

Madrid, 2 / III / 36.

Everything is a bit up in the air with our schedule because we are on the point of moving into the new Institute. I think we could have easily waited another 14 days. But that's the way men are, all of a sudden they can't wait any longer. I'm looking forward to the looks on their faces when they see all the cleaning women creeping around in the places they want to work in. Otherwise everything is terrific and hopefully it will stay that way i.e. clean and well maintained. I want to ensure that as best I can. Also, to my great delight a very nice Spanish woman is moving with us to the Institute. She has an awful lot of money and can afford to work for pleasure. She is a little older, around 40, but very agreeable and very nice. I can talk with her about a lot of things that are still difficult for me here on my own, because I may know what it is I need but not where I can get hold of it. And not everything is in the dictionary by any means.

We get on really well and every day I am learning something new even if it's just a few words. At the moment it's coldest winter here. It's snowing properly and there is an icy wind coming off the Sierra. It seems colder to me than it is at home. Thank God I've got good heating. But in the clinic today everyone was working in winter coats. I think people are more sensitive to the cold here. My poor Castro Mendoza¹ is getting smaller and smaller, he's freezing so. He comes from a country where it's never cold, but also never as warm as here. While he's shivering from the cold he is already beginning to think that he'll probably only be able to work until the start of July because of the heat. I probably

¹ Full name: Humberto Castro Mendoza.

won't have my lab assistant for much longer, her list of sins grows longer by the day. Everything is noted down precisely here because they're exceptionally correct about such things. I really like the fact that people are absolutely unsentimental, but the vast majority are good and care about others. They have so little egotism and sometimes they're like children. One of the assistants has a lovely car. Recently, 3 of them were very keen to take me out on Sunday at midday to the Ciudad to see what it looks like. I wasn't keen as I still had other things to do. But they threw a coin to see if it was heads or tails and I am sure they did something underhand because it turned out that I had to go with them. The onlookers were fascinated, as they probably are at a bullfight. Every incident here turns into an act of force. Like e.g. the outcome of the elections.² Afterwards there was a real pay day. One of them managed to actually win 50 pesetas. Everything was quiet here and it went off in a very orderly way.³ Only in the provinces were there supposed to

² Contrary to expectation, the parties of the Left had won - albeit by a small margin. Preston gives the results for the first round of elections as of 20. February as: 34.3 % for the Popular Front (Left), 33.2% for the National Front (Right), 5.4 % for the Centre. (Preston, 147)

³ Marianne's assessment was shared by the major Madrid dailies and foreign observers. *El Heraldo*, 17 February 1936: "In Madrid as in the rest of Spain democracy has provided an excellent example of civic spirit." *La Voz*, also on the 17 February: "Elections in Madrid have been a model of citizenship." *Ahora*, on the following day, 18 February: "The elections went off very peacefully." All three of these papers had left-liberal leanings but even the conservative *La época* could not point to any major disturbances, instead commenting in a bitter headline that "the mass of voters have decided on the suicide of Spain." (17 February 1936). The correspondent for *The Times*, Ernest de Caux, reported that

have been a few incidents, it's not clear who was responsible.⁴ Last Sunday there was a mass demonstration on a gigantic scale to celebrate the amnesty.⁵ From the new ministries to the southern railway station everything was dark with people. Even up the side streets, around my area as far as the first Calle de Génova, so that it was impossible to get through. And without the police playing any part at all!

voting had been "generally exemplary". (*The Times*, 17 / 2 / 36. Quoted in Preston, 147)

⁴ One such incident occurred in Valladolid, a city 200 km to the northwest of Madrid. An argument broke out at a polling station when a group of nuns, who were attempting to cast their vote, were insulted by a group of "female extremists". Passers-by intervened on the nuns' behalf and shots were fired by persons unknown, gravely wounding Orencio López Fernández, 20, a painter with no known political affiliation. (*El Nervión*, 17 / 2 / 36) But Madrid itself was not entirely free of trouble. In the late morning of the 17 February a demonstration of 8000 people marched towards the Plaza de España in central Madrid. After the crowd stopped to hear a speech at the intersection of Calle de Blasco Ibañez (today, the Calle de la Princesa) and Calle de Marqués de Urquijo, shots were fired from a car. One person was killed and several seriously wounded. In the report of the incident in *Ahora* (18 / 2 / 36), the dead man was not identified by name but described only as wearing "blue overalls" – the standard attire of the left-wing militias. The site of the shooting was but a 20 minute walk from Marianne's apartment in Calle Francisco de Rojas.

⁵ In anticipation of the results of the national election there had been massive demonstrations throughout the country in favour of an amnesty for prisoners, especially those who had been incarcerated in the left-wing uprising of October 1934. These demands were immediately acted upon by the new government: "The first act of [Manuel] Azaña as Prime Minister was to sign an amnesty decree covering political prisoners." (Preston, 151) The liberal-left press greeted the decision with delight, the headline of *La Libertad* on 23 / 2 / 36 reading: "Justice has been done for 'anti-Spain'!". 'Anti-Spain' was a term used by the Right for their political opponents.

People displayed an extraordinary discipline and everything went smoothly because the people are all peaceful at heart! The new government is very interested in our Institute. Otherwise there was not much happening this week. There is an endless back and forth between the old clinic and the new Institute. Almost every second day I was out there from 9 am – 11 am. At the moment I hardly see Franz because he has to take delivery of everything ordered in the city. Sometimes I go with him but someone has needs to stay back and make sure that the señoritas don't forget everything they've laboured to learn. And anyway it is not nearly so cold there as it is outside. This afternoon I was not out at all. I came home so late that I preferred to stay close to the heating with lots of hot coffee and to do my own work. When the Institute is finished it'll be all over for such lazy afternoons. It will be really grand out there but the problem of getting back and forth has still not been solved. As long as lectures are still on there are buses at certain times. The only tram is supposed to go every 15 minutes. But because there are two lines, and no one here goes by the timetable, generally 2 arrive at the same time and then there's nothing for half an hour.

My flat is very conveniently located because I can travel up the bouvelard⁶ to the city. Those trams come frequently. But the last bit from Plaza Moncloa on is very bad for anyone who doesn't have a car.⁷ As more people shift out there the

⁶ The number 17 tram which ran between Cuatro Caminos in the north of the city and Puerta del Sol in the centre passed along the Calle de Sagasta, just outside Marianne's apartment.

⁷ Marianne is here referring to the last section of her commute to work at the Instituto for which there was no direct link from Moncloa. Existing tram routes to the area north of Moncloa had been revised in 1932 to

transport connections will improve, certainly by the summer. And I have the impression that there won't be any regular work for another 4 weeks.

The kitchen is almost ready, as is the dining room. The library will be lovely. Consuela – what the rest of her name is no one here knows – has already said that, when everything is finished, all the girls in the Institute will throw a party without any men. They will invite me and intend to cook the best Spanish things for me. Because they are so grateful to me that I finally taught the men that finishing the girls' toilets, where they can also get changed, is more important than anything else. I also pointed out to them, well supported by F and Ochoa, that one should set aside the nightshift room as a day room for the girls during the 2 hour midday break. If they have to be in the Institute uninterruptedly from 9 in the morning till 7 in the evening they need to have a little space where they can rest. That was their biggest concern when they were allowed to look at the new Institute yesterday for the first time! And there has to be a rest area for when it gets hot in summer. First I went to work on F. who finally got the point. Then Ochoa, whom I really like. I'm looking forward to his wife, she comes from Puerto Rico. It was harder with the others. F walked up and

take into account the new university campus. Trams were to travel to the east of Moncloa, skirting the Parque del Oeste, passing the sports fields and stadium before taking one of two lines to their end stations. The proposed extension into the Ciudad Universitaria was, however, never completed before war intervened. For further information see: <http://www.madrid1936.es/universitaria/tranvia.html> [10 October 2019]. A map of tram routes in Madrid from 1871 – 2010 is available at: https://www.crtm.es/media/161806/plano_tranvias_historico_plano.pdf [Accessed 5 July 2020]

down the corridor persuading them which quietly amused me. He was quite put out that he hadn't thought of it himself. And the girls were quite ecstatic this afternoon when I told them everything had been sorted out. It's nice that they've all been brought up well. And it's nice with Consuela as one can be sure that it's all important to her since she's really only working out of love. That's so unusual, but fortunate for her!

We still haven't drowned in the flood waters but it's been raining since I arrived here and one loses one's faith in sunny Spain. Everyone assures me however that normally you can eat outside in February. Last year the Ullmanns ate in the garden at New Year. But it seems that the weather suits the times. One doesn't know what's up and what's down, everything, the whole world, has gone mad. In spite of the rain we live here in complete peace and the greatest harmony. Some people have a quite unfounded fear. Up until now only the prisoners from the October revolution⁸ have been released but they have not been replaced by new

⁸ That is, the left-wing uprising of October 1934. The revolt had a complex history but its proximate cause was the participation in government in early autumn of representatives from the right-wing Catholic party, CEDA (Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas / Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights), led by Gil Robles. As Robles had refused to state his unequivocal support for the Republic, the Socialist-controlled union, the UGT, called a national general strike; its militant stance was supported particularly by Catalan nationalists and the well organised miners of Asturias. The strike was quickly broken in Madrid and the aspirations for Catalan autonomy were suppressed through military force. The miners of Asturias held out longer but, in the end, they too were reduced by the army under Generals Goded and Franco. Thousands of left-wing activists and Catalan nationalists were imprisoned.

inmates. Everyone here loves their freedom passionately and so no other result could have been expected, determined as it was by the massive electoral propaganda of the Right. Thank you very much for the papers. The Julius Braun⁹ is still not here and there is no sign of the other books. If Mother were able to send an Easter Rabbit picture book, that would be nice. I'm so spoiled here, I couldn't have it better anywhere else. I've just been sent a huge plate of vegetables for supper again.

When my balcony is no longer a swimming pool but is inhabitable I'll invite everyone properly. F. always says they should be happy to have such an easy tenant but I'm really getting everything I want. Frau Ullmann has also worked and lived alone for years, she knows what it's like. She even brings me a warm drink when I'm not well. I am grateful to Mrs Wilkens that she brought me here. Otherwise these sorts of things are very difficult in Spain. By the way, we have a new girl. And surprisingly she has the same name as me which is so unusual here. She makes a very good impression. Caridad is getting married but she's left me the address of her sister in case I should need a girl! I don't think that will be the case, but it's so nice of her. What's more, I'm invited to the wedding. I definitely won't go, although F says it is bound to be amusing. But I will attend the marriage in the church, that is sure to be interesting –

⁹ Julius von Braun (1875 – 1939), German chemist. His *Lehrbuch der organischen Chemie* (*Textbook of organic chemistry*) was published in 1925.



Voters queue at a polling booth in Madrid during the national elections, 16/2/36. (*La Crónica*, 23/2/36. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



A publication of the Transport Workers' section of the UGT union from February 1936 with a call to support political prisoners. (*Transporte UGT. Órgano de la Federación Provincial de Obreros de Transporte*. XI, 114. February 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



Political prisoners in the Basque Country are greeted by family and supporters on their release following the Amnesty Decree, February 1936. (*Ahora*, 23/2/36. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



A view during the Civil War of the intersection of Calle de Sagasta and Calle Francisco de Rojas where Marianne lived until shortly after the outbreak of hostilities. The tram on the far right is a Number 17, operating on the Cuatro Caminos to Puerta del Sol route. (<https://lasheridasdelaguerra.blogspot.com/> [Accessed 5 July 2020])

Madrid, 8 / 3 / 36

I am waiting expectantly for news from you. I just want to have a newspaper. At the moment it's hard to tell just what is going on. We continue to live here in the utmost peace. And tomorrow we begin the move into the new clinic. Thank God! The men who have endured the endless procrastination for months are slowly becoming insufferable. It is understandable. But it really will be a beauty! My laboratory will be ready in 14 days. But I will be able to shift in quickly because everything will be unpacked, clean and tidy. The top floor is still in a bad way. For heating we will just have electricity and gas in the meantime. Before the main heating system starts operation the whole place first has to be occupied. But it is all fine in the southern rooms. F, Moran and I are all working with a view to the south. The huge windows, the pretty surroundings, it's all so beautiful that you just don't want to go out any more! I've been there a lot in the last week to put things in order and to discuss matters that men have no idea about. By the way, Thannhauser has been denied permission to contribute to the text book on internal medicine!¹⁰ So now, once the breach of contract has been decided, he will of course no longer want to publish in Germany. For your ears only: F. and Barrera now intend to publish a clinical book with him. I'm very happy about that. Th. was very sick, probably as a reaction to everything. He was offered a chair in Zürich but he'll probably stay where he is.¹¹ He writes that everyone is

¹⁰ As a Jew, Siegfried Thannhauser would have been denied the right to publish in Germany under the National Socialist regime.

¹¹ i.e. in Boston

nice and friendly to him. And anyway, he is at home there - in the language, too, which is always the most difficult thing. With me, a mistake here or there doesn't matter. But it must be difficult when giving a big lecture. Especially as he would also have to communicate with whomever his patient happened to be. There is little to report this week. We were at the cinema once. And yesterday afternoon at the Barredas, which was very nice. I got a charming handkerchief from Mrs Barreda, white silk, with one whole corner embroidered, so fine that one feels sorry for the person who made it. She comes from the Canary Islands where they make such things. She was really quite charming and gave me her telephone number. This is how the Spaniard says: my house is yours, come whenever you want. We've now arranged to go shopping together often. Men never look in a shop window, and they are so beautiful here! We've finally had two days of good weather. They say that it will soon be summer. When the sun shines it's like the end of May. And wonderful. The colouring of the evening sky is incredibly beautiful. When the sun goes down the snow-covered mountains become dark blue and dark red, quite unusual. In the old quarters where there are still houses without stoves the people lean up on the walls of the buildings and bake in the sun. They are so undemanding. One can learn a lot from them. Next week I am going to make a lot of wastepaper baskets: beautiful woven baskets from hemp for a few centimos. I'll have them lined with bright wax cloth. I think they'll be very pretty -

Madrid, 15 / 3

Plenty of answers concerning our move! The job is still not going the way it ought to! But things are slowly coming right, thank God. The Institute is becoming more and more attractive. In spite of all the mess the tradesmen bring with them we have made ourselves right at home. And I'm slowly beginning to get back the patience I've been lacking for the last few years. It's hardly surprising that it had wasted away. On Friday we were at the movies. Getting there was difficult because two churches were on fire.¹² They don't know who it was but they have their suspicions. There was great excitement for a few hours but now everything is very peaceful again. The police do a marvellous job here! It's a shame that some people think they have to take revenge for the defeat of their party with a gun. But thank God most of them were locked up straight away. In any case, no matter what the radio in the rest of the world says, there's no talk of

¹² The two churches were San Luis Obispo in Calle Montera and San Ignacio in Calle del Principe. Two firemen received serious burns while combatting the fire in San Luis Obispo and succumbed to their injuries several days later (*El Sol*, 15 / 3 / 1936). San Luis Obispo was a Baroque structure built in 1679; the famous philosopher, Miguel de Unamuno, was a regular attendee at mass there. The church was totally destroyed in the conflagration, but the Baroque portal was eventually salvaged and now adorns the Iglesia del Carmen in the Calle de la Salud. San Ignacio de Loyola was the church of the Basque community in Madrid. That it was targeted in what was clearly an act of anti-clerical violence is an historical irony; the deeply Catholic Basques were eventually to ally themselves with the decidedly secular left-wing Frente Popular government during the Civil War in the hope of securing greater autonomy for their region from Madrid. The church was restored and still serves as a place of worship.

revolution here! The Left won the elections with an absolute majority¹³ which was all the more astonishing given that the Right with all their money had put out an enormous propaganda campaign, which the Left only began the day before and which was a completely unexpected, resounding success.¹⁴ And Azaña is said to be an exceptionally intelligent, moderate person. This great election victory is probably due to his candidacy.¹⁵ In the end, the Acción

¹³ In fact, the election result was very tight with the country evenly split between Left and Right and highly polarised. The parties of the Left gained around 47% of the vote to the Right's 46%. The difference was made up by the small group of Centrist parties who eventually chose to support the Leftist Frente Popular. Seats in a given electoral district – such as Barcelona – were distributed according to the proportion of votes cast, so that the most popular party could gain as much as 80% of local seats once they gained a simple majority. The remaining seats went to the second most popular grouping. Consequently, although the national vote was more or less balanced between Left and Right, the Frente Popular was able to dominate the 473 seat legislature with 263 deputies to the Right's 156; the Centre controlled 54 seats.

¹⁴ “[...] the Left had won an unexpected victory; and the Right, particularly the CEDA, an unexpected defeat.” (Thomas, 148)

¹⁵ Manuel Azaña Díaz (1880 – 1940). Azaña was leader of Izquierda Republicana (Republican Left), a party he had helped form in 1934 and which combined his own Acción Republicana (Republican Action), elements of the Partido Republicano Radical Socialista Independiente (Radical Socialist Republican Party), and the Organización Republicana Gallega Autónoma (Autonomous Galician Republican Organisation). The Izquierda Republicana was in turn part of a broader electoral alliance of the Left in 1936 – the Frente Popular – whose largest party was the Partido Socialista de Obreros Españoles (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party – Spain's equivalent of the Social Democrats and still a powerful political force today). Azaña's Izquierda Republicana contributed 87 of the 263 left-wing deputies sent to the Congress of Deputies (the Lower

Popular, one of the main political parties, went over to his side.¹⁶ I don't understand much about politics. But to put your mind at ease, I discuss politics with colleagues and I hear how amused they are by this or that radio report by a foreign broadcaster. Of course, shots are fired occasionally but that's always the way it is here. And when all that gets nicely reported on somewhere else, though this is a big country, then it can have interesting and dangerous consequences for those who want it to. Even if people in this country are far removed from all that and are just going about their business in peace and quiet!

In spite of not having all my good friends I still like it here. And I know of a few who would dearly like to swap with me. I hope what the boss said to me recently does come true – that when people get to know and like someone in Spain then they never let go of him. Of course it's part of the attraction of the job that I feel so happy here and in the right place, with no senior doctors, completely independent and responsible for a well-defined area. No longer just a girl Friday and no resources to work with. Here, responsibility and there, shut in and disciplined like a worker. I am in charge of my department, it is my affair. Nobody would have

House) after the February elections. Nine of the twelve members of his cabinet were also drawn from the ranks of the Izquierda Republicana.

¹⁶ This remark seems to have been the result of some confusion on Marianne's part. The Acción Popular (originally, Acción Nacional) was in fact a conservative Catholic and Monarchist party which had already been integrated into the CEDA in 1933. As the arrangements for the alliance of the Frente Popular had been made well in advance of the general election of February and the ideological commitments of political parties were clearly demarcated, there were no sudden shifts in loyalties after the Left's victory.

said anything if I hadn't turned up until everything was already running. But they were very surprised that everything is being done according to my instructions and from the bottom to the top it has been recognised with respect and pleasure.



A view of the Calle Montera showing the towers and front of San Luis Obispo (Source: <https://ungatopormadrid.com/2017/11/01/madrid-desaparecido-iglesia-de-san-luis/> [October 16, 2019])



A crowd gathers outside the ruins of San Luis Obispo, March 1936 (<https://madridafondo.blogspot.com/2014/02/la-portada-de-san-luis-obispo.html>) [Accessed October 16, 2019]]



The church of San Luis Obispo after the fire. (<https://ungatopormadrid.com/2017/11/01/madrid-desaparecido-iglesia-de-san-luis/>) [Accessed 16. October 2019]]



The baroque portal of San Luis Obispo, all that remains of the church and now in the Calle de la Salud. (<https://madridafondo.blogspot.com/2014/02/la-portada-de-san-luis-obispo.html> [Accessed October 16, 2019])



Juan Jesús García Diéguez (left) and Lorenzo de la Fuente, the firemen who died as a result of injuries suffered while fighting the fire in San Luis Obispo. (<https://asociacioncementerios.blogspot.com/2016/03/80-anos-del-incendio-de-la-iglesia-de.html> [Accessed 5 July 2020])



The church of San Ignacio in the Calle del Principe on fire, 13 March 1936 (Archivo Regional Comunidad de Madrid, Fondo Santos Yubero. Source: <https://sites.google.com/site/bibliotecaunedfrentepopular/Conflictos-y-violencia> [Accessed October 16, 2019])



[Iglesia de San Ignacio de Loyola \(Madrid\)](#) / Church of San Ignacio de Loyola (Madrid). Zarateman. [Attribution-Share Alike 3.0](#) unported license. Wikimedia Commons. [Accessed 5 July 2020]

Madrid, 22 / 3 / 36

Now this really is your last Sunday in Langenberg and it's bound to be quite uncomfortable in your lovely apartment.¹⁷ But I hope that amongst all your many invitations, you have one for today. I am just about to go to the Lagasca. It's so cold here. The storm broke a window pane. I mustn't have closed the window properly. As I was about to start writing just now there was a crash on the lower floors – 2 broken windows there too. At least it's worth it for the glazier to come tomorrow. There's a tremendous wind blowing here. It's bringing icy air down from the Sierra. In the Institute everything's cheerily going ahead. It took us a week to unpack and store all the glass items. Next week it's the turn of the chemicals. We don't go home any more in the afternoon. We eat our sandwiches in the Institute and make coffee to go with them – a good, Spanish one! Next month Franz will no longer have his food provided at his guesthouse either. I'm glad that I started out straight away without this arrangement. It's the only proper thing to do and much cheaper in the long run.

¹⁷ As becomes apparent in subsequent letters, Marianne's parents shifted at this time from Langenberg to a new home in Berlin. Her father, Konrad Angermann, had been mayor of Langenberg without interruption since 1911 but officially retired on 30. March 1936 (Degen, 362) – a week after this letter was written. In 1936 the Angermanns' address in Langenberg was no. 20 Hindenburgstraße. This street was one of a number in Langenberg which had had its name changed under the National Socialists. (It was President Hindenburg who had appointed Adolf Hitler to the position of Reich Chancellor in January 1933.) The street had previously been called Kamperstraße (Degen, 357), a name it has once again assumed.

The murder you write about did indeed happen. It is not a university professor who is dead, but rather a poor Guardia [Civil officer].¹⁸ There is no disorder here at all. There is only one group that thinks it should get its own way and that's the students. But they were given short shrift and were expelled. It's a tough punishment - for the parents too who have spent money on [their children's] study. But perhaps they'll now bring up their sons a bit better. And later, when they've seen reason, there'll be an amnesty.¹⁹ Despite what your paper says not a single apartment has been plundered in Madrid.

¹⁸ The incident referred to here had occurred ten days before this letter was written. On the morning of 12 March (the day before the burnings of San Luis Obispo and San Ignacio), there had been an assassination attempt on Luis Jiménez de Asúa, a Law professor at the Universidad Central (today, the Universidad Complutense) and a Socialist member of parliament, as he left his house in the Calle de Goya, no. 24 – a mere 20 minute walk from Marianne's apartment in the Calle Francisco de Rojas. Though Jiménez de Asúa managed to escape unharmed and hide in a coal bunker, his police escort, the 26 year old Jesús Gisbert Urreta, was hit twice by shots fired from a machine pistol and died shortly after. Gisbert's murderers were four students from the Universidad Central who escaped on foot, having unhappily stalled their getaway car. Of the assassins, only Alberto Ortega Arranz was captured; his accomplices had managed to flee the country in a light aircraft. Ortega Arranz was sentenced to thirty years in prison but died in the confusion surrounding the first days of the military putsch just a few months later in July. (See *ABC*, 4 April 1936; *Ahora*, 13 March 1936; *La voz*, 18 March 1936)

¹⁹ Marianne may have been referring here to the wave of arrests that followed the attempted assassination of Jiménez de Asúa. As many as two thousand people were taken into custody in the days following 12 March including the leader of the Falangist (Spanish fascist) party, José Antonio Primo de Rivera, and its militant rank and file, many of whom were students.

So don't worry.²⁰ If anything does happen it's nothing more than what usually goes on. They're angry with the churches²¹ and no more have been set alight since the two that really did burn down. Anyway, they were quite different

²⁰ That Marianne's parents were concerned for her welfare was hardly surprising given the unremittingly negative coverage on Republican Spain by the National Socialist press in Germany. A review of the Angermann's local newspaper, *Die Heimat am Mittag (Langenberger Zeitung)*, for March 1 – 22, 1936 reveals seven major stories detailing acts of politically motivated violence, arson and theft in Spain. Needless to say, the perpetrators are invariably described as "Communists" or "Marxists". The assassination attempt on Jiménez de Asúa and the funeral of Gisbert were also covered briefly by the paper (13 and 14 March) but without any reference to the politics of the attackers. A selection of the headlines for March reads: "Rotmord in Spanien" 5 and 13 March; "Mord und Brand in Spanien", 10 March; "Kommunistenpöbel wütet", 11 March; "Kirchen in Flammen", 14 March; "Der rote Terror in Spanien", 17 March; "Kommunisten wüten in Spanien", 19 March.

²¹ Ill-feeling towards the Catholic Church on the part of liberals and the working class had a long history in Spain and had much to do with the Church's wealth and its influence on education. Perhaps precisely because its lands had been disentailed under reforms instituted in the nineteenth century, the Church had become an energetic capitalist investor: in 1912 a Catalan businessman estimated that it controlled around one-third of Spain's capital (Thomas, 50). During periods of social stress, therefore, the Church frequently came to stand in for the whole problem of social injustice in Spain. During the *Semana Trágica* of 1909 in Catalonia around 50 churches were burned (Thomas, 18), while civil unrest in 1931 saw a hundred churches damaged throughout Spain (Thomas, 56). Anti-clerical feeling reached fever pitch during the Civil War, however: "At no time in the history of Europe, or even perhaps of the world, has so passionate a hatred of religion and all its works been shown." (Thomas, 261-262)

people than those who are getting the blame!²² And they have locked up a priest.²³

²² Both sides pointed the finger at each other over responsibility for the destruction of the churches. On the Left, it was implied that the burning of San Luis Obispo was an 'inside job' carried out with the intention of making an insurance claim (¿Quién quema las iglesias? / Who is burning the churches? *La Libertad*, 15 March 1936), a charge that was apparently reinforced by the discovery in Aravaca, on the outskirts of Madrid, of a large number of valuables belonging to the parish; it was suspected that they had been spirited out of the church prior to its planned burning (*La Libertad*, 31 March 1936). The Right responded by laying the charge at the door of the Left: in the Congress of Deputies, José Calvo Sotelo, a monarchist and the most charismatic of the opposition politicians, claimed to uproar from the government benches that the churches were burned by leftists in protest at the Frente Popular's lack of progress in implementing its programme (*Ahora*, 16 April 1936). He further stated that 36 churches had been burned since 16 February. Calvo Sotelo's assassination by Socialists in July would be the final act in the descent into Civil War.

²³ It is difficult to know to whom Marianne is referring here; no official of the Church was charged with either the San Luis or San Ignacio arsons. While priests were occasionally being arrested at around this time, these events were for breaches of laws concerning the education system or to enforce the distinctions between Church and State. For example, on 13 March 1936 it was reported that a Catalan priest by the name of Soler had been arrested after preaching a sermon encouraging his congregation to withdraw their children from school if no religious instruction was being offered there. It was better, he said, that children should be illiterate than that they should be denied a religious education. (*El Siglo Futuro*, 13 March 1936)



Professor of Law and Socialist deputy, Luis Jiménez de Asúa, talking to journalists shortly after an attempt had been made on his life. Marianne refers to this incident in the foregoing letter. (*Ahora*, 13 March 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España.)

Madrid, 25/3/36

If I were you I wouldn't get any grey hairs over Berlin. After all, Berlin is big and that's the wonderful thing about the city – you don't need to be seen if you don't want to, but if you feel the need for something you can have it quite cheaply. And you can enjoy the beautiful shops and the good cinemas, all of which aren't really expensive. When the first few weeks are over you won't be thinking, as you are now, of leaving again soon. But perhaps I can't judge that so well because we didn't grow up at a time in which it is, or was, possible to remain settled. So maybe it's quite sensible that we've learned to love change. I think it's crucial. So I'm perfectly content here. Our Institute is coming together poco a poco.²⁴ It will of course take some time before it is quite ready for business. But we were starting to do things today already. My colleague is so nice and pleasant, I couldn't wish for better. And the other people are nice as well. In a few days our laboratory will be ready for work. I'm looking forward to it. Already we are spending the whole day out there. For lunch we eat sandwiches. When F. no longer eats at his guesthouse on the 1st we'll shop together, just for good things, which are plentiful here, and it will still be cheap. We are already making coffee. To make the procedure simpler we bought two filter cups today. In the evenings we will eat somewhere together, though I won't every day because all that food will be too much for me. But fairly often, nevertheless. It will be a bit more expensive than eating at home but then so much nicer than just gulping stuff down on your own. And certainly more interesting. In summer we'll

²⁴ Sp.: bit by bit

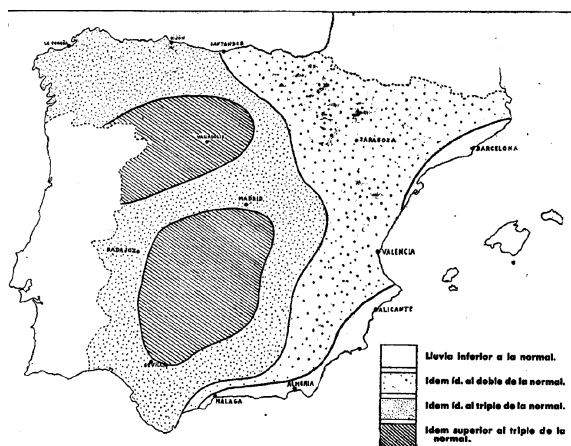
be able to sit outside to eat sometimes, which is supposed to be nice here. In the meantime it looks like anything but summer. We are having exceptionally bad weather here. People say that it hasn't rained as much in their whole life as much as it has in the last four months.²⁵ I am glad to have galoshes which I hardly ever take off. I am not grumpy as you might think, it's just that when one has such a beautiful Institute and really wants to have proper work again, then you can imagine how much you hope that your work things finally arrive. I write to other people as little as possible. I really hope that I don't need them. And, after all this, a simple laboratory job - which is perhaps the most that H. could help me to get - just doesn't come into consideration. Anyway, I have had such a nice letter from Th.²⁶ I'm sure that, if the worse comes to the worst, I could get a very good job there - if not a very well paid one. He was happy to hear that I'm here. H. could have written as well, in my opinion. I need such people just as little as I needed them before. At the end of the day it is your own work that helps get you through. But F. says he hopes it will be like Freiburg where Th. said: if only she were still here.²⁷ For me there's no compelling

²⁵ *El Sol* (4 March 1936) called it: "An extraordinary winter. A rainy season unknown in Spain." The 1935-1936 winter was the wettest in Madrid since records began in 1860. The city's average annual rainfall was 400 mm but it had achieved three quarters of that level already in the three months from December 1935 - February 1936.

²⁶ Thannhauser

²⁷ Marianne had worked closely with Professor Thannhauser, first in Düsseldorf and later again in Freiburg. Though Thannhauser was by all accounts a charming and cultivated man, he was not always even-handed in his treatment of female colleagues. According to his biographers he favoured women he found attractive "and was known to

reason to change things now. Let's hope for the best and I like it [here] just as much if not better than before. – San Luis really did burn beautifully²⁸ but the thing with the Communists is still not clear. They have, so it's said, arrested the chaplain.²⁹ It looked fantastic. Now there's not much left to see, inside everything is said to be in ruins. – We now have a lending library where there are good, new books and so we are now living by and large in the old Freiburg style. I just wish it could stay that way.



Map showing rainfall for winter 1935 – 36. Madrid lies in the densely dotted zone, indicating three times the normal seasonal rainfall. (*El Sol*, 4 March 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

show his lack of appreciation for those to whom nature had been less than generous.” (Hoffmann, 21)

²⁸ See the previous letters of 15 and 22 March for Marianne’s report on the arson attacks on two Madrid churches.

²⁹ Marianne makes the same claim in the previous letter of 22 March. There are, however, no press reports in 1936 concerning the arrest of a cleric for these offences.

Madrid, 9/IV/36

My dears, today you are getting a Maundy Thursday letter. We are having kind of a little holiday. From today till Sunday. Monday is a half day and Tuesday is again a national holiday.³⁰ This morning I was in the Institute for a little while so I could read in the library. Then I went for a meal with F. Chicken with rice accompanied by red wine for 60 pfennigs. I couldn't eat everything. For afters there was French toast. Then I went home quickly because the Ullmanns came to pick me up at 3.30. In beautiful spring weather we travelled a long, round-about route through the

³⁰ Tuesday, 14 April 1936 was the fifth anniversary of the declaration of the Second Republic, the occasion for official celebrations in Madrid, including a march along the Paseo de la Castellana. There were outbreaks of violence at this event. A group which had shouted its support of the Republic were fired at as they stood in front of the reviewing stand which had only shortly before been occupied by the President of the Republic and members of the Cabinet. One person was killed and several injured. (*El Sol*, 15 April 1936) The stand was located at the intersection of Paseo de la Castellana and Calle de Fernando el Santo, only a 10 minute walk from Marianne's apartment on the Calle Francisco de Rojas.

Manzanares³¹ valley to El Pardo, a castle built by Charles V.³² We had coffee in a little garden restaurant there and now we are back. It was absolutely wonderful, everything is in flower, the lilac so magnificent it's hard to imagine. There are dark blue lilies in the gardens. The chestnuts only need another two warm days like we've just had. Because of all the rain in the last few months and the sudden warm weather everything is so lusciously green and the grass is just shooting out of the ground. It won't take long, then everything will be grey with dust. It seems as if the rainy period has come to an end and every day it's getting a bit warmer. The day after tomorrow we are going shopping in the morning, mainly for deck chairs for the terrace which is now wonderful. The day before yesterday they had the flower boxes made up. Now the summer has really begun. My writing is in a bit of a muddle but I have to cover a long period of time. It starts on Saturday 8 days ago when we had

³¹ Just a few months later, the Manzanares River would play a crucial role in the Nationalists' advance on Madrid. Their intention had been to swiftly penetrate the city through the Casa de Campo, a former royal park to the west of the Ciudad Universitaria, and the relatively open space of the new campus; elsewhere, an attack would have required fighting in an urban environment in which the defenders had the upper hand. Nationalist forces managed to cross the Manzanares on 15 November 1936 with the aid of tanks, but they progressed only slowly across the lightly rising and fiercely defended ground on the far bank. Eventually the Francoists were halted at the University where battle lines would change little until Madrid finally fell in March 1939. The Faculty of Medicine housing Jiménez Díaz's Instituto would find itself in the front-line on the Republican side.

³² A former royal hunting lodge that was used in the Second Republic as one of the residences of the President. After the Civil War it became General Franco's official residence.

“reunión” which is a bit like a presentation evening.³³ The boss suddenly wanted coffee, and as we were the only ones amongst these bachelors who had any I made it for 10 people. They enjoyed it and we were happy that last Saturday the boss said that ours wasn’t as weak as the last lot. It has now become an institution that the department heads take turns to donate the coffee on Saturdays. Last Saturday the boss’s wife came and brought real caviar sandwiches! On Sunday I went for a long stroll in the Retiro³⁴ with F. It was brutally hot so that we had to drink a little beer after 1 ½ hours. We went to the movies in the evening. Then the week passed by quickly enough with work. On Saturday my Castro invited me to dinner. He has a very nice, agreeable wife, she is a pharmacist. F. says she is from a first rate Madrid family, and one can certainly see that in her. I’m glad to have met her. On Sunday afternoon F. came to read then we went to the movies and afterwards had a rice dish to eat. It was an expensive meal, almost as fine as those in Freiburg, but it did us good. On Monday evening we wrote letters; there is still business correspondence with Germany to deal with. Tuesday and yesterday I went to bed early so that I was rested for the holidays. At the moment it’s difficult to get up to much because something unpredictable can always intervene. And time is too short to really be able to see something of Spain. So one really needs to wait until summer. We will have a few free days around about August. Tomorrow I’m going back again to the engineer’s family. So

³³ For Jiménez Díaz such gatherings were an important part of fostering an atmosphere of collegiality and collaboration. In Madrid, they were always held in the library of his house on Calle Velázquez 23. (Jiménez-Fernández, 22)

³⁴ A public park in the centre of Madrid.

I'm always doing something – in fact, more than I can cope with. In the last few days I've thought about you a lot. How nice that you were able to do some more sightseeing. We pass by too many things in life. That old Frenchman with his 7 D³⁵ trains was quite right. But I have managed to catch an express train – at least that's what I think. Sometimes it's difficult to believe just how good I have it. I just hope that you have managed to settle in Berlin as quickly and as well as I have here. It's so nice that the Uncle Fritzes – please pass on my regards – are there as well. I imagine you'll get together at Easter for a day. Otherwise you'll have to make a spring trip to Potsdam.³⁶ You do have time now, I mean, around Berlin there's so much to see for so little money. That makes me really happy.

The charming little picture arrived safe and sound and was promptly unpacked and hung up. I was dreadfully pleased with it. It suits the colours really well, because I have the dining table cloth set out. Though at the moment it's in the wash, so I have the pretty voile cloth, which in fact has the same colours; blue and yellow tones suit my room. I also bought sunglasses with F.'s assistance and now I'm glad because the light is so unbelievably bright. The nights are delightful. When it gets a bit warmer in the evenings we will sometimes drive out somewhere to eat. I'm really looking forward to it already.

In the meantime I'm learning about new things, namely tropical food and drink. A very good one is cinnamon. You

³⁵ "D" designates a *Durchzug*, a faster train service that does not stop at every station.

³⁶ A city to the southwest of Berlin. Today, the capital and largest city of the federal state of Brandenburg.

take a cinnamon quill, just a little, cook it with water and sugar, as much as you like, but not too sweet, just one lump per cup of water, for me at least, until it gets a slight tea colour, and then filter it. Naturally the cinnamon is crumbled into small pieces before using. It tastes lovely, to me at least. F. doesn't like it at all. I'll also put paprika in your package, 2 types, sweet and spicy. What else would you like?

Here it's now asparagus season. There are magnificent asparagus and strangely I've eaten them twice and they were unpeeled. Apparently they're cooked just as they are and they're only peeled at the table. But they taste really good, probably because they retain their flavour and don't sit in the water as they do with us.

The old U.³⁷ parents lend me stuff sometimes. They are actually very nice to me, as everyone is. Really, I'm doing so well here that I might wish to spend the rest of my life in this beautiful Institute. I'm also so happy with my apartment, I couldn't have had it any nicer.

³⁷ Ullmann



EL QUINTO ANIVERSARIO DE LA PROCLAMACION DE LA REPUBLICA.—Bajo la presidencia del jefe del Estado, el Gobierno en plaza y ante una consiguiente multitud, se ha aya con bellísima circunstancia, en el punto de la Castellana, el desfile militar organizado con motivo del quinto aniversario del advenimiento del régimen. Un momento del paso de las tropas ante la tribuna presidencial (Foto: Ahora y Piedad).

The President and members of the Government review a military parade on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Second Republic, 14 April 1936. (*Ahora*, 15 April 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



["Río Manzanares a su paso por Madrid / The Manzanares River in Madrid."](#) Nacho Castejón Martínez. Creative Commons [Attribution-Share Alike Generic 2.0](#) license. Wikimedia Commons. [Accessed 15 July 2020]



[Palacio Real de El Pardo, Madrid / Royal Palace of El Pardo, Madrid.](#) [Carlos Delgado](#). Wikimedia Commons. [Accessed 15 July 2020]

Madrid, 14 / IV / 36

You don't need to worry about me at all! Here it's absolutely peaceful. We are working, as usual, and see no signs of any unrest.³⁸ A lot of people are frightened for their wallets, but as ours is not so large there is no need to fear at all. I got my residence permit back again as well, a matter that's not quite so simple for us foreigners. They are tremendously alert to newcomers. The police visited me twice and I had to give an account of my whole professional life. But now in a few weeks I'll have the identity card which, according to the regulations passed last year, every working foreigner has to

³⁸ Events in Madrid did not bear out Marianne's sanguine assessment. In the previous week there had been two remarkable incidents of political violence in Marianne's immediate neighbourhood. The first had been a bomb attempt on the life of left-wing politician Eduardo Ortega y Gasset, a former civil governor of Madrid and brother of the famous philosopher, José. On the morning of 7 April an explosive device hidden in a basket of eggs was delivered to his home in the Calle Rafael Calvo, no. 12 (a ten minute walk from Marianne's apartment in Calle Francisco de Rojas). After her suspicions were aroused by the smell of burning, Ortega's wife hurriedly threw a mattress over the basket which then detonated as she ran out. The Ortega apartment and offices on the floor below were destroyed, but fortunately no one was seriously injured. The would-be assassins were anarchists who had been expelled from their organisation and had then joined the Falangists (Fascists). (See *El Sol*, 8 April; *Ahora*, 14 April 1936). In the second incident, Manuel Pedregal Luege, a magistrate in the Supreme Court, was walking home on the afternoon of 14 April when he was shot by two assassins on the corner of Calles Luchana and Covarrubias. He was rushed to hospital but died of his wounds that evening. The site of Pedregal's assassination was a mere 400 m – less than a five minute walk – from Marianne's home on Calle Francisco de Rojas, 3. (See *El Sol*, 14 April 1936; *Ahora*, 15 April 1936)

acquire. I can imagine that if one didn't come here as I did, and be able to take all sorts of letters to these offices and ministries, it would be rather difficult to get.

So don't worry if a letter takes a little longer, mostly that has to do with the fact that post boxes are so hard to find here and since we've been working in the outskirts I seldom get to the main post office which I always passed by on the way to the old clinic. But now in the spring they're beginning to paint the post boxes again and I've already discovered two new ones. The weather here is beyond awful which is lucky for everyone who saved his money and didn't travel away. The others already returned home on Monday or, at the latest, Monday evening because of all the rain and the awful cold. Yet the chestnuts are blooming. It's a crying shame. As the Spaniards are not used to it they've been claiming for several weeks that they are starting to go mad. We're beginning to find it too much as well. Good Friday was extraordinary, weather in which you'd prefer to go to bed with a book or five. On Saturday it was glorious in the morning so for enjoyment we went to the Institute for a bit and wanted to go for a stroll from there and then go eat somewhere together. Instead of a walk we sheltered for half an hour in the passageway of a house because it hailed so much it hurt. Afterwards we quickly ducked into the next pub and we arrived home dripping wet. In the evening we were with Wilkens at the movies, and drank coffee first. We saw *Broadway Melody 1936*, a review with superb dancers and very pleasant music.³⁹ On Sunday morning the weather

³⁹ *Broadway Melody of 1936* (Roy Del Ruth, 1935). The film was showing that day (Sábado de Gloria / Holy Saturday) at the Capitol cinema on the Gran Vía. (*Ahora*, 10 April 1936). During the Siege of Madrid 1936 –

was radiant again and a glorious warmth lured me out of bed early to enjoy my balcony. At 12.30 we had a little something to drink, went for a stroll and as it was clouding over again quickly bought a few nice things to go with coffee. We arrived back at my place just before the last raindrops. Today one of my colleagues announced the comforting news that some astrologer has learned that it is going to be a year just like 1564 when it rained from November to 3 August. That's going to be fun!

But the main thing is that the Institute is ready. We are already beavering away. And it's fun, I don't have the feeling that I've been away from the business for so long.



Events belie Marianne's portrayal of a calm city: a view of the bomb damage in politician Eduardo Ortega y Gasset's apartment after the assassination attempt of 7 April 1936. (*Crónica*, 12 April 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

1939, the Capitol would be used as an observation post by the Republican army. (Regueral, 44)



The violence continues: Manuel Pedregal Luege (right) and the corner of Calles Luchana and Covarrubia where he was shot and mortally wounded on the afternoon of 14 April 1936. (Ahora, 15. April 1936. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)

Carta de Identidad profesional núm. **14.358**

Por la presente CARTA DE IDENTIDAD PROFESIONAL se autoriza a D.^a Marianne Angermann Beutler, de profesión u oficio en misión científica Doctora en química, nacido en Dresden (Alemania) el 30 de Junio de 1.904, para trabajar en calidad de Jefe del Departamento químico en el Instituto de Investigaciones Médicas (Facultad de Medicina, Ciudad Universitaria).- Madrid.

según contrato de trabajo estipulado el de de 193..., en , por tiempo de , con el de pesetas

Categoría profesional del interesado
 Calificación id. del id.
 Posee título de

El interesado,
Marianne Angermann

El Jefe del Servicio,
P. U.
Luis de Benito

Marianne Angermann's identity card from 31 December 1936. (Hocken Collections, MS1493/001)

Madrid, 19 April 1936

My dears, today is darling⁴⁰ Sunday and I have already done all sorts of things. First, I was early to the clinic with F. to look at a patient who needed something examined. From there we went to the Prado for a bit to look at some pictures, in particular to see 2 shrines from Oviedo which are temporarily on exhibition.⁴¹ Then we ate well, first of all *almejas*, which are an excellent type of clam, then some chicken. For dessert something baked and filled with a kind of cream and very good. It cost 20 pfennigs with red wine and bread. Then we strolled slowly home because nothing had come of our planned walk due to bad weather. I first slept a little then read then did a mighty tidy up, sewed names into all my stockings and the sorts of things working people do on Sundays. Now I'm writing to you. There's not all that much to say about the week, I think. Tuesday was the last public holiday,⁴² thank God. Because after a fine Sunday we had dreadful weather, cold, wet – everything you could wish for. You could really only crawl into bed with a book. If you weren't at the movies. Then we worked again for a bit,

⁴⁰ "Darling Sunday" appears to have been an expression peculiar to the Angermann family.

⁴¹ The shrines on exhibition at the Museo del Prado were El arca santa (Holy Ark) and La caja de Santa Eulalia (The Chest of Saint Eulalia) both of which had recently undergone restoration work. These reliquaries had been damaged when Asturian revolutionaries detonated a bomb in the Cámara Santa (Holy Chamber) of Oviedo Cathedral on 11 October 1934.

⁴² See letter from 9 April. Tuesday 14 April 1936 was the fifth anniversary of the Spanish Second Republic.

until the general strike came on Friday.⁴³ I was almost at the Institute early but I had to get out of the tram as everything came to a stop and, as Marie used to say, continue on Shanks's pony. A few of our people had the pleasure of having to do a march of 1½ hours. At around 12 most of them ducked off because there was apparently shooting in the city. The more reasonable ones, which included us, stayed because it's quite quiet out there. At 2.30 we left as well and in honour of the occasion we had a good meal. Then we went off to my place to have coffee. There was no one on the street in the evening but unfortunately there was also no cinema open. The whole thing went off with remarkable discipline from the workers without any conflict and, as a result, one was left thinking that if the balloon does go up here it won't be the government parties that start it. Unfortunately a few people had been shot dead in the last few days and that's why there was a protest strike.⁴⁴ A few

⁴³ As Marianne notes, the strike on Friday 17 April was particularly effective in halting public transport. The newspaper, *Ahora*, reported: "Scarcely had they left the depots than the trams and buses returned to them. By nine-thirty in the morning public transport was totally paralysed." There was a return to work the following day after union negotiators accepted the government's commitment to pursue right-wing perpetrators of violence with vigour. (*Ahora*, 18 April 1936)

⁴⁴ The general strike in Madrid on Friday, 17 April had been called by the Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT), the country's main anarchist union, as a protest against the events that had occurred the previous day during the funeral for Anastasio de los Reyes, an officer in the Guardia Civil (a national police force much despised by the Left) who had been shot and killed while attending the Republic's fifth anniversary celebrations on Tuesday that week. Although authorities had wanted his funeral to be a private affair, his son and a senior colleague illegally appropriated his casket from the morgue and postponed the funeral to a time of day when those in the Guardia Civil and the military could more

people have now been put in jail, perhaps it will now go quiet. But all in all, there's not the least cause for concern. At the end of the day newspapers in other countries live off these few sensations⁴⁵ but mostly the locals notice it the least. In any case, you can go about unmolested at all times of the day and night. You can go, as always, to the cinema or café. Only a few people with a great deal of money or a bad conscience or both have cleared off. But as we don't belong to them, we're doing well. Less good is the weather – it's trying and failing to get warm. Sometimes it looks like it's going to and then the next day it starts pouring again. From today our heating is back on again – something unheard of for Spain. At the same time, everything looks summery and green, the chestnuts are blooming in the wide boulevards so that it all looks magnificent.

easily attend. As the giant cortège wound its way through the streets there were frequent exchanges of fire with left-wing gunmen. Finally, on the Plaza Manuel Becerra, the crowd was ordered to disperse and then fired upon by the Guardia de Asalto (a police force loyal to the Republic), an action which resulted in several fatalities. (See *Ahora*, 17 April 1936) The day ended with five people killed and thirty-two wounded. The officer commanding the Guardia de Asalto, Republican loyalist José del Castillo Sáenz de Tejada, would himself later be murdered, and his death, in turn, avenged by the assassination of the right-wing politician, Calvo de Sotelo.

⁴⁵ If the Angermanns (senior) were still in Langenberg at this point, they would have been able to read of the events on the front page of their local newspaper. *Die Heimat am Mittag* (*Langenberger Zeitung*) of Friday, 17 April headlined their reports: "Die Sowjet-Saat geht auf!" and „Der blutige Donnerstag / Kommunistischer Feuerüberfall in den Straßen Madrids“.



The Arca Santa of Oviedo which Marianne saw in the Prado. (Source: *The Art of Medieval Spain, A.D. 500 – 1200*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993. 259. Photographer: Bruce White)



Soldiers pose in the damaged Cámara Santa of Oviedo Cathedral after it had been the target of a bomb attack during the uprising of October 1934. The explosion had significantly damaged the Arca Santa (*Ahora*, 23 October 1934. Source: Biblioteca Nacional de España)



Tensions increase: An officer in the Guardia de Asalto, José del Castillo Sáenz de Tejada had ordered the dispersal of a funeral cortege on Thursday 16 April 1936 which resulted in several deaths. ([José de Castillo, about 1930](#). Public domain. Wikimedia Commons. [Accessed 16 July 2020])

Madrid, 26 / IV / 36

On Tuesday we were with an acquaintance at the movies, a spy film, superb.⁴⁶ Wednesday is always *reunión*, the presentation evening. Afterwards we go out to eat together. On Thursday we operated, that was a late one. On Friday we went for a little stroll in the glorious weather, yesterday was again *reunión* and afterwards we ate very well in an Italian restaurant. This morning we went for a long walk with a friend. The weather is like it is at home in July, simply glorious. Everything's in flower, sunflowers, lilac, chestnuts, irises, which at home don't come until autumn, all in an outrageous display of colour. And everyone is on the street to enjoy these summery but not too warm days. Everywhere it's hot in the sun, but we still like that – even though they say I'll get sick of the perpetually blue sky. Yesterday a colleague from Andalusia told me that it is much, much warmer there than in Madrid and much brighter still. That's hard to imagine. I bought some sunglasses at F's urging and he was right. They're quite dark, otherwise my eyes can't stand it. The air is so fantastically clear you can almost see the trees on the Sierra which are quite far away.⁴⁷ A bit like it is at home in autumn, only more so. Tomorrow I'm going to buy a big bottle of the best olive oil, otherwise I'll peel like

⁴⁶ This is likely to have been *Brigada Secreta*, a French spy film with Jean Murat in the lead and whose original title was *La deuxième bureau* (Pierre Billon, 1935). The English title was *Second Bureau*. It was playing that week at the Teatro Figaro in the Calle del Doctor Cortezo.

⁴⁷ Geoffrey Cox – Otago University graduate, Rhodes scholar and war correspondent – claims in his *Defence of Madrid* that the one of the reasons Phillip II chose the city as his capital in 1560 was for the quality of its air. (Cox, 67)

a snake. For my hair I've ordered Brilliantine,⁴⁸ otherwise it'll soon look like a brush. People don't wear hats here, only quite elegant ladies who order such things from Paris. Otherwise they go about with veils⁴⁹, the more modern ones with nothing, which is the cheapest and most comfortable thing.

Today we were in Rosales⁵⁰, an area that stretches as far as the Parque del Oeste.⁵¹ Then we walked on with the intention of getting as far as the Puerta de Hierro⁵² but gave up due to the great heat. We each of us bought 4 boiled sweets for 10 centimos and sat on a bench in the shade in the rose garden. It was absolutely beautiful everything so fresh and green from all the rain. They say that in 4 weeks or even sooner everything will be grey from the dust or the sun. At midday we have now taken to sitting for a quarter of an hour

⁴⁸ Brilliantine is a hair-care product. Still available today, it was much more widely used in the 1930s.

⁴⁹ In Spain the "mantilla" is a traditional veil or shawl worn over a high comb ("peineta"). Today, these are only seen on special – usually religious – occasions.

⁵⁰ The Paseo del Pintor Rosales, to give it its full name, runs for just over a kilometre along the eastern side of the Parque del Oeste above the Manzanares River. In November 1936, the Nationalist attack into Madrid was planned to strike first across the river and proceed directly up to the Rosales before capturing the Model Prison nearby.

⁵¹ The Parque del Oeste (Western Park) lies just to the south of the university campus. Fortifications built during the Civil War can still be seen in the park today.

⁵² The Puerta de Hierro or Iron Gate lies to the north of the university campus close to the Manzanares River. Constructed in the mid-eighteenth century, it marked the entrance to the royal hunting ground of El Pardo. From the Parque del Oeste to the Puerta de Hierro is a distance of around 5 km.

on the terrace at the Institute, tomar el sol⁵³, as they say here. The stones are scorching hot and I'm slowly beginning to get some colour. They predict, however, that I'll never really succeed. Still, my hair has turned really dark here. For the Spanish I may still be light blond, but we would probably call it brown. Funny, normally in the summer sun I look bleached, here I'm getting dark. Anyway, after this walk we again landed in yesterday's Italian restaurant where I ate Milanese rice and had strawberries for afters, strawberries with apple juice which tasted delicious, much better than with cream. Then we went home to sleep. At around 5 I made some coffee, ate on the terrace till 8, then it gets quite windy and cool in the evenings. Now I've already written a few letters, eaten supper and you know everything I've done during the whole week.

We can't understand here how you could have had snow. Though the Sierra is still deep in snow and it's a marvellous view – summer down below and then the snowy mountains. You shouldn't always say that things would be different if I were there. Maybe – or even probably – I would be so irritated that I wouldn't be in such a good mood, the way I always am here. And so sometimes a letter written out of genuine desire is worth more than long days spent in a bad mood. In any case, you will come here at some point. F. is already mentally putting together the restaurants that Mother would like. And there are a lot of them here. And he laughs when he thinks how annoyed Mother will be that there are no indicators on the cars here, and that the trams don't always stop at the stops but rather only when you show, by raising your arm, that you intend to get on and,

⁵³ = sun-bathing (“to take the sun”).

when you want to alight, you have to ask the conductor to stop. And then they stop sometimes of their own accord, particularly when the conductors have run out of tobacco and they're driving past a shop where they can buy some. Or when it's warm they sometimes have to stop at a fountain to have a drink. By the way, the funny little red ceramic bottle which always stood on my corner wardrobe must come from Spain because they use them here in all sizes to store fresh water, that they want to drink cool. People pour it into their mouths in a fine stream which must be very hard. Yesterday on the way home we went past a green field where lots of people and even more children were lying all dressed in lurid clothes. In the sun it looked like a field of Easter bunnies. There's one class of people that has a love of dreadfully bright colours thrown together any old how. Somehow it seems fitting here, but you're always happy when you see a well-dressed woman clad in black again. Wicked tongues say they're only in black because they're always having children, half of whom die, and because black is worn for whole year after a death they never get out of mourning. Funerals here are also quite different. As in the Rhineland, women don't attend.⁵⁴ F. recently went to one with a red tie. I was shocked at first, but was told that it doesn't matter here. The hearse goes at a gallop and, all in all, the occasion is not taken so seriously. People have a quite different relationship to their beloved God here. It's a joyful and, at least in terms of the saints, a very familiar Catholicism. They've got one [saint] here for whom the people queue up between Carnival and Easter because out

⁵⁴ A similar observation is made in the letter of 19 / 1 / 36.

of three wishes that you make, one will be fulfilled.⁵⁵ Another is for getting married.⁵⁶ You buy a figurine but if it hasn't helped within a year it's thrown away or drowned. Every country has its idiosyncrasies and at the end of the day they are all big kids here.

⁵⁵ The "saint" referred to here is an image of Christ known variously as Nuestro Padre Jesús de Medinaceli (Our Father Jesus of Medinaceli) or Jesús Nazareno Rescatado (Jesus of Nazareth Redeemed) which is located in the Basílica de Jesús de Medinaceli in Madrid. The main date in the cult's calendar is the first Friday of every March (the "besapiés" or "kissing of the feet") when it is customary for the faithful to make three wishes, one of which it is said will be granted. A member of the Spanish Royal Family is also often in attendance.

Given the polarization of Spain along political and religious lines in 1936, devotion to Jesús de Medinaceli was obviously seen as an ideological commitment. This is certainly how the annual cult was interpreted that year by the conservative newspaper, *La Nación*, which reported that up to 50 000 pilgrims filed past the image in a process that took 30 hours to complete. The faithful were, the paper claimed, representative of "another" Spain which was able – like Christ – to demonstrate its faith silently and without rising to the provocation of its enemies. The paper's praise of the virtues of meekness, however, also betrayed its conservative anti-Semitism: the taunts levelled by secular Spaniards at the patiently queuing Catholics came from those who were "los judíos de ahora" – "the Jews of today". (*La Nación*, 7 March 1936) See also: https://www.abc.es/espana/madrid/abci-jesus-medinaceli-tres-deseos-para-cristo-cautivo-201703031359_noticia.html [29. October 2019]

⁵⁶ St Anthony is usually regarded as the patron saint of single women who wish to marry.



Queen Sofia, mother of the present Spanish king, Felipe VI, before the image of Jesús de Medinaceli in 2016. (*El Mundo*, 4 March 2016. <https://www.elmundo.es/loc/2016/03/04/56d993d1e2704e70288b4672.html> [Accessed 29 October 2019])