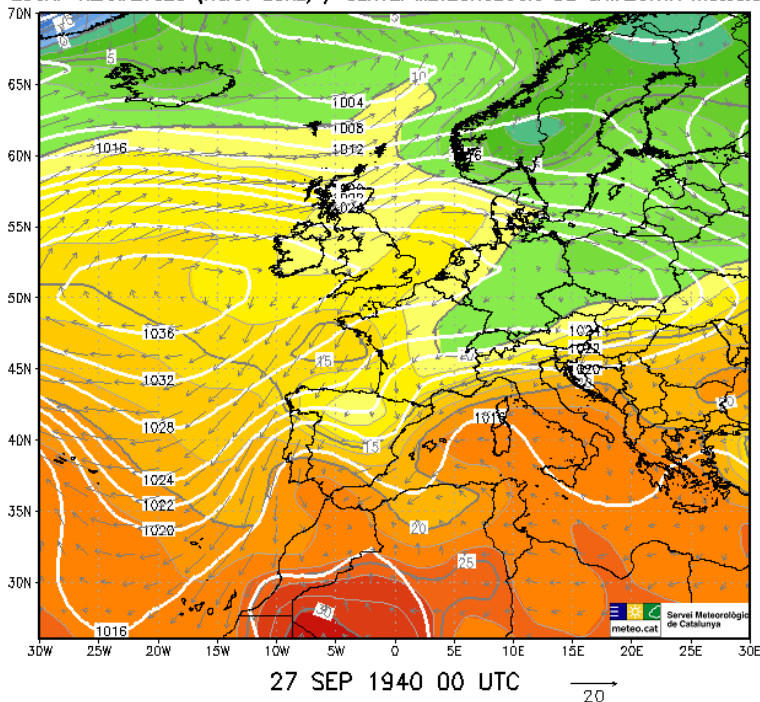




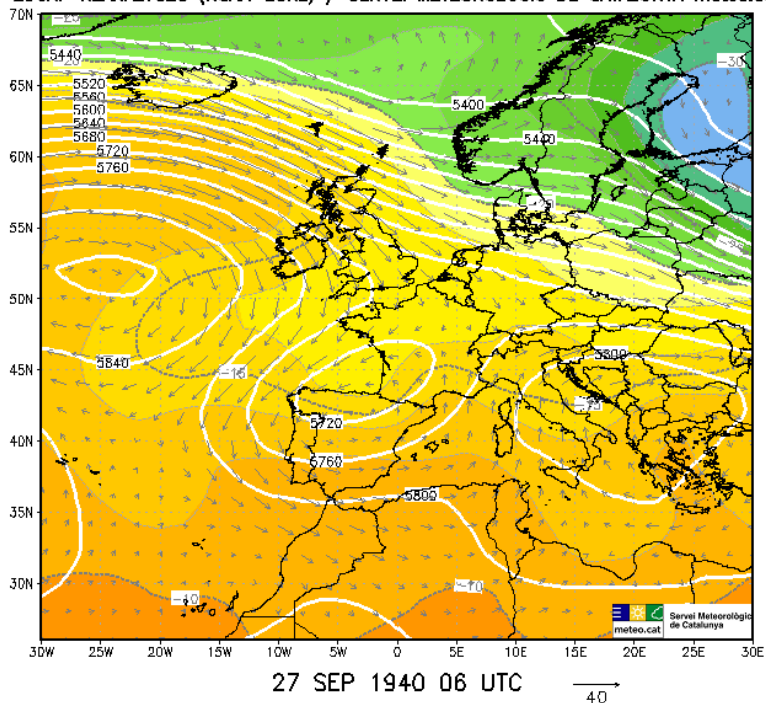
GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 850 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



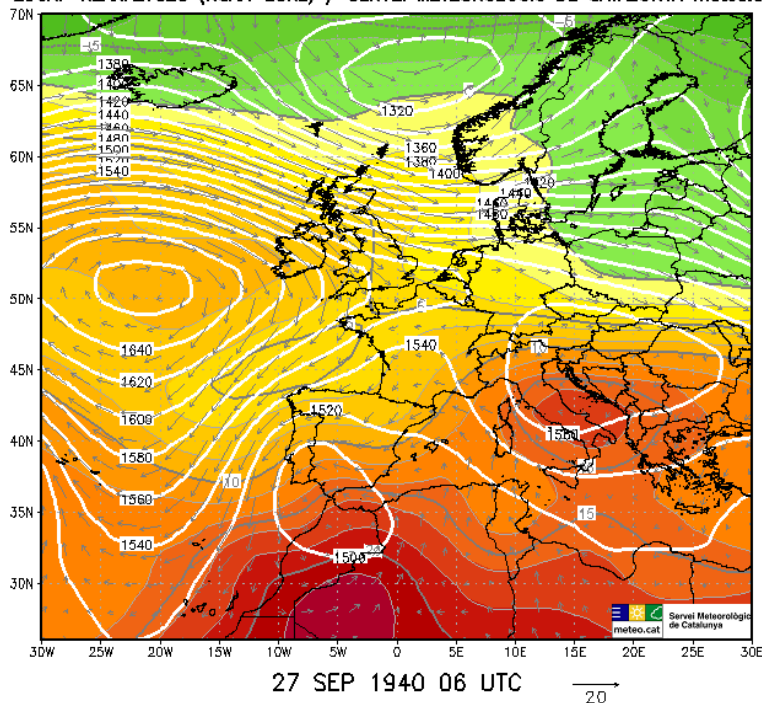
MEAN SEA LEVEL PRESSURE (hPa), 2-m TEMPERATURE (°C) & 10-m WIND (m/s)  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



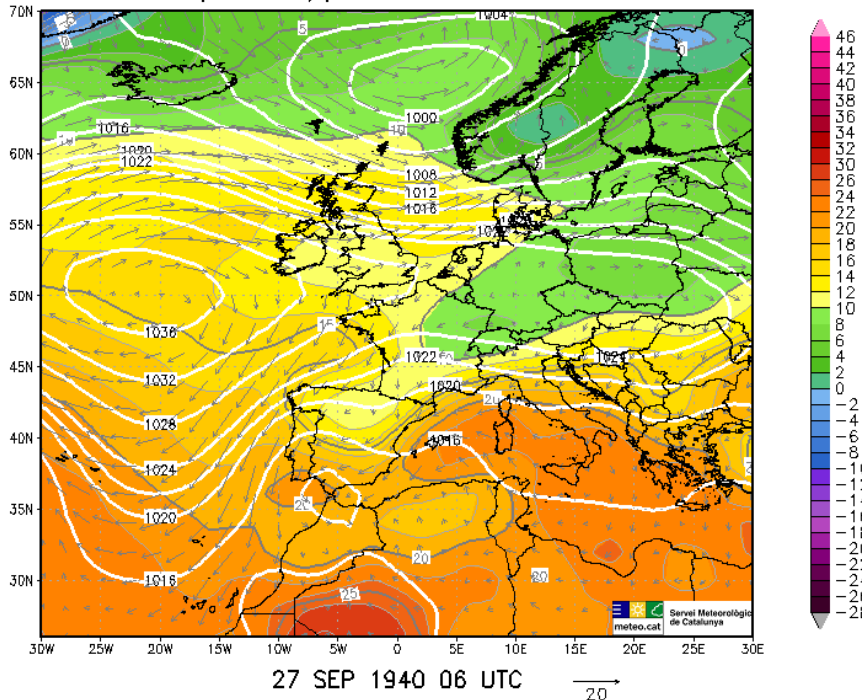
GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 500 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



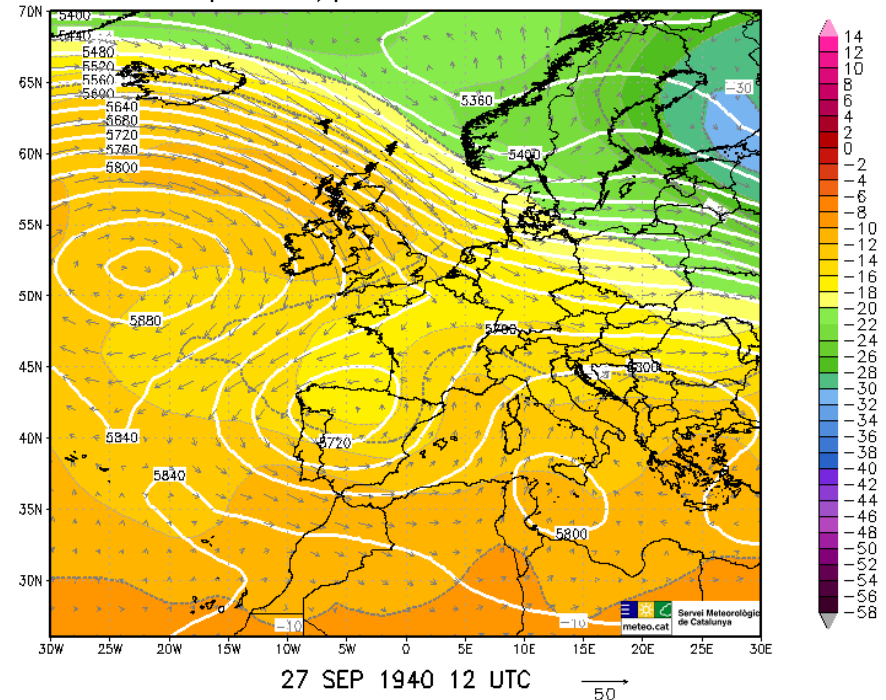
GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 850 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



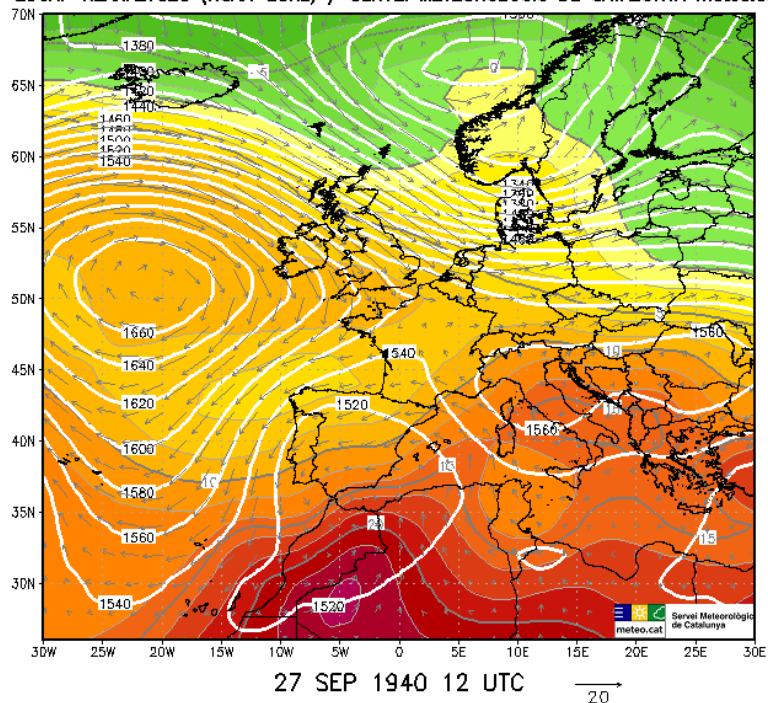
MEAN SEA LEVEL PRESSURE (hPa), 2-m TEMPERATURE (°C) & 10-m WIND (m/s)  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



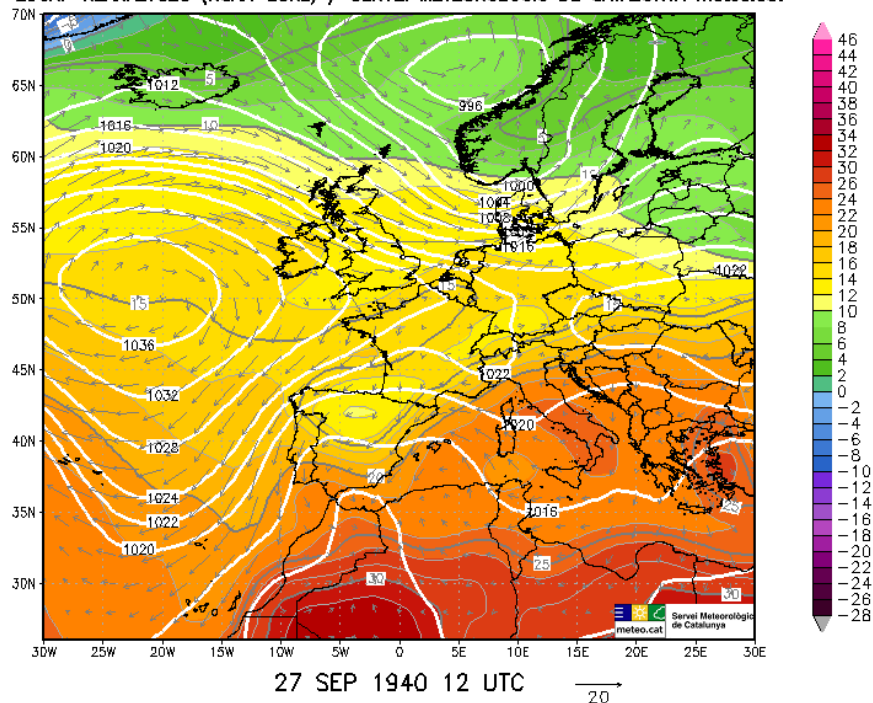
GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 500 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 850 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat

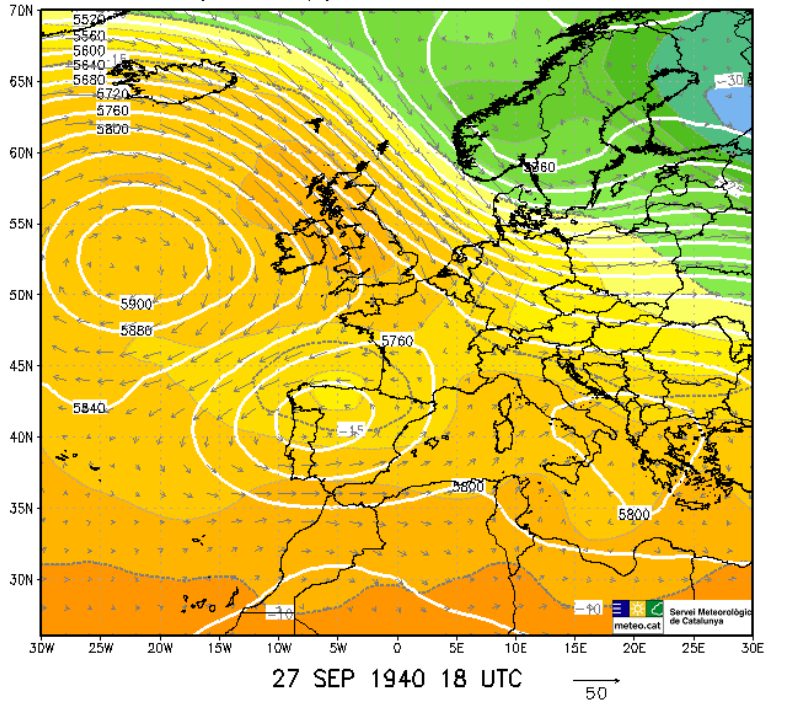


MEAN SEA LEVEL PRESSURE (hPa), 2-m TEMPERATURE (°C) & 10-m WIND (m/s)  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat

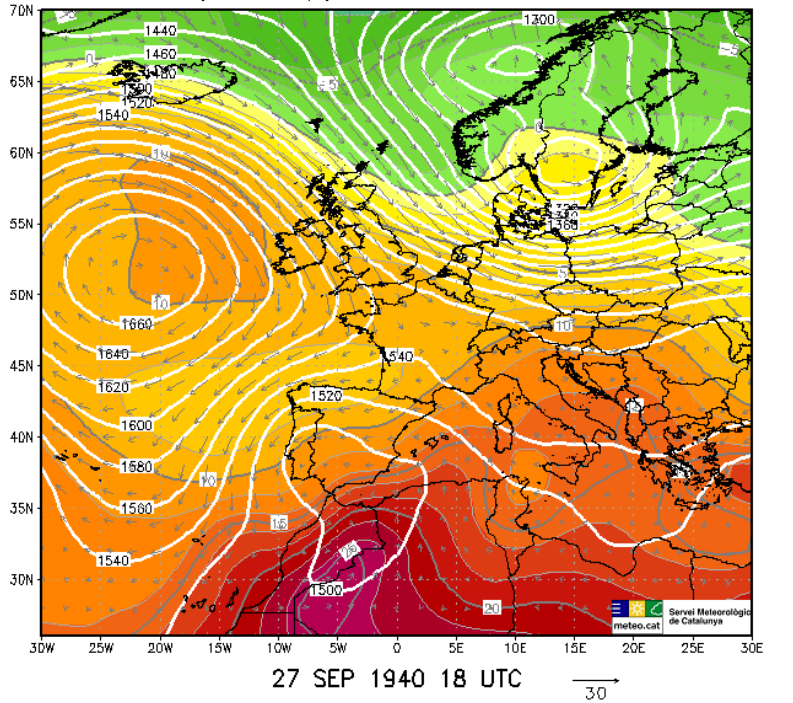




GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 500 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat

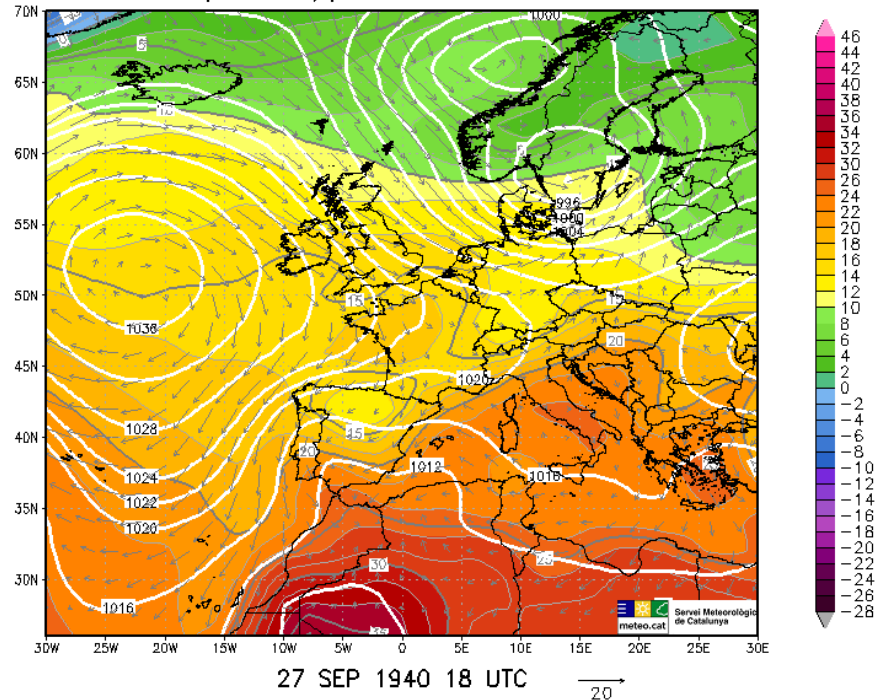


GEOPOTENTIAL HEIGHT (m), TEMPERATURE (°C) & WIND (m/s) at 850 hPa  
 20CRP REANALYSES (NOAA-ESRL) / SERVEI METEOROLÒGIC DE CATALUNYA meteo.cat



MEAN SEA LEVEL PRESSURE (hPa), 2-m TEMPERATURE (°C) & 10-m WIND (m/s)

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**KUNSTHØGSKOLEN I OSLO**  
OSLO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE ARTS

