

Barcelona in the eyes of foreign journalists during the Spanish Civil War

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Abstract

Historiography has significantly neglected the presence of foreign journalists in the Spanish Civil War, therefore ignoring an account of the conflict which includes nuances which are clearly differentiated from the dominant narrative. Nearly two hundred women, however, left testimony of their journey through the Iberian Peninsula, more interested in the effects of war than in the military culture. Most of them passed through Barcelona and focused, among other aspects, on life in the city, the aerial bombardment of the civilian population, the bloody events of May 1937 and the Republicans' departure for France.

Keywords

Women, Journalists, Barcelona, Civil War, Foreign Press.

Resum

La historiografia ha descuidat de manera significativa la presència de les periodistes estrangeres en la Guerra Civil, obviant per aquest motiu un relat del conflicte amb matisos clarament diferenciats de la narrativa dominant. Prop de dues-centes dones, no obstant això, van deixar testimoniatge del seu pas per la península Ibèrica, més interessades en els efectes de la guerra que en la cultura militar. La majoria d'elles van passar per Barcelona i es van fixar, entre altres aspectes, en la vida a la ciutat, els bombardejos aeris sobre la població civil, els successos sagnants de maig del 1937 i la sortida republicana cap a França.

Paraules clau

Dones, periodistes, Barcelona, Guerra Civil, premsa estrangera.

There were many more foreign journalists who travelled to Spain during the Civil War to report on the conflict. Anglo-Saxon historiography has limited their presence to a small number, made up mainly of British and Americans, even acknowledging that the confrontation had been the most mediatic in history up to that time. The mechanism through which the work of foreign journalists is limited to exceptional terms is similar to the predominance of the masculine in the contents of the very abundant bibliography on the war. The texts that include onomastic indexes allow us to see that, among the most reputable historians, the leading role of women barely accounts for between two and four percent of that which was documented.¹

In a recent study² it was possible to verify, in documented form, with biographical profiles and basic hemerography, that 183 journalists, photojournalists, press collaborators and a few memoirists travelled to the country during the war and left written and photographic evidence of their experience. In many cases, their information and comments also fed shortwave radio broadcasts to Europe and America from both sides.

Even though a considerable number of foreign journalists have been identified, there is a more relevant fact in the investigation: the existence of a story which is different from that which was dominant. In other words, a historiographic filtering of the stories reported, in which the military operations, war machines

and political debate are not so much looked at, rather the heart of the society, to the suffering of the most vulnerable, those on whom the singular humanitarian bankruptcy of the years 1936 to 1939 fell. Their chronicles and reports focused more on the daily suffering of the rear guards, where life was not only difficult, but also permanently at risk.

In the chronicles of foreign women, there is a singular concern for aspects that, seen 85 years later, refer to the now normal description of *war crimes*, alluding to practices such as the bombing of the defenceless civilian population, something unknown until then, which the Norwegian journalist Gerda Grepp (1907-1940) described as "vulgar murders".³ The deceased did not carry weapons, nor uniforms, nor were they heroes. What is more, the image used until then against wars – endless rows of white crosses on battlefields – was now very different, according to the Swedish woman Barbro Alving (1909-1987), who discovered the new picture of the warlike anomaly in the morgues full of corpses of women and children.⁴

Limbs detached from torn bodies, headless, like in an anatomy class. On a higher table are two little boys, one a seven-year-old with his head smashed in, probably still with his trouser pockets full of all his things. Next to him, a coffin that is less than a metre long, of a six-month-old baby, killed by a blow or a fall, without blood, who still looks handsome. And the women! They lie in a long, uneven line,

*their clothes pulled up and their black hair sticking to the blood; one has a completely smashed face. You don't want to see any more and you want to scream loudly. A boy, covered in a bloody cloth, is missing his head. A young man, who retains all the southern beauty of his face, seems to be sleeping, lying down with his head to one side. And yet, the most dramatic thing is not the wounds, the mutilations and the blood. It is the tattered clothes of women who have nothing to do with war. Women who could be scrubbing the floor, doing the dishes, tending to a child, gossiping, nothing worthy of such a gruesome death.*⁵

The culture of war is based on values of hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, despite the large presence of women journalists and alternative stories, this may be the reason why the historiographical sediment ignores or overshadows the role of women and that of other sectors of the population – the elderly and children – far from the dominant centrality. Even so, there was a female reading that focused on the effects, on the fatal consequences of the war on the entire population, which was, by far, compared to previous war scenarios, the one that gathered the largest number of women. A collective story, highly defined by the presence of journalists related, as a general rule, to the Republican postulates, compared to the very scarce numbers in the areas of the country dominated by the rebels.

Barcelona through the feminine eye

Through the stories of these foreign women, you can follow the entire sequence of the war, from its beginnings to its final moments, including the Republican exodus and exile, as well as the beginnings of the dictatorship and repression. Barcelona is, without doubt, one of the central scenarios on which the chronicles and reports were based, and a vital step for most of the journalists who travelled to Spain between 1936 and 1939. Their experiences even served to allude to the old conflicts of national identity or simple exercises of contrast between Barcelona and Madrid. The American woman Janet Riesenfeld swung more towards the Catalan capital, “It doesn't matter how many modern improvements you put in this city [Madrid], because the people are still the same as they were in the eighteenth century. Barcelona seemed more American to me, more cosmopolitan.”⁶ Anita Brenner also expressed herself in this sense, finding a reason to explain a differentiating fact: “There is a lot of Jewish blood in Catalonia.”⁷

*Two dues, two ages, two classes, two philosophies battle for possession of Spain. Prosperous, energetic, industrialized Barcelona is at once the general headquarters and the symbol of the struggle against somber, hungry, hierarchic Madrid, and it is a struggle which divides each of the two and every other Spanish city, town, and village, within and against itself.*⁸

The celebration in the Catalan capital of the People's Olympiad, shut down by the outbreak of war, attracted some journalists who, under the circumstances, became the first informants of the war. Such were the cases of the British woman Josephine [Jose] Shercliff of the *Daily Herald*⁹ and the American woman Muriel Rukeyser of the London magazine *Life and Letters Today*.¹⁰ The military coup surprised the Palmer family on holiday in Montgat. The young Aileen, who had joined the press office of the Olympiad, lived through the initial years of the military coup in Barcelona, where her mother, writer and journalist Nettie Palmer, went to look for her, with both reporting on the outbreak of the war in the Australian press.¹¹ Also in Barcelona was Clara Thalmann, a member of the Swiss swimming team at the Olympiad, who stayed in Barcelona to join the POUM (Workers' Party of Marxist Unification) forces and report on the beginning of a revolutionary process in Catalonia. “Not a single convent has been saved,” she wrote, surprised by the very high number of traffic accidents in those first days of the conflict, due to the use of the seized cars by those who had never driven.¹²

Elisabeth Deeble,¹³ a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* and, later, for *The Washington Post*, had lived in Barcelona for years. There was also the Swedish journalist Kajsa Rothman, a partner in a travel agency, and Austrian photojournalist Margarethe Michaelis, with an anarchist ideology, who had set up a small studio.¹⁴ Also in the city were the American woman Megan Laird, the Polish woman Joanna Gintuł and, not far away, in Tossa de Mar, the British woman Nancy Johnstone. Laird bore witness to the start of the war in *The Atlantic Monthly*,¹⁵ between July 19 and 26, from what she saw from the window of her flat on the fifth floor of Calle Lauria, on the corner of Calle Provenza. The identity of Joanna Gintuł is more unexpected, author of two chronicles in the Warsaw weekly *Wiadomości Literackie*, whose presence fades after their publication and the strong controversy they aroused in the conservative Polish press. Then there is the contribution of Nancy Johnstone, who ran a hotel establishment with the Scots man Archibald Johnstone, formerly deputy editor of the *London News Chronicle*, is significant. Her books on the war years are a prodigy of empathy with those who tried daily to maintain a spirit which was alien to the anomaly of war.

We were amazed to hear that we were trapped among wild Bolsheviks, who were howling outside our houses for our blood, while the rebels, tactfully called “insurgents” in The Times, were doing their best to come to our aid in time and save us from “something worse than death”. [...] What took us completely by surprise was that the serious press tacitly supported a military coup. It had never occurred to us that, if the right-wingers were the rebel coup plotters and the left-wing government was the legally elected one, the British Conservatives would say: “Long live the rebels!”¹⁶

Seventy journalists in 1936

Between mid-July and the end of 1936, some seventy foreign journalists, photojournalists and press collaborators passed through Barcelona. In the first days of the war, the French woman Marguerite Jouve (1903-1963)¹⁷, Andrée Violis (1870-1950) and photojournalist Hélène Roger-Viollet (1901-1985) arrived. Gerda Taro also arrived, sent by the French media, and three weeks after the outbreak of the war, British woman Nancy Cunard (1896-1965), who reported for the press in Europe and America. In the Parisian weekly *Regards*, she published a paper in which she confronted the information that appeared in some Parisian newspapers about religious persecution in Barcelona, and pointed out that it was necessary, to understand the causes, the weight of the Catholic Church in the country, and how it “not only instigated, but, in many cases, led the fascist revolt”.¹⁸ In August, the American woman Kitty Bowler (1908-1966), accredited by the Federated Press, travelled to Barcelona from the USSR, where she had had an affair with the controversial *New York Times* correspondent Walter Duranty. In September, the first visit of British Sylvia Townsend Warner (1893-1978) and Valentine Ackland (1906-1969) took place. In the second fortnight of October, the Norwegian Gerda Grepp (1907-1940) travelled to the Catalan capital, who wrote three chronicles from Barcelona for the newspaper *Arbeiderbladet*.¹⁹ It was at that time that she also interviewed President Companys, “a very nice older man”, who responded to her questions “in fluent French”. Another prominent figure also arrived in October, British woman Kate Mangan (1904-1977), who felt the revolutionary social upheaval up close. She was caught up in a more aesthetic and gestural communication that conveyed vitality, since she understood neither Spanish nor Catalan. “Everyone seemed so strongly enthusiastic, and after learning about the rallies in Spain, those in other countries seemed terribly boring and routine”.²⁰

At the end of 1936, American veteran Anna Louise Strong (1885-1970), who had led the *Moscow Daily News* in the Soviet capital, also joined them. In Barcelona, she established a good relationship with Jaume Miravittles, head of the Propaganda Commission of the Generalitat, who shared with her some key points about the complex Catalan reality, “Madrid wages wars; Barcelona, revolutions. A kind of division of labour that runs through a century of Spanish history”.²¹

Militant journalism

It did not take long for journalists to travel to Barcelona seeking to support the information and propaganda tools of the different political forces. One of the first to arrive was British woman Mary Low (1912-2007), who joined the information activities of the POUM and the Propaganda Commission of the Generalitat, only to return to her country disappointed at the end of 1936.

The revolution, according to her, was being hindered, even as far as its everyday aesthetics.

*Nearly all the men were wearing ties again. The workman's overalls had largely disappeared off the streets. More and more elegantly dressed women were seen everywhere. [...] Everyone had gradually given up wearing the militia uniform, for now it had become the uniform of the regular army which was being formed and we had not come here to fight in any bourgeois army.*²²

The French-Peruvian Simone Kahn (1897-1980), who had been the wife of André Breton, also joined the POUM's information and propaganda activities; Austrian Katja Landau (1905-c.1975), who carried out very intense activity in the international secretariat;²³ English woman Mary Low (1912-2007); and the very young American Lois Cusick (1917-1985), who worked on the English-language programmes of the POUM's shortwave stations. She also wrote press releases in English for the Propaganda Commission, where she received ten pesetas a day, which she described as, “the first money I earned in my life”.

Lois, who did not hide her enthusiasm for the historical experience of the revolution, with the workers and farmers who owned the factories and the land, noted the progressive loss of the first transformative impulses and the growing influence and control of the pro-Soviet communists. She was especially interested in the analysis of the collectivised economy and its reflection on everyday life, expressions that heralded, according to her, the beginning of an anti-authoritarian millennium.

In the anarchist ranks, in addition to the Austrian woman Michaelis, Hungarian Kati Horna (1912-2000), also an outstanding photojournalist, travelled to Barcelona. Also, the Scots woman Ethel MacDonald (1909-1960), who, in January 1937, joined the broadcasting division of the CNT-FAI (National Confederation of Labour-Iberian Anarchist Federation),²⁴ becoming one of the most widely heard voices in Europe and America regarding the conflict, with an audience that rewarded the beauty of her voice.²⁵

The most celebrated anarchist, founder of the legendary magazine *Mother Earth*, was undoubtedly the veteran Emma Goldman (1869-1940) who was of Russian origin. She visited Barcelona on several occasions, took part in the broadcasts of Radio cnt-fai and represented the Mujeres Libres (Free Women) organisation in London.

Images of the arrival

In September 1936, on their first visit, British woman Sylvia Townsend Warner and Valentine Ackland were held for two days at the border for incomplete documentation, before continuing to Barcelona on a train painted in bright colours with the initials of the CNT.

[At Barcelona] our luggage gave a great deal of pleasure to a very young militiaman who was overseeing the customs.

*Valentine's pocket telescope interested him a great deal, he pronounced favourably on a tiny set of traveling tumblers. After examining everything in great detail, he made up his mind that Valentine's habit of traveling with a screwdriver denoted us as nice people, and packed us up again with great swiftness and dexterity.*²⁶

Kindness was not always present in the first meetings. The Norwegian woman Gerda Grepp refers to certain difficulties in arriving in the Catalan capital three months after the beginning of the conflict.

It is not easy to enter Spain. We found out when we arrived at the Barcelona aerodrome. We were met by a group of armed soldiers and taken to an office where they rudely checked all of our documents. It is quite reasonable that they try to prevent the entry of spies.²⁷

Many of those who travelled to the war-torn country were unaware of Spain; it was sometimes imagined with a mixture of exotic character and gloomy appearance, so their arrival would involve the initial surprise that illustrated the context of their chronicles and writings, with frequent descriptions of the beauty of the landscapes and their empathy with the people.

The Russian woman Agnia Bartó (1906-1981), of the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, recorded her first impressions when passing the border city of Portbou, in July 1937: a transparent blue sky that seemed much higher than what she was used to seeing. "It was a special feeling of space and light". The children played on the beach near the sea, sunbathing and jumping over the waves. The women rested on the shore under the trees. "At noon, we heard muffled explosions in the distance. First, three; and then four more. I expected everyone to run for shelter, that the mothers would grab their children...". "Why aren't they taking their children? They are going to die!" she told her. The woman answered, "Where do you want me to take them? They can kill them anywhere".²⁸

The British woman Helen Grant (1903-1992) travelled from the French border to Barcelona in a third-class train wagon, packed with farm workers who helped her with her luggage and offered her food – "A Spanish custom" – during the two-hour journey, and they burst into laughter and uproar when, drinking from a boot, she spilled the wine on her dress. In the Catalan capital, she discovered that the taxis were painted red and black with the initials CNT, and that the drivers did not accept tips as it was an inappropriate bourgeois custom in a time of revolutionary change. "Cafés full of people, trams, buses and taxis running smoothly, cinemas that were open...". Grant found a situation of normality with one exception: power outages at night because of the bombings.

Austrian Marie Langer recalls in her memoirs that she landed with her partner in Barcelona "without understanding much of what was happening there".

Never before, nor after, have I seen a city so happy, so full of music and enthusiasm, so excited as the Barcelona of that time. [...] La Rambla looked like a party. Militiamen

*were seen everywhere, some still almost children, with fairly improvised uniforms and weapons.*²⁹

In September 1938, when the future of the Republic was darkening, the American lone Robinson (1910-1989) travelled from Perpignan to Barcelona in an old Chevrolet, in the company of the Cantabrian illustrator Luis Quintanilla.

*We stopped first on the outskirts of the city [Perpignan] to change my dollars into pesetas and to buy food. Two wooden boxes were filled with Italian salami, sardines, English cookies, etc. All the things that we, in America, would have selected for a picnic. [...] It was a beautiful afternoon to be driving into a war! The air was filled with the odor of eucalyptus and pepper trees. There was not a sign of life anywhere in the mountains, and because of the stillness and the similarity of the vegetation to California, it seemed that I was going home and not into a war.*³⁰

Pictures of life in Barcelona

Despite the war, Barcelona maintained a large part of its social life. English woman Mary Low refers to the very frequent trips from the newspaper's office to numerous cafés, of which she listed the main ones, including Gran Oriente, Automatic, Euzkadi, Canaletas, American Bar, Café de las Ramblas and Moka. She wrote down their characteristics, ambience, the type of customers and service at a time when collectivisations were being imposed, where waiters no longer had a boss and "he is working now as you might be tapping a typewriter".

The Australian health worker and press contributor Agnes Hodgson (1906-1984) looked out over dozens of cafes, terraces, bakeries and restaurants, but not always with the desired tranquillity.

*[We were] sitting on the terrace of a café when, on the other side of the building, a bomb fell, with an infernal noise and a flash that lit up the sky. For a moment, panic set in. Some people started running, throwing their chairs to the ground. I went to the door of the establishment and a soldier told me, "Try to keep calm".*³¹

There are many images of the city that attract the gaze of those who arrive in the anomalous time of war. From the dawn of the uprising to life on the streets, in cafes and terraces, on transport, in the markets...

The French journalist Émilienne Morin (1901-1991), Durruti's companion, a year after the military coup in July 1936, recalled the atmosphere in Barcelona at the start of the war, when people did not yet show any great concern.

However, the threat was felt. And the trucks full of young anti-fascists, of fiercely determined soldiers, passed at full speed through the streets of Barcelona. Around three in the morning, trucks with assault guards were seen going to requisition the best stock in the armoires: rifles and pistols,

*cartridges and boxes of gunpowder. When, at five in the morning, the firing of a cannon gave the alert signal, we only found, among the weaponry seized, hunting shotguns, women's pistols and other objects.*³²

The exceptional Erika Mann (1905-1969) discovered a city living in an apparent normality and, despite the shortcomings and deep urban wounds of the war, "we do not see frightened people". She found the regular Catalans, "relaxed, mostly looking good and cheerful", and the Catalan women "attractive and well-groomed". In addition to the damage caused by the bombing, she noted three changes: the large number of soldiers on the streets, the scant amount of traffic, and the dangerously crowded trams.

*Travellers hang like bunches of grapes from the wagons: they go in front, behind, sitting on the buffers or clinging to the window frames. There are surely more than a hundred travelling on each one. Children and soldiers easily adapt to this instability. Women, the elderly and civil protection volunteers also use this transport. I've seen a man with a straw hat and a walking stick travel like this, with one leg pressed against a bar and the other in the air, grabbing the man in front of him with one arm and balancing himself with the other. It was a curious picture.*³³

Elena Garro's perception was very different, in the summer of 1937. "The number of crashed cars along the road was impressive. I asked why so many accidents were taking place. 'Look, comrade, it's that these comrades don't know how to drive, and they throw themselves like crazy into the cars, so naturally lots of accidents happen'".

*It is difficult to forget the terrible impression that city made on me. It was as if a layer of lead was weighing down on it, burning lead, for it was very hot, too. The branches of the trees were broken, and the streets were almost deserted. The atmosphere was heavy, tragic; it scared me. I had never visited a city like that. They put us up at the Majestic Hotel, on Paseo de Gracia. I looked out the window, there were no victorious troops, there was just a very sad silence. I wanted to leave Spain right away. "I want to go home," I told Octavio Paz. He was indignant at my stupidity, saying, "I don't know why I brought you here!". I didn't know either, nor do I know to this day.*³⁴

Ione Robinson, also staying at the Majestic Hotel, observed the city from a distance similar to approaching a cliff-edge of the disaster, and which would later become an expression of empathy with the suffering of the people.

I also saw the bombed Barrio Chino [Chinatown] (a sinister section of the city) and then I walked over the broken glass and rubbish of the market. Luis [Quintanilla] told me that rebel planes bombed the market in broad daylight, when it was crowded with women and children! When we returned to the Majestic, I had my first real taste of rations of this

*city. It is hard to describe what we ate today at noon. First we had a watery soup served in a cup which Luis called "Agua del Mediterráneo" [Water of the Mediterranean]; after that, a two-inch square of indescribable meat, a few lentils, and some strange greens (which tasted like grass).*³⁵

During this unfortunate experience at the luxurious hotel, Robinson met a dishevelled Russian journalist, apparently a correspondent for *Pravda*, who was obsequious and communicative.

I noticed a woman dressed in red, with bare legs and white sandals and a head of wild-looking hair, table-hopping with her arms full of food tins. I asked who she was, and without answering, the Daily Mail correspondent left our table and brought her back with him. He introduced me to this woman, who was a correspondent for the Russian newspaper, Pravda. He told her that I had just arrived from England and that I had quite a talk with Winston Churchill about Spain. The Pravda woman threw her head back and laughed loudly, saying she didn't give one hoot about Churchill or England. I was relieved by her answer; I didn't want to argue with this woman. When she left us, I watched her table-hopping, handing out dabs of butter and sardines to the Republicans. The correspondent smiled and said she had "the edge on the news, both from the front and behind the front". I didn't doubt it... with her tins of food.

The hotels appear regularly in the chronicles of the female foreigners. They were often the bubble inside which food and alcohol animated the meetings of journalists with their colleagues, and even distorted the sensation of reality.

*We didn't know what we were doing there. We didn't feel like dancing, but now that we were there, we couldn't leave either. Everything seemed so unreal that, fed up with the reality as it was, we stayed pinned to our chairs. [...] We knew that they would cut the motorway from Barcelona to Valencia and that loyal Spain would be divided. But we were still sitting in the Ritz ballroom, watching couples dance and diners feast, wondering when the next bombing would start, wondering if the fascists hadn't already taken Barcelona. And there we were celebrating in the Ritz ballroom.*³⁶

May 1937

One aspect that received most attention in the stories of the journalists were the bloody events of May 1937 in Barcelona, which confronted the forces of the left in debates and differences that revealed different approaches to war and revolution.

In May 1937, the American woman Josephine Herbst (1897-1969), who had a communist ideology, travelled to Barcelona, moved by the conviction that the fight against fascism, which she had seen closely in Germany and Italy, was an imperative for

the civilised nations, in order to avoid global catastrophe. She suffered a heavy disappointment in the Catalan capital however, when observing “Republicans fighting against Republicans and not against Franco”. This aroused a critical response in her, and a break with party discipline. “Before I left Spain, the disintegration had begun with a squalid internecine brawl in Barcelona. I have never had much heart for party polemics and it was not for factionalism that I had come to Spain”.³⁷

Frenchwoman Émilienne Morin (1901-1991), director of the newspaper *Le Libéraire* and widow of Buenaventura Durruti, spoke out against those who put military action before other issues, thereby paralysing the social revolution initiated in response to the military coup. She therefore abandoned “the silence that we imposed on ourselves”, out of respect for the anti-fascist front.

*We can no longer tolerate seeing the CNT and the fai and, likewise, a large part of the UGT (General Union of Workers) insulted by those who, by any means – including the most despicable – try to assassinate them. Because there is no doubt about the true objective of the criminal offensive that is unleashed against us: to eliminate, from the political and social life of Spain, these organisations that are too revolutionary and intransigent.*³⁸

Without doubt, the most influential journalist who intervened in the controversy was the Mexican Trotskyist Anita Brenner (1905-1974), whose denunciations in *The New York Times* and *The Nation* created friction with the editorial lines of New York publications. Distanced from the republican nucleus of the war, she became a leading analyst of dissent among the forces of the Spanish left.³⁹

The Austrian woman Katja Landau (1905-c.1975), affiliated with the POUM, and a victim of the repression, testified how the May clash served to empty the prisons of a large part of “doctors, priests, lawyers, and big businessmen, political adversaries of the Republican regime” to make way for “workers, old Socialist Party members, syndicalists, anarchists, and POUM members”.

*Whereas real fascists were set at liberty, revolutionary anti-fascists were once more forced to go on hunger strike to protest against their arrest by the GPU and the torture they had endured.*⁴⁰

One of the victims, the American woman Lois Cusick, was arrested and detained in a cheka in Puerta del Ángel, where she coincided with Katja Landau. “Fascist Spy Ring Uncovered in Barcelona”, published *The New York Times*, with names and photographs.⁴¹ The news served, however, to get her out of a critical situation. Brown Ransdell, editor of *The Courier-Journal* of Louisville, had known Lois since she was a child and moved to alert the American consul in Barcelona. On Thursday, July 1, she was released, along with Landau and both left Spain two days later.

Emma Goldman contributed to the international denunciation of a conflict that weakened republican expectations. She

affirmed that the political persecution undertaken by “Stalin’s henchmen” was no different from those practised in the USSR, for which reason she decided to raise her voice: “In justice to the thousands of our comrades in prison I have left behind. I will and must, speak out”.⁴²

The chronicles of Ethel MacDonald, from the CNT-FAI broadcasting tools, was possibly the first critical information about the events that went abroad. The information transmitted to Glasgow was reflected in at least two issues of the *Barcelona Bulletin*, published in the Scottish city on May 12 and 15. MacDonald was arrested and released weeks later, her voice no longer reaching an expectant audience.⁴³ MacDonald, after a second arrest and finding herself in danger, remained in hiding until she managed to flee to France in the second half of September. “I went to Spain full of hopes and dreams. It promised to be utopia realised. I return full of sadness, dulled by the tragedy I have seen,” she told the hundreds of people waiting for her at the station in Glasgow.

Likewise, Swiss woman Clara Thalman (1908-1987) bore testimony to the repression of anarchists and supporters of the poun, with whom she fought side by side. She was caught with her partner Pavel when they tried to leave Barcelona by boat to Marseille. Both were arrested, transferred to Valencia and imprisoned in separate cells. After frequent interrogations, Clara sang to Pavel in a Swiss dialect to give him information. Her confinement was not easy; she was next to a German prisoner whose husband had been murdered by the communists and “had an exacerbated hatred of all reds, prayed for hours in the cell for their annihilation and explicitly manifested her adoration for Hitler”.⁴⁴

It is a case similar to that of the Dutchwoman Antje Wiersma (1908-1975), who spent six weeks of uncertainty with Jan, her partner, until they were released. In her last chronicle in *De Socialist*, she denounced the aberration of the humiliating treatment inflicted on anti-fascist fighters, “It is part of our job to expose this shameful abuse of power. Freedom for all anti-fascist politicians in Spain!”

Another dissenting voice was that of Mexican journalist Blanca Lydia Trejo (1906-1970), assigned to the consulate of her country after the events in May, who wrote in the Catalan press while she lived in Barcelona, and changed her political orientation from communism towards a more libertarian position.

Continuous bombing

The greatest dramas of the female journalistic story were when the war deliberately hit the civilian population, turning it into the military objective of the foreign fascist aviation at the service of the rebels on a daily basis. It is difficult to find a single reference to the aircraft models or the type of ammunition used, but there are many details of their effects on people and daily life in the city. Taken at random, what follows are some brief snippets of

the feminine narrative, presented from the experience in the Catalan capital.

March 1937. Simone Téry gave an account of the first wave of attacks by the Italian aviation based in Mallorca, on Barcelona. They came with such intensity that, “the infamous Madrid bombings were nothing compared to them”.

*Eighteen massive bombings in two days. You need to see them to understand what the “all-out war” of the fascists, those champions of civilisation, is. If we let the heroic Spanish Republic be crushed, it is necessary to repeat and shout until the most cowardly and the most unconscious are convinced that we will experience this horror tomorrow in Paris. In Paris, Toulouse, Nice, Bordeaux, Lyon. [...] [The sirens] began to wail with sadness. The power went out and the lift stopped working. I didn't know where the stairs were. Without my efficient torch I would not have got out of there. I had barely gone down two floors when the first shells exploded. [...] I almost stepped on something terrible. It was a woman's foot in a small shoe. Beside her was a bouquet of white daffodils. All that was left of a girl on a spring day. I walked another hundred metres and backed away in horror. Every side of the street was filled with huge craters. There were not two houses demolished, but two blocks. Of the solid, modern six-story buildings, only a few metres of smouldering rubble remained, which firefighters sprayed to extinguish the fire. A shell that fell in the middle of the street had burst a pipe and the water was spurting out, filled with yellow mud.*⁴⁵

October 1937. Attacks on the city intensify, especially on [the neighbourhood of] Barceloneta. Elena Garro, shortly before leaving the country, experienced with Octavio Paz the worst days of the four months of war that they spent in Spain. “We were hit by the most ferocious bombardment that the city had suffered up until then”. Although I thought I was already immune to fear, “that night, huddled on the stairs of the Catalan hotel, seemed eternal and terrible to me. [...] The bombs fell with an unusual noise, and we all had the conviction that there would be no relief”.⁴⁶

February 1938. The bombardments, particularly intense during the month of January, with some six hundred dead, frustrated the “emotional chronicle” that Lucien Vogel, director of *L'Œuvre*, had ordered Madeleine Jacob to write on the meeting of the Spanish Parliament in the monastery of Montserrat at the beginning of February. Back in Barcelona, an aerial bombardment wreaked death across the city. She then went to the hospital morgue and there she put forward a true emotional chronicle, formulated under the suffocating smell of phenol, the corpses and the smoke from the fires that were still active.

In the morgue at the Hospital Clínico I saw around two hundred corpses thrown on the floor, kept cool with a hose. It was all there. Children caught while playing, women from the town, some snatched from life while asleep. [...] But in

this communal storage space, where there was the twisted body of a baby, an old man who was literally crushed and a young girl in a nightdress with her hands crossed over her belly, I could not take my eyes off a little girl of four or five years old, with her knickers slightly falling down and felt slippers on her feet, who only smiled from the good side of her chubby, rosy face, because the other side was torn apart, with her eye protruding from her cheek...⁴⁷

March 1938. A month of successive attacks and more than a thousand deaths. The Belgian Marthe Camilia Huysmans focused intently on daily life in Barcelona, its markets and its prices, without losing sight of a constant that marked the differentiating facts of the conflict: the bombing of the civilian population. A city which was difficult to feed, whose normal population of one million inhabitants, had passed, in 1938, with the influx of refugees, “to at least three million”, including the suburbs.⁴⁸

*Tonight I visited the city. And tonight the same happened as all those other nights in which the bombs, the anti-aircraft guns and falling rubble are heard. The huge blocks of houses that become graves for some, and for others, for those who survive, who groan and cry in crypts where they are buried alive, have collapsed. The clarity of the night illuminates the disaster.*⁴⁹

Back in Barcelona, Simone Téry gave an account of the low flights of death, the weariness of the population and the progressive deterioration of living conditions. In the trade union weekly *Messidor*, she wrote of the harsh experience of visiting a morgue overflowing with the humanitarian ruin of the war. She sought to reflect with her readers, transferring onto them her look, her breath and her touch, the dramatic impact she felt when she went down to the morgue.

We are all responsible. That is why today it is necessary for you to have the courage to see with me what we could have avoided. See it to be able to draw enough strength from this ghastly spectacle, to make new disasters impossible.

When I was little, if I saw a drop of blood, or just the thought of a wound, I would pass out. And yet I have gone there [to the morgue] for you. Now, I will take you by the hand. Come down these stone steps with me. Come inside with me.

Take your handkerchief, put it over your nose, and over your mouth. You will have to put up with this somewhat sweet, disgusting smell coming from that black door; enter inside without fainting – this smell of death, a breath of death upon you that clings, sticky, to your skin, and penetrates to the bottom of your lungs. [...] We passed in front of them [the corpses], without stopping. We don't have much time and there are so many that we aren't able to look at all of them.

The tension builds throughout a story of her approaching this infernal underground, when the journalist collapses – “my head is spinning” – and takes a break.

*I can't keep looking at those torn up feet, those bloody abdomens, those stripped bodies, those legs covered in wounds, in a chaos of torn, tattered clothing stained with mud and blood.*⁵⁰

May 1938. Germaine Decaris (1899-1955), during the bombing of Granollers, when more than 220 people died, and of which Winifred Bates left graphic testimony, created a piece that appealed to the conscience of the French, trying to make its readers put themselves in the shoes of the Spaniards, in the face of what she described as the second Guernica. Eight low flying planes wreaked death among the women who, with their children, were shopping in the market, destroying more than fifty buildings in the centre of the city.

September 1938. Danish woman Lise Lindbæk (1905-1961), a journalist for the Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*, reported on "intentional attacks" by Italian aviation, serving the rebels, on the civilian population of Barcelona.⁵¹

October 1938. British woman Rose Smith (1891-1985), of the *Daily Worker*, travels to Barcelona when republican hopes were beginning to wane. After a night of repeated raids, Italian bombers launched an attack at half past six in the morning, as workers headed for the factories and women went to the shops and markets for their daily food.

*More than a hundred people lay injured and twenty had died. Some of those reported missing will never be found again, because fascist bombs have obliterated all traces of them. Dozens of homes have been destroyed. Families are engaged in a desperate effort to recover their scattered and buried belongings.*⁵²

November 1938. Star journalist Martha Gellhorn, and partner of Hemingway, wrote one of her best articles on the war – "The Third Winter Is the Hardest" – which was not published by *Collier's*.

*In Barcelona, it was the perfect bombing weather. The cafés along Las Ramblas were crowded. There was nothing much to drink; a sweet fizzy potion called "orangeade" and a horrible liquid supposed to be sherry. There was, of course, nothing to eat. Everyone was out enjoying the cold afternoon sunlight. No bombers had come over for at least two hours. The flower stalls looked bright and pretty along the promenade. "The flowers are all sold, Señores. For the funerals of those who were killed in the eleven o'clock bombing".*⁵³

Also in that late month of the conflict, French veteran Andrée Viollis returned to Catalonia to play Russian roulette where the civilian population, the target of aerial bombardment, took their chances every day.

What happens? Suddenly, the few lights [of the hotel] go out. [...] The sinister roar of the sirens sounds long. I run up the marble staircase and up the endless floors to a colleague's room at the top (the lift hasn't worked in a

*while!). [...] The planes arrive from the sea, hidden among the clouds at four or five thousand metres and, suddenly, like birds of prey, after circling overhead, they swoop down on the city. It's impossible to avoid them, unless you are underground. Better, then, to give yourself over to chance. That's what most people in Barcelona do.*⁵⁴

Until the last moment, the air attacks, from which other towns in Catalonia were not spared, punished the city, and continued as the exodus of the people filled the roads towards the French border.

February 1939. French woman Édith Thomas wrote about the women and children who arrived in the neighbouring country, with testimonies of the physical and psychological suffering of those who did not usually appear among the victims, a qualification reserved for the dead, even though they were the ones facing the consequences of war. A child from Terrassa, with a trembling voice from the memory of the horror and using childish language, offered his testimony. "Along the way, the planes bombed us. The whole road was filled with dead people". The journalist wondered, "How will we manage to erase from these children's minds the shock caused by corpses in the ditches at the roadside?".

Contrast in perspective

The collective account of the foreigners who passed through Barcelona recovers the perspective from the Republican side. Only two journalists who travelled to the Catalan capital were in the Franco zone. The American woman Virginia Cowles (1910-1983), accredited by *The New York Times*, and the French woman Clara Candiani (1902-1996), from *La République*.

During her time in Barcelona, Cowles attended a bullfight at La Monumental, expressing her displeasure; a condemnation that other foreign women also expressed in their writings during the war years.

*I had never seen a bull-fight before and the sight of a bull pawing the ground with the blood streaming down his sides was nauseating to me. Most of the time I couldn't look. The small, dark Spaniard next to me complained loudly, but not for the same reason.*⁵⁵

In the middle of 1938, Candiani made her third trip to Spain. On this visit, unlike the previous ones, she went to the area controlled by Franco's troops, where she travelled widely. Her impression was not satisfactory. Some time later, she went to Barcelona for ten days, recalling that her status as a Catholic made her condemn what was said about the Republicans in the ever-expanding land of the rebels.

*The Christian state that claims to be the rebellious Spain, falsifies with tragic criminal cynicism the reality of the Republican Spain and those who have been faithful to the law are presented, without exception, as monsters with sadistic instincts.*⁵⁶

The reporting on the war was decreasing as other fronts opened up in Europe promising a large-scale confrontation, as the foreign members of the International Brigades left Spain. At the end of 1938, Rose Smith (1891-1985) from the *Daily Worker* arrived in Barcelona, and her focus was on the children on the streets, misery and the abandonment of minors as the Christmas holidays approached, at the same time as promoting financial aid from the British.⁵⁷

Reporting on the final few months, she describes the tragedy of the departure of the Republicans towards France and the hardships that they suffered in the refugee camps, which some journalists also suffered, because few lived through the entry of the Francoist troops into Barcelona. Muriel McDiarmid (1900-date unknown), author of the *Franco in Barcelona*⁵⁸ publication, was an exception. She drew up a living testimony of the fall of the city and of the first weeks of the new regime.

*Thousands of people lined the streets to see the soldiers. A number of them appeared excited, though most seemed only relieved that the bombing had finally stopped. [...] Groups of young girls ran wildly up and down Paseo de Gracia and Diagonal, cheering, surrounding anyone they saw who looked important. [...] Vans with loudspeakers broadcast fascist slogans and military marches. In the poorer streets of Barceloneta and in those close to the Cathedral, people did not appear to be so happy. There, I could calmly survey the tremendous damage caused by the bombs over the past week.*⁵⁹

Towards a long and apparent normality

The suffering of the people was mistaken for a respite.⁶⁰ The anomaly of the war had erased the memory of normalcy.⁶¹ Months earlier, a trip by English woman Lorna Wood (1905-c.1975) to Perpignan with her husband, also a journalist, after not having left Barcelona for some time, allowed her to discover the differentiating elements of life in an environment of peace. The normality of the French border city took the couple back to the feelings of a bygone era, starting with the lighting, which “was turned on”.

It also gave us a fantastic feeling to see the women in their autumn headwear. What had happened to me in Spain? It made me wonder, who does not love fashion? You never really know how extraordinary hats are until you live in a place where they don't wear them. [...] Meanwhile, however, we looked at the shops full of food, the abundance of bread, the people dining in the restaurants, not voraciously, but with the quieter enjoyment of the well-fed. [...] The vision of hunger is an image that remains etched in my mind. “So”, my husband said, “tomorrow we'll go shopping”. We walked back to the hotel through the fairground and watched the children on the brightly lit Ferris wheels and tried our hand at the pellet gun. There were one or two telegrams waiting for us [at the hotel]... “Can you bring me three tins of milk?”

*“Could you kindly get me half a kilo of coffee?” We went to bed to get back our energy for the next day's shopping. All night I dreamed of bombs. “That must have been the lobster”, I thought.*⁶²

Notes

1. Hugh Thomas, for example, refers to nineteen women of the approximately 750 names that appear in the index, where only Dolores Ibárruri stands out, with twenty-two references, and Federica Montseny, with seven (calculated from the expanded edition of Thomas, H. (1961). *The Spanish Civil War*. Eyre & Spottiswoode). In the latest available edition (The Folio Society, 2014), of the approximately 2,200 names referred to, only 53 correspond to women, that is, 2.4 percent, with the exceptional presence of Dolores Ibárruri (62 references) and Federica Montseny (18)..
2. Díaz Nosty, B. (2022). *Periodistas extranjeras en la Guerra Civil*. Renacimiento.
3. “Madrid-bombardementet er ikke krig, det er mord” [The Madrid bombings are not a war, but a murder], *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, December 16, 1936. <https://bit.ly/3TzOdHP>
4. “Kvinnor och barn på bårhus — en mardröm. Kan lukta blod. Bombat Madrid ger beviset” [Women and children in morgues: a nightmare. You can smell the blood. Madrid is ready for the bombings], *Dagens Nyheter*, Stockholm, December 13, 1936.
5. “Spania-nytt på norsk” [Spanish News in Norwegian], *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, December 16, 1936.
6. Riesenfeld, J. (1938). *Dancer in Madrid*. Harrap, p. 111.
7. “A visit to Barcelona. Jews in the city of the Catalans”, *The Zionist Record*, Cape Town, January 12, 1934.
8. “Behind Spain's conflict: The basic issues. Deep Divisions Cut Across All Parts of the Nation; of these Barcelona and Madrid Stand as the Symbols”, *The New York Times*, October 14, 1934. <https://nyti.ms/3VGUeEB>
9. “On Sunday [July 19] I was woken up by a rifle shot. From my hotel I saw people running through the square. Behind a tram, police and workers with red armbands were on their knees, shooting. When they stopped, they would run to a café on the other side of the avenue, quickly grab a cup of something and eat a sandwich, then immediately return to their posts” (“Eye-witness tells what has happened in Barcelona”, *Daily Herald*, London, June 24, 1936).
10. The frustrated reporting of the Popular Olympiad was transformed into a story of perceptions about the uncertainty of the outbreak of war – “Barcelona 1937” (London, autumn 1937) – which was also reflected in New York's *New Masses* (September 1, 1936).
11. Nettie's testimonies, forwarded from London, appeared in Melbourne's *The Argus* and were reproduced in other

- newspapers. ("Spanish days", August 8 and 15, 1936; "Cannon and machine guns. Barcelona's grim awakening", August 14, 1936).
12. "'In one hospital alone, there were 30 deaths due to traffic accidents, because people drove like crazy, with others who opted to keep their weapons on the roof of small cars, or in the car boots or wherever there was room. [...] The square is full of wrecked cars" (Thalmann, C., & Thalmann, P. (2020). *Viviendo la Revolución del 36*. Barcelona. Descontrol, p. 57).
 13. Established in Barcelona in the twenties, she spoke Spanish and Catalan.
 14. Grete [Margarethe] Michaelis contributed to Barcelona's image of strong modernity through her photographs in publications that were the avant-garde of modernity, even though her position in Catalan society was tenuous. Ennis, H. (2005). *Margaret Michaelis. Love, loss and photography*. National Gallery of Australia p. 108.
 15. Also published in a serial in the *Winona Republican-Herald*, excerpts from which were published in the *Reader's Digest*.
 16. Johnstone, N. (2013). *Hotel in Spain*. Clapton Press Limited, p. 251.
 17. Survivor of the plane crash in which *Vu* magazine editor Lucien Vogel and other passengers suffered injuries of undisclosed prognosis. Jouve took charge of editing the special issue on Spain.
 18. "Dans Barcelona en fièvre. Des églises à l'Hotel Ritz", Paris, August 27, 1936. Beginning in the autumn of 1938, her most moving accounts appeared in *The Guardian*, where she also reported on the mass departure of Republicans to the south of France in early 1939.
 19. "Spaniabrev I: Barcelona", *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, October 20, 1936. After this first chronicle, she issued two more from Barcelona (October 21 and 22).
 20. Mangan, K. (2020). *Never more alive. Inside the Spanish Republic*. The Clapton Press, p. 43.
 21. Strong, A. L. (1937). *Spain in arms*. Henry Holt, p. 69.
 22. Low, M., & Brea, J. (1937). *Red Spanish notebook. The first six months of the Revolution and the Civil War*. Secker & Warburg, p. 216-217. A book praised by George Orwell.
 23. Together with her partner Kurt, she coordinated the foreign journalists and writers attached to the organisation, which had a wide broadcasting reach, headed by the newspaper *La Batalla*, and attended the German-language broadcasts of Radio POUM. Katja wrote about the role of women in the revolutionary process initiated in Catalonia, prostitution, abortion and homosexuality and was part of the women's secretariat of the party (SFPOUM), which edited *Emancipación* in 1937 (Lugschitz, R. (2016). *Pressebüro und Zensur im Spanischen Bürger*innenkrieg: Reporterinnen zwischen Journalismus, Propaganda und Überwachung*. [Press office and censorship in the Spanish civil war. Reporters between journalism, propaganda and control], *ÖZG*, 27(3), 160-171. <https://doi.org/10.25365/oezg-2016-27-3-8>).
 24. Every night, at 10.30pm, she spoke on the ECN-1 Radio CNT-FAI Barcelona station, on 42.88m shortwave and 222.55m medium wave, as announced by the working-class press in Scotland and in other regions of the United Kingdom. People wrote to the CNT-FAI headquarters (Avenida Durruti, 32 and 33), congratulating her and giving her encouragement. The weekly newspaper *Bellshill Speaker* published her speeches (March 12, 19 and 26, and April 2, 9 and 16, 1937) and the *USM* published the separate *Save Spain. Act! radio speeches by Ethel MacDonald* (Glasgow, May 1, 1937), simultaneously with the first issue of *News from Spain*, edited by Guy Aldred "CNT, FAI and Youth Movement (Anarchist and POUM)".
 25. *The Glasgow Herald* reported that "A prominent news editor in Hollywood says that he has received hundreds of letters concerning Ethel MacDonald, stating that the writers, in all parts of the USA and Canada, enjoyed her announcements and talks from Barcelona radio, not because they agreed with what she said, but because they thought she had the finest radio speaking voice they had ever Heard". (taken from *Spartacus Educational*. <https://bit.ly/3CLkdIK>).
 26. "Catalonia in Civil War", *New Masses*, New York, November 24, 1936. <https://bit.ly/3DyXF7X>
 27. "Spaniabrev I: Barcelona", *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, October 20, 1936. After this first commentary she wrote two more from Barcelona (October 21 and 22). <https://bit.ly/3SiCwnM>
 28. Text taken from *V revoljutsionnoj Ispanii* [In revolutionary Spain], taken from the compilation website of the author's work. <https://bit.ly/3sdekA3z>.
 29. Langer, M. (1984). *Memoria, historia y diálogo psicoanalítico*. Folios Eds., p. 60.
 30. Robinson, I. (1946). *A wall to paint on*. Dutton, p. 323.
 31. Hodgson, A. (2006). *The Last Mile to Huesca: An Australian Nurse in the Spanish Civil War*. University of New South Wales, 1988.
 32. "Souvenirs: L'enfantement d'une révolution", *La Libertaire*, Paris, September 25, 1936.
 33. "Reisebrief aus Spanien", *Neue Volks-Zeitung*, New York, July 16, 1938.
 34. Garro, E. (1992). *Memorias de España 1937*. Siglo XXI, p. 13.
 35. Robinson, I. (1946). *A wall to paint on*. Dutton, p. 327.
 36. Johnstone, N. (2022). *Hotel in Spain*. Clapton Press Limited.
 37. "The Starched Blue Sky of Spain", *The Noble Savage*, January 1960, no. 1, World Publishing Co., p. 79-80.
 38. "Le complot contre la révolution espagnole", *Le Libertaire*, Paris, May 20, 1937.
 39. At the beginning of 1937, *The Nation* withdrew her

- accreditation (San José Vázquez, E. "Anita Brenner, corresponsal de prensa en España" [Anita Brenner, press correspondent in Spain]. In: González, J. R. et al. (Eds.). (2016). *Testimonios del desastre. Periodistas y escritores en los campos de batalla* (Trea, p. 235). "If in her recent conflictive relations with the editors of *The Nation*, her disagreements with the weekly's star envoy, Louis Fischer, an outspoken supporter of Stalinism at the time, had prevailed, she also had problems with the editorial line of the *New York Times* regarding the Spanish situation, in her criticism of its correspondent Frank L. Kluckhohn" (*ibid.*).
40. Landau, K. (2007). *Los verdugos de la revolución española, 1937-1938*. Sepha, p. 51.
 41. Orr, L. (Lois Cusick). "The May days and my arrest". In: Horh, G-R. (Ed.). (2009). *Letters from Barcelona. An American woman in Revolution and Civil War*. Palgrave, p. 190-191.
 42. Emma Goldman, "Political Persecution in Republican Spain", *Spain and the World*, London, December 10, 1937.
 43. The Scottish press followed the mysterious disappearance of the "radio girl" daily (*The Scotsman*, Edinburgh, August 4, 1937).
 44. *Ibid.*, p. 155. The news of the arrest in the Swiss press and the determined support of the prestigious Belgian socialist Louis de Brouckère before his co-religionist Julián Zugazagoitia, the Spanish Minister of the Interior, facilitated the release of the Thalmanns in mid-September and their departure from Spain.
 45. "Les heures tragiques de Barcelone sous les bombes", *Regards*, March 31, 1937. The article is also dated ten days before, March 21.
 46. *Op. cit.*, p. 116.
 47. "Images d'Espagne. Une démocratie qui ne se laissera pas étrangler", *L'Œuvre*, Paris, February 18, 1938.
 48. "Tooneelen uit het leven te Barcelona" [Scenes of life in Barcelona], *Vooruit*, Ghent, March 15, 1938.
 49. "Barcelona onder de verschrikking van de luchtbombardementen" [Barcelona under the horror of aerial bombardment], *Vooruit*, Ghent, March 23, 1938.
 50. "Devant les morts de Barcelone", *Messidor*, Paris, April 1, 1938.
 51. "Overlagte overfall på det civil folk. Dramatiks luftkamp over Barcelona" [Premeditated attack on the civilian population. Dramatic aerial duel above Barcelona]. *Dagbladet*, Oslo, September 2, 1938.
 52. "Rose Smith Sees Bombers Smash Homes", *Daily Worker*, London, October 24, 1938.
 53. Collected as "The Third Winter" in her book *The Face of War* (Gelhorn, M. (1956). Simon and Schuster, p. 37-50). Collier's had asked her to turn focus from Spain onto Czechoslovakia.
 54. "Barcelone douloureuse", *Ce Soir*, Paris, November 5, 1938.
 55. Cowles, V. (2010). *Looking for Trouble. The Classic Memoir of a Trailblazing War Correspondent*. Modern Library
 56. "I, a fervent Catholic, declare that from the microphone in Barcelona I can speak as a true Christian, and in the one in Seville I cannot, because from there they shout, 'We pray for the extermination of the reds, in the name of God and the Homeland!'" ("Terrible acusación de una escritora católica francesa" [Terrible accusation of a French Catholic writer]. *Ayuda*, Madrid, October 2, 1938). <https://bit.ly/3Ny2YJv>.
In 1939, Clara Candiani married Josep Maria Trias Peitx (1900-1979), whom she met during the war when he was Secretary General of the Democratic Union of Catalonia, and who later helped develop the refugee committee helping Spaniards in France, through humanitarian assistance and the promotion of jobs, which was the way to free them from confinement in the labour camps..
 57. "Children find peace, but need food", *Daily Worker*, London, November 16, 1938; "Food shortages take heavy toll on children's lives", *ibid.*, December 1, 1939; "British seamen give food to children", *ibid.*, November 29, 1938; "Everyone can fight fascism with food", *ibid.*, December 3, 1938.
 58. London: United Editorial Ltd., 1939. The publication, 28 pages long, appears without a name, despite its authorship being known with certainty. Priscilla Scott-Ellis (1916-1983) entered Barcelona in her luxurious car accompanying Franco's troops (Scott-Ellis, P. (1995). *Diary of the Spanish Civil War*. Michael Russell Publishing Ltd).
 59. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
 60. Madeleine Jacob, "Le calvaire d'un peuple", *Messidor*, Paris, February 3, 1939.
 61. After the war, in the summer of 1939, the German woman Carmen Bud (1911-2011), who had spent the war in Spain, arrived in Barcelona with a false passport, and gave an account of the dramatic reality of the country, although for this she had to salute, with restrained refusal, raising her arm in the fascist manner ("Vikulaun fyrir 1 kíló af kjöti! Fólklið verður að selja húsgögn sín til þess að geta fengið sér matarbita. Ástandið á Spáni eftir sigur Francos" [A kilo of meat costs a week's wages! People sell their furniture to get food. The situation in Spain after Franco's victory], *Alþýðublaðið*, Reykjavík, August 5, 1939.
 62. "Going shopping", *The Manchester Guardian*, December 13, 1938.