

## Letters of an Antifascist

From Marianne after her emigration to Spain, from 22  
December 1935 to 14 July 1936 to her parents,  
Antifascists<sup>1</sup> in Germany

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<sup>1</sup> Though Marianne Angermann's antifascist politics are evident in her letters, her parents' political position is less obvious. Her father, Konrad Angermann, was initially close to the Deutschnationale Volkspartei which would have placed him on the far right of the spectrum. Whether his views underwent a change throughout the 1930s cannot be determined since the journals only record Marianne's voice. The references to antifascism on the journal's cover have clearly been added at a later date.

Marianne's letters from Spain – I.<sup>2</sup> from 22 December 35 to  
14 July 36.

Copies: the originals are in storage and should be burned,  
unread, after the death of her parents  
November 1838<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> i.e. Journal I. (Hocken Collections MS1493/6)

<sup>3</sup> An obvious error. The date should read: 1938.

## From Marianne in Spain

What can I<sup>4</sup> do better on New Year's Eve 1935 than to start the book that will record everything that Marianne experiences in a foreign land – in Spain? It is bitter to realise that one's dear child is so far away, so unreachable for the present. But better that she is out there, happy and content, than dissatisfied at home and not in her proper place. Marianne has done the right thing – as lonely as we are without her. After bitterly difficult years she has closed one door behind her and opened wide a new one – may God grant to a better future. On 22 December 1935, Sunday before Christmas Eve, Marianne left from the Anhalter railway station in Berlin for Stuttgart at 9.35 in the morning. Fine, clear winter weather on Sunday, the train full of happy people in a Christmas and holiday mood, on their way home or heading to winter sports, it seemed like a good beginning for her long trip to Spain, to Madrid. Marianne looked out at her homeland once more, serious and sombre but with a smile on her face. She saw once again festive cheer enlivening dreary everyday life. We went home sadly and in silence. How lonely our life will be without this dear child whose sorrows and joys we have shared in everything!

Prof. Díaz<sup>5</sup> called Marianne to Madrid, where he is Professor for Internal Medicine at the city's university. Díaz is a man

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<sup>4</sup> We believe the copyist of this first group of letters in this journal to be Marianne's mother, Clara Clementine Charlotte Angermann née Beutler.

<sup>5</sup> Carlos Jiménez Díaz (1898 – 1967). Spanish physician and medical researcher. Jiménez Díaz had conducted research in Berlin and Frankfurt a. M. in the 1920s. On his return to Spain he became the driving force behind establishing the Instituto de investigaciones médicas in Madrid in 1935. Work in Madrid was rendered impossible due to the city's siege

whom everyone in the medical world considers a genius, a friend of Marianne's great teacher, Prof. Thannhauser<sup>6</sup> who now holds the Chair of Internal Medicine at the University of Boston. He had not been allowed to realise his dream in Germany of setting up an institute for modern medical research.<sup>7</sup> Now Prof. Díaz has succeeded in Madrid! Thanks to his energy and his own finances, and those donated by private sources, he will open the gates to the

Instituto de investigaciones médicas  
Institute for Modern [sic!] Medical Research

on 1 January 1936.

In September 1935 the following article appeared in Spanish newspapers about Prof. Díaz's plan:<sup>8</sup>

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during the Civil War which placed the Instituto on the frontline from 1936 to 1939. Jiménez Díaz then moved to San Sebastian in the Basque Country after its capture by Francoist forces. Following the Nationalist victory in 1939 he focused on rebuilding the Instituto which had largely been destroyed in the Battle for Madrid. Still located in the Moncloa area of Madrid, the Hospital Universitario Fundación Jiménez Díaz is now a privately owned teaching and research hospital.

<sup>6</sup> Siegfried Josef Thannhauser (1885 – 1962). German-Jewish physician and medical researcher.

<sup>7</sup> This is a slightly disingenuous formulation. If Thannhauser was not able to pursue his plans for a new medical research facility it was because, as a Jew, he had been dismissed from his post under the provisions of the *Berufsbeamtengesetz* passed by the Nazis in April 1933.

<sup>8</sup> The article does not appear in any of the Madrid newspapers for 1935 held in the digital archives of the Biblioteca Nacional de España. The place name appended at the end of this journal entry – Paris – further obscures the original Spanish source.



Along with other observations that make a conversation with him a celebration of the mind, an optimistic Prof. Díaz, teacher at the Don Carlos University in Madrid, makes the perceptive point that intellectual research is neither tiring nor depressing. On the contrary, he insists that the activity of the mind and the brain is like a type of gymnastics whose effects are similar to those which, in the physical and muscular domain, are required for the development of sound armies. Fatigue, in the sense of the meaning that he gives it, does not exist and may not exist for the intellectual. On the contrary the intellectual is in danger of becoming jaded, tired and depressed if he interrupts the routine of his work, if he devotes himself to tasks and activities which have nothing to do with his profession. In so doing he boards the speedy ship of inactivity!

I admire Professor Díaz for his theory which he seeks to prove to me. He does not have the maturity of a man in his worldly-wise years. Yet in him dwells the intellectual decisiveness of a man who is far from the temptations and sinister threats of life. His eyes are ceaselessly searching. He weighs everything up in his mind – it is as if it wants to lead a life independent of the body. His nervous hands accompany his ingenious conversation. He has just come back from Switzerland, from Montreux, where he had been invited to a medical conference, one of a small number of 30 of the best doctors in Europe.<sup>9</sup> It was a week of work!

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<sup>9</sup> The conference was reported in the Spanish newspaper *Ahora*, 9 September 1935. The gathering had initially been boycotted by Germany because an article had been published in a Swiss medical journal opposed to the practice of eugenics. The boycott was lifted after the journal's editors disclaimed responsibility.

Twenty papers in four days! Our great countryman spoke about metabolic and muscular diseases. This captivating speaker from a Spanish university and medical science believes what he says and radiates this belief to the new generation seated at his feet!

I did not make it easy for him! Again and again I questioned him about his hopes and his plans. But his enthusiasm is gripping and persuasive. From what he told me I learned that there really are young people keen to learn and who will master life if their teachers are drawn from an intellectual elite!

Is this the magic of a teacher who dominates everything, is it the stamp which he puts on the world around him – a world in which he teaches and provides guidance? Or is it a phenomenon [of nature]? Prof. Díaz claims that the scientific level of Spanish medicine is superior to that of other nations, including France. He bases this on Spain's ancient culture, on its profound drive for knowledge, on the serenity which this country, unaffected by World War, has given to science.

And it is Prof. Díaz who, to Spain's glory, will initiate a magnificent scientific project, the Institute for Modern Medical Research, which, attached to the Institute of Pathology, has him as its patron.

Thanks to the approval of its board this institute will also be constructed at Moncloa.<sup>10</sup> It is not just a matter of buildings, though, and Prof. Díaz has attracted the interest of significant individuals. Amongst those who have committed

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<sup>10</sup> Suburb in the northwest of central Madrid. The city's new university campus had been under construction in Moncloa from the 1920s. Today, the official residence of the Spanish president is located there.

to annual donations are the Duke of Alba<sup>11</sup>, Domingo Ortega<sup>12</sup>, Calvo Sotelo<sup>13</sup> and Sánchez Román.<sup>14</sup> This board is composed of: its President Pablo Garnica<sup>15</sup>, Messrs da la

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<sup>11</sup> Jacobo Fitz-James Stuart y Falcó, 17th Duke of Alba (1878 – 1953). Spanish nobleman, politician and diplomat. Foreign Minister in 1930 – 31, he was General Franco's official representative in London at the close of the Civil War and Spanish ambassador to the UK during World War Two.

<sup>12</sup> Domingo Ortega (1906 – 1988). Spanish bullfighter. Ernest Hemingway mentions him, somewhat disparagingly, in *Death in the afternoon* (1932).

<sup>13</sup> José Calvo Sotelo, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Calvo Sotelo (1893 – 1936). Spanish lawyer and politician. One of Spain's most prominent political figures in the 1920s and 1930s, Calvo Sotelo played a key role in the administration of the dictator Miguel Primo Rivera and was an ardent anti-leftist in the Second Republic. His assassination by the Left on 13 July 1936 was a significant factor in triggering the army's rebellion against the elected government on 17. July.

<sup>14</sup> Felipe Sánchez Román y Gallifa (1893 – 1956). Spanish lawyer and politician. A moderate leftist and founder of the small Partido Nacional Republicano, in July 1936 Sánchez Roman was briefly involved in an abortive attempt to form a compromise government that might appeal to the rebels. He left Spain in 1937 and eventually settled in Mexico.

<sup>15</sup> Pablo Garnica y Echevarría (1876 – 1959). Spanish lawyer and politician. Garnica held various cabinet posts in the first two decades of the century and was named procurador (non-elected parliamentary representative) by Franco in 1943.

Mora<sup>16</sup>, Selgas<sup>17</sup>, Anastasio<sup>18</sup> and Colom Cardany.<sup>19</sup> The construction of the institute will amount to 200 000 pesetas. 160 000 pesetas are already available, 30 000 pesetas will be provided by Díaz from his own personal resources. The institute will consist of six departments<sup>20</sup>, the outstanding heads of which Prof. Díaz will appoint himself. There are initially four Spaniards, superb doctors from the Faculty of San Carlos who have specialised abroad for many years. The other two are Germans whom Prof. Díaz has tested and proved. (Marianne and a doctor who was not up to the mark.<sup>21</sup>) Two assistants will work in every department. With this project Prof. Díaz, as its creator, is called on to

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<sup>16</sup> César de la Mora (1873 – 1937). Lawyer and anti-Republican politician.

<sup>17</sup> Jiménez Díaz gives the name as Don Juan de Selgas in his list of the original members of the board of the Instituto. (Jiménez Díaz 217)

<sup>18</sup> The more complete name of Don Ernesto Anastasio is provided by Jiménez Díaz in his list of the original board members. (Jiménez Díaz, 217)

<sup>19</sup> Miguel Colom Cardany (1887 – 1936). Lawyer and conservative politician. A councillor in Madrid's municipal government in 1936, he was arrested on 13 August by anti-fascist militias and murdered shortly thereafter.

<sup>20</sup> In fact, there were only five departments: Physiology (Dr. Ochoa Albornoz), Biochemistry (Dr. Franz Bielschowsky), Experimental Clinic and Pathology (Dr. Morán), Cellular Metabolism (Dr. Barreda), Immunology and Bacteriology (Dr. Arjona). (Jiménez Díaz, 220)

<sup>21</sup> This parenthetical comment is an intervention by the keeper of the journal (Marianne's mother). Marianne was not a department head, though her future husband, Dr Franz Bielschowsky, was in charge of Biochemistry. Marianne and Franz were the only Germans at the Instituto though several of their colleagues had studied or engaged in research there.

strengthen substantially Spain's national feeling and sense of community both within the country and abroad.

Paris, 18 / IX / 35



[View of the Askanischer Platz towards the southeast along the Königgrätzer Strasse with the Anhalter train station, around 1910.](#)

Waldemar Titzenthaler. Public Domain. Wikimedia Commons.

Marianne departed from this station on her journey to Spain.



Siegfried Josef Thannhauser when he was Director of the University Polyclinic in Heidelberg in 1924. (Source: A.F. Hofmann and Nepomuk Zöllner, *Siegfried Thannhauser (1885 – 1962). Physician and Scientist in Turbulent Times*. Freiburg: 2004. 13) Marianne worked closely with Thannhauser at the universities of Düsseldorf and Freiburg.



José Calvo Sotelo, a member of the board for the Instituto de investigaciones médicas. The most charismatic of Spain's right-wing politicians, Calvo Sotelo was assassinated in July 1936. (Source: *abc*. <https://www.abc.es/madrid/20150727/abci-casa-sotelo-asesinato-madrid-201507262135.html> [Accessed 5 July 2020])

From Stuttgart, the first leg of her long journey, Marianne writes:

I'm happy to be stranded here! In spite of the hour-long<sup>22</sup> journey, it all went so quickly. It was an exciting und not entirely uninteresting experience. Because the train was so overcrowded there was no chance of getting through to the buffet car. Thanks to the delicious things in my bag I didn't starve. I've just had a wonderful bath to wash off the first layer of dirt from the trip, nice and relaxing. Had some cold cuts and tea and want to tell you quickly about my trip before I go to sleep. The journey through the Thuringian Forest was magnificent. Germany really is beautiful! They're looking after me well at the Hotel Marquard,<sup>23</sup> it's comfortable. I'm already making use of the room and the writing table. I thought about you a lot today. I'm still so close to you! While I was still on the train you laughed at me when I said I regretted all the work involved in my move. But I really meant it seriously! When you get my letter it will be Christmas in Germany! And I am already so far away! Do you still remember that you promised me not to be sad? We were together for 30 Christmases and they were always so lovely. I will miss you a lot. But it is definitely better to imagine it

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<sup>22</sup> Curiously, the original German text uses the term "einstündig" i.e. hour-long. A train journey from Berlin to Stuttgart in 1935, however, would have taken many hours.

<sup>23</sup> Still a prominent building in Stuttgart's inner city, the Hotel Marquard was built between 1872 - 1874 but closed its doors as a hotel in 1938 after having accommodated guests such as Richard Wagner, Franz Liszt and Otto von Bismarck.

would be nice if we were together - than to be together and sad, dissatisfied, ground down by the eternal monotony of everyday life, since for me everyday life had become monotonous and would have remained so. Think about me a lot – I'm eager for the future. And, ultimately, I have you to thank for everything because you let me study until I became what I am now. It would have been nice if my home country had given me what a foreign land is now giving me without being asked! But one never gets everything in life and for the first time in years I have the feeling that things might turn out well for me. I will write to you often and about everything so we really will be together ---



[The Hotel Marquard on the Stuttgart Schlossplatz around 1905.](#)  
Undated postcard. Public domain. Wikimedia Commons.



Madrid, 26 / 12 / 35

Finally I've got around to writing. You'll be amazed, but I've only been here since yesterday. Sometimes flying has its little quirks! But to put it all in order: I've already told you about the trip from Berlin to Stuttgart. I do hope you got the letter by Christmas. I was really well looked after at the Marquard. The hotel is directly opposite the stop for the airport omnibus, separated only by a passageway. The plane took off punctually at 9.30. But thick freezing fog forced it to land at 11.30 in Stuttgart again. After a good lunch we were off again at 2 pm – at 5.30 pm we were drinking coffee again at the Böblingen airport hotel!<sup>24</sup> There was nothing to be done. In the end we had dinner at Lufthansa's expense, overnighted and breakfasted at their expense – they even attended to both my urgent telegrams to Barcelona and Madrid – and then took off on Tuesday at exactly 8.30 arriving smoothly in Barcelona at two o'clock.<sup>25</sup> There was only one new passenger and as a result of our shared experiences an enjoyable and entertaining companionship developed, despite our concern about having lost a day. We soon knew where each of us came from and where we were

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<sup>24</sup> Until 1939 Stuttgart's international air connections were provided from an airport at the nearby town of Böblingen, 20km southwest of the city. In 1932 – three years before Marianne flew to Spain – the local newspaper, the *Böblinger Bote*, reported that a large crowd had turned out to provide Hitler with a "rapturous greeting" when he landed there. (*Böblinger Bote*, 1932. Quoted in: [https://deacademic.com/dic.nsf/dewiki/449725#cite\\_note-10](https://deacademic.com/dic.nsf/dewiki/449725#cite_note-10) [Accessed: 4 August 2019])

<sup>25</sup> Marianne's itinerary would have taken her to Barcelona via Geneva and Marseilles. A one-way ticket in winter 1936 cost 135 Reichsmark. (<https://flughafenbb.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/deutsche-lufthansa-winter-1936.jpg> [Accessed: 8 August 2019])

headed – and they marvelled at and congratulated me on my good fortune. I always have this effect on older men! I soon made friends with a German engineer who has already lived 13 years in Madrid with his wife and children. Strangely, F's landlords know him as well. His wife is apparently very nice and very active in charitable work. It was touching that cousin Rudi and his wife had made their long way to the airport two or three times – a distance of 20 km. The telegram was quite garbled, they could only make out that someone had to be picked up. In the kindest of fashions they took care of the customs difficulties, which would have been enormous for me, in the twinkling of an eye. They made me their guest for the afternoon, lent me the necessary pesetas and finally shipped me off to Madrid in the evening. The nice engineer sought me out on the train. We had dinner together and, while eating my delicious Christmas biscuits, remembered that in Germany the candles would already be out on many a Christmas tree. It was a strange Christmas Eve this trip through a spring-like country when at home one pictures everything in deep snow. The engineer was sad to be so far from his wife and children on Christmas Eve. Finally, one gentleman was so kind as to offer me his seat so that I could stretch out. And in the morning I arrived in Madrid after a great night's sleep.

Then we looked for a flat. For now, I am living at Plaza de las Cortes 3 III, Trianon.<sup>26</sup> The room is small but cheap. There was nothing else available because of Christmas. The food is quite decent. This evening we are going to discuss which is

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<sup>26</sup> That is to say: on the third floor of no. 3. The Plaza de las Cortes is located in the centre of Madrid.

better: to live close to the Atocha<sup>27</sup> clinic for the time being or to move straight out to the new Institute which won't be completely open for another two months. F.<sup>28</sup> wants me initially to move into a guesthouse. The room that his acquaintances have found is, it seems, in a location that is not too warm. I'll probably follow their advice and ask the engineer's family as well. They must surely have got to know the country and its people over 13 years. Until my other things arrive, I'll quietly look for something else. Yesterday, after a drinking a vermouth together at the Molinero<sup>29</sup>, I ate here and then had a good sleep before coffee and supper in the Lagasca<sup>30</sup>. This morning I was with Barreda<sup>31</sup> in the

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<sup>27</sup> Atocha is a district in south-central Madrid where Díaz's research work was initially based.

<sup>28</sup> Dr Franz David Bielschowsky (5 January 1902 Berlin – 21 April 1965 Dunedin), physician and medical researcher and eldest son of the famous German-Jewish researcher, Max Bielschowsky. Both Franz and Marianne had worked under Siegfried Thannhauser at the universities of Düsseldorf and Freiburg. Franz was compelled to leave his post in Freiburg in 1933, eventually accepting a position with Jiménez Díaz after a brief period at the University of Amsterdam. Franz and Marianne were married in Madrid 12 July 1938.

<sup>29</sup> This was presumably the Restaurante Molinero, Avenida del Conde de Peñalver, 24.

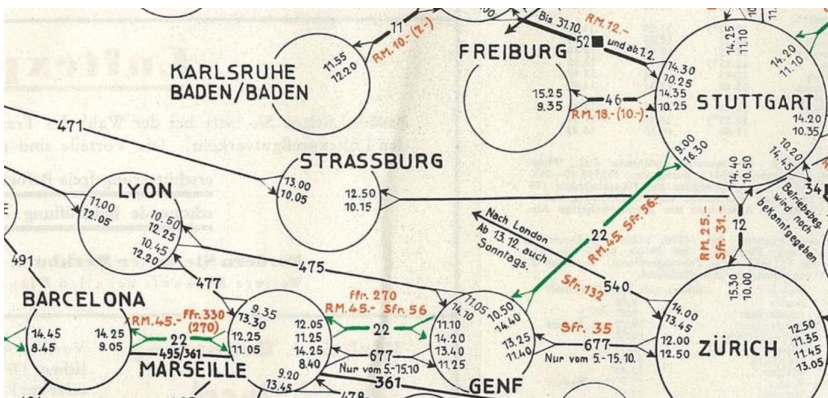
<sup>30</sup> Calle de Lagasca in the Salamanca district of central Madrid is an area known for its restaurants.

<sup>31</sup> Dr Pedro de la Barreda Espinosa, physician and medical researcher. Barreda had conducted research in Germany for several years in the early 1930s with Marianne's own mentor, Siegfried Thannhauser, in Freiburg. During the Civil War he was active on the Republican side, including a stint at the military hospital in Madrid-Chamartín where Marianne also worked. A close friend of Juan Negrín, the Second Republic's last president, Barreda was persecuted by the Franco regime after the Civil War when he was sent into internal exile in Soria for three years. Though he was never permitted to re-enter the public university

Institute and met all the other department heads. Just as we'd had a look at everything, Díaz came and it all started again from the beginning. The Institute is unbelievably beautiful. Everyone has their own large laboratory, larger than my big beloved one in Düsseldorf. One is shared by the doctoral students. Running off these are common rooms for the apparatus, a fume cupboard, an ether room etc. At the moment in my laboratory I have an assistant and a lab technician. The second assistant is still partly working with Díaz. Incidentally, my chemistry department works with all the other departments and the work promises to be pleasant, stimulating and diverse. You can't begin to imagine my laboratory – it is the finest of them all. The walls have bright yellow tiles, the floor is made from a special sort of rubber – soft and light as a feather to walk on. One wall has only sliding windows with a view of snowy mountains. At the moment I wouldn't swap with anybody. Teaching and learning, it's what I've always wished for! Now I've got it and the people with whom I'm working are definitely an intellectual elite. I will have the opportunity of exercising my brain again. But that's good and satisfying.

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system in Spain, under the protection of Jiménez Díaz he was able to gradually resurrect his research career in the rebuilt Instituto de investigaciones médicas. Barreda was head of Internal Medicine at the Instituto when he retired in 1978. [<https://www.laprovincia.es/cultura/2010/11/17/colaborador-negrin-destierro/334518.html> Accessed: 4 August 2019]



Schedule, route and prices of Lufthansa flights from Stuttgart to Barcelona, Winter 1936. (<https://flughafenbb.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/deutsche-lufthansa-winter-1936.jpg> [Accessed 5 July 2020])



Marianne's first, temporary apartment. Plaza de las Cortes 3, Madrid. June 2019. (Photo: Cecilia Novero)



Dr Pedro de la Barreda Espinosa, a colleague of Marianne Angermann at the Instituto de las investigaciones médicas. (Archivo Magdalena Palazón de la Barreda. Source: <https://www.laprovincia.es/cultura/2010/11/17/colaborador-negrin-destierro/334518.html> [Accessed 5 July 2020])

Madrid, 30 December 35

Now I can finally let you know what my address is:

Don Pedro Ullmann<sup>32</sup>  
Francisco Rojas<sup>33</sup> 3, Tel. 46909

Unfortunately you will never be able to use the telephone! The house is very, very nice. I am living in the “ático”<sup>34</sup>, on the topmost floor. The room is painted blue-grey and very well appointed. Instead of a bed there is a “cama turca” which I particularly like; it is a kind of couch, quite big, quite soft and fabulously comfortable. Then a big bookshelf, with glass in the middle, for books and pretty things, wooden doors on both sides. A round table as well, a comfortable chair, a nice big desk with a lamp and chair and two other chairs. Right beside it is my bathroom, fantastic, all in bright blue-grey tiles, even the bathtub. I keep all my toilet things in a little cupboard. I can shower as often as I like and take a hot bath twice a week. And there’s a big washstand with running water as well. The most enchanting thing is the large terrace off my room of which I have sole use. F. says I will almost certainly sleep there in the summer. After my experiences with hot summers in Freiburg that is certainly possible. The people are extraordinarily nice. They don’t let out as such but the rent in this comfortable new building is still too high for them. There is a well-trained girl here who

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<sup>32</sup> = Herr Peter Ullmann. Peter Ullmann (1902 – 1939) was the son of the banker Wilhelm Ullmann and his Swedish wife, the painter Thyra Ekwall.

<sup>33</sup> Correctly: Calle Francisco de Rojas. A street in central Madrid.

<sup>34</sup> Correctly: ático.

takes care of me. For breakfast, all laundry, and the girl who prepares and serves the supper things I buy myself, I pay 150 pesetas. I'm living so cheaply: a schnitzel for example costs 1 peseta, fruit and eggs almost nothing. For lunch we eat in the Ciudad<sup>35</sup>. I'm so happy that I can move in on 1 / 36. Then I'll store the few things I have here and think long and hard about how I'll organise everything once my suitcases arrive. I forgot: there is also a wardrobe, a built-in one of fantastic proportions with lots of shelves so that I can comfortably accommodate everything. F's landlady was touching, she went with me hither and thither and always toted up what everything ultimately cost. One other place was in consideration, with an English woman. 25 pesetas cheaper, at least 50 pesetas uglier, very far from the new uni and in a less attractive area. As it is I'm living in a good neighbourhood, comfortable, exactly halfway between the uni and Lagasca. And between them is everything you want, cafés, cinemas etc. The lady of the house<sup>36</sup> is very nice. There's a charming little child but you never see or hear it because these good Spanish apartments are so roomy. So everything's off to a better than good start. Work finally begins on Wednesday. Until now I've slept in every morning, had a long shower, breakfasted and then gone in to the city. There are so many formalities to deal with: residence certificate, registering with the consulate etc. After lunch I

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<sup>35</sup> Ciudad Universitaria (University City). Initiated under Alfonso XIII in 1927, this project concentrated university teaching and research facilities in the Moncloa district of Madrid. Its progressive design was closely modelled on the campuses of North America. Jiménez Díaz's Instituto would be relocated there in early 1936 and become part of the group of buildings belonging to the medical faculty.

<sup>36</sup> Peter Ullmann's wife, Friedel Zahn (1905 – 1972).



slept again and then spent hours over coffee discussing everything about the new job with F. After a late dinner, something one has here at 10 pm, I read newspapers, thanks to Frau Dr Rodriguez, if we aren't at the movies.

The only time I saw Díaz was when we had a look around the Ciudad. Holidays are celebrated in grand style here. There is another big public holiday on the 6<sup>th</sup>.<sup>37</sup> Now I have to get a work permit, the most difficult thing of all. But people have been encouraging. I've been brought in from abroad by the Spanish state, they say, and I didn't immigrate. Díaz will take care of it for me. In Spain there are over 20 000 Germans. So they should just get used to it if there's the odd foreigner earning his crust with us back home. And these 20 000 are surely just a fraction of all the many Germans living around the world. And perhaps it's good luck to land in such an up and coming country. I mean, you see the improvements that have been made compared with the way things were two years ago.<sup>38</sup> If you had money you could get off to such a good start here. I understand the language very well and hope to be able to speak fluently very soon. You will be able to find where I live on the map of Madrid – the big street Recoletos to the Plaza Colón, left and along Génova, across Plaza Alonso Martínez, Calle de Sagasta, from there the third street on the right, one past Manual Silvela. The tram to the Ciudad and Lagasca stops almost in front of the house. The distances are not very great here because a million people

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<sup>37</sup> Día de los Reyes Magos i.e. Epiphany or Three Kings' Day.

<sup>38</sup> An indication that Marianne probably accompanied Franz Bielschowsky when he moved from the University of Amsterdam to take up a position with Jiménez Díaz in December 1933.

live in very tall buildings. Everything is hilly, even in the city. Cyclists are an unusual sight.

One more business matter. What is the address here in Madrid to which Knauer<sup>39</sup> sent my books? I must enquire if they've arrived. I've already sorted everything out with Cook<sup>40</sup>. They say everything will be here in 10 – 14 days. How glad I'll be then. It's warm, like it is at home at the end of April. Already in Marseille<sup>41</sup> there was real spring weather, like May on the Baltic. And it was even warmer in Barcelona. But in the evening it is decidedly cold – the fur coat comes in handy. They say the real cold comes at the end of January, start of February. For the time being there's still no sign of that. During the day I get about without a coat and I've never yet closed the window in my room. What my landlord actually does, I don't know, but he's the son of the managing director of the Overseas Bank.<sup>42</sup> I think he has

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<sup>39</sup> Gustav Knauer was the name of a removal company. In the 1930s, German removal companies were the beneficiaries of Nazi policies of repression since anyone emigrating had to engage their services. In 1937 Knauer won a lucrative contract to transport works of art from various museums to the infamous "Degenerate Art" exhibition in Munich and then on to storage sites. (<https://www.lbi.org/1938projekt/de/detail/das-geschaefft-mit-der-flucht/> [Accessed: 8 August 2019])

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Cook, the travel agency.

<sup>41</sup> The flight from Stuttgart to Barcelona would have involved refuelling stops e.g. in Marseille.

<sup>42</sup> Peter Ullmann's father, Wilhelm Ullmann, had been made director of the Überseeische Bank in 1907. The Deutsche Überseebank was founded in 1886 primarily for the purposes of trade with South America. It was renamed the Deutsche Überseeische Bank in 1893 and a branch was opened in Spain in 1904. See: Lothar Gall et al. *The Deutsche Bank 1870 – 1995*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1995.

something to do with art<sup>43</sup>. In any case the apartment is in perfect taste and that's good for me. Also, if you rent privately, you get a key for the main door. That saves on the two centimos for the concierge when you get home late.<sup>44</sup> I can't think of anything else to write today. I have to quickly do a few things in the city and have arranged to meet this afternoon with F. and a new colleague I haven't been introduced to yet.



Marianne's second residence – her apartment at Calle Francisco de Rojas 3, Madrid. June 2019. (Photo: Cecilia Novero)

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<sup>43</sup> If Peter was professionally involved in the art world this may have been due to the influence of his mother, the painter Thyra Ekwall. She held occasional exhibitions of her work in Madrid.

<sup>44</sup> i.e. the small payment made to the concierge for his/her trouble in opening the main door of an apartment block for a tenant returning home late.

Madrid, 3 January 35<sup>45</sup>  
Francisco de Rojas

My dears, optimism concerning my things makes me laugh. Nothing has arrived! And in the friendliest way possible they assure me that there won't be anything before the end of January. Barcelona really is further from here than it is from Cologne to Berlin. And everything takes time. The boss won't be here before 8 / 1 so there's not much happening at work. There is no Thannhauser tempo here. Though we may have been overcome yesterday morning by a German sense of duty in the faculty at Atocha, we didn't put ourselves out with an experiment. There are no lab coats here, everyone has his own, and of course for me they are all too short. Please send me four, washed and not ironed and roughly packed because customs is suspicious. They were concerned by my travel shoes and the evening bag which we couldn't get open. Books are hard to come by here. In this fortunate, peaceful country everyone carries around his own intellectual equipment. We do get a lot from []<sup>46</sup> but it's all just medical stuff and my wishes are purely chemical!

Now back to my apartment. It is the one Frau Prof. mentioned. There were some reservations due to board and lodging arrangements and it being too hot. But in the near future we'll be eating in the Ciudad which will be better and cheaper. In the evenings I have a schnitzel or something else tasty made for me – 70 centimes with salad, something amazing with eggs. The girl with the beautiful name of

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<sup>45</sup> The German manuscript has an error. The date should be 3 January 36.

<sup>46</sup> Word missing in the original.

Caridad <sup>47</sup> provides me with the best of everything. The house is quite delightful. I have six floors beneath me, there's good air, I'm away from traffic noise and I go up and down in the lift. What I'm happiest about is my terrace. At the moment people are complaining about the quite un-Spanish weather. It's warm and rains day after day. Today was the first day without rain, lovely like spring. I've got used to the street noise which, thank God, I don't hear in my room. Everything here is noisy – very noisy even. The cars don't just want to go that much faster than the others, they want to be louder as well. Then a mule tears down the street driven on by a bare-legged lad. There are contrasts on every side here. You forget one peculiarity because of another and you probably have to have lived here a while before you can understand and describe the country and its people. Recently, e.g., I went past a large Spanish café in front of which a black man was spreading out a sack on the street. Since I was interested in what was going on I watched as he leisurely poured freshly roasted coffee out of a drum onto the sack to cool it down. And yet another strange thing. On cold evenings you see in front of all the houses that still have no heating a kind of coke stove such as we have in new buildings, only more enclosed. It almost looks like Christmas! Otherwise there is little sign of Christmas here. I have only seen four Christmas trees: one at Lloyds, one in the cinema hung with the most improbable glass items, one in an impeccable drugstore – which was every bit as good as Audorff - and the fourth in a lingerie shop, hung with bras, girdles etc. I'm only just starting to see what wonderful shops there are here! You wouldn't believe the price of

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<sup>47</sup> = Charity

groceries here: 1l of best olive oil, 60 pfennigs, butter 1 mark a pound, a real Gervais<sup>48</sup> 10 pfennigs, a glorious mandarin the size of an orange 3 pfennigs, 1l of good red wine 20! I'm happily eating lots of fruit. It tastes completely different than it does at home, of sun!

On New Year's Day I was the guest of F's landlady. It was very nice. And yesterday the wife of the engineer I met on the trip rang and invited me on Sunday. I'm looking forward to it. My landlady told me today that her mother-in-law<sup>49</sup> has a reception every Thursday and would be happy if I were to come along too. One would meet lots of interesting people at her place. So you see, I'm not a nobody here and in no way am I having a bad time. Díaz's light shines far and wide!

Once I no longer speak like a six year old, just a bit more slowly, then it will all be hunky dory.

[...]<sup>50</sup>

The rubber flooring is the only one in the whole institute, that's how F. wanted it. Whether it's to make up for past injustice<sup>51</sup>, he's doing very well here and he's playing an important part. We don't have the feeling that we've hardly seen each other in the last five years. I think we'll be able to work well together again. I know all four Spaniards now, bright, ambitious men. I'll be happy as a child when the real work starts at the Institute, for and with Díaz. Without housework one has so much time. And until my books arrive

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<sup>48</sup> A type of cream cheese also known as petit suisse.

<sup>49</sup> i.e. the painter, Thyra Ekwall.

<sup>50</sup> It is likely that the manuscript is missing some text at this point.

<sup>51</sup> A reference to the forced exile of Franz Bielschowsky from Nazi Germany and the enormous obstacles this presented for his career.

I'm enjoying F's library. He has wonderful things. Tomorrow after our dog has been to the vet we will head out again to the fabulous Ciudad.

They are currently building the Institute of Dentistry, 16 floors, one for every two teeth. I'm gradually beginning to attend to my mail. I have written to Th<sup>52</sup> and to Budapest. How happy they'll be for me, from the bottom of their heart. Just think, there's a special place for my laundry in the bathroom, it disappears and comes back washed again. Ideal, don't you think? Now you know everything. On Monday there is another holiday, then work finally begins. By the way, I've bought 6 clothes hangers, at the risk of my life, in the only Ehape<sup>53</sup> in all of Spain. Here it's called Sepu<sup>54</sup> and Spanish women are so enamoured of it that they begin and end their day there. By the way, my couch bed is fabulously comfortable: a type of sprung mattress standing on six heavy wooden feet. The bed is made on top of that and over it a quite large, heavy blanket, hand woven in quite delicate yellow, green and black. The curtains and the chair covers are like that too, a harmony of colours that I really love. And for the first time since I was a student there are good pictures in the room, two originals and a good print. The onyx lamp on the writing table has a yellow silk shade, ditto for the ceiling light and the lamp by the couch.

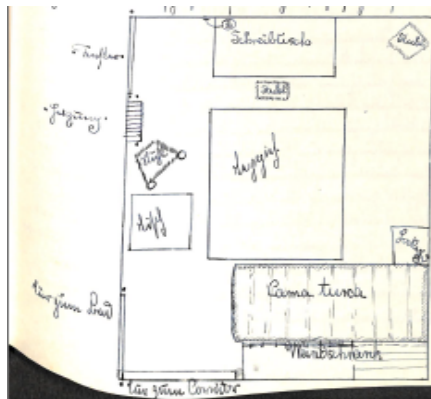
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<sup>52</sup> Thannhauser.

<sup>53</sup> Ehape was an abbreviated form ("EHP" in German) of Einheitspreis-Handelsgesellschaft mbH. Established in 1925 as a chain of German budget department stores, Ehape was renamed Rheinische Kaufhalle AG in 1937.

<sup>54</sup> An acronym of Sociedad Española de Precios Únicos, A.A. Spain's first department store, it was founded in Barcelona in 1934 by two Jewish-Swiss businessmen, Henry Reisembach and Edouard Worms.

And now I'll sketch for you, as I've always done, just how I'm set up. The radiator has a little shelf above. There you'll see my only possessions, a pretty Meissen jar and a new little calendar I was given in a drugstore at New Year's and which I've cut into the right shape, to everyone's amazement. And another thing, feel free to write my address in German on my letters, they will get here. Italian, like on the last one, won't be understood.



Marianne's sketch of her room and its furnishings.



Madrid, 6 /12 / 36<sup>55</sup>

Just a quick note to my last letter: the lab coats need to have my monogram sewn in so that customs know they're my property. Díaz is coming back the day after tomorrow. It was really nice yesterday afternoon at the engineer's. Now I just hope that my things arrive and I don't need to pay customs duty. Customs officials seem to be unpredictable here. Today is a kind of half-holiday.<sup>56</sup> People give each other cakes into which little surprises are baked that bring good fortune. I have just had one with coffee and found a little porcelain rabbit in it. I'll put it in my purse. Afterwards I'm going to the clinic and then to the cinema, for the third time since I've been here. This past fortnight I've gone out more and been happier than in all my time in Cologne and Berlin put together. But that will all change when work begins. At the moment I am reading through Spanish chemical catalogues more from a sense of duty than from enthusiasm. It's just the worst when everything you've worked with daily for years suddenly gets another name. A similar name, true, and when I hear it I know what kind of substance is meant, but when I say all the names in German no one understands me. But it'll be fine. I am already having long conversations in Spanish with the maid here, using my hands and feet! I'm testing my knowledge and courage with her. She was just now interested to learn that there are rabbits in Germany as well – live ones and ones made of porcelain. I really would like to know what she thinks about a foreign country. But to go that deep is still too far for me! She can't write, she can't read

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<sup>55</sup> An error in the German manuscript. The date should read 6 / 1 / 36.

<sup>56</sup> Día de los Reyes Magos (Epiphany / Three Kings' Day).

apart from numbers. Recently at the post office I wanted to pay in my pesetas for Barcelona<sup>57</sup> and was studying what I had to fill out. A man dressed in livery came up and offered to write for me. I didn't understand what he wanted until a woman asked of him: so and so many pesetas and warm regards to my son. He thought I couldn't write! By the way, Spanish schools are excellent - they demand a great deal. The books for 11 year olds are the equivalent of those for 13 and 14 year olds at home.<sup>58</sup> It's fantastic training for the memory, for the skill of speaking. But the sheer mass of theoretical knowledge means practice gets neglected. And that is what we two Germans are supposed to methodically teach to those learning with us. Intellectual energy and deep, intellectual knowledge – definitely a good balance. I have to say, if I were to sum up my short time here: I am more and more happy to be able to work here. Life here is so pleasant. Farewell, I'm in a hurry. International post only goes off once a day, in the evenings around 7 o'clock.

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<sup>57</sup> This must refer to a transaction involving the arrival of luggage.

<sup>58</sup> Werner Droescher (1911 – 1978), latterly a senior lecturer at the University of Auckland, did not share this assessment of the Spanish education system. In 1936 Droescher had been engaged as private tutor to the son of ex-patriate Germans living in Catalonia. Upon his arrival in Tossa del Mar one of his first tasks was to familiarise himself with the education curriculum in order to prepare his charge for a State examination: "It was all dead matter, designed to be learned by rote and then parroted. [...] Fortunately the Spanish text books were so primitive that we were able to get a grip on the material without any great difficulty. The texts usually just consisted of definitions which one could easily master without any great degree of understanding [...]" (Droescher, 41. OGS translation.)

Madrid, 11 / 1 / 36

You'll be surprised that I'm answering your 2 letters today. Mother's airmail letter just arrived. So: to deal with your worries straight away: Point 1 – the landladies in question don't know each other, it was arranged by a third party. Point 2 – above this *attico* there are other mansard rooms for the maids, so not just a hot roof. What's more, the house was only finished in September and so it's modern, built entirely with cork insulation. The fear of being too warm, then, doesn't apply - to the extent that you can ever say that here. In addition, the balcony faces east so it can even be used in the evenings in summer since it's in the shade. Point 3 – there are actually 2 elevators in the building – both built by the best company – so you don't need to worry there. Point 4 – the wardrobe can really only be reached from the corridor, but it's tiled so there's no wood available for little creatures of any kind. At the moment we're bringing in fleas all the time. They come from our dogs. One morning recently we caught more than a dozen. Of course, I'm not together with the others, but the apartment does have a lot of other advantages that are hard to describe. But certainly the family plays a big part as well. I can't really go to Díaz about the coats. My salary is the equivalent of a full professor's. And according to everything I've been able to calculate in this short time, I am very comfortably off. I think 300 pesetas will deal with all my living expenses. I'll add 200 pesetas for the unexpected and [miscellaneous] purchases – which is a lot when a man's suit costs 200 ps. And the rest is mine! At the start one always needs more because one is still not familiar with everything. But that's an advantage to me as well, because people who've lived in Madrid for 30 years

have been giving me good advice. There are different views concerning the books. I spoke about it with the engineer. He said it's always best if you keep your knowledge locked up in your own bookcase and only make it available according to need. That's a principle that really makes sense to me. Because if one gives everything away, one loses a lot of advantages! And the people who've been here for so long already know the mentality of the locals best.

The calendar has already found a place for itself and is in service. I was so happy about that. But now, along with the German names of the months I have to learn the Spanish ones, to the great amusement of F. This week we were all together in the Lagasca, the 5 doctors from the Institute and I. I was so tired from everyone talking at once, and it was all so fast. One really needs to pay such close attention. Yesterday I was at the theatre, but because they sang as well I unfortunately understood almost nothing. Whenever I was lucky enough to grasp the words they had already moved on a bit so the plot became quite opaque to me. What's more, it had to do with some Spanish revolution from last century about which I know absolutely nothing.<sup>59</sup> But I can go shopping on my own, and since I currently have the laboratory assistants for induction I have to learn more than those girls do. But they're so much nicer and more modest than one is used to that it's a pleasure in spite of all the work. On the second day already they came to thank me for

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<sup>59</sup> This was probably *La española* (*The Spanish Girl*), a *zarzuela* (a genre that mixes spoken verse with song) by Luis Fernández Ardavín and Valentin de Pedro. *La española* was set amongst the Spanish community of exiled liberals in Paris in the year 1878. It had been premiered on 12 December 1935 and was being performed during January 1936 at the Teatro Fontalba.

working with them and they said they'd learn a lot. It's actually rather the case that on mornings like that I'm learning much more than they are. Never mind! In the evenings I also have half an hour of the liveliest conversation with the maid here and I'm learning about the most common aspects of life. I've already found out that they don't speak proper Castilian here in Madrid and I'd already picked up some of these differences. People have already predicted that my good pronunciation will last 4 weeks at the most. What's certain is that all the new things I'm learning daily are in Madrid-ish. Today I'll write to Dorothee<sup>60</sup> about the book and that I'm fine and like it here. Really, I've not regretted a minute of being here. And I'm not 1/8 as lonely as I was in Berlin. When I can converse *corriente*<sup>61</sup> then it will be even more fun. You write that these 3 weeks have been like an eternity. I feel as if I've always been here. We are working together, and it's not as if 5 eventful years had intervened. He gave me a lovely recording book for the laboratory, with removable leaves. Each evening I write in it all the preparations for the things I have to teach the girls the next day. *Ciudad universitaria* means something like University-City because it's an entire district in which everything that belongs to a university is supposed to be located. Everything is of fantastic dimensions. It is going to be impressively beautiful. Have I already told you that I'm called Angermann-Beutler here?<sup>62</sup> Women and men both

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<sup>60</sup> Dr Dorothee Schnabel née Angermann, Marianne's sister.

<sup>61</sup> = fluently

<sup>62</sup> Spanish naming conventions require the father's name to be followed by that of the mother in a double-barrelled format. If the surname is shortened it is usually to the patronymic, but where this is very common the matronymic is often used instead.

have their father's as well as their mother's names. For everyday life it's rather long but it's normal for bureaucratic forms and so on. Well, now I've run out of things to say. I'll use this beautiful Saturday to take a little midday nap ---

Madrid, 19 / 1 / 36

There's not much to report on here today. I'm still waiting for my suitcases. How can Cook claim that they would take 14 days at the most? It doesn't matter – but I really would like to get things in order. The more so since – with the exception of the last two days when it poured down – the weather has been glorious again. Last Sunday it was almost too warm for a coat. I put it on only to look respectable and because it's January. Before we ate we were in the city and I met a very nice Hungarian, a very intelligent person, academically very well known, and who has been working here for about 3 years. On Monday we spent a long time doing preparatory work for the Institute at my place. It's fun to be able to discuss everything together again and my machine<sup>63</sup> is so indispensable to me. On Tuesday I received a nice invitation to dine with my folk here, on Wednesday evening we went to the Lagasca, on Thursday I was out for tea and a very fine dinner with the director of the Overseas Bank.<sup>64</sup> On Friday we were at my place, yesterday afternoon at the cinema. You see that time flies. At 7.45 I get up, work from 9 till 2 then have lunch, sleep till 4, work from 5 till 7 – or perhaps we stay till 8 or 9, it depends. If we are finished at 7 then we have a coffee because one doesn't eat until 9 in the evening. The evenings here don't begin until 10 and if one is at home they last till 12 or 12.30. Outdoors it's much later. But not as late as last year because, thank God, one doesn't have to add up the hours. In the meantime, we are acting as if it is going to last forever! My language is getting

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<sup>63</sup> i.e. typewriter.

<sup>64</sup> Wilhelm Ullmann. See the letter of 30 / 12 / 35.

better and better. I just start talking, there's nothing else for it, and people understand me. The girls say I'm *simpatiquísima*<sup>65</sup> and that goes down well with the doctors. At the start I had the feeling they were somewhat suspicious in spite of all their helpfulness. Of course, they have their own pre-conceived ideas and need to slowly start seeing who I really am and, especially, what I'm thinking.

The boss is extraordinarily kind. On the first day back from holiday he showed the greatest understanding in getting my money matters in order. Every day I feel glad that I'm here and can work. At the moment things are moving slowly in the Institute. Politics will be centre stage until next month.<sup>66</sup> But there's no great sign of it in public life. Occasionally two people shoot each other. But no one here takes that tragically. One only reads about it in the paper. I read them every day – but hardly anything from you anymore. At the most a picture postcard with a brief signature, quite different from last year. Interest is obviously flagging! Yesterday I had a charming letter from Budapest, so long and so nice that I want to answer it straight away. They want to know everything of course. We are keen to know what Thannhauser will say. F. thinks he will be overjoyed. We'll be his school in the Institute, four of us out of six.<sup>67</sup> The first doctor I'm supposed to teach is here – a pleasant, quiet person, a Peruvian who does everything – but everything –

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<sup>65</sup> = very nice

<sup>66</sup> Spanish general elections were held on 16 and 23 February 1936.

<sup>67</sup> Barreda had worked closely with Thannhauser in Freiburg for four years, but the rest of the team at the Institute had also benefited from time spent at German universities: in Berlin (Ochoa and Morán), Hamburg (Arjona), and Heidelberg (Morán and Arjona). (Jiménez Díaz, 222 – 223).



exactly as I do it, even the same hand movements. Does he think it has to be that way? Later he's supposed to work with Díaz in a private laboratory. My laboratory is practically in the middle of the departments. That saves a lot of running around. And the people are not just particularly nice, they are decidedly an intellectual elite brought in by Díaz. It is really enjoyable to have to think hard when one talks with them about scientific matters. When everything here is finally finished, it will really be wonderful. We have a beautiful dining room just for us, and for those free hours when we don't go home in the afternoon, an absolutely wonderful terrace which may well get rather warm in summer. But then there are fabulous showering facilities. Everything is beautiful, such as I never thought I would find. I just can't describe it all to you.

My future laboratory assistant is called Concha, a nice little thing who, however, has a huge amount to learn – no simple undertaking as there are still many words I don't know in the laboratory.

At the moment I have to vet all 7 of them. But it's a pleasure when each of the future department heads are already coming to assure me that they're very happy with how they [the lab assistants] are being trained before they start their specialised tasks. In the interim I'm teaching them general laboratory skills. They have brilliant memories on account of their schooling. Spanish schools are very demanding. Some of them have their university entrance qualifications. They all come with recommendations. 150 applicants for 7 positions! Most of them are somehow related to the doctors, they are all very organised and very diligent. Everybody is addressed by their first name here, me too, apart from those who were in Germany. So it's fortunate that I at least have a

name that they know in a slightly different form here, Mariana, and can pronounce. At first it seemed strange. But I've already got used to it and respond to my name. Today is letter-writing day. Yesterday, Díaz's mother<sup>68</sup> died and today she is being buried. Like at home in the Rhineland, women don't attend. All the others are going. We won't meet until coffee time or this evening. The time of the funeral still hadn't been decided yesterday. Here everyone has a telephone. It's included in my rent. Which is very convenient. Everyone thinks my apartment is very cheap. I do too and so in the summer I'll be able to travel off somewhere which we have already firmly planned. In the meantime, our pleasures have got as far as a bottle of cognac, gigantic, excellent, the best one can get here, for a whole 6 pesetas! Fabrics are also much cheaper than at home. And I already have a seamstress, or rather three. As soon as my things arrive I'll begin, because it's getting really quite warm. It's always 10 – 15° but people are so used to it that they find it cold when it is only 10°. The programme for next week is not yet in place. But our work is forging ahead. We are in the process of working on everything that has been started because there are other plans for the new Institute. So you can see from all this that I'm doing well. Sometimes it seems like a fairy tale that it's worked out so well. And slowly but surely I'm beginning to forget how hard the last 5 years were. But not the good things! It just seems to me that I have been here forever. Now there is bright blue sky again, just like April at home, only warmer.

I will write to Frl. Dr. Ahrends today so my letter still gets to her in Cologne. So farewell, I'm almost getting writer's

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<sup>68</sup> Jacoba Díaz Benito.

cramp from typing. F. says now I could type his 7 line letters to Holland and I should write them on the deadline. He is thrilled that I can type so quickly. He takes twice as long. Sometimes life really is such fun. Just a shame that you both have so little part in it. But you will visit. F. is already thinking about where he can go with Father. In the meantime we are keeping ourselves amused on our own. Father should set about learning Spanish so that you can look around during the day when we are in the clinic. Because we only have holidays in August. And they say that coming here at that time is impossible for a Central European! But the days are long! You can have an extended rest at midday so that we can see each other in the evening!

Madrid, 25 / 1 / 36

One wouldn't think it possible that a week had gone by already since I wrote to you. But it has and I want to use Saturday evening, when all Spanish men gather at the pub, to write to you and others. I don't need to write that I'm doing well – just that I was already in bed by 11 on Monday. On Tuesday we worked here, on Wednesday we were in the Lagasca and on Thursday at the cinema.

Yesterday I washed my hair at 8, thank God it was almost dry when the telephone rang after 10. But we decided it would be better to drink a cognac here than to go out again into the – if you'll pardon my language – swinish weather. It was so nice to talk about work without actually doing it. But we can never finish before 1 o'clock and how fortunate it is in this country that I'm no early riser. I'm studying Spanish, proper "castilian"<sup>69</sup>, with great energy. One of the doctors in the clinic wants to go to Germany in 4 weeks. Every day we work together a little so that we both profit from it. Franz absolutely cannot stand him but in this case it doesn't worry me. What intelligent people there are here! One wouldn't believe how quickly they pick things up if one didn't see it for oneself. It's a real pleasure for me to work here. When I get up every day I'm really glad to think that the clinic awaits me. Of course we speak a lot of German still, but there will slowly be less of it because it's really not good for us. One has to think constantly in the local language and if one speaks a lot of German one's Spanish gets much worse. Tomorrow I've been invited by Wilkens to the Lagasca. I don't have so much free time here, there's always something on. And if I

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<sup>69</sup> Correctly: Castilian (Sp. castellano)

plan to spend the evening at home then the phone immediately rings with the question of whether we can meet. I haven't had it this good since the medical clinic. I'm really enjoying it. Everyone says that I look so much better. How good, you can't imagine. I haven't been so dreadfully tired for a long time either. That must be down to the climate at this altitude, 600 m and then the 40 m of the apartment building. That means a real change of air. If only my things would arrive. Notification of the books has come from Irun<sup>70</sup>. The new maths text is here as well and is being eagerly used. As if I foretold it, I've been told that 3 people intend to study maths with me this summer. So I'm already beginning to refresh my knowledge. I have the impression that all five departments are making sure that the central chemical laboratory, my one, has plenty to do. The lab assistant I will ultimately keep from amongst all those I'm training is working quite well. And when one of the five departments has something for me, then one of their two lab assistants always works with me. The Spaniards are Ochoa, Arjona, Mora and Barreda. Ochoa at the moment is doing his "defence" i.e. he wants to become a *catedrático*, what we call a full professor.<sup>71</sup> It is quite different to the way we do things, really quite exciting. They don't do a post-doctoral qualification first. Instead, 3 candidates compete for the position. Each gives an impassioned talk about his work and is sharply critiqued by the two others. Everything in front of a high tribunal consisting of the faculty, the other

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<sup>70</sup> A town in the Basque country directly on the border with France. Presumably the books Marianne refers to were imported into Spain via Irun.

<sup>71</sup> Ger.: Ordinarius.

*catedrático[s]*. I spent three evenings at this exhausting event. Not today. Today was *memoria*, the end, in which the 3 set out how they picture their future academic careers as *catedrático[s]*. I had to pay colossally close attention. They spoke so quickly, so stirringly. And I was so happy that I understood what it was all about. The doctor who will work with me will bombard me with questions. But he is a quiet, refined person, a conscientious worker who is sure to become an excellent analyst. Apart from that I still don't know who will come. It will still take a while until the Institute is completely finished, because here everyone has what no one has at home – namely, time.

I am really happy with the girls. They understand me well, they pay attention well and they enjoy their work. At the beginning the one I'm going to get was the least interested. No one could get through to her and yet they wanted to keep her because she is the daughter of a recently deceased professor in the faculty, in very poor circumstances. But gradually she's becoming nicer and I think that she will be the most serious worker once she gets the right kind of work. If I don't like her, I'll get another one right away. But they will be especially pleased if I make something useful of her. And so I say to myself: why shouldn't I put the people here under an obligation, if I can have it so easy. Of all the girls she is the least attractive and the least kind and if one is just a bit nice to her she is a completely different person. I like her because she is quiet and a reliable worker. And everyone says that, since I've been here, she has become quite changed. I feel sorry for someone like that and I have to help them, in any way I can. It will all be fine. I wish my laboratory was ready, although everything is going well for me now too. I work the whole day together with F. We have

a heap of plans for what we'll do later in terms of our publications. Oh, it really is simply brilliant here!

Here the weather is very bad. The rain is drenching everything. They say that it hasn't rained this much since 1876. And in Barcelona the peach trees are all in blossom! It's now Sunday. We sat in the sun for a change and drank vermouth. The sky was blue like it is at home in mid-summer. Then I had a good sleep and was in the Lagasca for coffee. When I came back home I talked with my landlady's family for an hour. When the sun shines properly again I'll start clicking.<sup>72</sup> I'll have to get used to a completely different light intensity and will make a lot of mistakes at the start. But I'll finish up now. It's almost 1 o'clock and there's a lot to do tomorrow.

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<sup>72</sup> i.e. taking photos.

Madrid, 30 / 1 / 36

As I was writing the date just now I noticed just how quickly time is passing. Grandmama's death has made me very sad. And how happy I was that we were there [with her] one more time. How lovely that her end was so easy. To be so spritely right up to the end, that's a real mercy. Of course it is all the more surprising when someone like that departs. One never really entertains the idea that it might happen. I'll write again to Langenberg<sup>73</sup> today like the short message on Monday when I got Mother's message: "Did not arrive". In the meantime Mother's letter arrived today and Father's kind card from Bühlau.<sup>74</sup> I'd like to thank you straight away for both. I'll answer everything in Sunday's letter because I'm expecting F. soon who wants to dictate some Spanish letters to me. Thank God he can't speak and think in Spanish as quickly as in German and I have time to think about the spelling. This week was busy at work. On Monday we were kept going till 10 o'clock because of the operations and then we had something to eat quickly. On Tuesday there was a lot of work and preparation for a kind of presentation evening on Wednesday with Díaz. I didn't get home till 11 o'clock and talking and listening to so much Spanish made me so tired that I went straight to bed after the meal. At the moment I'm giving the lab assistants an hour's tuition every day in theoretical chemistry. That's a lot of work. To lecture for an hour in German is not easy. But I think there's nothing better

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<sup>73</sup> Langenberg is today a district of the city of Velbert in North-Rhine/Westphalia. The city lies roughly midway between Essen and Wuppertal.

<sup>74</sup> Bühlau is a district in the east of Dresden.



for learning, for both sides. That's it for today, and don't let things get you down too much at the moment.

Madrid, 2 / 2 / 36

Now I want to write the Sunday letter I promised. I have to admit that I didn't have any coffee until 11 o'clock today but that's nothing out of the ordinary here. I had a wonderful sleep of exactly 12 hours! The week was busy at work. We had dinner in the evening one more time, otherwise we always had coffee at my place after the evening meal. We bought a tin of good coffee for one peseta and it's doing us good at work. We are reading a lot together and, because the Institute is still not ready, preparing for all the jobs we will do when it is. So a lot of work will have been done by the time summer comes. When spring arrives, and that won't be much longer here, then we'll also get up to something such as drive out of the city. So it's great to prepare things in advance while the weather is still being miserable and unpredictable. There's a bit of conversation to be had along the way as well of course. This afternoon we'll go to the clinic. One of the staff wants to do practical exercises for his defence and to run through it beforehand. I am really not required, but Franz, cautious man, is all for bringing me along just in case something goes awry. Afterwards we'll eat somewhere, like yesterday, when we drank beer and ate excellent salads. The best was one with garlic which tasted fabulous. At 10 o'clock I was at home. Today I'll eat asparagus, 1 peseta 25 for a ½ pound, a tin of quite small peas 60 centimos. Every week<sup>75</sup> I give the girl 5 pesetas, which is called a duro here. That's 1.50 mark and for that I'm looked after in a way that couldn't be better. When there are fresh vegetables she gets them for me as well, and potatoes

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<sup>75</sup> An error in the German manuscript here has: "every week month".

seem to be included in the rent. Really, I couldn't have it better in any respect! I'm taking the pictures you asked for whenever there is constant sunshine. That way, everything looks nicer. You'll also get a picture of Thilo, the son of the household. He's slowly starting to talk and calls me – like he does his father and mother – mama. He is really quite funny. But a fabulously well looked after child. His parents have invited me on Sunday car trips in the summer. I'm looking forward to it as it will be an opportunity to see a lot of Spain and to go swimming. The suitcases are still not here. Everyone has such annoying problems. If I only knew with which ship they left for Barcelona. People here suspect that they were just unloaded in Portbou and are now sitting there in the freeport<sup>76</sup>. I've been asking around about the summer wardrobe. And about fabric as well. To have a one-piece dress sewn costs around 15 – 20 pesetas, and for a good one 30 – about the same as at home. As far as Grandmama's things are concerned, keep them as you see fit. I'm slowly beginning to think that people here do things more cleverly than we do. A lot of them rent furniture and later terminate the contract. I think that's because the Spanish are spread all over the world. The Landas e.g. come from the Canary Islands, don't know if they'll stay and can't drag their household goods around with them. We are all so settled and that's why everything piles up around us.

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<sup>76</sup> Portbou (wrongly, "Port Bon" in the German manuscript) is a small Catalan town directly on the border with France. The last military engagement of the Spanish Civil War was fought near the settlement in 1939. In the following year, the German-Jewish philosopher, Walter Benjamin, committed suicide there after being threatened with deportation to Vichy France.

How good I have it here compared with the dreadful loneliness of Berlin! Almost every day someone drives me home. Here they don't let a lady pay for a tram. On Wednesday before the presentation evening we first had to eat well because one can't do science on an empty stomach. You know, everything is so nice. And now farewell. I've got to get ready for the clinic.

Madrid, 9 / 2 / 36

A postcard with a view of the post office.



The Madrid Central Post Office in 1936. (<http://madrid1936.es/madrid/imagesdeschamps/000003fl.jpg> [Accessed 5 July 2020])

Madrid, 8 / II / 36<sup>77</sup>

A Sunday letter is due again! I'm starting to write early because I have time for it now. There is nothing doing in the laboratory. The Spaniard has left for Göttingen. I'll be interested to know how he gets on there with his language. But without him it really is a great deal easier for me. My things are now all stored away, I'm only missing the books. It's hard to believe how long it all takes. On Tuesday I was in Lagasca. Otherwise we were well-behaved due to the dull offerings at the cinema. On Thursday morning I was once again out at the new Institute. It'll be wonderful. The rubber flooring has been laid in my area and is drying out. Then comes a big work bench and a cupboard, divided between books and my clothes, a writing desk and a comfortable armchair as well. Along the wall with windows are white-tiled work stations. I'll take the one next to the writing desk. F. anticipated my wishes and has had a socket installed in the wall by the writing table.

The library will also be nice. We hope that everything will be finished in 4-6 weeks. But we are slowly making a start with our work. On Wednesday we discussed all sorts of things with Díaz. And that's why he was here [i.e. at the old clinic] today. The man who's starting first spent a long time in America and is supposed to be a good worker. For me it's all rather easy and it will continue to be so until we shift into the new Institute. I'm getting more and more settled here. Speaking is not such a chore anymore and I understand practically everything even if there are lots of words I still

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<sup>77</sup> Huge rallies were being held by all political parties in Madrid that day prior to the General Election of 16 February.

don't know and I make mistakes. All that will improve with time. F has just come to get me for coffee. So I'll continue again tomorrow.

[Later] Because it was raining so hard we didn't go out and had to console ourselves with the dregs of our first bottle of cognac. Without work of any sort it was a comfortable afternoon which stretched on until 10 pm. Then I had a bath, ate well and slept soundly till 10 this morning. I had wanted to go to the Prado<sup>78</sup> after breakfast but the weather was too bad. So I worked and had myself a feast: pieces of cauliflower baked with pork fillet, cheese, oranges. In the afternoon I had tea at Lagasca and now I'm attending to my unanswered correspondence in the late evening.

Now to answer Mother's letter of the 30<sup>th</sup> which only arrived after my card had already left. It certainly took its time. I will write to Frau Laubmeyer today. To Gerharda as well. She seems to think of Spain as a Dutch colony and warns me about the climate and swamps. I am so sorry that the little bag has been returned. Imagine – my big, new suitcase travelled all the way from Barcelona unlocked. The Railways then sealed it up here. I had to open it in the presence of the insurance official and there was nothing missing. On the contrary, the odd thing had fallen out but had been packed back in on top so that the case, which someone had lovingly repacked after the customs inspection, arrived tidier than the one that was shut. On top someone had placed a huge nail for free!

I'm very glad that you have ordered the books, I need them urgently. They are worth more to me here than everything else.

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<sup>78</sup> Museo del Prado, Spain's greatest museum of fine art.

The small child in the house is a boy and his name is Thilo. He is 19 months old, understands Spanish better than German, is very sweet and I'll take a picture of him as soon as there is sun. Then you'll also get a picture of me. The hairstyle in question is in the process of changing. Strange, my hair is getting noticeably darker here. Maybe that is to do with the air. I really appreciate my Knirps<sup>79</sup> here, but it's also a nuisance. Because people have never seen one before, I constantly have to show them the mechanism. Now I have run out of things to say. I have a lot to do tomorrow. Tuesday is a holiday, they are operating on Thursday, Wednesday there is another evening with Díaz at which F. and Barreda are presenting. Díaz is very satisfied that I understand everything and Barreda claims that I can speak better than F. could after a year. That is a bit of an exaggeration but the good man admits, if reluctantly, that it's easier for me than for him. Without a trace of envy, and as if it were his doing, he enthusiastically tells everyone that I can speak remarkably well!

Of course it is more convenient for him than if I were to sit around stiffly with nothing to say. If they get a well recommended person from Germany, then they want to get something out of it, in the workplace and socially! It is really such fun the way F and I work so well together. Biochemistry and chemistry have so much in common. The responsibilities of each department are beginning to be allocated. I will have the German and chemical-technical correspondence and chemicals together with F. because two people are to work in each area, which seems very wise to

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<sup>79</sup> The "Knirps" was a folding camera manufactured by G.A. Krauss of Stuttgart from 1920 – 1923.



us. There will always be one person around who will know what to do no matter what crops up.

By the way, the Madonna is on the book shelf, and in the middle a huge bunch of catkins. On the other side is the jewellery box from Granny. The dining table cloth is also spread out. The little writing table clock is ticking and everything is hunky dory. And now I'm getting writer's cramp!

Madrid, 16 / II / 36

I'm just home after a lovely drive. We were out for the whole morning, the Ullmann family with father-in-law<sup>80</sup> and I in his wonderful car. We were in Alcalá de Henares, an old university town with a wonderful university which is now a military orphanage.<sup>81</sup> We set off in bad weather which improved noticeably the higher we were in the hills. At the top there was radiant sunshine and a sky as blue as it is in mid-summer at home. The façade of the old university is wonderful, in a stone that looks like yellow sandstone but can't be because it has scarcely weathered over the centuries. Inside there are three courtyards. Each of them has wonderful arcades. Even the main lecture hall is reached through such a courtyard. The ceiling is carved in wood and brightly painted. On the walls there are plaques with the names of former students who have now become more or less famous.

Then we went to the old student hostel which had been restored to its presumed original state by the Patronat del Turismo. The old and the new have been beautifully brought together. Electric lightbulbs have been skilfully fitted into

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<sup>80</sup> Presumably this means the father-in-law of Friedel Zahn, Marianne's landlady. This would be Wilhelm Ullmann, director of the Überseeische Bank in Madrid (see footnote for letter of 30 / 12 / 1935).

<sup>81</sup> Located around 30 km northeast of Madrid, Alcalá de Henares was the birthplace of Cervantes. A university had been founded there in 1499 but was moved by royal decree to Madrid in 1836. The buildings were subsequently used for other purposes – such as the orphanage Marianne mentions here. An independent Alcalá University was re-founded in the city in 1977.

old oil lamps. A big open fireplace is heated with wood and in front of it there are stools of sheepskin. On a table in a corner there are wineskins made from pigskins sewn together at the feet. The neck is tied up and fixed to the ceiling by a string which one can let down. To pour a drink you loosen this string a little and the wine flows from the neck. We drank vermouth and ate olives and salted almonds with it. It was very nice. Everywhere the fruit trees are in blossom, the bushes have proper leaves already. At the moment it is not so warm. The cold front from America must be having an effect. But at midday already you can sit in the sun without a coat!

Yesterday afternoon we had coffee at my place.

Then we went for a stroll through town. Due to the elections there was a lot going on.<sup>82</sup> There's a mass of paper on the streets, just like Carnival in Cologne<sup>83</sup>. Some buildings are unrecognisable, plastered as they are with election posters. One party sticks something up, the other one tears it down. Voter turnout is high, but a gentle rain is cooling all the passionate spirits, and that's good! We ended up in Casa Alvarez, an ale house where you eat well. Today I bought fruit, apples 25 Pf.<sup>84</sup> the pound, 6 large bananas 20 Pf., and a grapefruit – I didn't know that they grew here, large, golden yellow and so juicy – for 15 Pf. My books have arrived and are on the shelves. I am really hoping now for the rest. If the

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<sup>82</sup> 16 February 1936 saw the last Spanish general election before 1977.

<sup>83</sup> The end of Lent – Carnival - in the largely Catholic Rhineland is the occasion for a holiday marked by processions and exuberant celebrations.

<sup>84</sup> Pf. = Pfennig

Karrer<sup>85</sup> is not amongst them, I would like to place it on hold. The Richter-Anschütz has now finally come out. I'm especially interested in the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume, 1<sup>st</sup> section which is on organic chemistry<sup>86</sup>. It will cost around 50 M. I am still to get 35 M from Ernst Schnabel<sup>87</sup> for the set of weights which unfortunately won't get through customs. That's just occurred to me now!

I had a letter from U.<sup>88</sup> Hopefully Father has not had too much trouble and annoyance. He can say that my salary here is only 267 M. I can set out what the cost of living is here. It's not enough to buy books on. They need to understand that in Düsseldorf. German books are promoted by being seen and admired here. The same goes for all the orders placed with German firms by the Institute and they're all made on my recommendation. I already emphasised that in my application for foreign currency.

Yesterday we tested the girls again. It went better than I expected and I was happy about it. They'll now come in groups every morning. That is much easier than trying to explain things to them all for hours on end. The Institute is supposed to be ready in 14 days!

From Berlin I got a picture of everyone at the company from one of the employees. That delighted me!

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<sup>85</sup> Paul Karrer (1889 – 1971), Swiss chemist and Nobel prize winner. His *Lehrbuch der Organischen Chemie (Textbook of Organic Chemistry)* was first published in 1927.

<sup>86</sup> The work in question was *Chemie der Kohlenstoffverbindungen Band 2 (Chemistry of Carbon Compounds Volume 2)* by Victor von Richter (1841 – 1891) and Richard Anschütz (1852 – 1937). It was first published in 1896.

<sup>87</sup> Marianne's brother-in-law.

<sup>88</sup> U = Ungarn i.e. Hungary

Madrid, 24 / II / 36.

Now my Sunday letter really will be a day too late. I did all sorts of things on Sunday and ended up too tired to write. We are slowly beginning to move into the new Institute. We are starting with the preliminary tasks, unpacking and ordering our material. It's a lot of work but in the meantime the laboratories on at least one floor will be finished. First up I need to come to a friendly agreement with F. because 2 rooms have already been finished in his department. I'm completely focused on the chemicals store. It is so much easier even though at the start everything is so painstakingly arranged. F. is doing the glass things, Ochoa the library, Mora the instruments, Barreda the metal materials. So everyone has his own area! We are also starting to organise our tasks. Along with Castro whom I'm training and who doesn't cost me too much time, I will finally have two big projects again as well, one with F, and one with Ochoa with whom I imagine it's easy to work.

We have discussed everything already. Alongside all this there are then the general Institute affairs. But I'll go through it in order. Ochoa arrived first so he gets first choice. I will keep a separate journal for each department with dates, requests and their implementation. I don't really think that that will be necessary here amongst good friends. But I can drop it later on, rather than see that it would have been better to have done it from the outset. It's so easy to pass the point of no return! The Institute will be wonderful, really indescribably fine. We hope to be working properly in 7 weeks!

I don't have so much to report. We've gone for a beer twice and otherwise we have been busy. There's not much sign of Carnival. I have seen a few very pretty floats but it is nowhere near as lively as in Cologne. Strange, though, that it is still going on on Ash Wednesday.