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# **They Still Draw Pictures!**

**A collection of 60 drawings made by  
Spanish children during the war**

**INTRODUCTION BY**

# ALDOUS HUXLEY

New York, 1938

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(QUAKERS)





# INTRODUCTION

**T**his is a collection of children's drawings; it is also and at the same time a collection of drawings made by little boys and girls who have lived through a modern war.

Let us consider the collection in both its aspects—as a purely aesthetic phenomenon and as an expression of contemporary history, through the eyes of the sociologist no less than of the art critic.

From an aesthetic and psychological point of view, the most startling thing about a collection of this kind is the fact that, when they are left to themselves, most children display astonishing artistic talents. (When they are interfered with and given “lessons in art,” they display little beyond docility and a chameleon-like power to imitate whatever models are set up for their admiration.) One can put the matter arithmetically and say that, up to the age of fourteen or thereabouts, at least fifty per cent of children are little geniuses in the field of pictorial art. After that, the ratio declines with enormous and accelerating rapidity until, by the time the children have become men and women, the proportion of geniuses is about one in a million. Where artistic sensibility is concerned, the majority of adults have grown, not up, but quite definitely down.

The sensibility of children is many-sided and covers all the aspects of pictorial art. How sure, for example, is their sense of colour! The children whose drawings are shown in this collection have had the use only of crayons. But crayons strong enough to stand up to the pressure imposed on them by impatient childish hands are a most inadequate colour medium. Child colourists are at their best when they use gouache or those non-poisonous, jam-like pigments which are now supplied to nursery schools and with which, using the familiar techniques of playing with mud or food, even the smallest children will produce the most delicately harmonized examples of “finger painting.” These Spanish children, I repeat, have had to work under a technical handicap; but in spite of this handicap, how well, on the whole, they have acquitted themselves. There are combinations of pale pure colours that remind one of the harmonies one meets with in the tinted sketches of the eighteenth century. In other drawings, the tones are deep, the contrasts violent. (I remember especially one landscape of a red-roofed house among dark trees and hills that possesses, in its infantile way, all the power and certainty of a

Vlaminck).

To a sense of colour children add a feeling for form and a remarkable capacity for decorative invention. Many of these pastoral landscapes and scenes of war are composed—all unwittingly, of course, and by instinct—according to the most severely elegant classical principles. Voids and masses are beautifully balanced about the central axis. Houses, trees, figures are placed exactly where the rule of the Golden Section demands that they should be placed. No deliberate essays in formal decoration are shown in this collection; but even in landscapes and scenes of war, the children's feeling for pattern is constantly illustrated. For example, the bullets from the machine guns of the planes will be made visible by the child artist as interlacing chains of beads, so that a drawing of an air raid becomes not only a poignant scene of slaughter, but also and simultaneously a curious and original pattern of lines and circles.

Finally, there is the child's power of psychological and dramatic expression. This is necessarily limited by his deficiencies in technique. But, within those limitations, the invention, the artistic resourcefulness, the power of execution are often remarkable. The pastoral scenes of life on the farm in time of peace, or in the temporary haven of the refugees' camp, are often wonderfully expressive. Everything is shown and shown in the liveliest way. And the same is true of the scenes of war. The drawings illustrating bombardment from the air are painfully vivid and complete. The explosions, the panic rush to shelter, the bodies of the victims, the weeping mothers, upon whose faces the tears run down in bead-like chains hardly distinguishable from the rosaries of machine-gun bullets descending from the sky—these are portrayed again and again with a power of expression that evokes our admiration for the childish artists and our horror at the elaborate bestiality of modern war.

And this brings us by an easy and indeed inevitable transition to the other, non aesthetic aspect of our exhibition. It is a pleasure to consider these children's drawings as works of art; but it is also our duty to remember that they are signs of the times, symptoms of our contemporary civilization. If we look at them with the eyes of historians and sociologists, we shall be struck at once by a horribly significant fact: *the greater number of these drawings contain representations of aeroplanes*. To the little boys and girls of Spain, the symbol of contemporary civilization, the one overwhelmingly significant fact in the world of today is the military plane—the plane that, when cities have anti-aircraft defenses, flies high and drops its load of fire and high explosives indiscriminately from the clouds; the plane that, when there is no defense, swoops low and turns its machine-guns on the panic-stricken men, women

and children in the streets. For hundreds of thousands of children in Spain, as for millions of other children in China, the plane, with its bombs and its machine guns, is the thing that, in the world we live in and helped to make, is significant and important above all others. This is the dreadful fact to which the drawings in our collection bear unmistakable witness.

North of the Pyrenees and west of the Great Wall, the imagination of little boys and girls is still free (I am writing in the first days of September, 1938) to wander over the whole range of childish experience. The bombing plane has not yet forced itself upon their thoughts and emotions, has not yet stamped its image upon their creative fancy. Will it be possible to spare them the experiences to which the children of Spain and China have been subjected? And, if so, by what means can this be achieved? To this second question many different answers have been given. Of these the most human and rational is the apparently Utopian but, at bottom, uniquely practical answer proposed by the Quakers. That this solution, or any other of its less satisfactory alternatives, will be generally accepted in the near future seems in the highest degree improbable. The most that individual men and women of good will can do is to work on behalf of some general solution of the problem of large-scale violence and meanwhile to succour those who, like the child artists of this exhibition, have been made the victims of the world's collective crime and madness.

A. W. Huxley.



# EDITOR'S NOTE

This book was published at cost and exclusively in order that the profits might be contributed to the Quakers for the relief of children in Spain, where millions are underfed or actually starving. As the sale of this volume will save many lives, we need not be apologetic about the breach of etiquette in asking the public to recommend this book. Its merits consist not only in Mr. Huxley's preface and in the publication of a unique collection of documents, the like of which have never before been seen, but also when given to a child may remind it that there are millions of unhappy children in Spain and teach it to appreciate its own good fortune, which it considers a matter of course.

The illustrations have been arranged in what one might call a chronological progression in four parts, adding thereto some miscellanea.

First: The children's general impression of war: Plates 1-7.

Second: A series of drawings which picture bombings: Plates 8-23.

Third: A cycle of pictures showing the flight from danger. Trains, trucks, steamers, rowboats, oxcarts, mules or their own feet brought the children to safer places: Plates 24-36.

Fourth: The life of the children, once they are in homes or colonies in Spain or France: Plates 37-49.

Fifth: Heterogeneous subjects: Plates 50-60.

The 60 drawings were selected almost at random, without paying special attention to their artistic value. They are autobiographic pages of unkept diaries. As the Peninsula has given to the world its most original painters, contemporaneous Spanish children's ability for pictorial art is certainly not inferior to that of other countries. A specific ability for perspective cannot be denied. Those who know Spain will quickly find themselves at home when scanning these illustrations, and those who have not been there will intuitively feel that the atmosphere of landscape, rural or urban architecture has been well caught.

As Mr. Huxley points out, the Spanish children are under the enormous handicap of not having proper material with which to work. Even professional painters in Spain at this moment complained to the writer of lack of good paint,

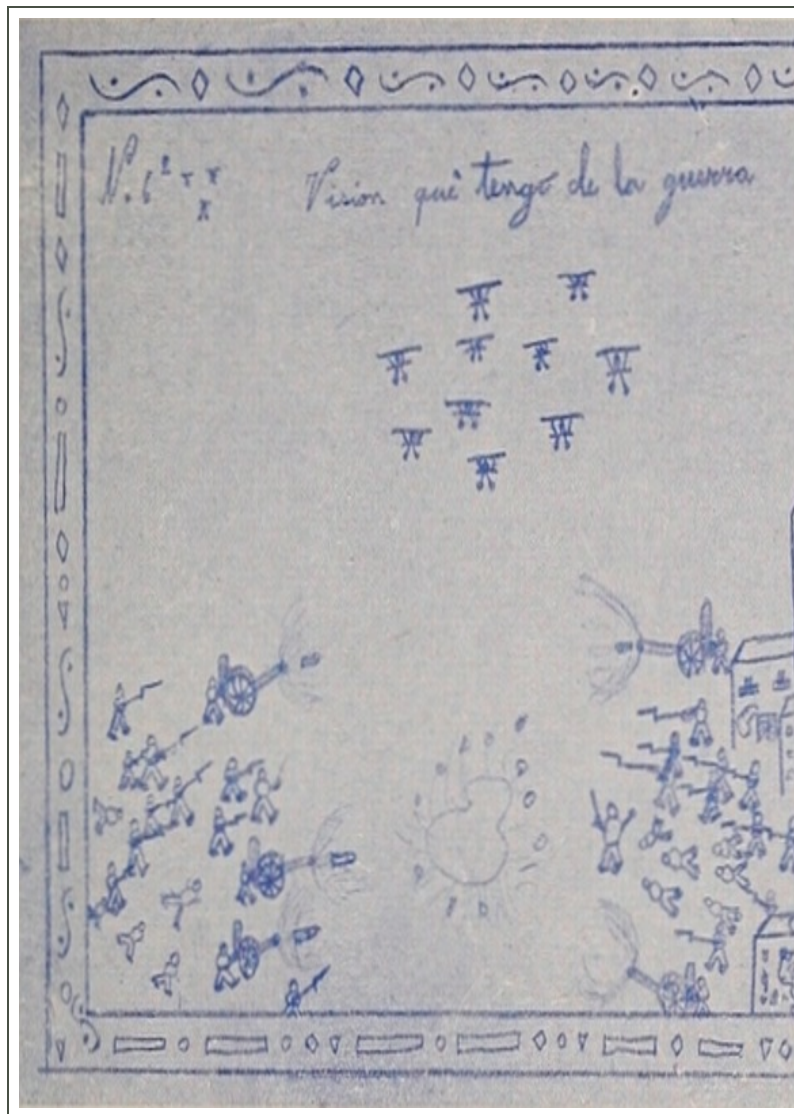
canvas, pencils and brushes. The children generally have to use small bits of inferior paper, whereas experience shows that a child's talents have free scope only when adequate space is allowed, hence the superiority of children's murals over their drawings. Empty stomachs, frostbitten fingers are other handicaps.

The captions are often as obvious, but perhaps as useful, as explanatory notes below reproductions of paintings even in many erudite books on art. Without having his attention drawn, for instance to Plate 40, only the most patient observer would notice the gay devilry of the class of youngsters and appreciate the humor of the drawing. The subtitles in quotation marks give a verbatim rendering of the children's inscriptions, reproducing their awkward, helpless, sometimes stilted verbal expressions. Their drawings are more eloquent than their words, better than their syntax.

One of this country's great child psychiatrists noted that these drawings lack the morbidity often observed in children's drawings of great American cities. He also observes that there are few drawings of food, so frequently the theme of children who live a normal life. In ordinary times Spanish children too painted sausages and hams. They also painted trains which were not meant for evacuation, and airplanes which carried mail and passengers.

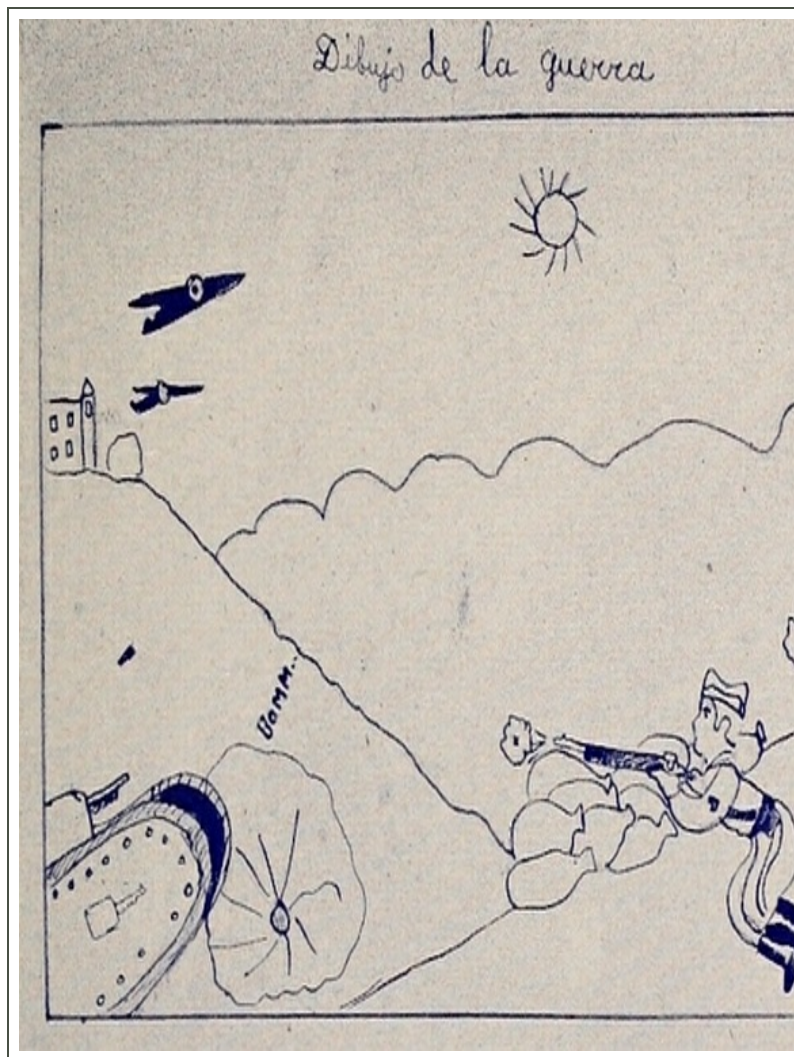
When Spanish children's drawings were first publicly exhibited, questions as to how they were collected were asked so frequently that an anticipated brief answer does not seem out of place. The writer, when in Spain six months ago, asked the Board of Education for some drawings, and within a few days was deluged with hundreds, flowing in from the schools of Madrid. At Valencia the same experience was met. To the authorities at Madrid and Valencia we want to express our thanks for their helpfulness. Also to Miss Margaret Palmer, Representative of the Carnegie Institute in Spain who sent us a great number of drawings from refugee centers for Spanish children in France. And to Bruce Bliven, from whose articles on Spanish children's drawings we have borrowed, with his permission, the title of this volume. In the name of the Spanish children we express our gratitude to Aldous Huxley for his most generous contribution.

—J. A. W.



## Plate 1

Jesus Esquerro, 10 years old. "My vision of the war." An young a child.



## Plate 2

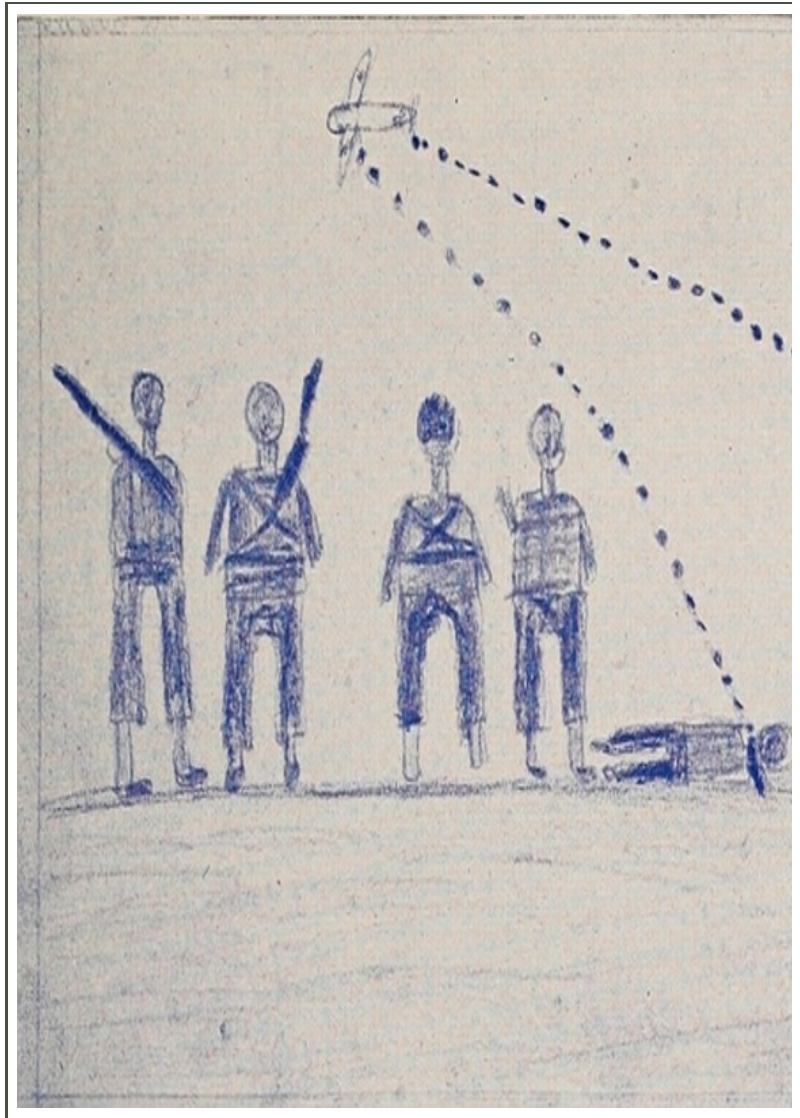
Enrique de San Roman, 11-year-old child at Colony of Po  
Valencia, writes above his drawing simply: "Picture of the v



## Plate 3

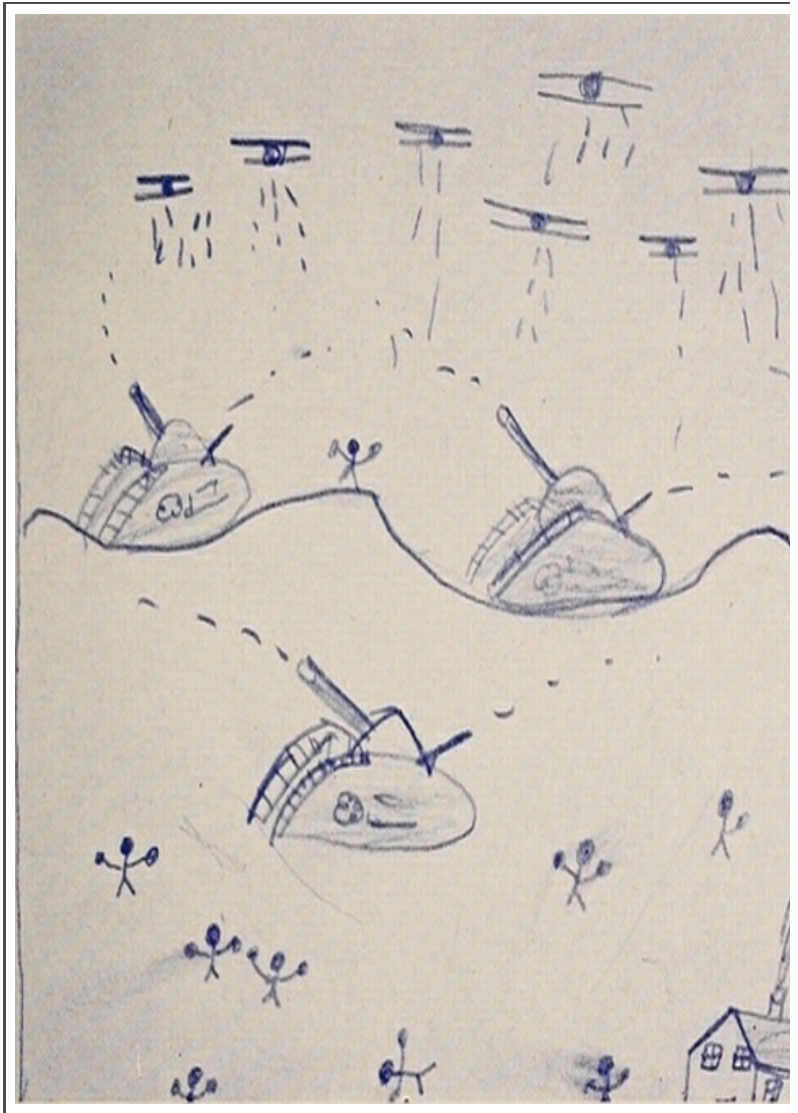
Isidoro Martin, 11 years old, Children's Colony of Tangel, gives his vision of the war in pen and ink. The fighting soldi Isidoro's own age.





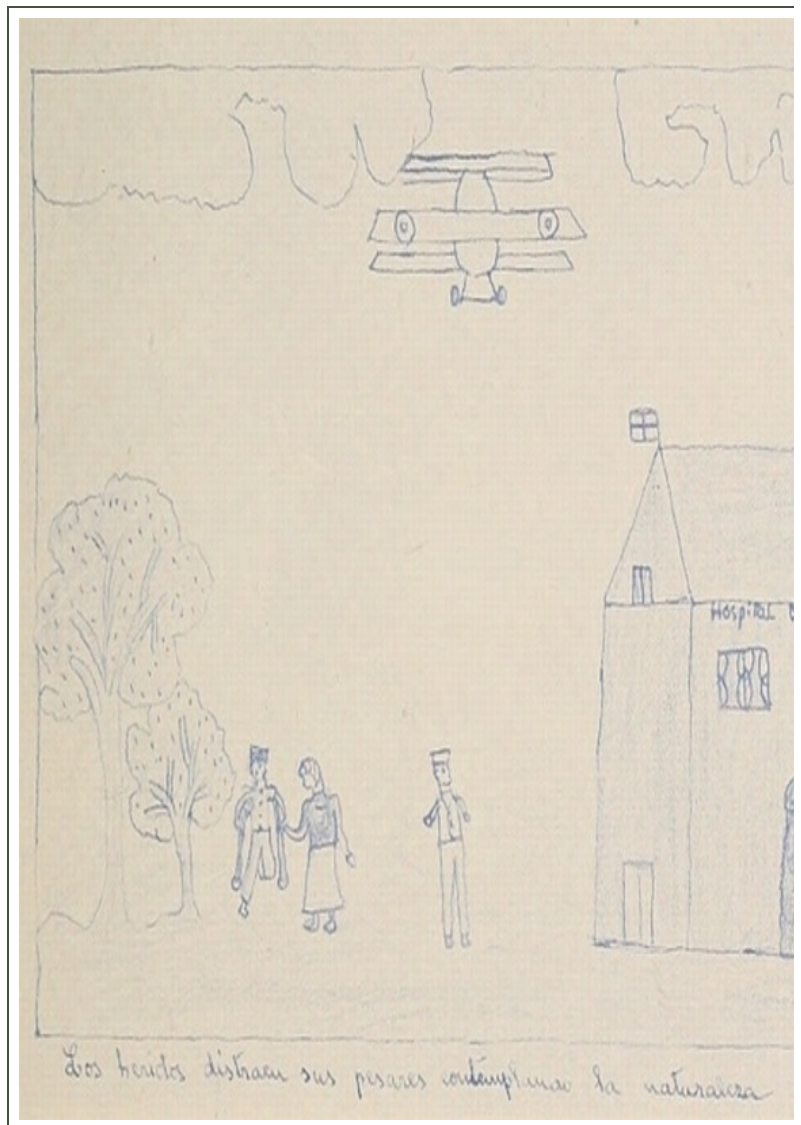
## Plate 4

Inscription on reverse says: "This drawing represents the militia went to the front, on the way the enemy airplanes or they have wounded some of them. Francisco Pedrell. Age



## Plate 5

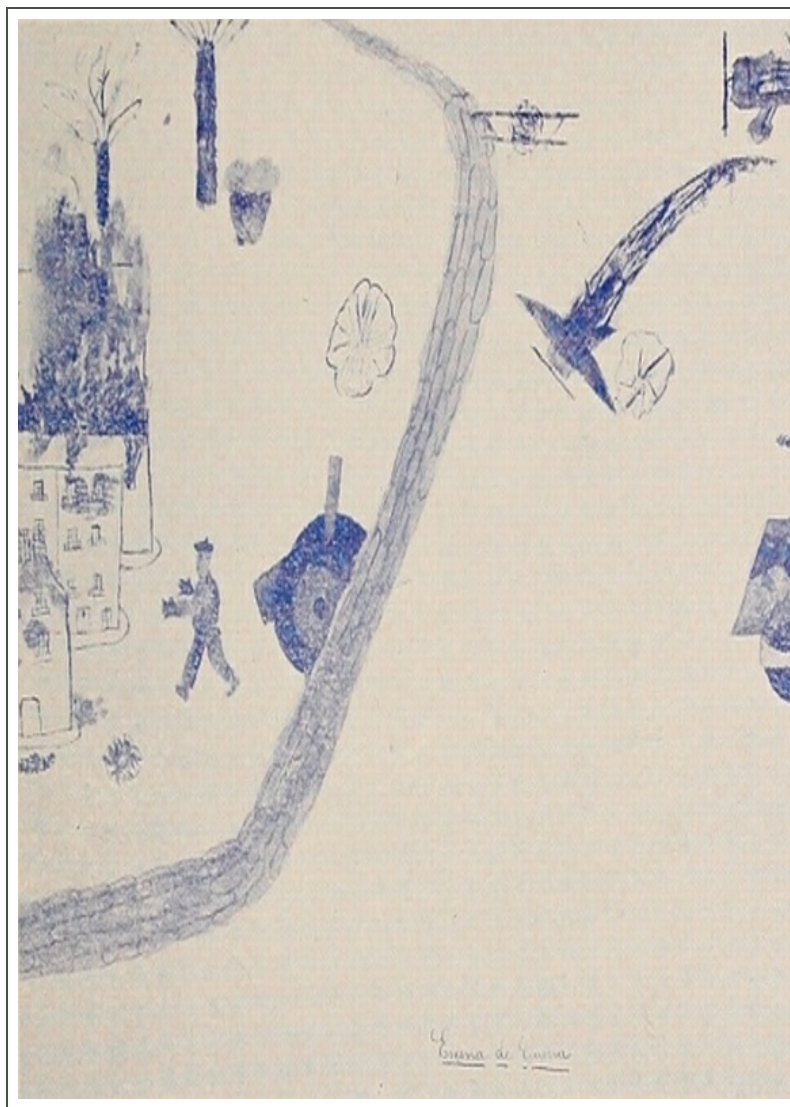
Manuel Alonso Alemani, 6 years old, of the School Color very primitive way of drawing figures and planes, whereas realistic.



## Plate 6

Writing on reverse says: "Dolores Turado Alonso, 10 years  
Charmartin de la Rosa, Madrid to Alcira, Valencia. Nov. 18  
drawing: "The wounded distract their sorrows contemplatir

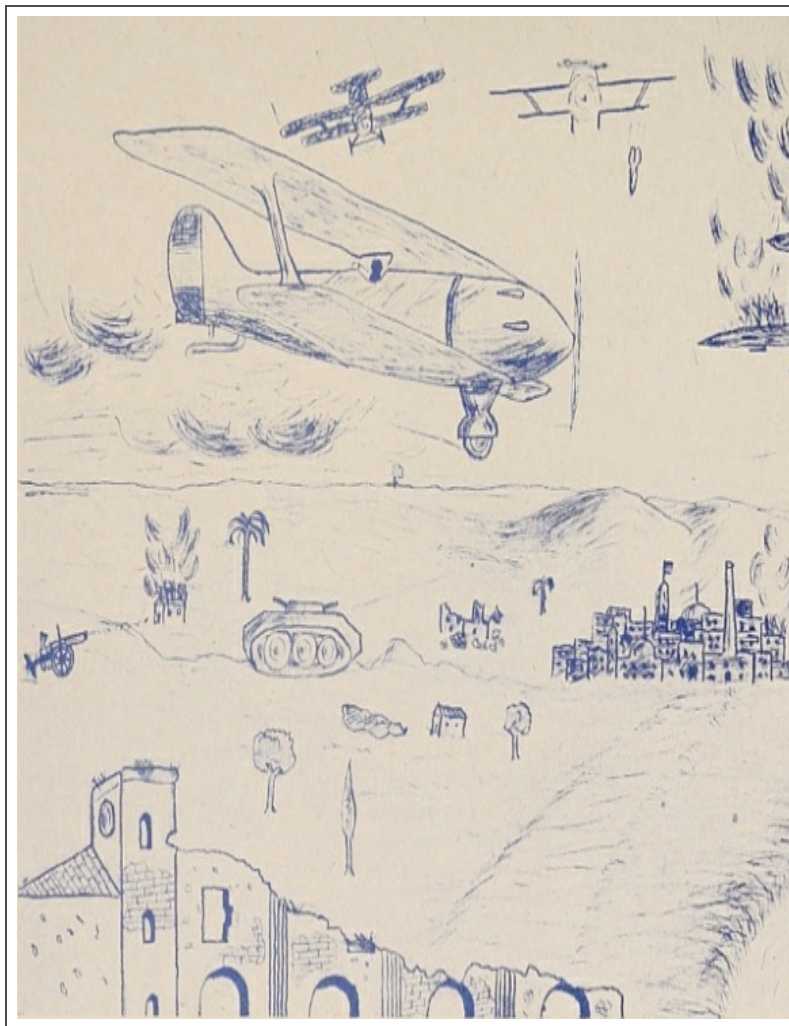
“Surgical Hospital” (Hospital de Sangre.)



**Plate 7**

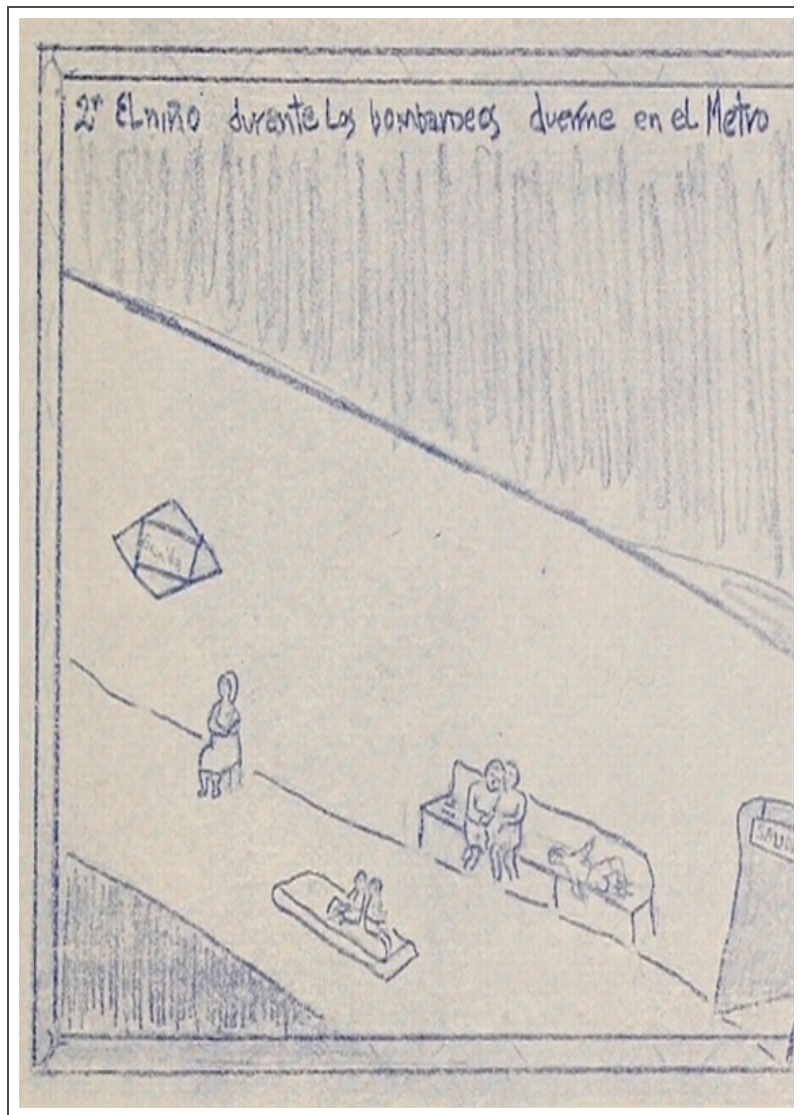


Tomas Bosco Gomar, 13 years old. January 18th, 1938. camouflaged armored car to the right. The original shows colours. Destruction shown to the left, destructive engines colour as it is in action.



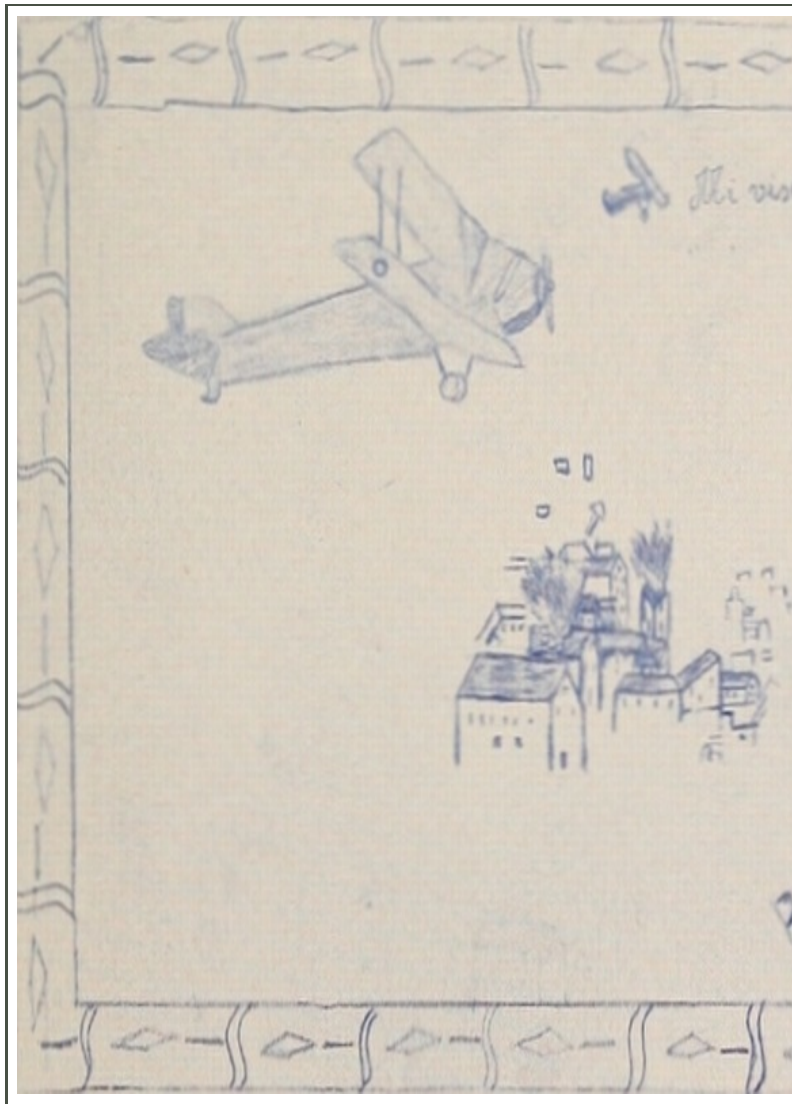
**Plate 8**

Fernando Gonzalez Esteban, 12 years old, evacuated from  
November, 1937. What excitement in the sky, trembling with  
The ruined building in the foreground has been shattered by  
growth of herbs on tower and walls.



## Plate 9

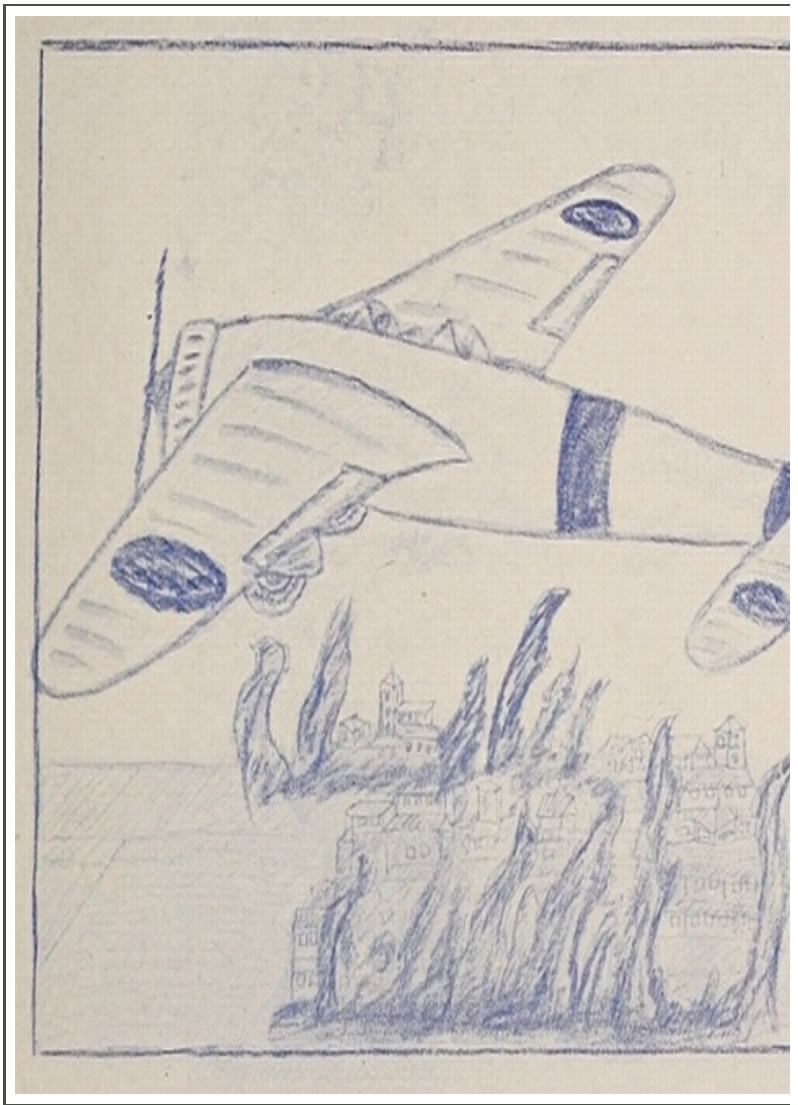
Drawn by Juan Jose Martinez, Madrid. 11 years old. The drawing is titled "2º El niño durante los bombardeos duerme en el Metro" (2nd The child during the bombings sleeps in the subway). It depicts a subway car interior. A child is lying on a bench, sleeping. Other passengers are shown sitting or standing. A diamond-shaped object, possibly a bomb, is floating in the air. The background is filled with vertical lines, suggesting a tunnel or a wall. The drawing is simple and expressive, using blue and black lines on a light background.



## Plate 10

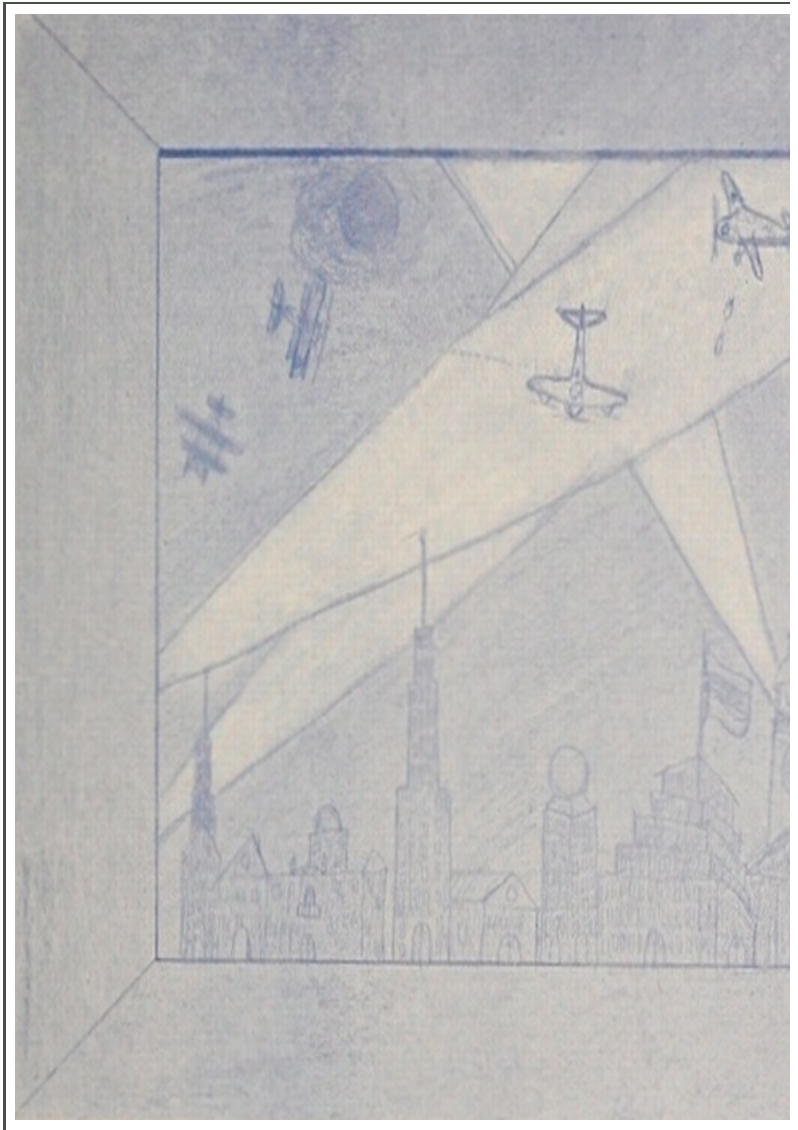
Rafael Gomez, only 10 years old. "My vision of the war." academic drawing, represents the literal truth: Planes, exp





## Plate 11

Alejandro Lazcano. No age given. Normally, a high-flying crow. In this child's mind the plane fills the sky, overshadows fire.



## Plate 12

Manuel Corona Mingo, 11 years old. Family Colony Group, Madrid. Searchlights focus on the enemy planes over Madrid. The famous American Telephone Building, shelled 160 times.

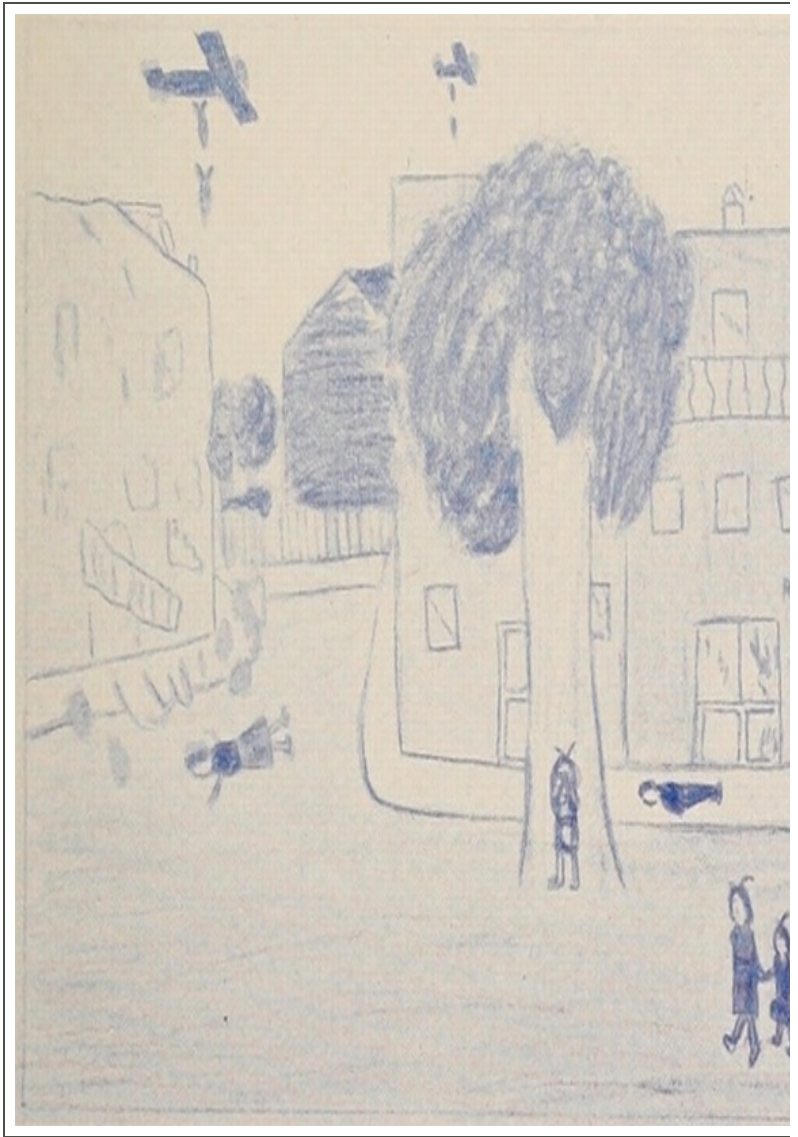




## Plate 13

Manuel Garcia, 12 years old. From a hospital cot, Manuel enemy planes. Covering his eyes to shut out the sight of fa dogs and sheep as frightened as himself. Children's Colon





## Plate 14

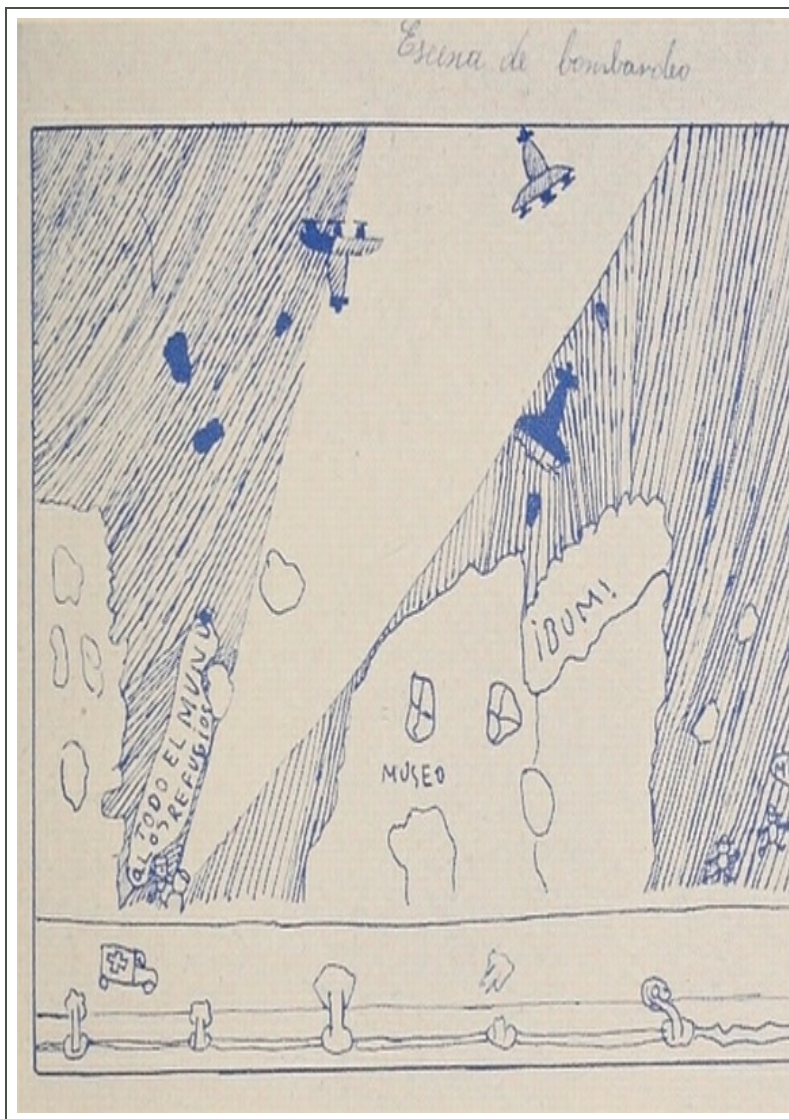
Spanish Center at Cerbere, France. Inscription on revers represents a bombardment of my town Port-Bou. Marie D  
The girl under the tree covers her eyes, weeping over the



## Plate 15

Inscription on reverse: "This scene I have seen when the and children and women run to the tunnel because if they c houses. Gloria Boada (girl) 12 years old, from Irun Guipuz Bayonne, France." The children at the left react differently

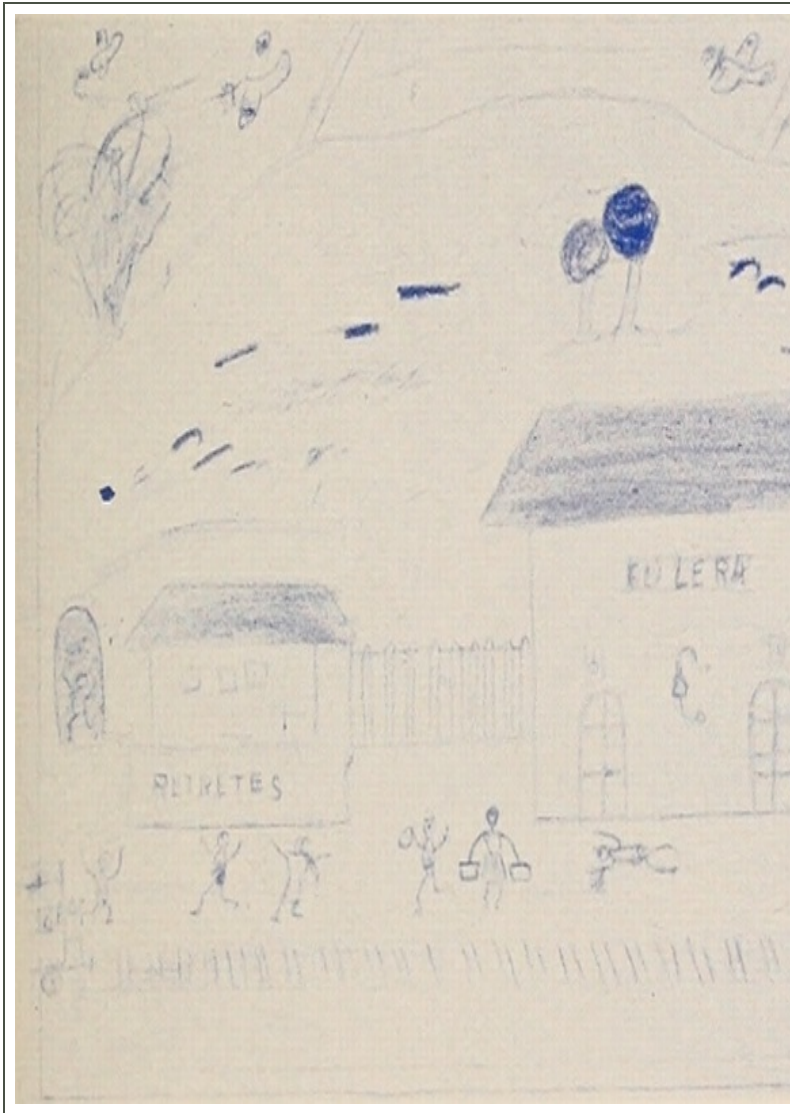
cries: "Oh Mama!" another, "The sirens and bells!" while the third, "How valiant." The woman with the child says, "To the tunnel face, the woman at the right cries out, "Oh, they have destroyed the church bell speaks, ringing out "puntulun."



# Plate 16

Francisco Torres Marcos, Family Colony of Puebla Large  
10. Inscriptions on drawing read from left to right: “Everybody  
“Boom.” “Mama I cannot see.” “Shelter.” (Refugio.)

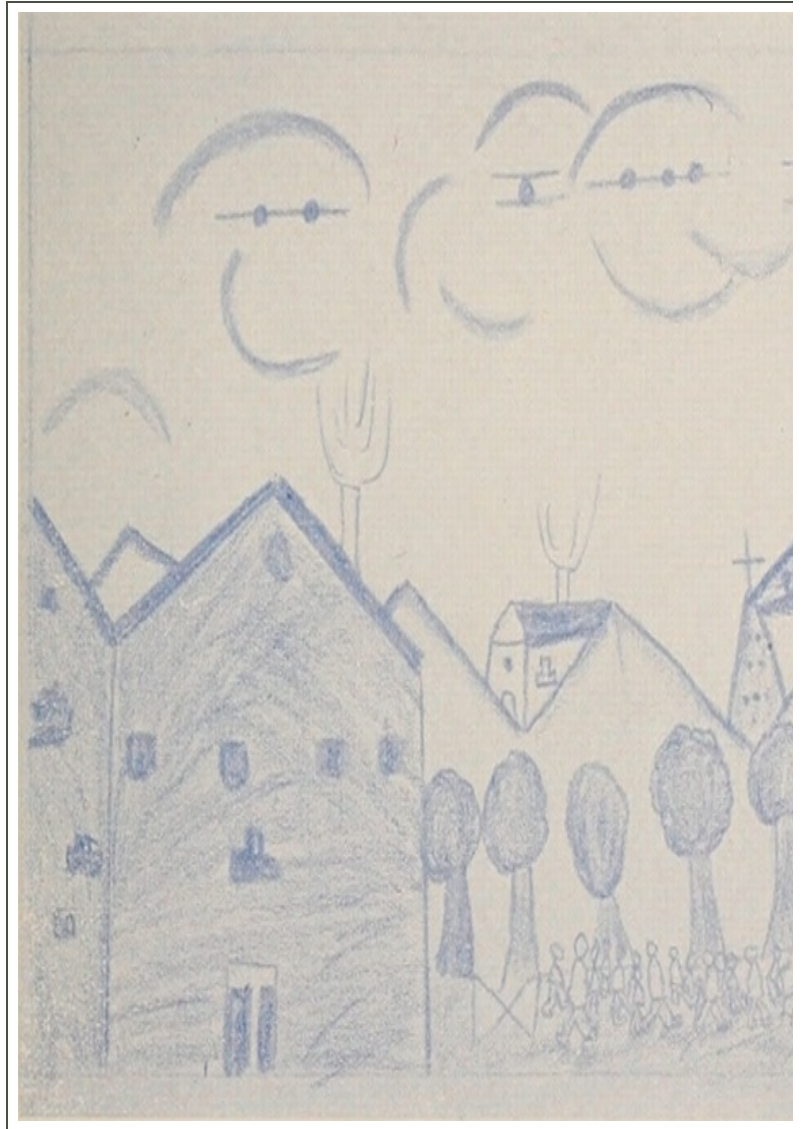




## Plate 17

Spanish Center at Cerbere, France. Inscription on the re represents the machine that came to fetch the cars and pl shelter. . .”—Jose Ruiz, 11 years old. This drawing gives c detail. Only a fragment of the car the locomotive is to fetch

the dugout which serves as a shelter. A dead baby on the running. Only the water carrier seems paralyzed. The plan and left.



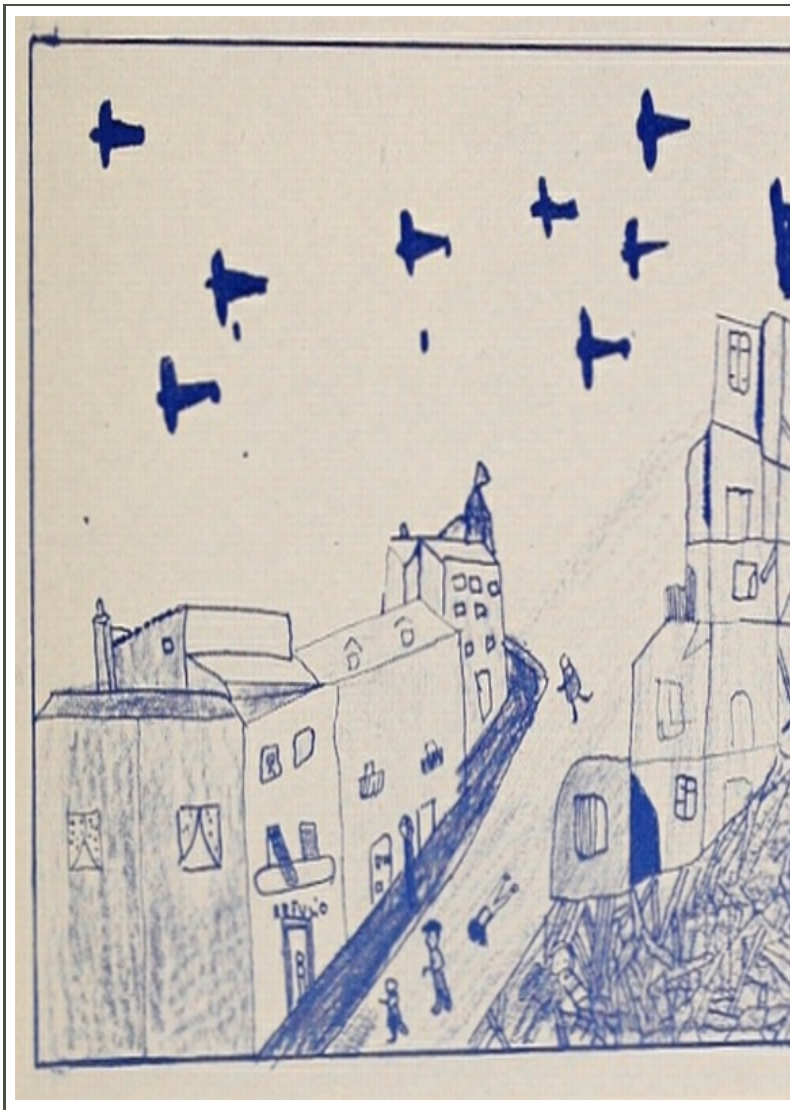
# Plate 18

Inscription on reverse says: (The stilted language of the been our rule, literally translated). “This scene gives the fo bombardments of Bilbao have been in the year 1937. I app at the entrance of the tunnel of Begona.” Hector Hilario fro at Bayonne, France. The composition of the drawing is dis patterns: the moving planes, the once quiet village and the seeking shelter in the tunnel.



## Plate 19

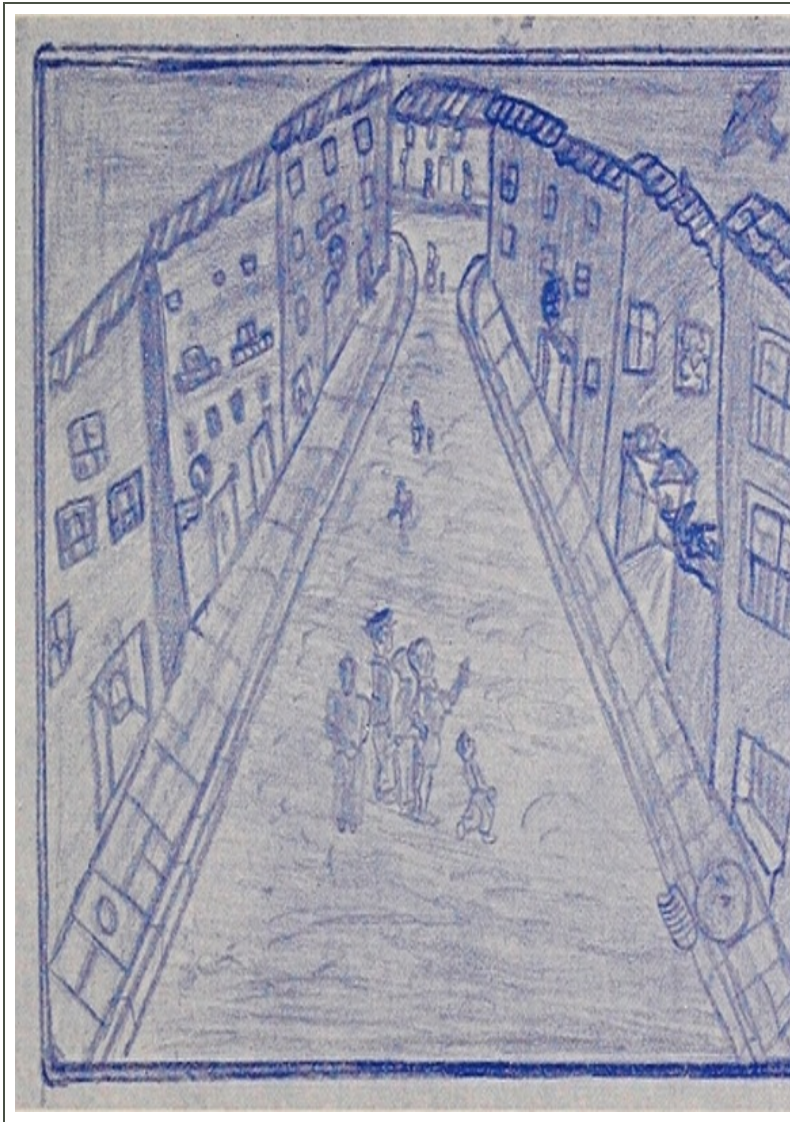
Placida Medrano, 11 years old. Inscription on reverse: "V trees." A precarious shelter indeed.



## Plate 20

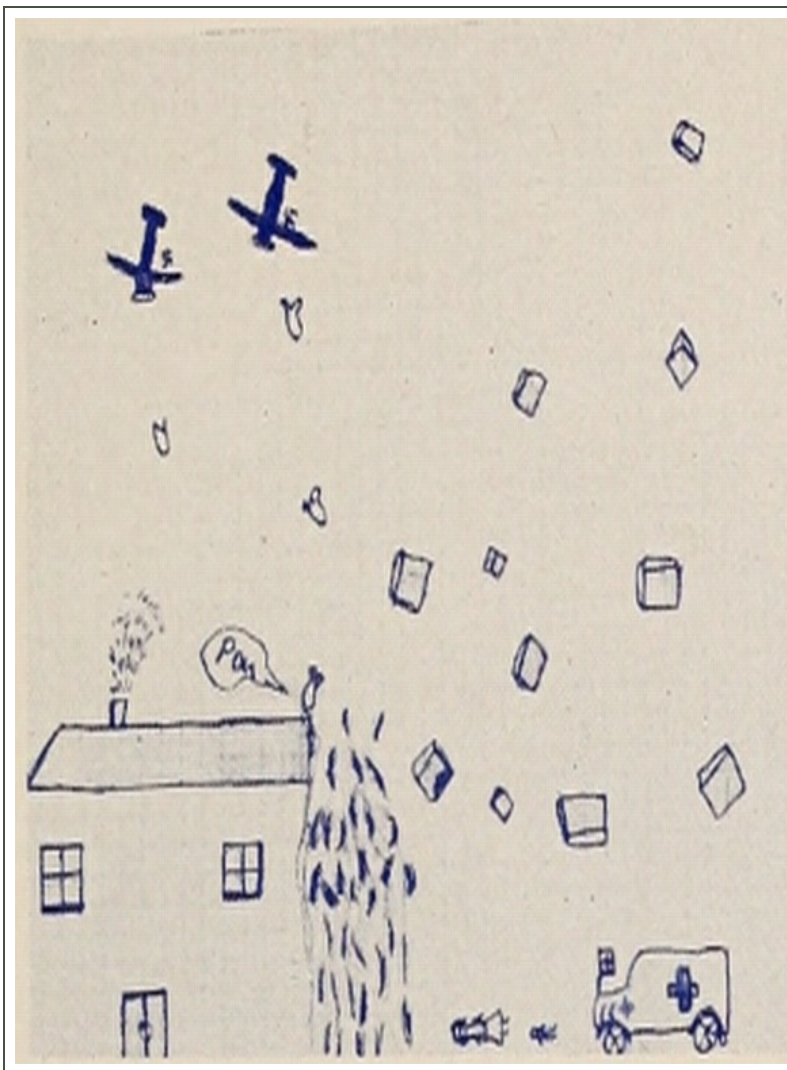
Colony 40 Oliva, Valencia. Magalena Ruiz, 11 years old. wooden understructure is splintered into an amorphous heap; person on the small town's street, killed on the way to the subject and a most remarkable drawing.





## Plate 21

Eduardo Herrera, 12 years old. A group of children on the Spanish town looks up to heaven. Perhaps those are friends in perspective. The nocturnal scene is happily rendered.



## Plate 22

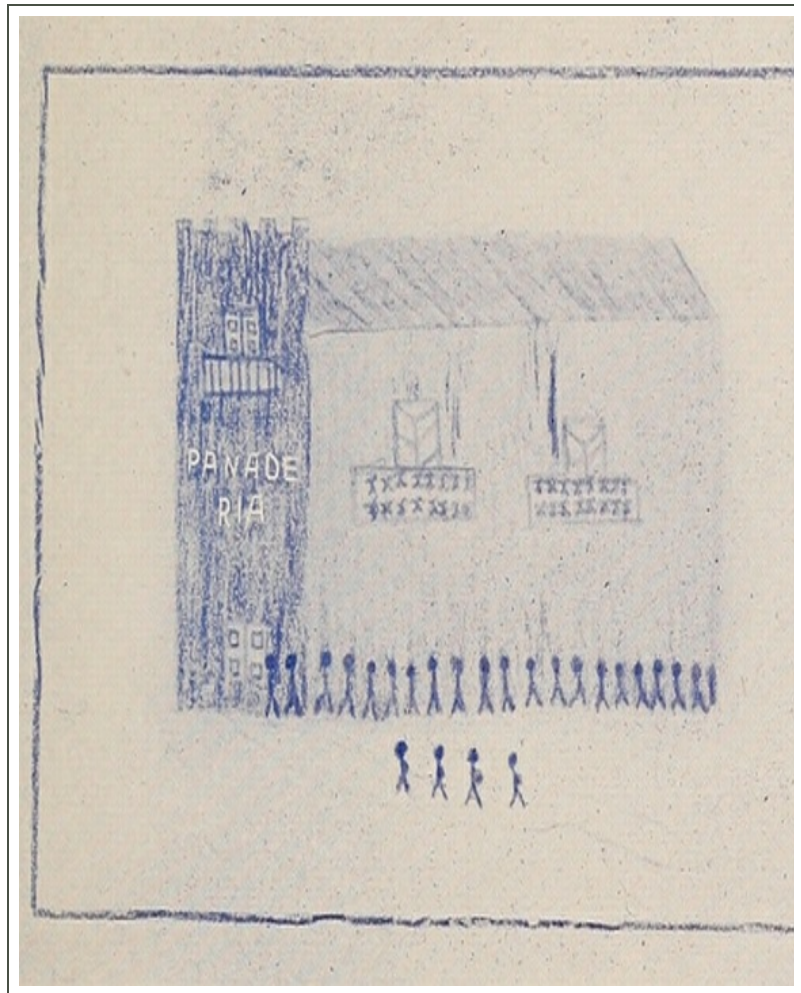
Inscription: "My house destroyed, the bricks are flying th  
a Red Cross motor truck, two adults seen in the shelter (re  
Carmen Huerta, 9 years old, shows us, as if it were made  
Charmartin de la Rosa (Madrid) and was evacuated to Alc



## Plate 23

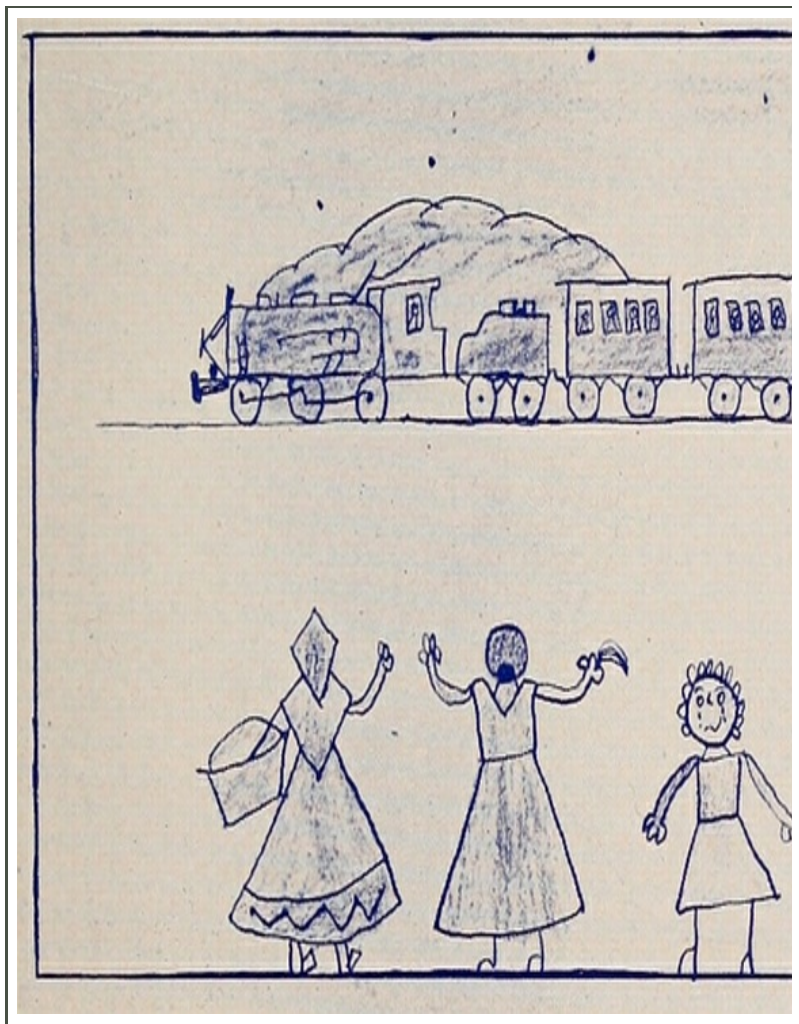
Lucia del Hierro, 11 years old. No other inscription. The drawing represents women and children standing in line to buy coal (center) and groceries to the right. A woman leads a child jumping rope. Planes, play and the struggle for food.





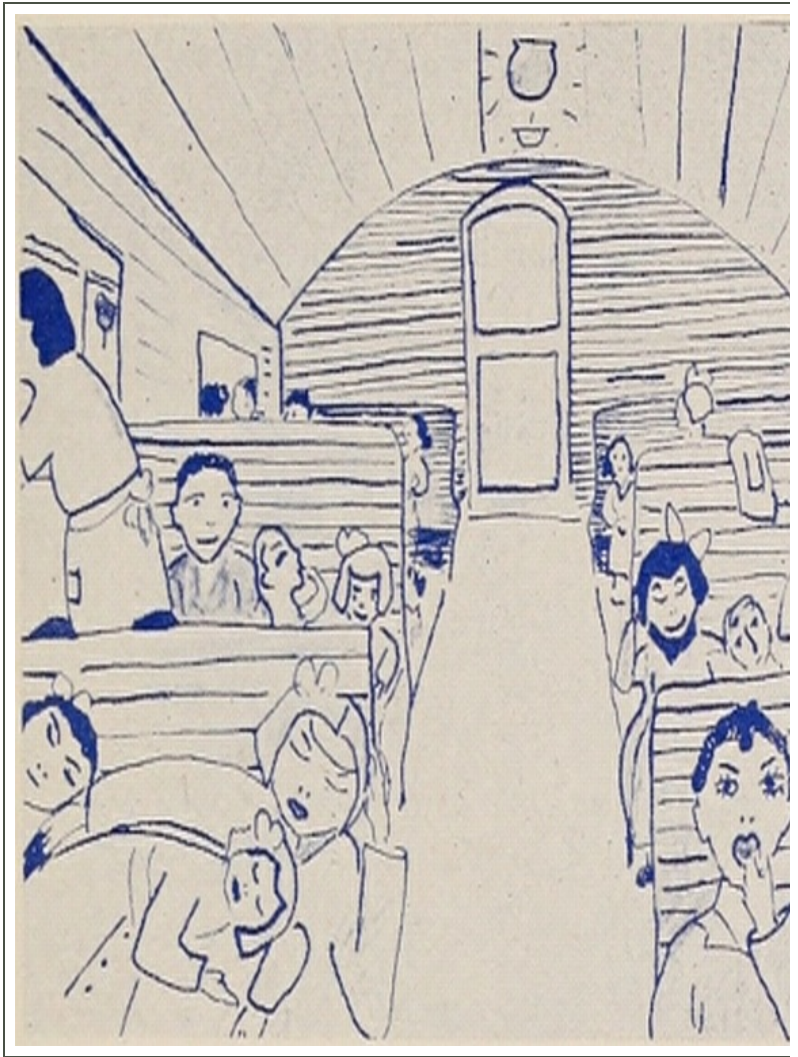
## Plate 24

Luis Gonzalez. La Pinada, 1937-1938. The child must be judge by the simplified human figures which stand in the br



## Plate 25

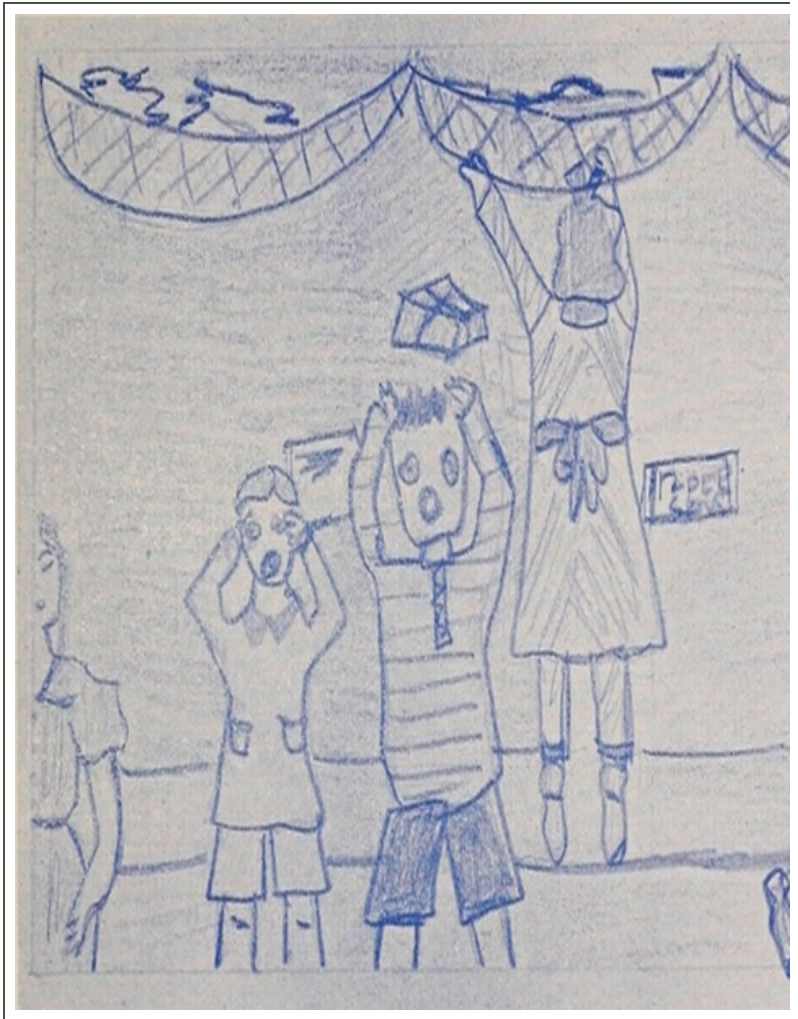
Inscription on reverse: Colony No. 40 Oliva (Valencia) Pe  
“Evacuation.” Peasant women wave their hands at the child  
hoping for safety. Is the child crying over separation from a  
was left behind?



## Plate 26

Rafael Jover Rodriguez, 13 years old, Colony at Bellus. |  
resting on the girl's lap, or her little sister? They are uproo  
their journey is exceptionally comfortable.





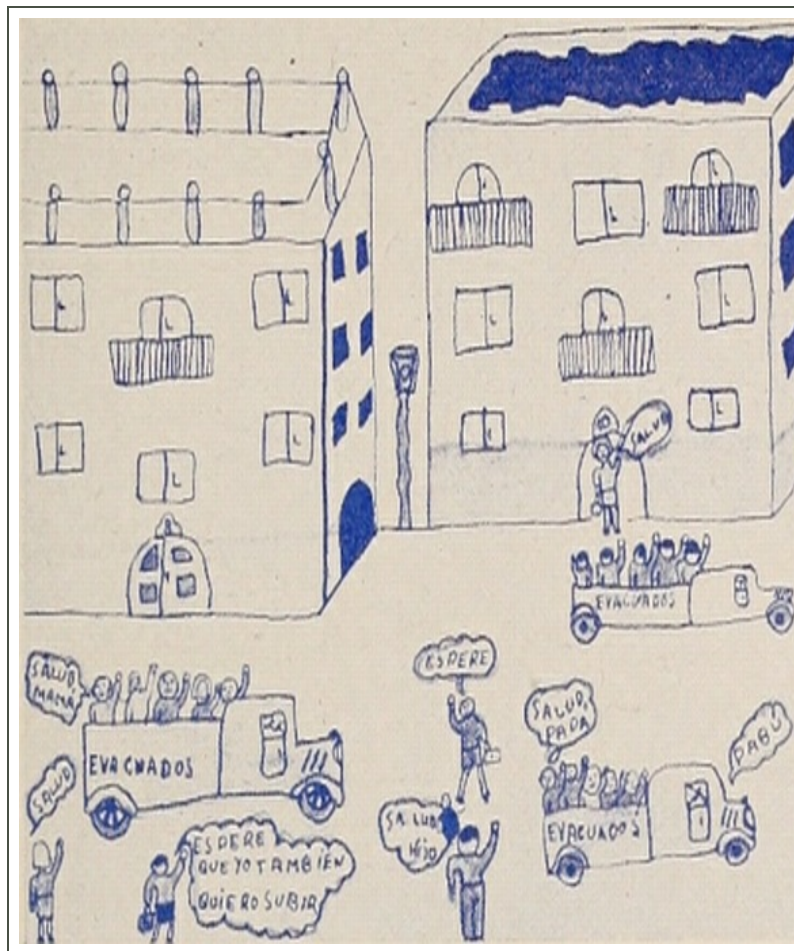
## Plate 27

Evacuation by train from Madrid. Two of the children cry, despair. A girl is still busy with her luggage, a boy shaking doorway. Perhaps it is a self-portrait of J. Rodriguez, 13 y



## Plate 28

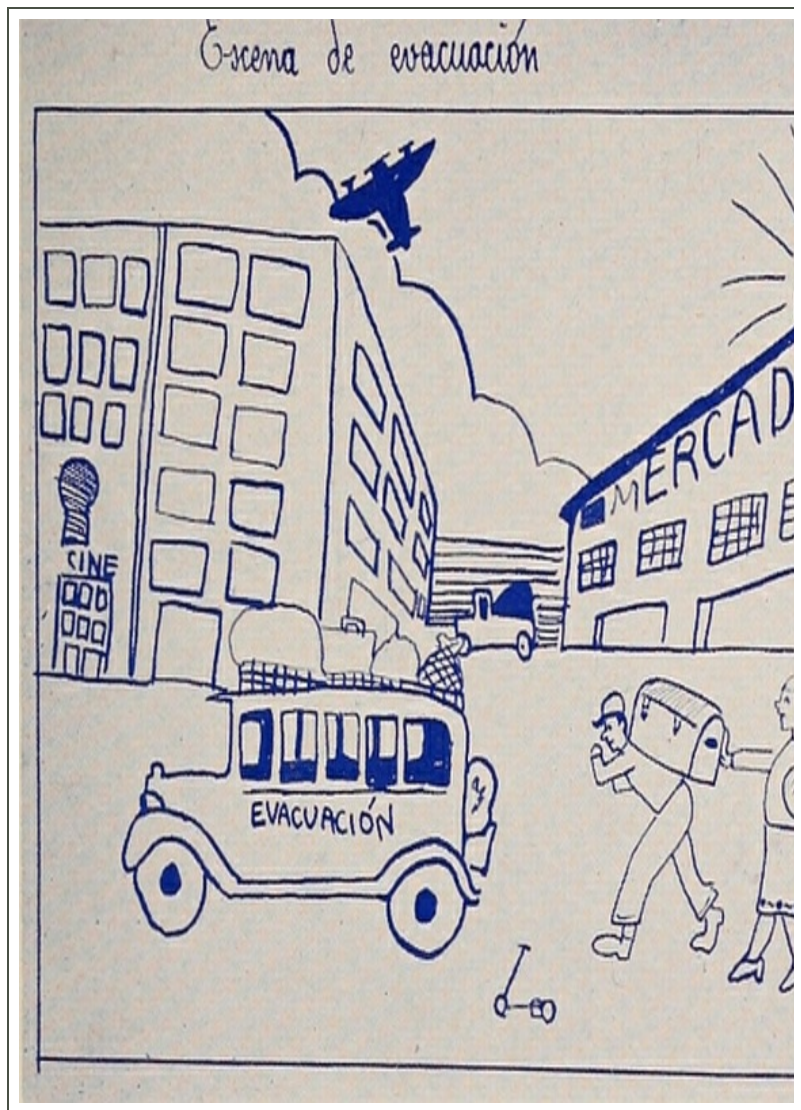
Francisco Garcia, 14 years old, School Colony, Torrente, Swiss Aid motor truck evacuating children from danger en route. "Is it ours or theirs?" the children ask themselves.



## Plate 29

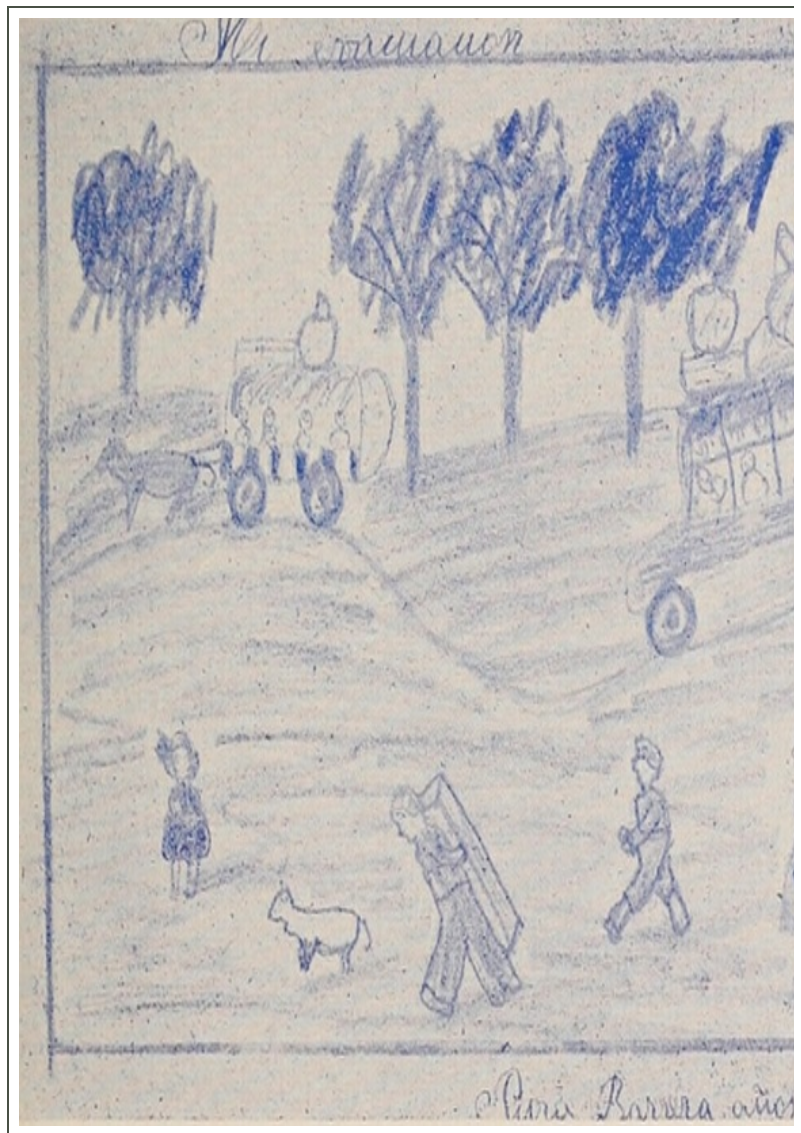
Ildefonso Ortuno Ibanez, 11 years old. Family colony at Valencia. The second child from the left exclaims: "I also want a valise, therefore was ready to be evacuated and must be behind. Not the "I also want to get on" of a spoiled child on excursion. A cry of anguish.





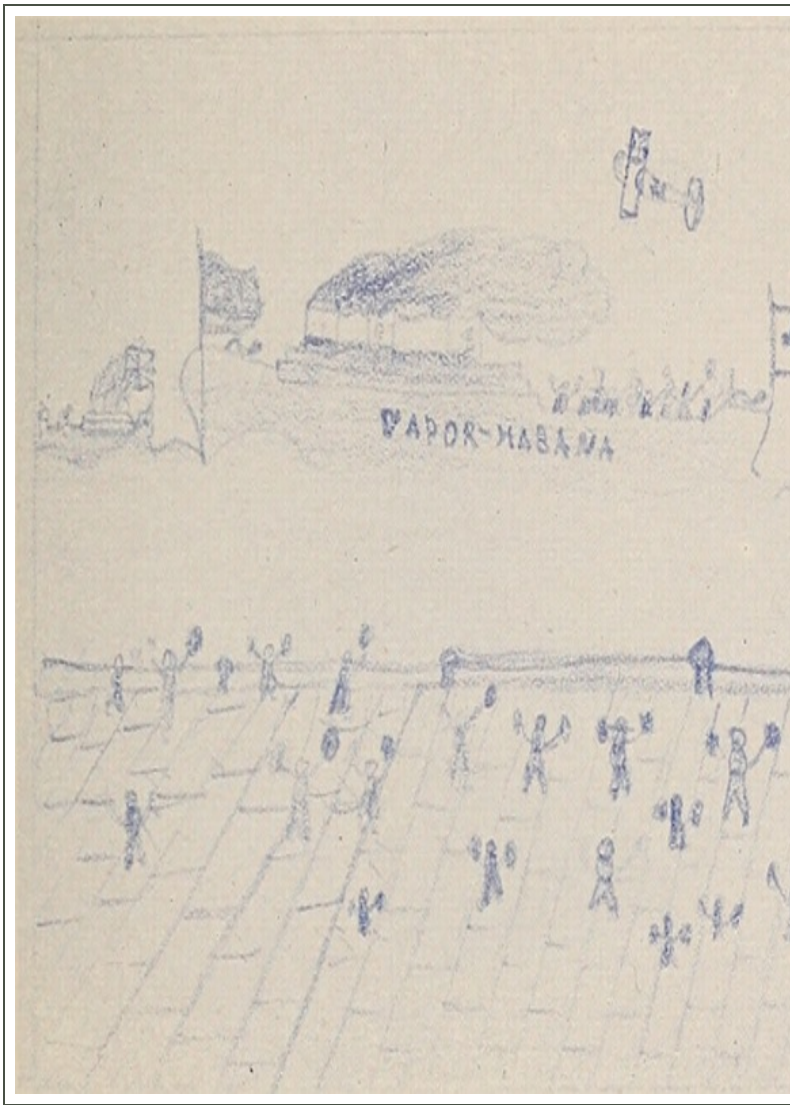
## Plate 30

Inscription on reverse: Luis Casero Esteban, 11 years old, Colony at Puebla Larga. (Province of Valencia.) If only the sunlight. This very bourgeois family with the hunchback prospect of leaving a place where airplanes drone. Will the



## Plate 31

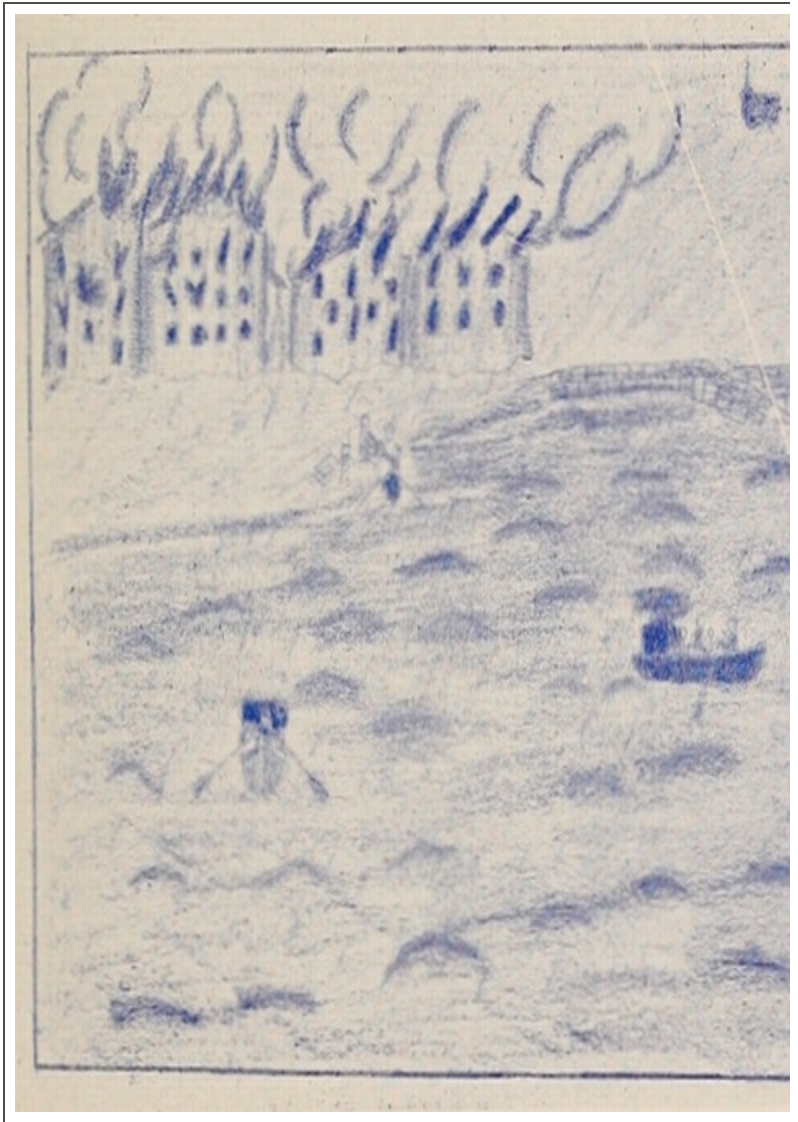
Inscription: "My evacuation." Pura Barrera, 11 years old.  
family to travel in the mule-drawn cart or in the motorbus?



## Plate 32

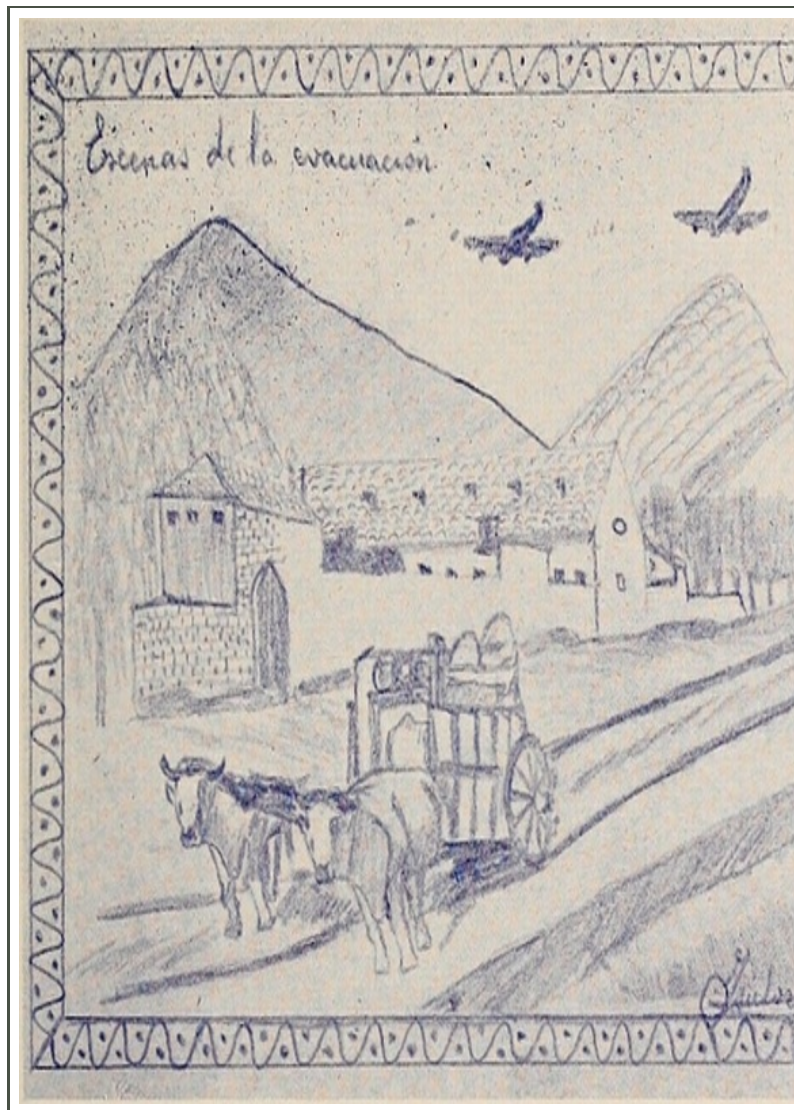
Felipe Redoudo Blanco, 11 years old, Bilbao. Inscription: France. The steamer "Habana" is nearing Bilbao to evacuate France. On the pier human figures waving their arms in welcome. The steamer Habana is flying the Union Jack.





## Plate 33

Inscription on reverse: "This drawing I have made to show this way." Theodoro Pineiro from Irun, Guipuzcoa. 13 years Bayonne, France. This is an impressive picture of an exodus rowboats the inhabitants fled to the French shore.



## Plate 34

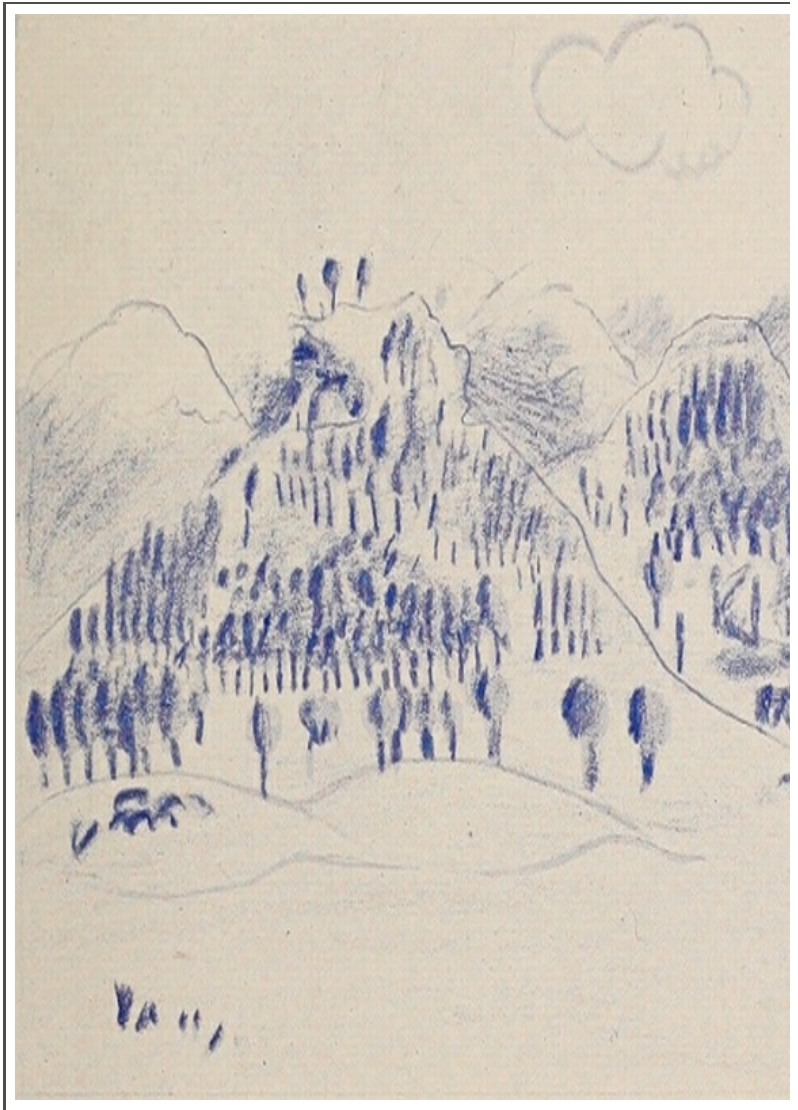
Isidro Esquerro Ruiz, 12 years old. Children's Residence (Alicante). Inscription over drawing: "Scenes of evacuation. vehicle for flight was available but this ox-drawn cart. The of burden contrasting with the swift-moving, dangerous mo



## Plate 35

Resurreccion Rodriguez, 11 years old. Inscription above evacuation." It is night. All the family's belongings are pack Tragedy vibrates in the nervous, artless lines of this drawir





## Plate 36

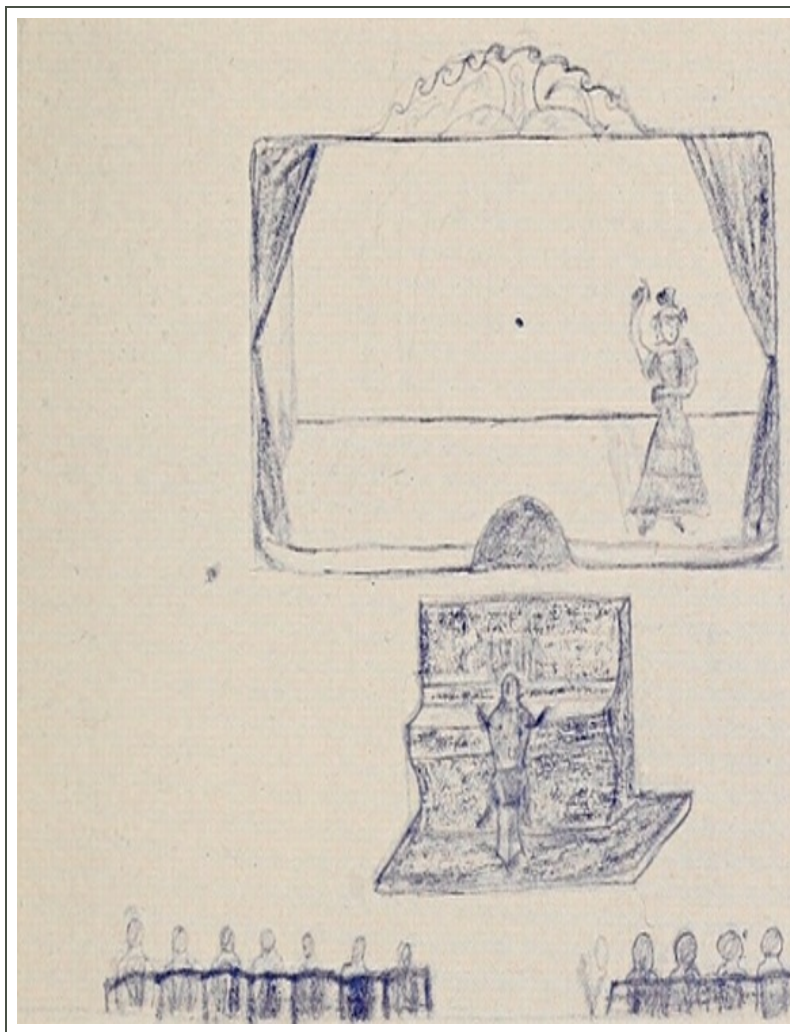
Inscription on reverse reads: "This scene means my flight from the distance the first village we encounter: Laroun. Elias Garal Pamplona. Children's Colony at Bayonne." The reproduction captures the beauty of the drawing. Note, moving towards the church.

people who straggle through the snow, dragging a mule be



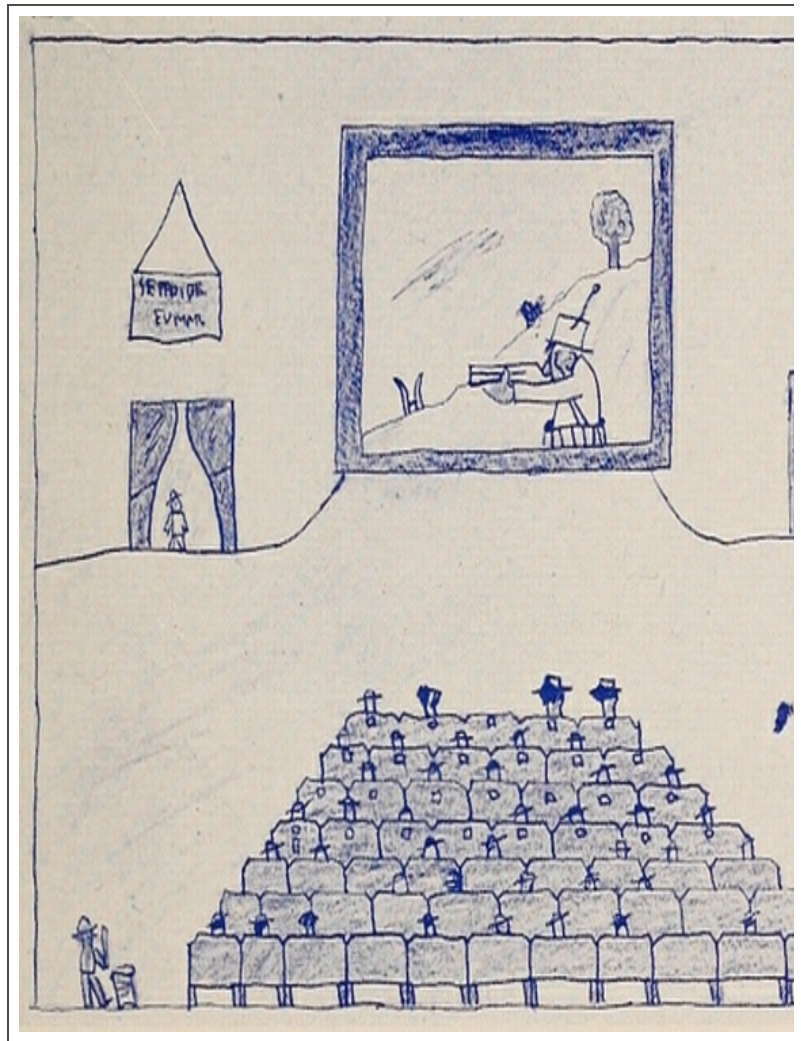
## Plate 37

Pilar Marcos, 14 years old, Colony at Bellus. Mickey Mo Spanish schools.



## Plate 38

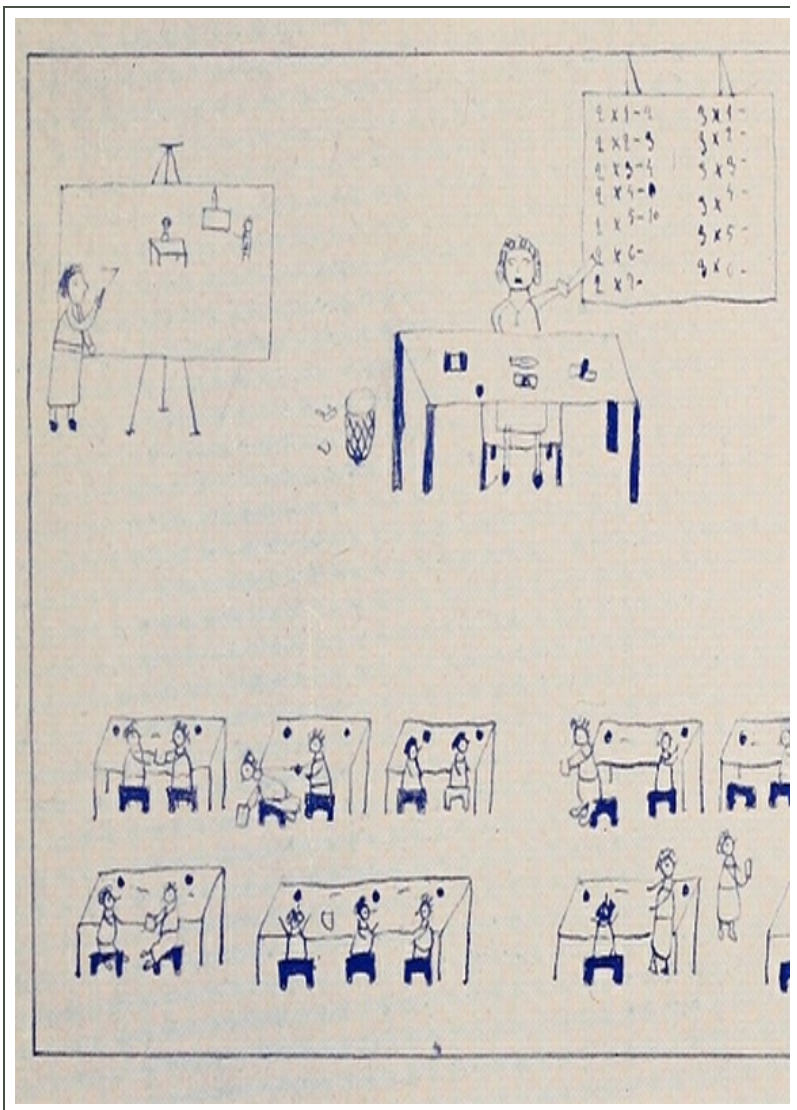
Francisca Gonzalez Ruiz, 12 years old, loves music, the painting.



## Plate 39

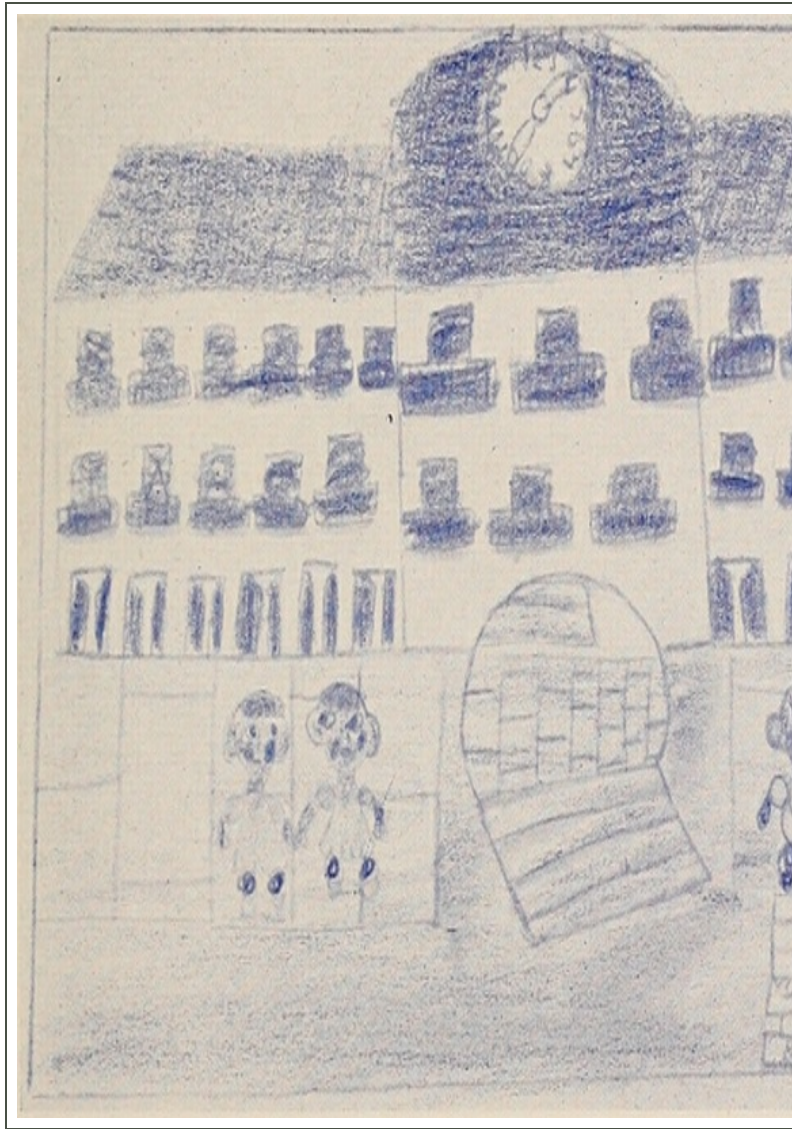
Julian Arjonilla, 12 years old, Children's Colony of Olivia, Inscription on reverse says: "Movies before the war." Inscription forbidden." To right: "Spitting forbidden." The child remembers broad-brimmed hats of spectators seem to indicate that Julian was in Andalusia.





## Plate 40

Maria Luz Escudero, 11 years old. Children's residence, Alicante. Pupils seem rather distracted. A difficult class to country is torn in two, what does it matter whether 2 plus 2



## Plate 41

Inscription on reverse: This is the Colony where we live a Cuadro." Marcelina Muneca, 12 years. "Al Cuadro" is the S  
The inscription (see third child from the left) says: "You are

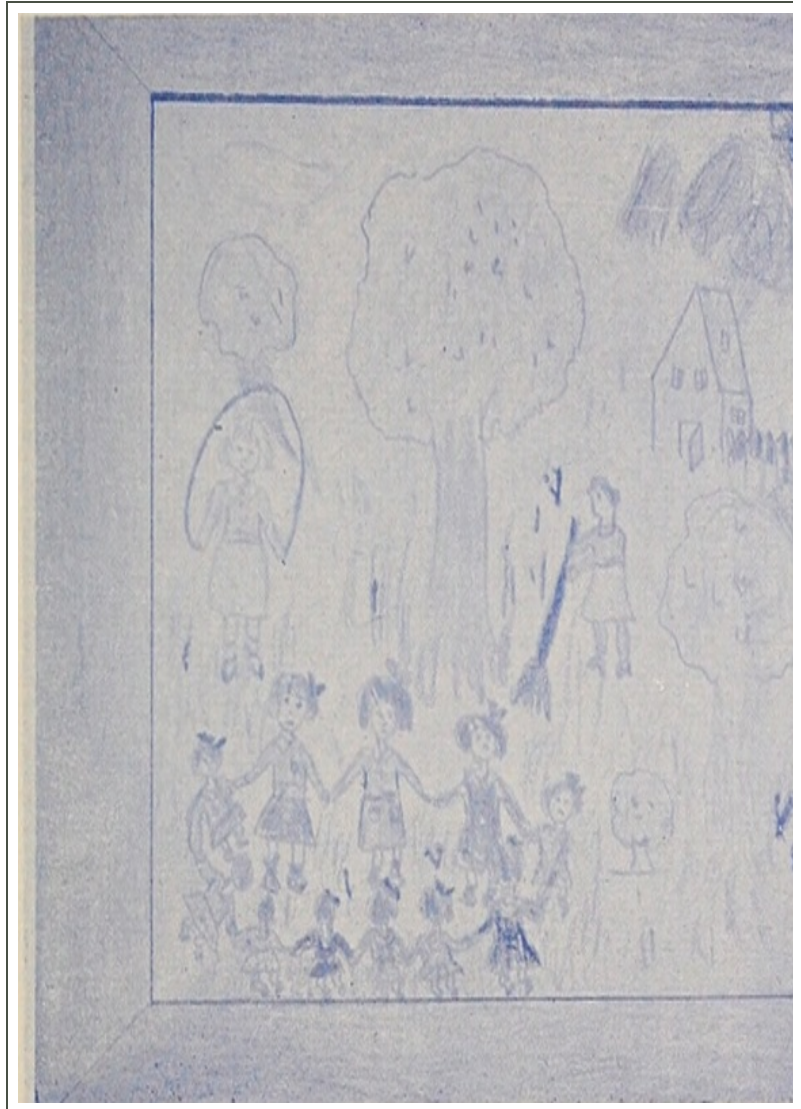




## Plate 42

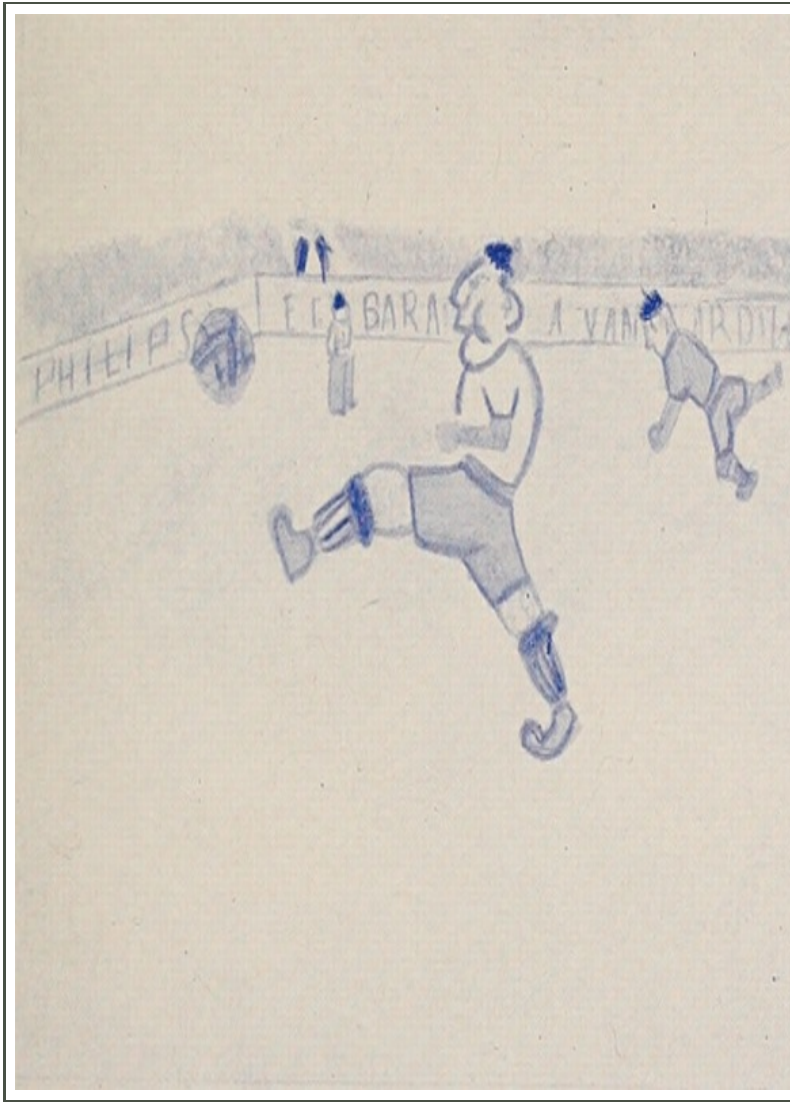
Children's Colony at Saint-Hilaire in France. The child, 9-

writes: "What we are doing in the colony." Jumping rope, p  
upper part of this diptych neatly separated from the lower  
is a reminiscence. Bullfighting scenes very rarely seem to c  
imagination. Only three "corridas" in a collection of over a t



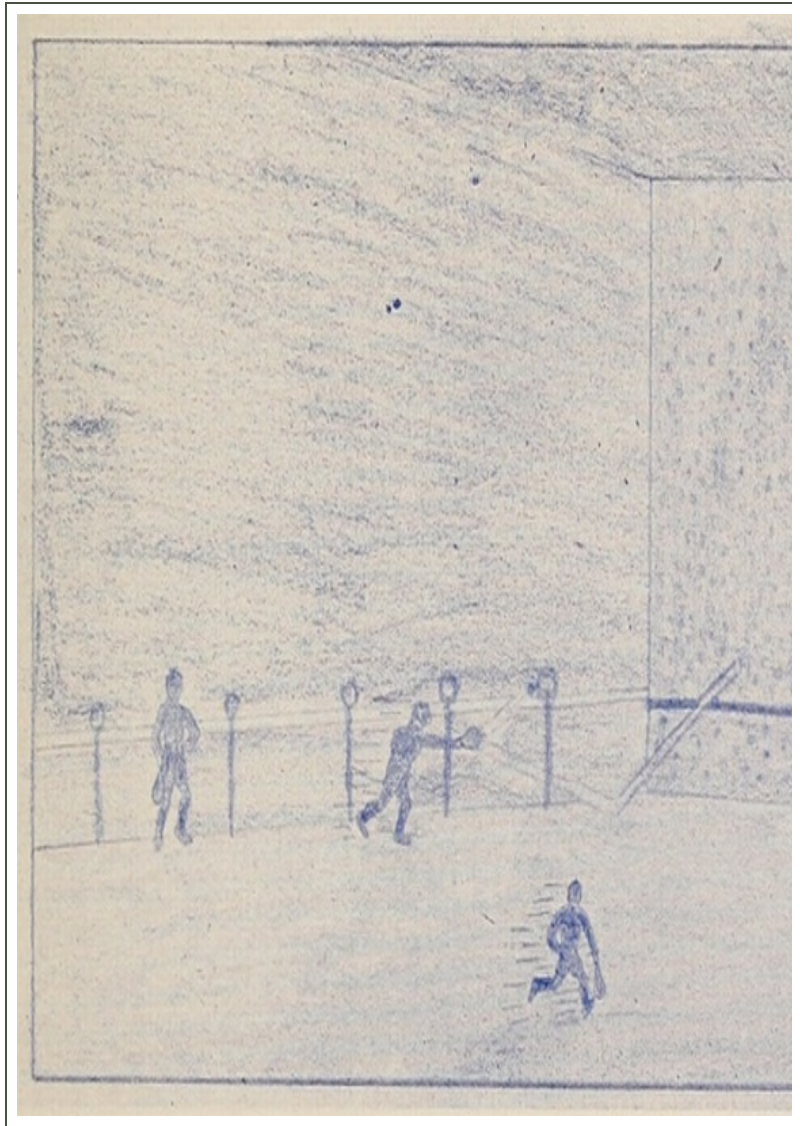
## Plate 43

Manolita Ortego Pallares, 10 years old, School of Chirive  
Alfredo Calderon, Madrid. "Playing in the Pardo," says the  
reminiscence, for the Pardo has not been accessible to ch  
out. Note the inverted perspective of the ring-around-the-r  
fanciful the figure of the woman with a broom. What is she



## Plate 44

Inscription on reverse says: "Football match in Barcelona years old. Football has become more popular than bullfighting."

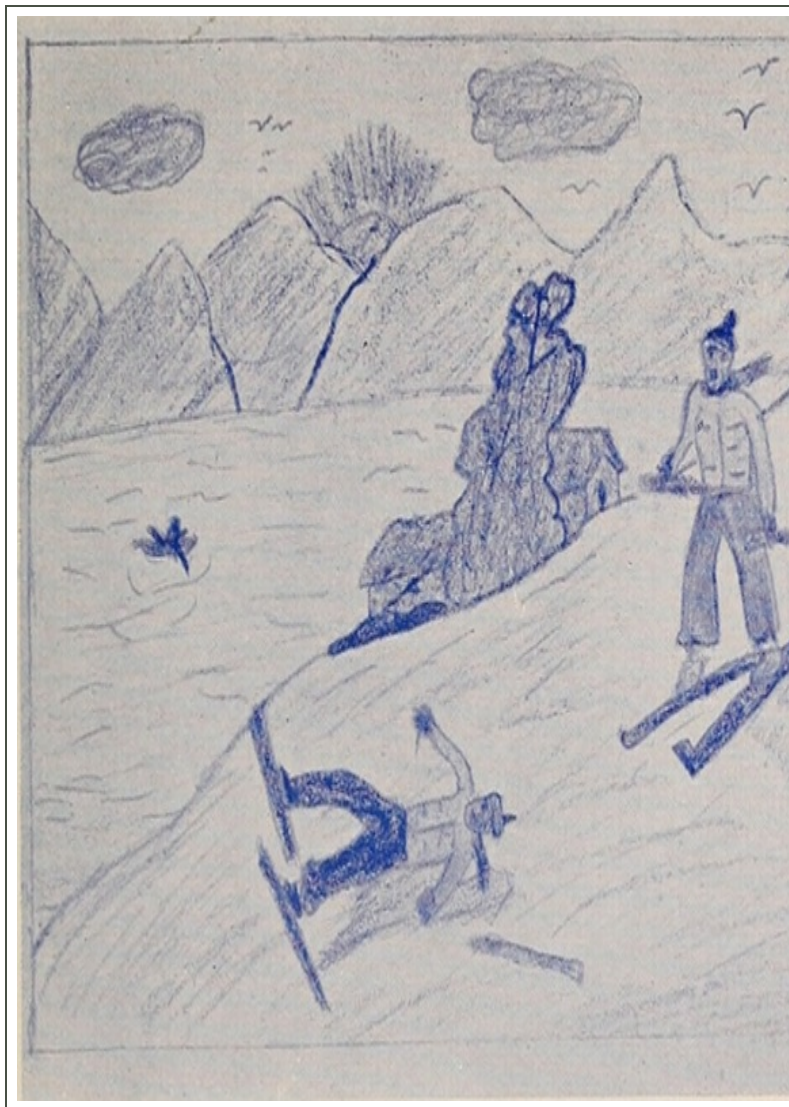


## Plate 45

“This drawing represents our life in the colony playing I a repents and politely strikes out “I and others” adding “othe the Colony. Tulano Theodoro Pineiro, 13 years old from Iru

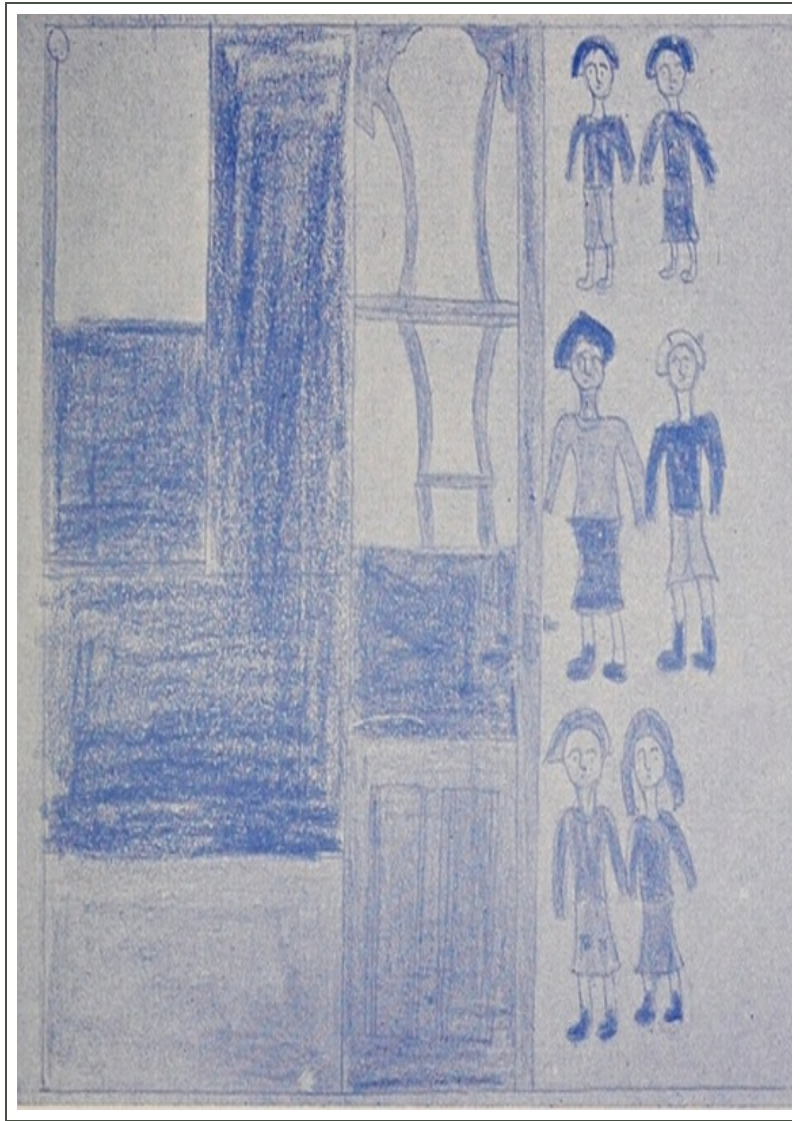


Colony, Bayonne, France. The Basque ball game, Jai-Alai, French Basque country. It is played almost everywhere in courts, in villages against any wall.



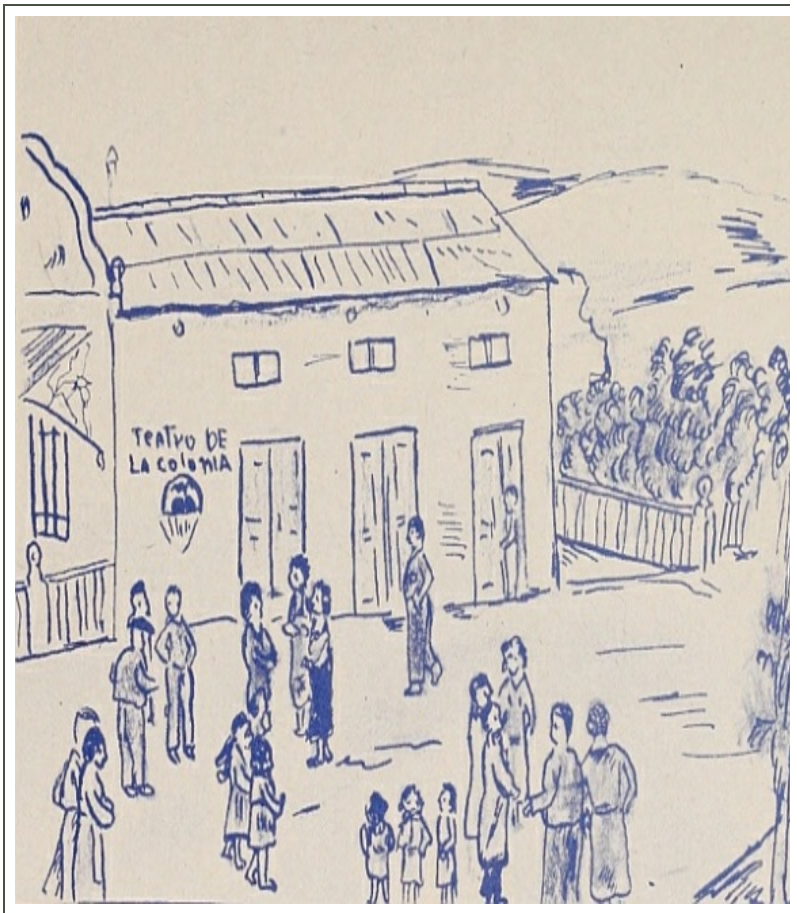
# Plate 46

Felix Ramirez Nieto, 11 years old, Colony of Bellus. Skiing in Spain during the last two decades. Excepting the South Coast from which snow covered peaks cannot be reached in a few days, the 7000-foot peak of Navacerrada is 30 miles, from Barcelona 100 miles. How could young Ramirez have missed the chance to come a cropper!



## Plate 47

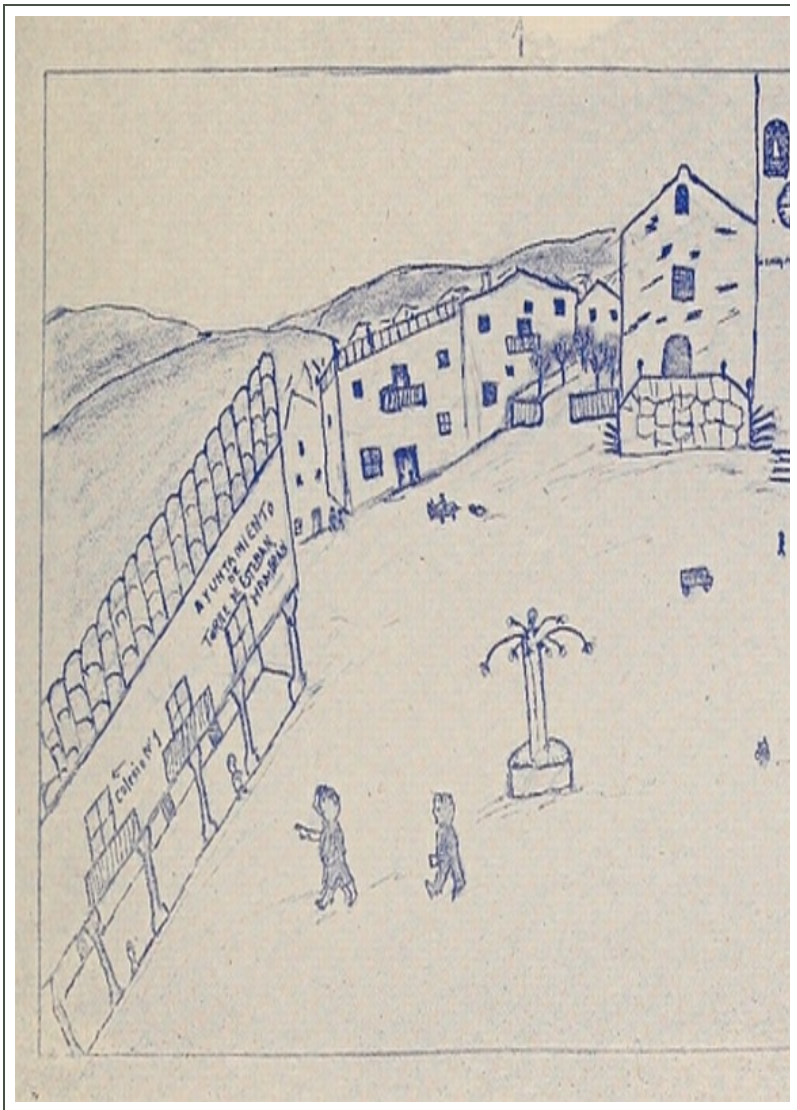
Inscription on reverse: "This drawing shows us before we  
Laura Grabacos Trias, 11 years old." This coloured drawing  
perspective of some early mediaeval miniatures.



## Plate 48

Pilar Marcos Garcia, 14 years old, Bellus. This gifted girl  
children in front of the Colony's improvised theatre. Leisure  
How contrasting with the tense atmosphere almost palpab  
evacuations and war scenes!

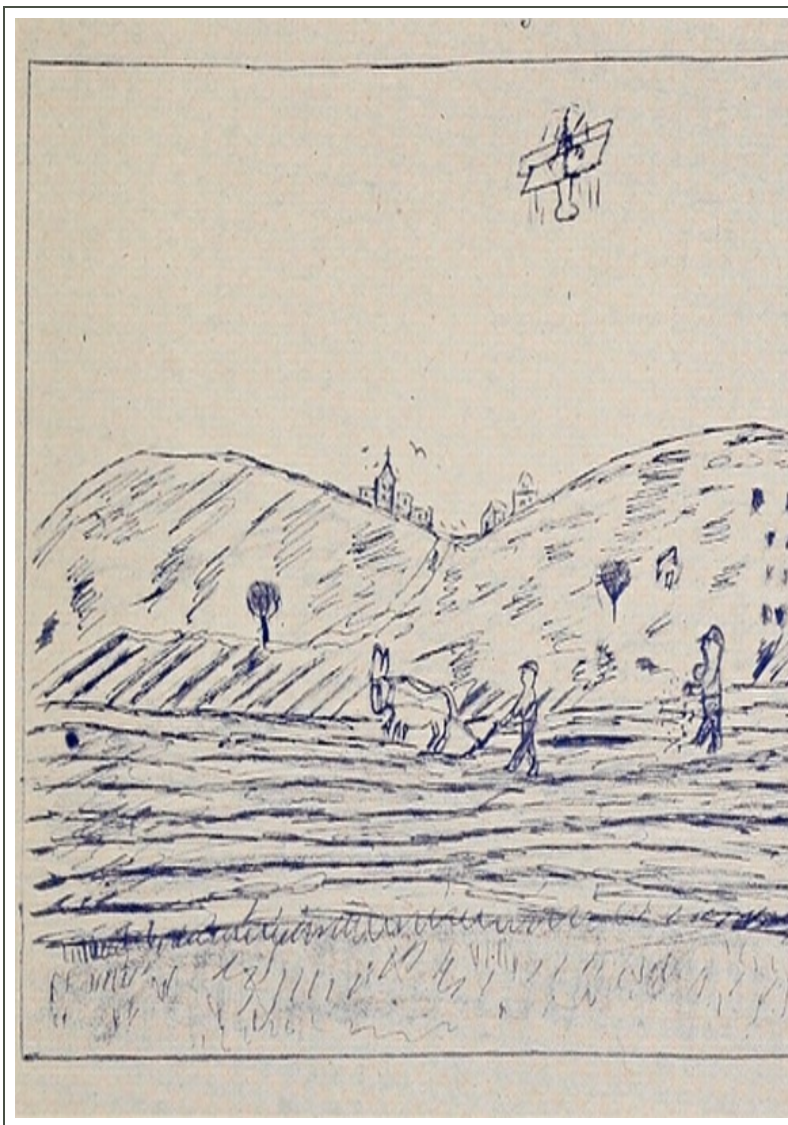




## Plate 49

Marcelino Serrano Hervas, 13 years old. Colony of Lobo  
This drawing gives an excellent idea of a small rural town.  
We suppose he has portrayed himself, walking in measure  
schoolmate, discussing very grave affairs.





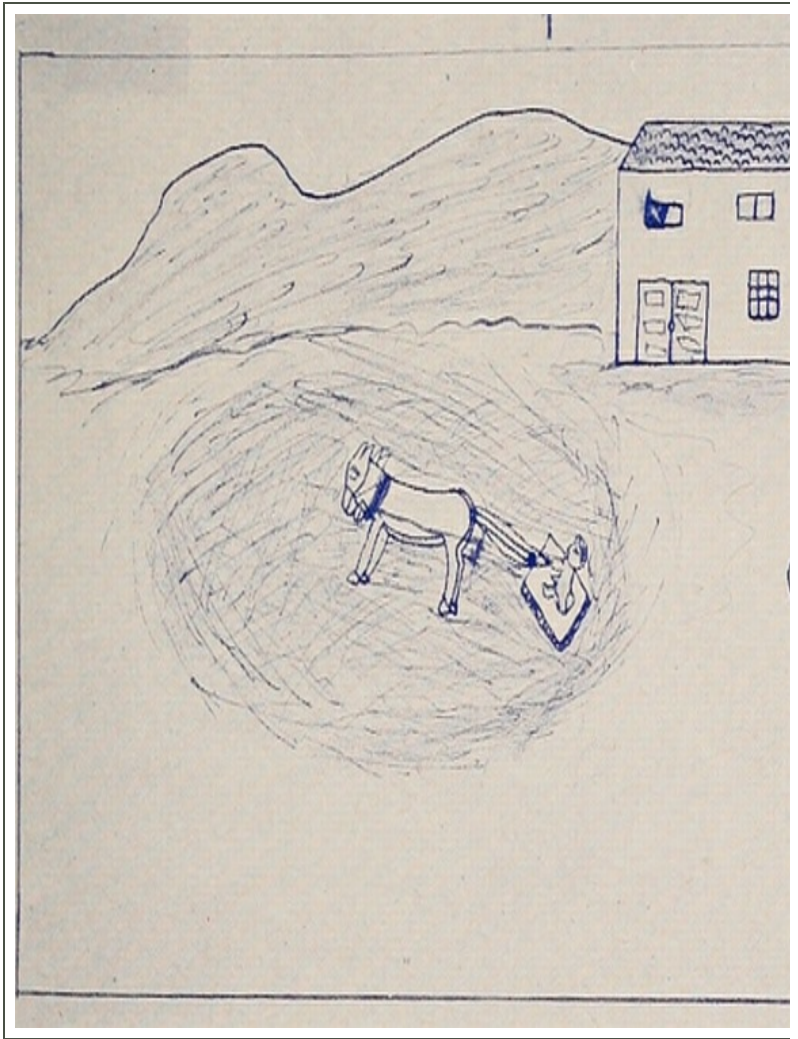
## Plate 50

Marcelino Serrano Hervas, (see preceding plate) also has good draughtsman, has great artistic sense, but is not over sober business worthy of the attention of a mature young man.



## Plate 51

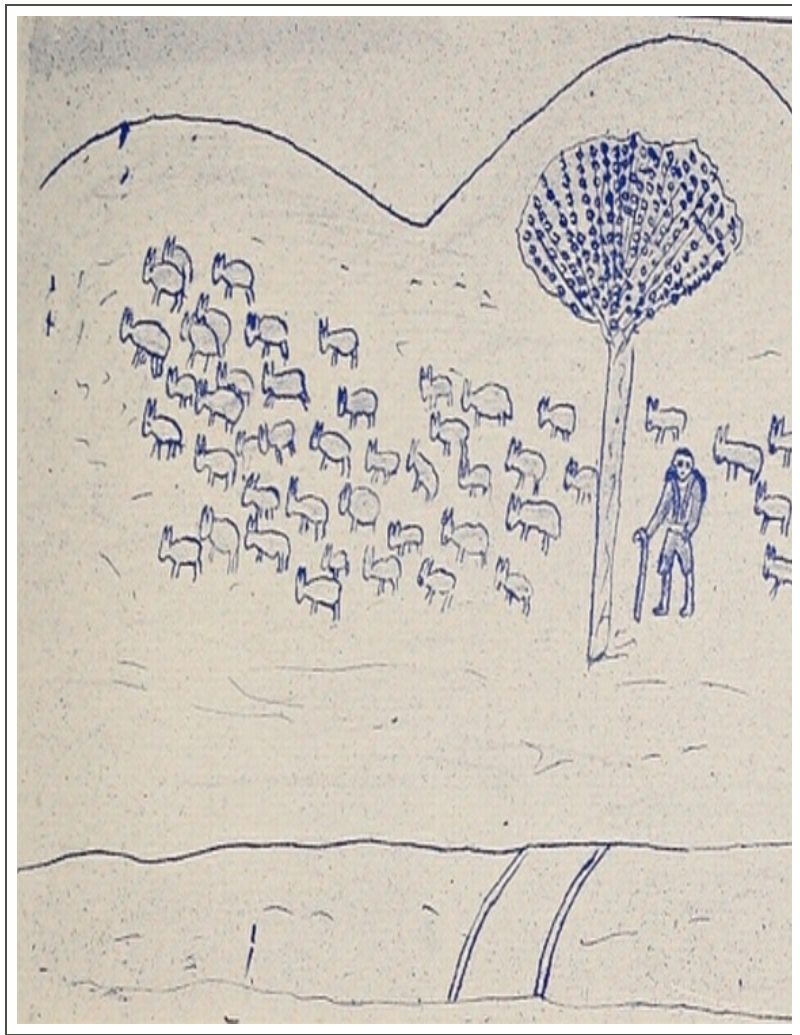
Teresa Vergara Garcia, 13 years old, School Colony at Valencia. Note the realistic drawing of the horse, contrasting treatment of the human figures picking oranges from the tree and the basket.



## Plate 52

Victor Ramirez, 14 years old, Child Colony of Lobosillo, drawing represents an everyday scene in Spain's rural life. The donkey is driven over the wheat. This is the old-fashioned way of tilling the soil, perhaps pre-Babylonian times. In the Near East and in Spain, the donkey is most frequently employed.





## Plate 53

Carlos Serrano Hervas, 14 years old, Colony of Lobosillo flock is an ever attractive motive for painters, photographers and children.



## Plate 54

Very gifted is young Lazcano, 14 years old, who draws the landscape of Colonia La Pinada. He will be a distinguished painter if he continues to improve. This is a perfect rendering of the southeastern landscape where near the coast, the land is carefully cultivated, gives abundant crops of oranges, olive

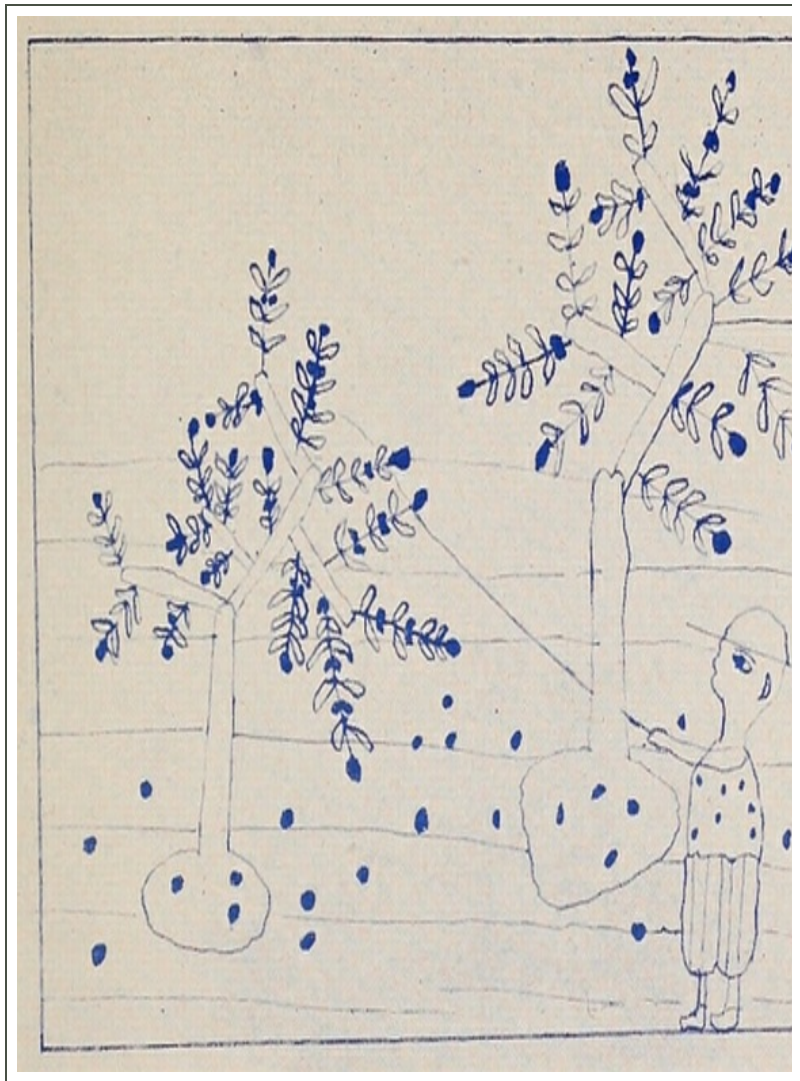


places even dates.



**Plate 55**

Inscription on reverse says: "This represents trees and a the trees and then there is a man who herds goats and a c Duran Gratacos, 11 years old." This is a flower-loving child hands. The blossom-covered trees gracefully and formally seem to float in the air. The color scheme is exceptional. The graceful frailness of Persian Timurid miniatures.



## Plate 56

Isidro Martinez, 11 years old, Colony of Tangel, Province town-bred boy. Certainly a peasant child, lovingly drawing being beaten down with a stick.

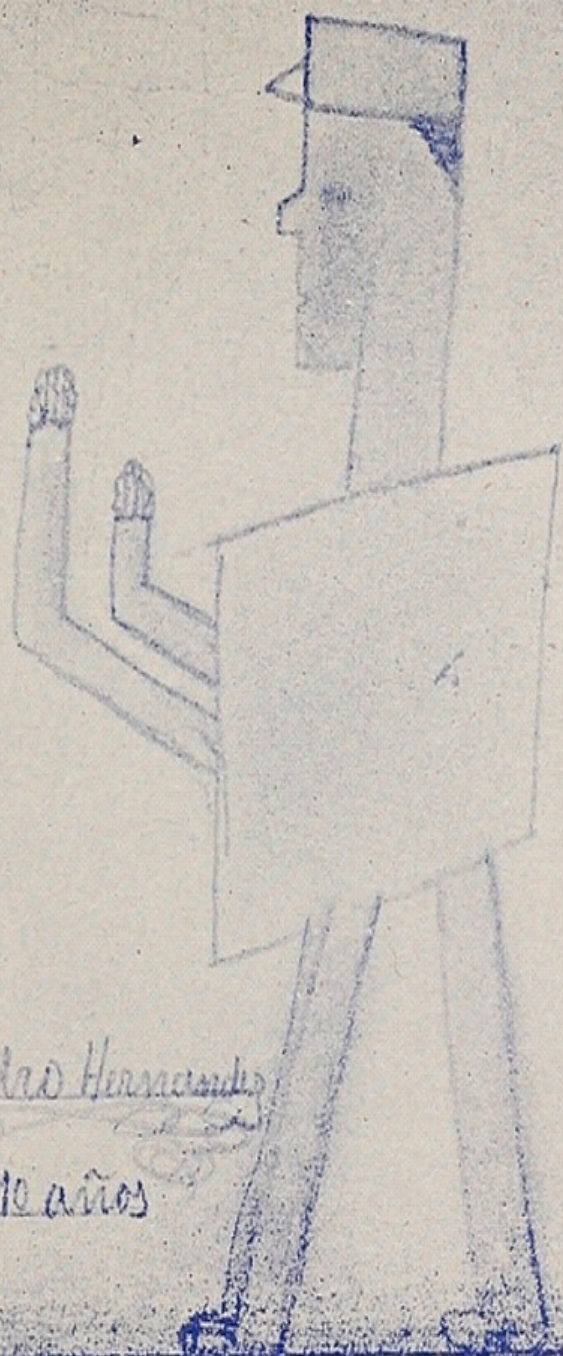


## Plate 57

Inscription says: "In the kitchen in the school of Freinet."

Notarilau. This gay watercolor is made by a gay child. Che  
peace and food in a French Colony for children. A very hot  
composition which has a quaint Marie Laurencin quality.





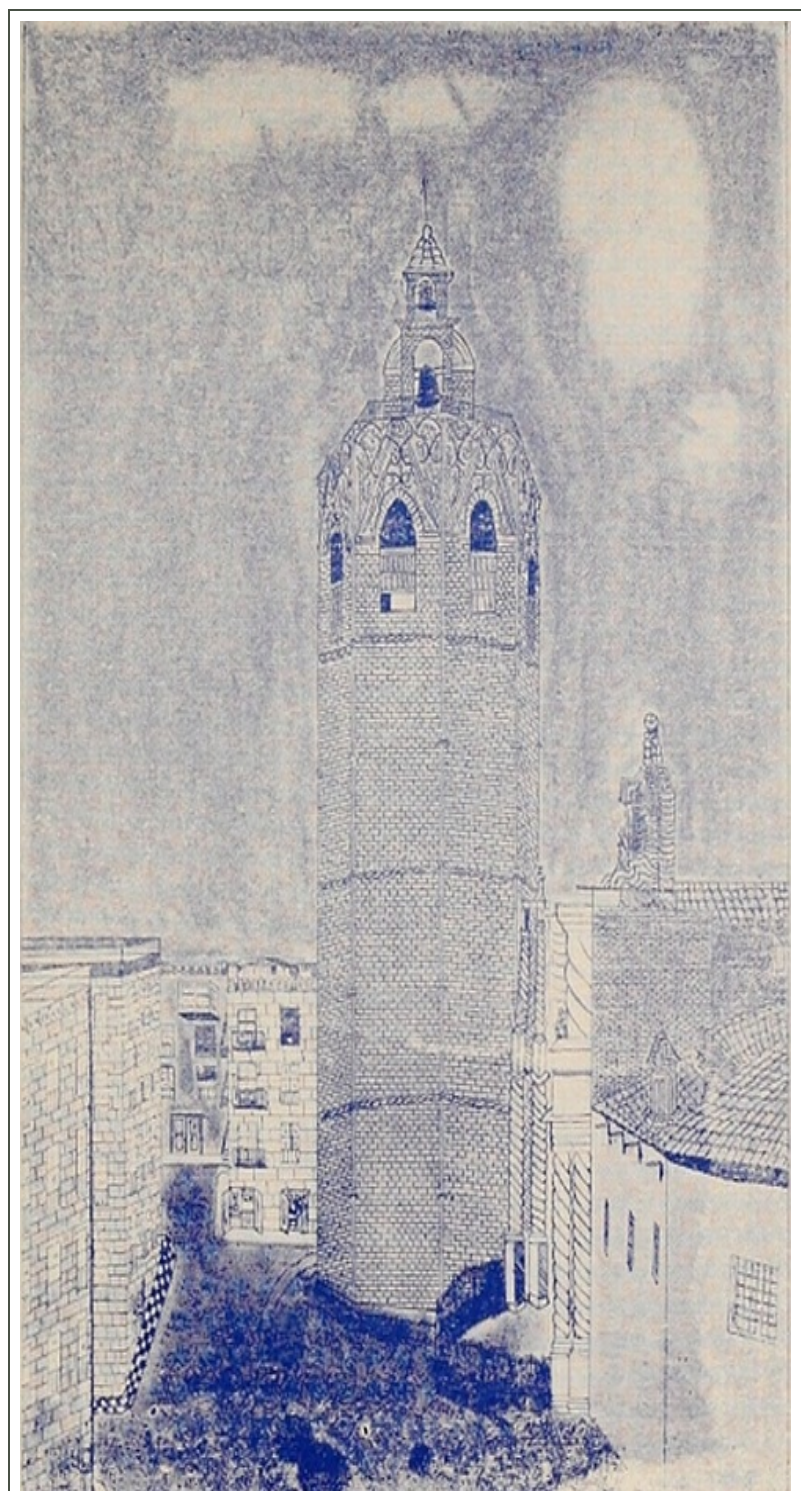
Isidro Hernández

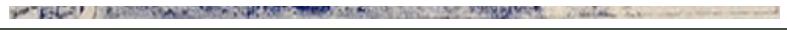
10 años



## Plate 58

What could be more cubistic than this drawing of 10-year-old innocent Picasso. And of the Blue Period besides.





## Plate 59

A. Guerra, 14 years old, drew this intricate picture of Val Miguelete.” His teacher, Jose Manaut, assured the writer that in his presence, from memory. If the boy survives he will be a painter. He never can have seen a work of Bombois or Viv





## Plate 60

The inscription in very childish handwriting says nothing b Alfonso Gonzalez, 9 years old." The grim simplicity of this completely the death of his playmate absorbs the child's r coffin to the cemetery over the gate of which is the sign R. May you rest in peace, little Miguel.



[The end of *They Still Draw Pictures!* by The Spanish Child Welfare Association]