

Madrid, 7 / V / 36

My dears, you are probably wondering about the badly written letter. But the fountain pen won't work with the nib pointing up, and it's too late, just gone 12, for typing. I've had a wonderful bath and have crawled into bed because of the dreadful cold. – On Friday there was a big public holiday<sup>1</sup> with nothing on i.e. no trams, no restaurants, no cinema, no nothing. So I slept in, did a bit of tidying up, peeled my asparagus, set the table and, when everything was ready, F. arrived with a huge box of chocolates. They were dreadfully good and not just because I haven't had any for so long. Chocolate here is very bad, and what is imported from abroad is awfully expensive because of very high duties. So with my yellow tablecloth, the serviettes, 3 plates and 1 small side dish made of loza – Spanish earthenware<sup>2</sup>, frightfully cheap, my ones have a dark blue border – and 2 pieces of chrome-plated cutlery we had a lovely table on which my sole fruit knife and the Meissner vase flaunted themselves. I got the plate for 4 pesetas and it had just the same pattern as F. could remember as one of his first memories from his childhood home. The menu was asparagus (30 pfennigs a pound) with butter, new potatoes and boiled ham. Afterwards omelette aux confitures i.e. with strawberry jam. You can't get any of that here and I'd let him make a wish. To accompany it there was viño tinto – that's red wine – from my water glasses, 50 pfennigs a bottle. It was holiday wine and very good. Slept a bit, then drank

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was written on Thursday 2 May. The holiday Marianne refers to was therefore Labour Day.

<sup>2</sup> la loza = earthenware

coffee with biscuits. Between 7 and 9 we went for a walk and observed all the returning holidaymakers and day-trippers which was very peculiar. My house is the second in the street. Lagasca is one of the boulevards, the trams drive on 2 sides and there is a wide tree-lined avenue in the middle with benches. But a lot of people were just sitting on the street, some of them even had a gramophone with them. At another place some children were digging out a tree and throwing the earth into a pile around another tree. All under the gaze of the police who were out in force, but also on holiday. So everything went off peacefully and harmoniously. For supper we had saveloy, ham sausage, aspic and liver sausage which are sold here under German names but are, of course, dearer than the local sausage. The last named is on the bill as “Lebebus”<sup>3</sup>. There is also “Metbus”<sup>4</sup>. We had our red wine with them and then felt tired from the strenuous celebrating. But it was a lovely 1. May. Saturday was just a half holiday<sup>5</sup> i.e. we were off completely and used the morning to attend to our most pressing needs. I went out and bought Brilliantine, for example. The sun and wind are making my hair like a Negro’s – it’s always somewhere where it shouldn’t be. The problem will soon be solved, and I’ll have a flawless Spanish hairstyle in just a few days – to Mother’s relief, let it be said. The air here also makes you thin so I went to the dressmaker

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<sup>3</sup> “Lebebus” is a Spanish phonetic rendering of the German “Leberwurst” (liver sausage).

<sup>4</sup> A phonetic attempt at “Mettwurst”, a sausage made of raw minced pork.

<sup>5</sup> This was “Dos de Mayo” (“Second of May”), a local holiday in Madrid which marks the uprising of the city’s populace in 1808 against French occupying forces during the Peninsular War (1807 - 1814).

because I'm in danger of no longer fitting all my skirts. But it suits me and I don't look pasty any more either. That's by the by. As well as the Brilliantine, I bought two deck chairs for my terrace. I gave them to myself as a present from you because just beforehand I had gone to the post office. They cost 5 marks each and are fabulous, they can't slip at the back because they've got a kind of ball joint and adjust themselves to suit you. The fabric has a blue background with fine green-red stripes. It suits the red tile floor well. On Saturday evening we had a festive meal after we had watched a gangster film with 2 schoolfriends of F. at the movies.<sup>6</sup> There's a lot to be said for not being provided with meals, even if I now have to spend a bit more on food when we're essentially eating together every evening. But it makes a change; meals cooked quickly at home become rather monotonous after a while. First of all there was fish soup, then we shared ½ a rotisserie chicken with strawberries for afters. They are still rather tart. 1 pound costs 60 pfennigs for woodland strawberries. But they taste very good. Cherries have been available since yesterday. 1 pound for 50 pfennigs. Very good, a small variety. Otherwise there are all sorts of fruit I've never seen before. All sorts of fresh vegetables as well. On Sunday at the end of the holiday we again went to the Italian restaurant; risotto, which is good but not expensive there. On Monday serious life began again. We worked hard this week. I spent a lot of time with Arjona with whom I can work really well. Yesterday the big

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<sup>6</sup> This was almost certainly *Public Hero # 1* (J. Walter Ruben, 1935), a crime film starring Chester Morris and Jean Arthur. It was playing that week at the Cine Carretas in the street of the same name just off the Puerta del Sol.

boss was there again, he usually comes on Wednesdays and Saturdays for 2 hours each time. Chemistry is a mysterious business for him.

The weather is less than ideal. After 10 days of sunshine it's cold again and with torrential rain. If it rains here, it really pours down. And we thought it was summer.

Perhaps you celebrated your wedding anniversary today. I wanted to write you a nice card on Saturday but it just sat there. You'll get it belatedly.

Madrid, 10 May 1936<sup>7</sup>

I hope my letter caught the flight to Berlin yesterday and that you got it today for Sunday. If flying were as cheap as an air mail letter, and there were no passports with visas, life would be a great deal simpler. One cannot imagine how easy it must have been when people didn't have all these difficulties. – This morning we dropped by the Institute, then we ate very poshly, though not very well, and decided not to go back to that restaurant. Then we went home after a short walk. I slept till 6 and now I'm writing to you. I'll spend the rest of the day hemstitching a new black slip because I only have one, the good one, as my old one is kaput, it started to fall apart all of a sudden. I really do need one for every day. That is pretty much everything I've done in these few days. I've just had supper – squid – then I'll work for a bit and go to bed soon because tomorrow we want to listen to a lecture from Zarger, and it's bound to be a long day. I imagine you'll write again soon and that you have settled in really well into the new apartment. I picture it as being very nice. I'm especially impressed that Mother's parlour furniture has found such a nice home in the bedroom. It would have been such a shame if Mother hadn't had her writing table to write

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<sup>7</sup> The political situation in Madrid had continued to deteriorate since Marianne's last letter three days earlier. On the evening of 7 May, Capt. Carlos Farauto, an artillery captain and advisor to the Socialist militias, was out walking with his wife when he was shot and mortally wounded by Falangists in the Calle de Lista (now the Calle de José Ortega y Gasset). This incident occurred around 1 km to the northwest of Marianne's residence on the Calle Francisco de Rojas.

letters to me. And write about what you do during the whole day. I'm interested in your daily schedule.

Madrid, 17 May 1936

This Sunday I can straight away say thanks for Father's letter which I found when I came home on Saturday. I'm very happy that your apartment is so nice which I was informed about on Thursday in a letter from Holland.-

Otherwise I don't have much to report. It was a fairly quiet, busy working week with only one trip to the movies, though it was a worthwhile one. The Spanish title is "Strictly Confidential".<sup>8</sup> It's a story about horse racing with wonderful photography. At the end, unfortunately, we had to go because there was a funeral for a horse held in very fancy style, with trumpets and a speech by a minister which we found too sentimental and kitschy. Before that we saw a film of the big parade held on the occasion of Azaña's election as President.<sup>9</sup> It must have been fantastic. Out at the Institute we only saw the flyover which was wonderful in the bright sunshine. To see it at the movies is much more comfortable; you're not in the crowd and don't have to get all sweaty, because it's been lovely and warm up until yesterday. Now it seems as if it wants to rain for weeks on end. The weather really is crazy this year, and no Spaniard can remember having experienced anything like this in the spring in Madrid. Yet the roses in the gardens are almost all

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<sup>8</sup> This film was *Broadway Bill* (Frank Capra, 1934). It was based on a short story entitled 'Strictly Confidential' by Mark Hellinger, the direct translation of which provided the Spanish title for the film: *Estrictamente confidencial*. It was playing that week at the Palacio de la Musica on Gran Via, 35.

<sup>9</sup> Manuel Azaña was elected President by the National Assembly in Madrid on 10 May (the date of Marianne's last letter to her parents) and sworn in on 11 May 1936.

faded. At the moment apricots are our dessert at lunchtime, a pound costs 15 pfennigs – our meal mostly consists of an entrée, some kind of canned fish or olives or something similar. Then come the eggs in various forms for which there is an aluminium pan. Then an open sandwich with sausage – we’ve found a shop where they sell German sausage. The Spanish type isn’t made for eating cold: it is isn’t cured. Then to finish there’s cheese which is made in all sorts of varieties here and is excellent. Then there’s fruit. The orange season is almost over. Instead there are cherries which are still too expensive at 75 pfennigs a pound. Apricots and a type of fruit we don’t have in Germany – they have three massive seeds and also cost 15 pfennigs.<sup>10</sup> Peaches will soon be here and are said to cost 5 pfennigs at their best. But of course here you have to count in pesetas.

On Wednesday there was the grand viewing of the Institute by the press. We all had our pictures taken and if I see one of them somewhere you’ll get it. On Monday an English professor was here whom I had met in Düsseldorf. He was impressed with the grandeur and was very nice. In the evening we went to his presentation which was very interesting but really difficult for us because he spoke Spanish and it’s still difficult to understand when it’s spoken by a foreigner. Don Carlos, who’s honoured me in the last week with more scientific discussions in the last week than in all the previous months, now only speaks Spanish with me and that’s quite good because he has an excellent

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<sup>10</sup> Probably the cherimoya, a fruit native to South America but cultivated in Spain since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

understanding of German.<sup>11</sup> If he doesn't say we need to speak German, then that's the best indication that I'm able to express myself in this new language. Like a child perhaps, but at least comprehensibly. On Friday evening, to mark the end of a busy week, we went out for an expensive, posh meal in Madrid's best restaurant in terms of food. Yesterday, against expectations, we got off earlier than usual because Don Carlos travelled to Galicia to give two conferences. Otherwise we have *reunión* on Saturday evenings. So we left at six on the dot, met a friend for coffee and afterwards shopped for necessities. We still had a lot of time because now in summer the shops don't close till 8.30. This morning F. came at 11 without, as it turned out at 12, having had any coffee. So I quickly made some. Then we went to Lazaro's to eat, princely for 1.50 marks. First of all *merluza*,<sup>12</sup> that's the best fish here, then partridge, then strawberries. Afterwards we were very tired. We worked for a bit, perused the main Spanish newspaper,<sup>13</sup> then had some coffee. In the meantime it was 9.30 and I'm now writing which is how the day will come to a glorious close. On Sundays people go to bed early so that they stock up on sleep for the week. When it's warm here it's wonderful. We now have temperatures like the best July days in Germany. You slowly start to get a

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<sup>11</sup> Jiménez Díaz must indeed have spoken good German since he had worked in research laboratories in Berlin and Frankfurt am Main during the 1920s.

<sup>12</sup> = hake

<sup>13</sup> This was almost certainly *Ahora*, a liberal-centrist daily founded in 1930 and which had a circulation of around 100 000. The only other newspaper of similar size, *ABC*, was openly sympathetic to the National Socialist regime in Germany and was therefore unlikely to have been read by Marianne or Franz Bielschowsky.

picture of what it will be like. We'll probably then start work at 8 because it's still cool on the way home. That's 9 o'clock with you. Then we'll finish already at 3 if we just take an hour for lunch which is plenty. Then you can sleep a little or go bathing or both and you still have a long day in front of you. But that is all still up in the air and depends on how the temperatures turn out. Tomorrow electric lighting is being laid on my terrace, then when the sun's gone down we can sit out outside till 10. My deck chairs are fantastic. – in a few months the other departments will move into the faculty and we'll become better known. Recently we've been getting a bus which picks us up for free from the tram stop which is very convenient so I get there in 20 minutes at the most. If we catch it in the evenings it takes 10 minutes to get into the city. It's very fine with grey plush upholstered seats.

When am I going to get wallpaper samples and a wee piece of the new curtains so I know what things look like at your place? Do you go to the cinema as well? There are a few in Stieglitz. How are the Fritzes doing?

I got a long letter from Gerharda, a card from Frau Laubmeyer. I have a bad conscience because I only replied to her letter after 8 weeks. But I thought she wrote more out of politeness, even if the letter was very personal. Now I get this card straight away as a first answer to my expression of thanks. Apparently she can't write more at the moment because she has visitors. But she says she was pleased and wants to write again soon. It's a bit funny for me when she writes that she has to think about me every day because she's always using the hand-sewn towel I once made for her. With the best will in the world I can't remember it but I guess it might be the case. On the other hand perhaps it does you good if you've been ground into the mud by other people like

I have. Well, ok. This is a time when the people who mean well are really starting to shine through. When everything is normal, one doesn't notice it at all. I had a long letter from Cologne. A shame that the poor girl has gone a bit mad, because essentially she really is a good soul.

Heinlein is going to get engaged soon. I'll be interested to see if it works this time. – I'll probably have a job for him in the next few days, it's still not certain, but I would like a patent document copied, you can find it all in the patent office for free. I'll write the exact number when I've found it out. It won't be urgent. The thing with Frau Senf<sup>14</sup> is typically funny. How old is she and does she have elephant legs?<sup>15</sup> Anyhow, you're better off than with an uppity Berliner.



Manuel Azaña arrives for his swearing in as President of the Republic, 11 May 1936. (*Cronica*, 17 May 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

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<sup>14</sup> Presumably the parents' maid in Berlin.

<sup>15</sup> The German term used here is "pommersche Einheitsbeine".

Primavera 1936.

## Ya está abierta la piscina; pero... ¡qué fría está el agua!...

**A**LBRECIAS, señores! El primer trocito de Primavera auténtica que ha disfrutado Madrid ha hecho florecer esas admirables mujercitas en maillots que serán durante unos meses la alegría de nuestras piscinas. Al conjuero de las perfecciones académicas de estas hermosas bañistas, surgirá, como todos los años en tal época, la consecuencia y tenaz Cofradía de los Mirrones. «El mirón público n.º 1» no dejará día sin acudir a rendir homenaje de admiración a estas bellas muchachas.

Mirrones de todas clases irán a tomarse su cañita de cerveza lo más cerca posible de los maillots sintéticos. Y allí se congregarán todos, desde el mirón descuidado hasta el señor de la barbilla al que su señora golpea la espalda por debajo de la mesa, al tiempo



The unseasonably cold weather of the Spanish spring in 1936 is suggested in this light-hearted article from *Cronica*, a weekly illustrated. Opportunities for swimming had been limited, complained the author, because of the cold and heavy rain. (*Cronica*, 10 May 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

Madrid, 26 May 1936

Winter has returned here again. It is dreadfully cold and I'm still waiting for the Spanish sun which I really just can't picture any more. It's as if everything's gone crazy, it just rains and rains and everything is one big swamp.<sup>16</sup> Next month my mathematics classes are starting. At first with F., Barreda and another senior doctor from another department. I hope there won't be any more because you can't really teach anything to a larger group. Díaz, for whom it seems the laboratory was something unsettling at the start, now comes every Wednesday and Saturday to me and is amazed I can always say by what time I'll have a certain thing ready.<sup>17</sup> But that's something you can only learn over time. He is very nice and, truly, not since Th. have I had a boss who always asks considerately at the outset if it's not too much for me. But it's a really pleasant way to work. Otherwise there's not much to report. On Sunday we were at a book fair and I found that you can buy books for 30 centimos – though they're printed on newsprint - that are excellent for using to learn Spanish. Historical stuff, art prints etc. Next week there's a flower market, I'm really

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<sup>16</sup> The weather appears indeed to have been dismal at that time, with storms, flooding and below average temperatures throughout the country. On 19 May, for example, *El Sol* reported that, although Madrid had only experienced a "modest" 22 mm of rain in the previous 24 hours, median daytime temperatures in the city had been six degrees below normal. (*El Sol*, 19 May 1936)

<sup>17</sup> Jiménez Díaz confirms this impression of Marianne's efficiency in his *Historia de mi instituto*, in which he writes: "I was always satisfied with the work of both of them [i.e. Marianne and Franz Bielschowsky]. Their preparation and potential seemed to me to be ideal." (Jiménez Díaz, 40)

looking forward to that, it's bound to be wonderful. There are always gladioli and cornflowers in my room. Otherwise we most live in the Institute then go out for dinner, now and then to the theatre again – or, more accurately, to the cinema.

I was delighted at the wallpaper samples, I like everything. As for the apartment, in the Hillerstraße<sup>18</sup> it was indeed nice; but if it doesn't work out then you're not married to it and perhaps you'll find something nicer.

It's nice that the Fritzes sometimes come. I mean, you should bear in mind that you would be just as - if not more - lonely in any other city.

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<sup>18</sup> This may be a reference to a previous address of Marianne's in Cologne.

Madrid. 4 / VI / 36

Things are going well here. At the moment all the construction workers have been on strike since Monday.<sup>19</sup> But that doesn't really affect us because we already have what we really need. It's just that the completion of our Institute will be delayed again, unfortunately. The top floor is still not ready for moving into, apart from a few rooms which we urgently needed and so took over just as they are. So, to get to the point. There isn't any Pentecost here. That's a shame. On the first day of the holidays I slept for a long time, then we went to the book market and the flower market, ate well – first lobster, then duck if you want to

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<sup>19</sup> The strike was one of the most significant political events in the dying days of the Second Republic. It involved around 80 000 construction workers whose demands were ostensibly focused on improved pay and a shorter working week. But the dispute also had much to do with the debates which had fractured the Left and which were to prove so fatal to the Republican cause over the next three years. Though the national Anarchist Congress at Zaragoza in May had decided to abandon its strategy of direct confrontation with the State there had been considerable dissent. There was therefore an eagerness for direct action when employers in Madrid rejected working conditions proposed by the anarchist construction union, the Sindicato Único de la Construcción (SUC), and agreed to by their Socialist counterparts in the UGT. There then ensued a period of intra-union tension during which anarchists and socialists battled for domination of the construction sector; several workers were killed in these clashes. As Gabriel Jackson comments: "the strike was in large measure a test of strength between the two union groups." (Jackson, 220) On 4 July the rank and file of the UGT decided to accept the judgement of a government arbitration panel and return to work, but they observed this in form only – reporting for duty with their employers but not actually working. Efforts by the State to break the strike led to the imprisonment of the SUC leadership.

know the menu – then rested at my place, had coffee, read and so on. On Saturday Don Carlos was here till 7 o'clock; then we went for a coffee and a bit of a stroll till dinner and then it was 11.30 already.

Here, there's really not much to report. There's work and that's all very nice. Next week is Corpus Christi, and we're all wondering if by then it will be a bit warmer. There's been no sign of it till now, because in spite of the fine weather it's quite cold; in the Sierra it's been snowing for several days and the wind is bringing the cold down with it. If "down" is the right thing to say since we're already living at 600 m – which does me good. Perhaps we'll get some involuntary holidays in the next few days, because the workers are still not sure if they want to let us work or not. As the whole faculty is still not finished, they apparently think it all belongs to them. It doesn't matter, there's so much to read and to see here which hasn't been possible until now because of the bad weather.

You shouldn't always feel that my being here is such a separation. At the moment I couldn't have it better anywhere than I do here, and I'm enjoying my life as much as anyone of my generation can. We haven't exactly been spoiled in such things. But we're always having a good time. What more can you want? –

Madrid, 16 / VI / 36

Thank you for both your letters which arrived quickly one after the other, after I hadn't heard anything for almost 3 weeks. It may indeed be that it has to do with the somewhat confused state of affairs in France.<sup>20</sup> Let's hope that everything will be sorted out there soon. Here pretty much everything is on strike.<sup>21</sup> We are only affected by it in that

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<sup>20</sup> When the Left-wing Popular Front coalition, headed by Leon Blum, was elected in the French elections of May 1936 it immediately faced an unprecedented, highly disciplined series of strikes and factory occupations. The scale of this movement to improve working class conditions is apparent from the statistics: "According to the official statistics there were 12 142 strikes and 1 830 938 strikers in June 1936 alone; the previous highest annual total of strikers, in 1920, was 1 316 559." (Jackson, 85) Eventually, consensus was reached with the signing of the Matignon Accords, an agreement between government, business and unions which implemented "a series of reforms, including paid holidays, the forty hour week without loss of pay[, and] collective labour contracts". (Passmore, 62)

<sup>21</sup> C.f. letter of 4 June. The election of the Frente Popular in February had greatly increased expectations that a centre-left administration would respond favourably to demands expressed through direct worker action. The result was an outbreak of industrial disputes whose magnitude was demonstrated by a headline carried by *El Sol* on Tuesday, 9 June: "La epidemia de huelgas" – "The strike epidemic". The comprehensiveness of the strikes and the effects they must have had on everyday life is well conveyed by Santos Juliá: "On 1 June 1936 there began in Madrid the fourth and longest construction strike during the Republic, involving 80 000 workers. Those in heating, elevators and sanitation had already been on strike for a few weeks and the brewing, ice and soft-drink workers had been idle for some days. In the very important union of waiters, great confusion reigned, for while the Sindicato Único de la Industria Gastronómica (CNT) had given the order for a general strike on 21 May, the Agrupación General de Camareros (UGT) gave the order

we need e.g. to have the permission of the gentlemen from the unions as to whether we get deliveries or not. If it goes on like this we'll probably have some accidental holidays. They don't like to see that it's possible to work in an unfinished building. But it's not so bad. We all take something out of the library and work at home. It wouldn't be a bad idea if the weather were to finally get better.

You mustn't think that the climate in Berlin is bad. You just can't believe what the weather is like here. My first four months here it's rained non-stop. Now it's more like two days of summer with 30 degrees in the shade, way over 40 in the sun, then five days of winter when it's so cold that I put on my black pullover. When we had the last two hot days we foolishly mothballed everything, now it's all back out again. At the moment I don't mind that it's cool, you can work much better. But sometimes you get into a bad mood when everything's always grey on grey in a way I've never seen it in Germany. F. tells me it's even worse than the constant rain in Holland.

Otherwise there's not much to report. There are difficulties with foreign exchange here too now. Of course, when one country starts all the others have to follow. Don Carlos will be travelling in the next few days to Brussels with 500

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to go to work. When the construction workers had already been on strike for two weeks, the 6 000 furniture workers and 1 500 tailoring workers all came out. In addition to the multitude of workers from small and middle-sized business, the strikers were also joined by the workers of Euskalduna, the glovers, the leather-workers and the women from the factories of Gal and Floralia. Madrid, in the months of May and June 1936, was really on strike." (Juliá, 137-38)

pesetas.<sup>22</sup> That's fun and games as well. But the other side of the coin is that people are slowly starting to put more effort into doing something for themselves, after they used to comfortably get everything from abroad.<sup>23</sup>

18.VI. Only today have I got around to continue writing to you. At the moment we are losing an awful lot of time by running around to various ministries because of our work

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<sup>22</sup> The remark indicates that Spain was restricting the flow of capital abroad, just as Germany had been doing for some years. On 16 May 1936 the Spanish government had declared it illegal to take more than 500 pesetas out of the country (*Ahora*, 17 May 1936) - hence the figure Marianne cites with regard to Jiménez Díaz's trip to Brussels. These regulations had been put in place out of the government's conviction that the country was witnessing capital flight. The issue incited claim and counter-claim depending on one's politics: the Left maintained that the Right had stripped the country of 500 million pesetas since 16. February, even though the Bank of Spain was paying a respectable dividend; the Right asserted that the amount of money in circulation had actually increased, but investor confidence had slumped as shown by the decline in the value of the stock market. *The Economist*, 27 June 1936 gave the official exchange rate as 36.95 pesetas / pound, though the black market rate was thought to be 45 pesetas. (Robinson, 394. FN 165) In the Third Reich, on the other hand, foreign exchange restrictions derived from the National Socialists' vision of an economy largely isolated from all external ties and entirely geared towards rearmament. Tight controls on taking money out of the country had devastating consequences for German Jews desperate to emigrate. Any income received as a regular payment (pensions, dividends etc) could not be transferred abroad and had to be sold or abandoned. Where assets could be realized as money it could only be transferred through nominated State institutions which set a highly unfavourable exchange rate and deducted huge fees. Even well-to-do emigrés, such as Siegfried Thannhauser, faced the risk of pauperization through this process. See: Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (New York: Viking, 2007).

<sup>23</sup> A reference to Spanish efforts at import substitution.

permits. It must be very difficult to get a residence permit for one's work here, at least for a mere mortal. Hopefully we'll have the matter in the bag by the end of this week thanks to the boss and other highly respected guarantees and testimonials, partly from acquaintances of the boss, partly from F. I think it all got too much for the ministries as well when every day one of us, or someone else, enquires with them about where things are at. But each new guarantee increased their politeness and we're now admitted straight away without waiting, and they know our names. Otherwise there's not all that much to report. We had a few warm days again so we could sit outside till late. E.g. yesterday when we were invited out, we sat outside in the street till 12.30. Today there's been quite a thunderstorm which has cooled things down noticeably. Still, it's about 26 – 28 degrees on average although you don't really feel it. Here everything is on strike, partly the workers, partly the employers.<sup>24</sup> It's a mad world!

Our timetable at the Institute is now not going to be changed. That's good because I've had enough of working all the way through from last summer. And just now at 6 it's no longer so very warm. All the shops are now open to 8.30, so there's plenty of time for shopping.

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<sup>24</sup> Employers in the heating and elevator sectors had initially refused to accept the decision of the Ministry of Labour in settlement of a dispute with their workers and stiff fines had been imposed on them as a result. In an expression of solidarity with these penalized businesses, the Madrid Employers Block (Bloque Patronal) had called for their members to close all workshops, offices and businesses with the exception of those in the public sector and in gastronomy. *El Sol*, 10 June 1936.

Madrid, 21 June 1936

My dears, now Sunday is once again almost at an end, a rainy one as usual. Such weather! They tell me I'll never experience such a summer here again.

The weather may be made for working, but it's otherwise rather dreary. When the sun shines there's an incredible heat, but that happens only rarely and I really don't get anything out of my beautiful terrace. Everything is still quite spring-like. This morning we used 2 dry hours to stroll a little through the Retiro. Everything is bursting forth and the trees are so fresh and green – it's just splendid. But without the sun nothing is maturing, and I think it's better for a country that it has dusty trees and dried grass that are suited to its climate in the summer, but along with it fruit and grain. We hear that it is supposed to be like this throughout Europe if not in the entire world, meaning everything will become more expensive. Up till now we've only seen it with fruit which is expensive for here. A pound of cherries still costs 20 – 30 pfennigs, albeit the best variety. There are much cheaper ones for stewing. There are still strawberries which apparently are normally over at the start of the month. Fresh figs are beginning to appear but I don't like them so much, they're very sweet, though quite refreshing. At the moment they still cost 15 pfennigs. And there are a lot of things the German name of which I don't know, because I've never seen them before. I'm really pleased that peppers are beginning to appear and there are tomatoes here – you can't imagine such good things, only a few seeds, not watery inside but with quite tender flesh. People here cut them into moderately thick slices, pour vinegar and oil on them and cover each of them with a slice of fresh onion. Onions grow

to quite a size here, tomatoes too. We also share a plate like this for 15 pfennigs. Then today we had the usual Sunday paella i.e. it's what we always do. It's a Valencian dish with a yellow spice I'm not familiar with, not curry, with peppers, green peas, ham, chicken, veal and mussels all cooked together. It costs 30 pfennigs and with dessert it's enough for me. Actually, we wanted to go to the zoo – which is supposed to be tiny – but unfortunately we got lost in the big Retiro park and so we had to do without that pleasure because we had to be at our Sunday restaurant, which is very good but also very cheap, half an hour beforehand, otherwise there wouldn't be any paella left and that was a sacrifice we couldn't make. On the way there we browsed a little in the bookstands on the edge of the Retiro. For 90 pfennigs I bought as my Sunday reading Clemenceau's *Grandeur and Misery of Victory*.<sup>25</sup> In Spanish, but brilliantly translated and written. It's an easy read and I'm very interested in understanding something of the psyche of this man who, in spite of everything, was probably our most clever opponent. Then we had a nap, drank coffee which I can now make very well in the Spanish manner. Unfortunately it has become more expensive. It used to cost 4.70 marks a kilo, now it's just under 5 marks. But it's good coffee! There are much cheaper kinds but I find that you use more of it. Here people drink it so black that with the best

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<sup>25</sup> Georges Clemenceau (1841 – 1929), French statesman and Prime Minister of France during World War One. In 1920 Clemenceau lost the elections for President of the Republic and, at the age of 79, withdrew from public life to devote himself to travel and to writing his memoirs: *Démosthène, Grandeur et misères d'une victoire* (Published posthumously in 1930. The Spanish title was: *Demóstenes, Grandeza y miserias de una victoria*).

will in the world I can only manage a cup at most. Then we chatted a bit and now I need the rest of the evening for writing.

I hope that you have received my letter in the meantime, and that I'll get one soon too.

On Friday we were at the movies, a gangster film.<sup>26</sup> I didn't really get it and F. said that I'll never learn and that it was a waste of money taking me to the cinema! But it was lovely, at the start there was a wonderful Micky Mouse film, they're so colourful and quite brilliant. Take a look at one – the cinema is the best thing there is, you don't need to go the finest one: we don't often do that ourselves and then we take the cheapest seat if there's an especially good film. Like there was recently with the Marx Brothers when we laughed until we cried.<sup>27</sup> We didn't feel quite so well afterwards and had to take something for it. F. calls it drinking medicinal herbs – meaning a Bénédictine liqueur: at least that's what we say. Tomorrow work starts again. I have a new PhD student. Whether he's up to much, time will tell. We will probably go on holiday on 1 August, this year only for four weeks because we started so late. If the weather stays like this it won't be worth spending money and going somewhere. In that case it's much more comfortable and nicer to stay here and there is so much to see nearby that you can do in 1 or 2 days. Perhaps I'll go to Salamanca or something. We'll see. Actually I had thought I'd cruise around the coast from Santander to Barcelona. But that's not going to come to anything with this

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<sup>26</sup> This was almost certainly *Panic on the air* (D. Ross Lederman, 1936) which was playing that week at the Teatro Figaro.

<sup>27</sup> The Marx Brothers film *A Night at the Opera* (Sam Wood, 1935) had played at the Capitol cinema on the Gran Via at the start of June. (*El Sol*, 4 June)

weather. I'd rather save for something big next year, perhaps the Canary Islands or Africa. At the moment it is very difficult for us to get entry visas but when we've been here a bit longer it will be better. The police pay very close attention to foreigners. In particular, the women and girls who live here are not going to get lost. At first I asked myself why the police were asking after me every month, but our Spanish colleagues now tell us that that's the law because after the war a lot of foreign women disappeared to South America via Spain.<sup>28</sup> By looking at people you wouldn't think they've got things so well organised. If you are at one of these ministries the clerk doesn't just slap you on the shoulders, he also does it to the first secretary of the minister if he happens to be pleased about something. They tell me here that he'll also do it to the minister if he knows him a bit better. And, ultimately, those are the best-informed people because everything else changes with the changing political scene. It's quite an undisciplined life but it works and works quite well, as we can see. If the tram drivers are thirsty then they leave the streetcar standing a while and go and get a drink and make up for the delay again by driving faster. The people are all very contented,<sup>29</sup> although they have an

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<sup>28</sup> Presumably Marianne is referring to the problem of human trafficking. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a number of international agreements designed to stamp out what was sometimes referred to as the "white slave trade" – such as the 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children.

<sup>29</sup> A peculiar remark, in the light of Marianne's earlier reference to widespread strikes. Given the levels of unrest and violence in the country, politicians of both Left and Right were convinced that a catastrophic breakdown in social order was all but inevitable. *El Socialista*, the newspaper of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), summed up the mood on 7 July: "the system of violence as party politics

unbelievably low standard of living compared to what we are otherwise used to seeing. They only really work properly at the Institute. And the young people, too, until they've made something of themselves e.g. like Don Carlos. He leaves the house at 9, rushes in for a meal at 3, at 3.30 his consultation hour begins then he goes back again to the clinic and at 10 or 11 the last patient leaves his house. And that's seven days a week. Twice a week he's at the Institute from 5 o'clock in the afternoon to at least 9, afterwards he's expected by his patients. At the moment he is, I think, the most famous doctor here.<sup>30</sup> He's just travelled to a congress in Brussels as the Spanish delegate. He is back next Saturday. Of course he earns many thousands of pesetas, but he has to – he pays for half our library and in addition donates another 30 000 pesetas a year and employs 4 doctors in his practice for at least 250 pesetas a month.<sup>31</sup>

The strike is going on relentlessly and if you think that a worker here on average earns 8 pesetas a day, one can

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is expanding in menacing proportions, though every civilized value is outraged by the shameful murder of citizens. A psychological regression has reduced us to political 'gangsterism'".

<sup>30</sup> An impression confirmed by a lengthy piece on Jiménez Díaz in *Ahora*, 24 March 1936 in which the author, Magda Donato, referred to him as "the Madrid doctor who is 'in' today, who is currently 'the doctor of fashion'". (Donato – real name: Carmen Eva Nelke Mansberger – was herself of German-Jewish descent. An emancipated and politically active woman, she fled Spain for Mexico at the collapse of the Republican cause.)

<sup>31</sup> Marianne and Franz Bielschowsky were direct beneficiaries of Jiménez Díaz's professional success. In his autobiographical *Historia de mi instituto*, Jiménez Díaz points out that he personally underwrote much of the Institute's work – including, he says, the expenses involved in hiring his two German staff. (Jiménez Díaz, 40)

understand that they are fighting for 1 more per day.<sup>32</sup> Of course, in relation to earnings in general it is actually quite a lot, considering that our laboratory assistants get 150 a month.

As for the summer wardrobe, which is really not at all necessary – I’ll probably have a little, white jacket made to go with the black pullover. I really do like them. As for my hair you needn’t fear that I’m rubbing too much in. The wind and the dry air have given me Negro curls which I’ll have to discipline somehow. It is downright astonishing the way the curls stand out 5 cm from my head. That is really not attractive and it’s also uncomfortable for working. And it bugs me to go about like this in a country where even the simplest girl has a perfect hairdo. Even in this rainy weather one gets a tan. Of course much less so for me than for the Spanish women but not even in the warmest summer in Germany was I like I am here. Here, even F. is rather pale and I can’t compete with him by a long shot. But strangely, I have the feeling that in general I am getting much darker. Even my hair – the only difference is that it shines quite brightly and in the light it seems so much lighter than it used to. I can also personally report that we weighed ourselves recently on the dog scales and in my full lab kit I weigh 123 pounds. F. says that once we have a proper summer I will only be 120 from all the sweating.

I wouldn’t want that because then I’d have to have my things altered again. Maybe it’s the air. Perhaps Drevermann was right when he always said that I didn’t show any signs of

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<sup>32</sup> Employers had offered an increase of 5 percent for all those workers on wages of less than 12 pesetas (a day). *El Sol*, 10 June 1936.

getting fat in old age. In any case, I feel perfectly well here, perhaps because of the great altitude. –

F. is basking in my good state of health. He still claims I arrived here half dead, even though you had fed me up in those last few months. It's now just occurred to me to ask if there might be a recipe for bee-sting cake<sup>33</sup> in my good baking book. We really want to bake one, but don't know how i.e. neither the woman of the house nor I. Butter may not be cheap, but honey is. And it's very good. If Mother would be so kind to copy it out! But remember that here there are no blueberries, no gooseberries and no birch trees<sup>34</sup> – but lots of things that we don't have. Though blueberries with milk wouldn't be so bad. Cherries here are so big, like small pears. And there are trees that look like beeches at the bottom, the upper limbs and branches are white like a birch and they have leaves like a white poplar. I must go to the Botanic Gardens soon and teach myself a few things. To the Natural History Museum as well because there are so many animals flying and crawling around here that I've never seen before, and the Spanish don't know what they're called either.

I don't know if I've already told you that I've recently eaten some fabulous milk ices. Or drunk them as the case may be. Just milk with sugar and a cinnamon flavour, but it seems that a great deal of cinnamon is left to steep in the milk before freezing because there's no sign of the cinnamon. F. always laughs at me when I'm so delighted about such things – but if it tastes so great? People here put away massive

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<sup>33</sup> A German dessert made of sweet yeast dough, with caramelized almond topping and a custard filling.

<sup>34</sup> Some recipes for bee sting cake call for "Birkenzucker" (birch sugar).

quantities of it, and when I think that most Spaniards in our circumstances here eat at least 4 and that for a big family with at least 6 members that comes to 720 per month then you can feel quite ill. But for a half dozen it costs from 80 centimos and up to 150 centimos for the best. The weather is always beautiful now in the evening. When we leave the Institute there is quite an intense smell of wheat fields. There aren't any close by and the Spanish say that that is just the smell of Castile. They are very proud of their country and it is a beautiful country. Some day I'll go up to the Sierra Nevada,<sup>35</sup> that must be so lovely, with the sun down below, nothing but sun, and then the snowy mountains. There's still snow on our Sierra<sup>36</sup> as well that's why it's cool here too because the wind comes from the hills in the evening. But when the weather is good and you go for a stroll after dinner, sit and have a coffee in the street somewhere, it's so extraordinarily beautiful that you regret having to go home at around 1 to one's bedchamber in order to feel refreshed the next day. Here you actually need very little sleep, I'm always awake on time and well-rested. The best thing is when the sun is shining early and I drink my coffee on the terrace and have enough time to smoke a cigarette. When you come next year, I'll show you everything. Sometimes if I get through shopping for our lunch early I walk to the Institute. It's downhill and it's a beautiful route when you come out of the city and go along the Parque del Oeste. It's so lovely! I always wanted eucalyptus trees as a child because they grow so tall and so quickly. There's an excess

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<sup>35</sup> A mountain range in the south-eastern corner of Spain, in Andalusia.

<sup>36</sup> The Sierra de Guadarrama to the northwest of Madrid.

of them here. And bamboo that's so high and so dense you can't get through it.

It always reminds me of the chairs we had, the ones with the nickel plated end-pieces.

Madrid, 28 / VI / 36

My dears, heartfelt thanks for Mother's letter which arrived here on Friday. Things are really taking their time now, and I'm hearing from all sorts of people that a lot of post from Germany is going missing. I don't know what's going on there, since letters from Holland arrive quickly after travelling through France as well. I very much hope that it's not a problem in the other direction.

People say that the railway workers are also going to strike here in the next few days. So I'll send letters by airmail instead. It's not for certain yet, but because all sectors are going on strike bit by bit,<sup>37</sup> it may well be possible. Still, the lifts are working again and that is a major step forward. At least in my house, it was operating the longest because everything is still very new.<sup>38</sup> In the Luginin it hasn't worked for six weeks now, I think. Isn't that just great? On Saturday we had no water at the Institute.<sup>39</sup> We couldn't do anything

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<sup>37</sup> Strikes were indeed spreading into every corner of the country as contemporary newspaper reports confirm. In Granada, even the Moroccans who provided a Moorish ambience in an exhibition on Hispano-Moroccan culture struck for higher pay. In July, school children in Barcelona went on strike to demand the reinstatement of certain of their favourite teachers who had been transferred.

<sup>38</sup> Unions involved in the maintenance and operation of lifts had called their members out at the same time as construction workers went on strike. Marianne's remark about the new lift in her apartment building indicates that it must have functioned well during the strike and did not require any maintenance.

<sup>39</sup> Many areas of Madrid were affected by water shortages during the height of the summer because a number of unions – such as those responsible for maintaining the city's infrastructure – had gone on strike in solidarity with the construction workers.

and went home at 4 o'clock. Hopefully there'll be some again tomorrow so that we don't have to go on an involuntary strike. Although it wouldn't be so bad, one could read a little and when it's so warm one is always pretty tired. Strangely, the heat bothers me least of all of us at the Institute. I can cope with it very well, because it's dry and there's almost always a breeze. The others sweat quite dreadfully and it is amazing, too, how the temperature rises here. On the Sunday that you found so warm I was still getting about here in a black woollen coat. The next day we had 26 degrees in the shade and it gradually rose the whole week. Yesterday it was 31. In the sun, though, it was much, much hotter than I've ever experienced at home. Everybody scrambles for a little bit of shade. Almost all women are armed with fans, and the men fan themselves with newspapers and other such objects. It looks funny if you're not used to it. Otherwise the whole city has shut, everyone's got their windows closed the whole day. It's not until the evening that everything opens and people pour out in their droves. Yesterday I bought us a persiana [ventana] for 3 pesetas, it's a kind of Venetian blind which keeps off the morning sun and so my room is quite nice and cool.

Today the weather is ugly, so humid because it always rains just a little but there haven't been any more thunderstorms. Otherwise there's not much to tell you, because nothing's happened. – Whether a holiday trip will come to anything because of the current political situation, we still don't know. I actually don't have any desire at all to travel anywhere, it would just cost a lot to be bored on my own and I've got everything I need here and I can see lots. I only bury myself in my work to the extent that I get fun out of it. And, in the end, what else are you supposed to do anyway? When you're

as old as I am it's not so easy to make new friends, especially when so few of the old ones remain. One becomes damned cautious. The Spanish don't live like we do. Life gets played out in the coffeehouse, and as women only seldom go there – and I'm not really interested either – I'm essentially living like Spanish women. It agrees with me and, actually, it's always suited me. – And, everyone is more or less on their own in the end anyway; some people like it, others find it hard to deal with.

It's good that I belong to the first sort. The only one who writes faithfully is dear Rina, as mad as she is. A devoted soul. Otherwise, I've had a letter from sister Elisabeth in the last few days. She's had a lot of problems with her husband who almost lost his job "because of a misdemeanour", which I can well believe. As a result of the whole business he's had a nervous breakdown. He started to drink and has spent half a year in an institution. What misery there is in the world.

I got a long letter from Frau Laubmeyer. She evidently sometimes longs for Langenberg as well. But she always liked being there and you didn't, so that is quite a difference. – Perhaps there's a lot that is unimportant, but if one doesn't write about the little things in life then one loses contact.

Thilo is travelling with his grandparents to the seaside on the 10<sup>th</sup>, they have rented a house there. Whether it will be pure pleasure for them, spending 8 weeks with the child, is another matter. The parents will join them in perhaps a fortnight. If I don't go away, I will let the maid take care of me. She cooks so well, and I am learning all the Spanish dishes, because you don't get everything in the restaurants either. I have travel plans for everything I want to see in the holidays and there is a delightful bathing beach as well. You can't ask for more. And really one ought to get to know

Madrid first. The surroundings are also very beautiful and still quite unfamiliar to me.



The strikes spread: Moroccans employed to provide a taste of Moorish life in Granada strike for better pay. The men on the right are playing the Internationale on flute and tambourine. (*Ahora*, 26. June 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



Barcelona school children on strike. Their demand was the return of teachers who had been transferred away from the school. (*Crónica*, 12 July 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



Water being delivered by municipal tanker to a neighbourhood where the supply had broken down. (*Crónica*, 5 July 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

Madrid, 2 July 1936

It's never until I write the date that I notice how long I've been here already. And yet it doesn't seem that way to me at all, the time just flies.

But to get straight to the main reason for my letter, I want to say today how grateful I am for your good wishes, the little package and the pictures. That was a great idea; now I know what your place looks like and that makes me happy. I like the apartment tremendously, the rooms must be wonderfully large, as Frau B. also wrote. And the view from the balcony, which can't be at all small, is decidedly green!! It seems to me that your place is remarkably pretty, the bedroom-living room is just impressive.

I fetched my parcel from the post office today. I will start to read the book tonight with great interest, I'm sure. Cookbook and pattern arrived safely. I think the pattern will go very well for an unlined dress to wear on the terrace. But you will probably want to know something about Tuesday.<sup>40</sup> Well, first of all my landlords had written down the [birth]date from my passport when I moved in, and while I was still in bed Frau Ullmann came and brought me a huge bunch of roses and a quite charming ceramic jar which will serve variously as a vase, a sugar bowl or for nice, pretty things. I was so pleased. Then I had quite a lot of post from Uncle Fritz, Frau B., Frau Laubmeyer, Fräulein Riva, Eva Pander and today a card came from Vollmann – which actually made me happy. I got a lovely, bright grey handbag from F. We bought it together. It was a whim, but it is

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<sup>40</sup> The gifts mentioned had been sent for Marianne's birthday. She had been born on 30 June, 1904.

beautiful, quite smooth and square, at the back there's a retractable handle, and at the front the flap just goes into a metal clasp. I almost had to laugh, because I think he's never bought anything like it. But it was nice, because weeks ago I happened to say that perhaps I might buy a bag that suited my summer things better than the big, black one that has given good service until now. The new one is the size of a book and all sorts of things fit into it. The leather is so fine that it's almost a shame to use it every day - but his lordship wants it that way: so I can't do anything. I also got a bunch of carnations from the wife of my colleague, Castro, of a size I've never seen before. Delightful - the whole house is full of fragrance.

So you see, I've had it good. During the day there was a lot to do because there was a big tour in the afternoon by the board of governors. In the evening, I changed quickly then went with F. for a fine meal in the Hotel Gran Via. First, entremésés<sup>41</sup> which were delicious, then beef with goose liver on top and, I think, truffles as well. Then salad, then espresso and it cost 3.50 Marks for each of us with drinks. Afterwards we were at the movies which I really enjoyed. It's true that nobody was shot dead but at least the spitfire sang well according to his nibs.<sup>42</sup> But I thought it was good. At the end we even went home by taxi. So overall it was a really nice day.

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<sup>41</sup> = appetisers

<sup>42</sup> This film was almost certainly *Kid Millions* (Roy del Ruth, 1934) - Spanish title: *El chico millonario* - which was playing that week at the Pleyel Cinema on the Plaza Mayor. The "spitfire" referred to would have been the famous American actress and singer, Ethel Merman.

Yesterday I wrote to Veit, there's a little parcel ready for her, I just need an opportunity to get to the appropriate post office.

Today we had quite a grand visitor to the Institute: Alcalá Zamora, the former president.<sup>43</sup> During the introductions he asked Don Carlos whether I was a student. An error that we cleared up. He was very kind and we spoke six words with each other. Now, it's only the current president who's missing. Even the greatest bullfighter<sup>44</sup> is a member of the board. We are always having visits and both of us in the laboratory feel like we're in a zoo, people look at us like

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<sup>43</sup> Niceto Alcalá-Zamora y Torres (1877 – 1949). Lawyer and politician. He held ministerial posts under Alfonso XIII and was President of the Spanish Republic 1931 – 1936. Alcalá-Zamora's visit to the Instituto is an indication of how successful Jiménez Díaz had been in mobilizing Spain's 'great and good' in support of his work: Alcalá-Zamora had donated 5 000 pesetas towards setting up the Instituto. (Jiménez Díaz, 225) This figure is worth comparing with the monthly wage of 150 pesetas for lab assistants mentioned by Marianne in the letter of 21 June; it represents almost three years of such earnings.

A moderate Republican, Alcalá-Zamora ultimately found himself outmanoeuvred in the increasingly polarized politics of the Second Republic. In April 1936 a newly elected Left-wing majority succeeded in ousting him from the Presidency, replacing him with Manuel Azaña. His appearance at the university on 2 July went unremarked by the press, but he is recorded as leaving Santander on 8 July by ship for Hamburg and thence to Scandinavia (*Ahora*, 9 and 12 July 1936). Caught unawares by the outbreak of the Civil War Alcalá-Zamora never returned to Spain, residing first in France and then, from 1942 until his death, in Argentina. In a curious historical twist, his son married the daughter of General Gonzalo Queipo de Llano, one of Franco's most ruthless military commanders.

<sup>44</sup> Domingo Ortega. (See the first entry in this journal.) Ortega had donated 2 000 pesetas towards establishing the Instituto and an annual donation of 1 000 pesetas thereafter. (Jiménez Díaz, 225)

exotic animals. Castro looks more Indian than Spanish and everyone knows immediately that I'm not from here even if I haven't said anything at all. Then they look with great interest and with still more amazement at our cage, as Castro says, and move on to the next one. But Don Carlos is proud and happy and he spoke brilliantly to all the board members recently about the grand history of medicine in Spain, and to Alcalá he said that he brought us two especially in order to eventually ensure a new generation of dedicated young Spanish scientists.<sup>45</sup>

So much for work. Concerning the weather I can report that it is wonderful, not too warm. The evenings are exquisite. I now have electric light on the terrace, a big oval table and so I am magnificently set up with both my deck chairs. - Everything will come right as soon as I am finished with my running about to the ministries. We hope that tomorrow will be the absolute last time we have to go. Then we'll go

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<sup>45</sup> The cultivation of future scientific talent in Spain was a subject that exercised Jiménez Díaz considerably. In his history of the Instituto, he lamented the technological and scientific disadvantages that Spain's turbulent nineteenth century had bequeathed the country. It was his express intention that the Instituto would help to reposition Spain in the concert of advanced nations: "The creation of the new faculty would, therefore, provide a home for the most gifted students, transforming them into the creators of the foundations of a new science in Spain comparable to that of other countries." (Jiménez Díaz, 34) He also thought that Spain had failed to capitalise on the flood of talent that was leaving Germany as a result of that country's anti-Semitic policies; if Spain had been more awake to the opportunities for the advancement of knowledge, he wrote, it could have made a great leap forward in the education of its youth by recruiting more German-Jewish scientists. (Jiménez Díaz, 40)

straight to the seguridad<sup>46</sup> and apply for residencia<sup>47</sup> for Spain. Then everything is taken care of. – In the meantime there are also stringent foreign exchange controls here: it couldn't be avoided.<sup>48</sup> Still, I hope that next year I'll be in the position to have you here for a few pleasant weeks. At the moment the world looks rather disordered but sooner or later everything will get back on track.



The bullfighter Domingo Ortega served on the board of governors for the Instituto (*Crónica*, 5 January 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

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<sup>46</sup> = security. The main authority responsible for public order was the Dirección General de Seguridad, located at that time in the Puerta del Sol in the centre of Madrid.

<sup>47</sup> = residency

<sup>48</sup> See letter of 16 June.

Madrid, 14 / VII / 36

My dears, finally, finally your letter arrived and after having just read it, it looks like you haven't received my latest in which I confirmed the arrival of Dut's letter which was stamped on 1 / VII in Berlin. I will write to her myself soon but I have so much post to attend to and, of course, so much to do with year-end tasks before the four week holidays that I haven't got around to it yet. –

In the meantime, a great heatwave has arrived but I'm able to manage; it's like the temperature of a well heated oven.<sup>49</sup> In the laboratories, though, we are still below 30 degrees, which is good if you're working. It seems tempers have also become somewhat heated, but if you should get unsettling news, then I can only say that we see practically no sign of it and life goes on.<sup>50</sup> E.g. we were invited to the country house

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<sup>49</sup> According to the daily meteorological column in *El Sol* for 14 July, the heatwave was due to cooling winds from the North having abated. Temperatures had risen rapidly in many parts of the country: it had reached 32 degrees in Madrid on 13 July (the day before this letter), while Cáceres in Extremadura had sweltered in 40 degree heat. With only three days to go before the outbreak of the Civil War on 17 July, it is difficult not to retrospectively read irony into the forecast for that day. It ended thus: "We are moving into the dog days and, as anomalous as this year has been, what can we expect but heat?"

<sup>50</sup> Marianne is no doubt referring here to two egregious political murders which had occurred in the previous 48 hours and that would act as the final catalyst for Spain's entry into Civil War just three days later. In the evening of 12 July, Capt. José del Castillo Sáenz de Tejada of the Assault Guards was gunned down in the Calle Augusto Figueroa – less than 1 km from Marianne's apartment on Calle Francisco de Rojas – while on his way to his barracks. (*El Sol*, 14 July 1936) It had been Castillo, a Socialist, who had given the order to fire to disperse the crowd gathered for the funeral procession of the Guardia Civil officer, Anastasio

of a colleague, we left early at 8.30 and were back home at 10.30 at night. It was a lovely Sunday, you couldn't have spent a better or more pleasant one.

In the meantime we are making so many holiday plans, though they're all a bit difficult because we don't know where to go. There's so much [to see] and it's best to make it dependent on the weather. If it's cool, then the South; if it gets warmer, then the North is preferable. For my part I'll stay here for a few days first, then towards the end we'll

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de los Reyes, on the Plaza Manuel Becerra on 16 April. (See letter of 19 April.) Castillo's death enraged his comrades in the security forces who sought permission from Juan Moles, the Minister of the Interior, to arrest certain Falangists who were presumed still in hiding. Moles authorized the arrests on the understanding that the rule of law would be strictly followed. Unable to locate their initial targets, the police detail made a spontaneous decision to visit the house of one of Spain's most charismatic Right-wing politicians, José Calvo Sotelo, at Calle Velázquez 89. (The location is a 20 minute walk from Marianne's apartment on Calle Francisco de Rojas. Carlos Jiménez Díaz also lived on Calle Velázquez, at no. 23.) Calvo Sotelo reluctantly agreed to accompany the officials to the Dirección General de Seguridad in a police van. It is during this trip that he was fatally shot, probably by Luis Cuenca, one of the bodyguards of Indalecio Prieto, a leading Socialist politician. The murder of such a senior politician fatally exposed the inability of the government to assert law and order.

Marianne's parents would certainly have heard of this "unsettling" news, given that it played perfectly into the National Socialist narrative of the inherent instability of parliamentary democracy and the need for authoritarian government from the Right. The reports on Calvo Sotelo's funeral provided by the *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro* portrayed the occasion as if it were a National Socialist rally: "Während die Begräbnisfeierlichkeiten erhob die fast unübersehbare Trauergemeinde wiederholt die Hand zum Faschistengruß und brachte Hochrufe auf Spanien und den Faschismus und Niederrufe auf das Parlament aus." (Mittwoch, 15. Juli. 3. Jahrgang. Nr. 922)

probably meet up for a few days with a married couple from work who are going to the Sierra. Tilo left on Saturday for the sea with his father and his mother is off travelling for three days so I'm on my own here with the maid. That's not such a bad thing.

Because we saved so much on Sunday we went out yesterday for a very fine evening meal, a soup, the recipe for which I'm in the process of tracking down. It tasted so gut that F. says I shouldn't express quite so much delight at every spoonful. Then we sat out on my terrace and did nothing. Really, the evenings – or rather, to use the old concept, the nights – are so exquisite here that one can just stare into the sky. So that's what we sometimes do.



The front page of *El Sol*, 14 July 1936 reporting on the two explosive political assassinations that had occurred in the previous 48 hours. José Calvo Sotelo (main image), the right-wing politician, had been kidnapped and shot dead, apparently in revenge for the murder of Capt. José Castillo (lower left). (Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

Strange ... the book is at an end! On the 14 / VII / 36 Marianne's last letter arrived and then nothing for several weeks, a worrying time, which we could only explain by the Civil War in Spain.<sup>51</sup> But others did get news, if only sparingly ...

Finally on 8 / VIII / 36 a letter. It wasn't the outbreak of the Civil War that had prevented the poor child from writing, but a serious illness: undiagnosed scarlet fever, suppurating middle-ear infection, the chiselling open and removal of part of a bone. Confined to a hospital bed for weeks, finally back in her apartment and still too miserable to write letters ...

Thank God we can begin the second book with the report that things are slowly looking up again!<sup>52</sup>

Berlin, August 1936

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<sup>51</sup> The Nationalist uprising began on 17 July 1936.

<sup>52</sup> A somewhat optimistic comment. The Nationalist advance on Madrid from the South was rapid; by mid-November the Ciudad Universitaria would be on the frontline of the Battle for Madrid and ultimately leave Jiménez Díaz's Instituto in ruins.