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MUSEO NACIONAL DEL PRADO, MADRID: ABSOLUTISM AND NATIONALISM IN EARLY- NINETEENTH-CENTURY MADRID

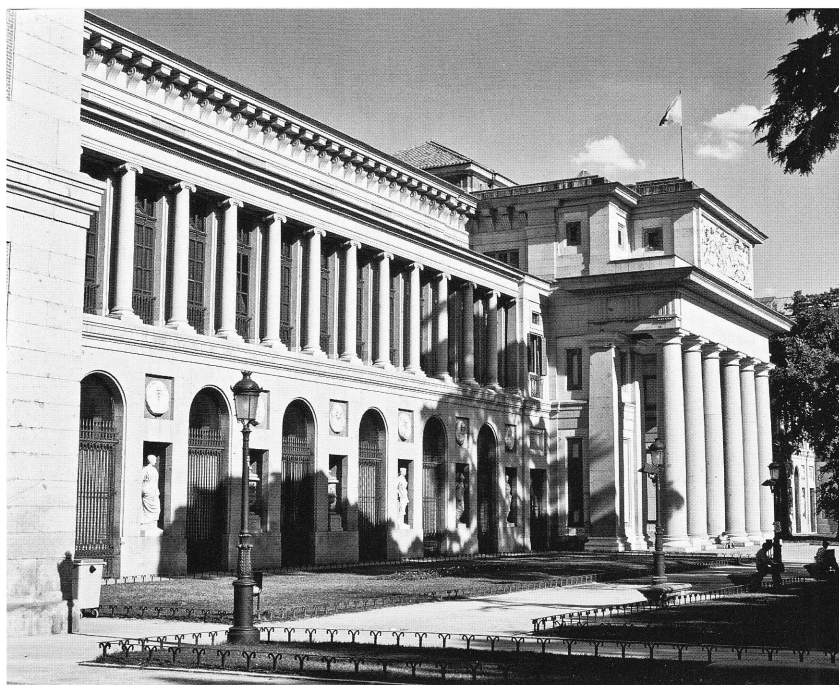
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On November 18, 1819, the *Gaceta de Madrid* announced the inauguration of galleries devoted to the Spanish school of painting in the “magnificent building of the Museo del Prado” (fig. 9-1).¹ The opening of the Real Museo del Prado marked the culmination of eighteen months of work to prepare this long-unfinished jewel of Spanish Neoclassicism to exhibit works of art drawn from the royal collection, an undertaking financed personally by King Ferdinand VII (r. 1814–33). In the rather grandiose language of the *Gaceta* notice, this new royally sponsored institution was intended “to beautify the capital of the realm and add to the luster and splendor of the nation, as well as to supply lovers of art with the most honest pleasure, and students of the arts of drawing with the most effective means to make rapid progress.”²

The *Gaceta* announcement also signaled that work would continue in order to ready galleries for the display of Italian, French, German, Flemish, and Dutch painting. The last of these galleries opened in 1830, thereby laying the foundation for the Museo Nacional del Prado as we know it today (fig. 9-2). Division according to national school had become the standard approach to museum installation in the final decades of the eighteenth century.³ At the time of the Prado’s inauguration, this method offered the advantage of highlighting the Spanish school of painting, which the *Gaceta* article lauds as “so distinguished even among the other nations that have cultivated with glory the fine arts.”⁴

This essay offers a broad overview of the creation and early history of the first public art museum in Spain and situates the Prado within the development of European museums of art in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Among the issues I consider are the history and character of the Spanish royal collection; unsuccessful attempts to establish a museum of painting at the end of the eighteenth century and during the French occupation of 1808 to 1813; the design and construction of the building designated to house the museum, which was conceived in 1785 to accommodate a group of scientific institutions but never completed for that purpose; and the evolution of the museum during the first phase of its existence, which came to a close with the death of Ferdinand VII in 1833. The absolutism of Ferdinand’s reign

FIGURE 9-1.
Vicente Camarón Torra
(Spanish, 1803–1864)
(after Carlos Vargas),
View of the Real Museo,
Situated on the Paseo del
Prado, 1824. Lithograph,
33.6 × 42.9 cm (13¼ ×
16⅞ in.). Madrid, Museo
Nacional del Prado



and the nationalist context of the recent struggle against the French in the Peninsular War affected in important ways the genesis and early history of the museum.

The Spanish Royal Collection and Unrealized Plans for a Museum of Painting

The paintings that Ferdinand VII displayed in his royal museum beginning in 1819 had been amassed over the course of the previous three centuries by his predecessors on the Spanish throne.⁵ Starting with the Holy Roman emperor Charles V (r. 1519–56; as Charles I of Spain, r. 1516–56), the Habsburg and Bourbon monarchs who ruled Spain avidly collected a wide range of objects, including paintings and sculpture.⁶ In addition to commissioning works by foreign and native artists, they acquired historical and contemporary art through purchase, gift, and inheritance, thereby building a royal collection remarkable for the legitimacy of its holdings.⁷ Limitations of space permit only brief mention of a few highlights of these collecting activities.

Charles V's most important legacy as a patron was his particular fondness for the work of Titian (1488/90–1576). He passed this taste on to his son and successor, Philip II (r. 1556–98), who also purchased major paintings by Hieronymus Bosch (1450–1516) and imported Italian Mannerist painters to decorate his major architectural undertaking: the monastery and palace of El Escorial (begun 1559). Philip III (r. 1598–1621) acquired the first works by Peter Paul

FIGURE 9-2.
West facade of the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, designed by Juan de Villanueva (1739–1811)

Rubens (1577–1640) to enter the royal collection; many more followed during the long reign, from 1621 to 1665, of Philip IV. Best remembered for his patronage of Diego Velázquez (1599–1660), Philip IV ranked among the greatest collectors of his age. He pursued every available means to obtain paintings and, to a lesser degree, sculpture, finding in this activity a refuge from ever-worsening economic and political crises. An inventory taken shortly after the death of the final Spanish Habsburg monarch, Charles II (r. 1665–1700), reveals that by the end of the seventeenth century the royal collection comprised 5,539 paintings.⁸

The Bourbons who assumed the Spanish throne in 1700 augmented the Crown's artistic holdings in various ways. The reign of Philip V (r. 1700–1746) witnessed a turn toward French and Italian art, both contemporary and historical. As for the Spanish school, the most significant acquisition was some thirty religious canvases by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1618–1682)—the Golden Age artist perhaps most widely admired in the eighteenth century—bought during the court's residence in Seville from 1729 to 1733. Also notable were the purchases of the collection of the Italian painter Carlo Maratta (1625–1713) and of the Roman sculptures that had been amassed by Queen Christina of Sweden (r. 1632–54); the latter were used to adorn the Palacio Real de La Granja de San Ildefonso, built for Philip V in emulation of Versailles. Although Philip V's son and successor, Ferdinand VI (r. 1746–59), devoted much more attention to music than to art, Charles III (r. 1759–88) continued the rich Spanish tradition of collecting and patronage. The most important project of the final third of the century was the decoration of the new Palacio Real in Madrid, built to replace the medieval Alcázar, which was irreparably damaged (along with a considerable number of paintings) by fire on Christmas Eve 1734. Anton Raphael Mengs (1728–1779) and Giambattista Tiepolo (1696–1770)—arguably the two most important court artists of the eighteenth century—executed ceiling frescoes in the new palace. The rise to prominence of their Spanish followers in the final quarter of the century signaled a shift in royal patronage from foreign to native artists. This development paralleled the maturation of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando (founded in 1752) and is exemplified most spectacularly by Francisco Goya (1746–1828), whose commissions for Charles III and Charles IV (r. 1789–1808) consisted primarily of cartoons for the Royal Tapestry Factory and portraits of members of the royal family, culminating with the *Family of Charles IV* (1800). Not remembered as a great patron of the arts, Ferdinand VII (r. 1808 and 1814–33) preferred the academic classicism of Spanish artists who had trained in the Parisian studio of Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825). Several large-scale paintings in that idiom were to be displayed in the Real Museo in its early years.

During these centuries the royal collection adorned the various palaces occupied by the Spanish monarchs. Particularly rich decorative ensembles were to be found at the Alcázar (until its destruction in 1734), El Escorial, the

Palacio del Buen Retiro (built on the eastern edge of Madrid for Philip IV in the early 1630s), and the new Madrid Palacio Real (habitable beginning in the 1760s). Although the guiding principle for the arrangement of paintings and sculpture was the display of power, aesthetic concerns also played a role, especially during the reigns of Philip II and Philip IV. Foreign diplomats and travelers had ready access to the collection throughout the early modern period, and many of them provide descriptions of its contents and installation in published accounts of their time in Spain.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, as museums of art became increasingly commonplace in Europe, first court painter Mengs lamented the lack of such an institution in Madrid. In 1776 Mengs composed a letter on the Spanish royal collection to Antonio Ponz, secretary of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Mengs prefaces his remarks on the collection by stating,

I would like to see gathered in this royal palace [in Madrid] all of the fine paintings that hang in the royal sites, and that they be organized in an orderly way in a gallery worthy of such a great monarch, to create for Your Majesty, for better or worse, a discourse that, starting with the earliest painters known to us and continuing to the most recent that are worthy of praise, will enlighten the understanding of those who are interested in art. In this way one would be able to understand the essential differences between them and be more charitable toward my ideas.⁹

Plans to create a museum were first formulated more than two decades later, during the brief tenure of Mariano Luis de Urquijo y Muga (1768–1817) as first secretary of state (the equivalent of prime minister) to Charles IV.¹⁰ A royal order issued on September 1, 1800, called for the transfer to Madrid of eleven works painted by Murillo in the late 1660s for the Church of the Hermandad de la Caridad in Seville. Apparently, the scheme entailed commissioning replicas of Murillo's canvases for the church and then shipping the originals to the capital. The order signed by Urquijo situates this undertaking within the context of enlightened policies being enacted abroad, and does so in terms that are typical of the centralizing impulse that characterized Spanish absolutism during the final decades of the eighteenth century: “[T]his measure conforms to the practice observed in all of the civilized nations of Europe, in which plans are being made to create in the seat of the court schools and museums that could not be maintained in the provinces.”¹¹

The Francophile Urquijo certainly had in mind the Musée du Louvre, in Paris, which had been inaugurated in 1793 (and was then referred to as the Muséum français or Muséum national des arts, among other names). But since no further trace of this plan has surfaced, it is difficult to know precisely what was envisioned. We do not know, for example, whether the works were

to be used to adorn the Madrid Palacio Real or, perhaps, to be installed as part of a larger initiative to create a public museum in the unfinished building on the Paseo del Prado designed in 1785 by Juan de Villanueva to house the Royal Cabinet of Natural History and a projected academy of sciences.¹² In any event, the plan to remove to the capital paintings by one of Seville's most famous artistic sons caused an uproar among local officials, and the political fallout may have played a part in the brevity of Urquijo's tenure as first secretary. The order was revoked in 1803, and no further official documents have come to light outlining plans for a museum before the onset of the Peninsular War in 1808.¹³

It is noteworthy that the one piece of information we have regarding Urquijo's scheme relates to the confiscation of religious art. Such a strategy was not to figure in the plans or early history of Ferdinand VII's Real Museo, the holdings of which came directly from the various royal palaces. By contrast, the removal of artistic treasures from convents, monasteries, and other religious institutions was a cornerstone of the museum initiative formulated in 1809, in the midst of the French occupation of the Iberian Peninsula from 1808 to 1813. Urquijo again was at the center of things, this time as first minister to Joseph Bonaparte (r. 1808–13), Napoléon's older brother and the "intruder king" of Spain.¹⁴ On December 20, 1809, a decree signed by Urquijo announced the formation of a museum of painting, filled with works to be drawn in large measure from religious institutions that had been suppressed by a royal order issued on May 20 of that year.¹⁵ The project was described as follows:

Wanting, for the benefit of the fine arts, to make available the multitude of pictures that, separated from the view of connoisseurs, were found up to now locked away in the cloisters; that these displays of the most perfect of the old works serve first as models and guide the talents [of new artists]; that the merit of the celebrated Spanish painters, little known by neighboring nations, shines, procuring for them at the proper time the immortal glory that the names of Velázquez, Ribera, Murillo, Ribalta, Navarrete, Juan San Vicente, and others so justly deserve.¹⁶

As this passage indicates, the aim was to create a museum dedicated to Spanish painting, rather than one devoted to the full breadth of the royal collection. In this respect, too, the Napoleonic initiative differed fundamentally from that carried out once Ferdinand VII was restored to the throne.

A commission under the direction of Frédéric Quilliet gathered some fifteen hundred works, depositing them in the Madrid convents of San Francisco and El Rosario.¹⁷ The original plan called for establishing the museum in the Convent of the Salesas Reales, but a royal decree issued on August 22, 1810,

shifted the intended location to the Palacio de Buenavista, situated on the Plaza de Cibeles, at the corner of the Paseo del Prado and the calle de Alcalá.¹⁸ These plans were abandoned when Joseph Bonaparte fled Madrid on March 17, 1813.

The unrealized Museo Josefino is one element in the broader narrative of the French discovery—and looting—of Spanish art that occurred during the Peninsular War. These years witnessed not only the official export of paintings to enrich the holdings of the Parisian Musée Napoléon (as the Louvre was called from 1803 to 1815) but also the acquisition of artworks (with varying degrees of legitimacy) by Napoléon's generals in Spain, including Soult, Murat, and Junot.¹⁹ The signing of the restitution act by Louis XVIII on May 8, 1814, led to the return of many, but by no means all, of the seized paintings. Nonetheless, these collecting activities during the war sowed the seeds for French interest in Spanish art, which was to grow in subsequent decades, as evidenced by the opening in 1838 of King Louis-Philippe's Galerie Espagnole in the Louvre.²⁰

Ferdinand VII and the Founding of the Real Museo del Prado

It was not until the restoration of Ferdinand VII in 1814 that plans were successfully carried out to create a museum of painting and sculpture in Madrid. Indeed, the founding of the Real Museo del Prado is the most important cultural legacy of Ferdinand's divisive and repressive reign.²¹ However, the creation of the royal museum did not occur without false steps. Two converging ambitions—both related to Spanish nationalism in the aftermath of the defeat of the French—led to the museum's inception. The first was the king's wish to establish such an institution as a means of making known the glories of the royal collection and, above all, the Spanish school of painting. The second was a desire, which took shape before and independent of Ferdinand's museum project, to salvage and complete the building on the Paseo del Prado that had been designed by Villanueva in 1785 to house the Royal Cabinet of Natural History and an academy of sciences. This edifice had been badly damaged during the French occupation, and its restoration was framed as an expression of national pride.

Shortly after his official entry into Madrid in May 1814, Ferdinand VII announced his intention to found a museum in the Palacio de Buenavista—the location of the unrealized Napoleonic Museo Josefino. On June 5, 1814, Ferdinand visited the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in the company of Princes Charles and Anthony and announced his decision to cede the Palacio de Buenavista to the academy so that that body could establish “a gallery of paintings, prints, statues, architectural plans, and other artistic treasures, with the appropriate amenities and decorum, in order to serve the instruction and use of students and artists, to satisfy the noble curiosity of Spaniards and foreigners, and to give Spain the glory it so justly deserves.”²² But owing to the sub-

stantial cost of repairing the palace and adapting it to this new use, as well as complex legal questions regarding ownership of the building, efforts to establish the so-called Museo Fernandino were abandoned in the fall of the same year. As compensation for scrapping the plan, Ferdinand gave the academy sixteen paintings from the royal collection, chosen in the summer of 1816 by first court painter Vicente López (1772–1850).²³

With the unraveling of the plan to use the Palacio de Buenavista, the project to create a museum shifted from the oversight of the academy to the direct control of the royal administration. This process began with a report issued by the Council of Castile on November 29, 1814, which called on the king to establish his desired museum in Villanueva's museum-academy on the Paseo del Prado. "It would be much better, regarding a museum," notes that report, "to use to this effect the famous building which was constructed for this purpose at a cost of many millions by the august grandfather and father of Your Majesty on the Paseo del Prado, rather than leave it to be totally destroyed in order to look for another that is more convenient and better suited."²⁴ Ferdinand agreed, and on December 26 he issued a royal order confirming his intention, thereby beginning the series of events that was to lead to the inauguration some five years later of the Real Museo del Prado.

The architect Antonio López Aguado was charged with the renovation and completion of Villanueva's building. Writing in 1826, Aguado described as follows the condition of the building in 1814:

Its capacity and location, which were suitable to the enemy for ends far removed from those of its founding and incompatible with the preservation of its beauty [from March to May 1808 French soldiers had used the lower level as stables], caused a multitude of deteriorations in its fabric, concluding with the total extraction of the lead from the roofs. [Since the building was] uncovered and abandoned to the elements during the years of the French domination, the rains gathered in its vaults, ruining the majority of them all the way to the top and preparing the rest for the same fate.²⁵

Thus the task given to Aguado was an act of restoration in both the literal and the figurative sense.

The transformation of Villanueva's museum of natural history—*cum*—academy of sciences into a museum of painting and sculpture needs to be set within the larger narrative of the building's inception and its place as part of the agenda of enlightened reform in the late eighteenth century. This edifice had originally been conceived as one of a number of changes to the urban fabric that took place along the Paseo del Prado in the late eighteenth century, during the reign of Ferdinand VII's grandfather Charles III (r. 1759–88).

This zone underwent relatively minor changes in the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century, but significant modifications commenced in 1767 and continued for several decades.²⁶ These projects were entrusted to the most accomplished Neoclassical Spanish architects and encompassed (among other things) creating a new central promenade; adding the monumental fountains of Cibele, Apollo, and Neptune; replacing the existing *Puerta de Alcalá* (the official entrance to the court); and expanding the nearby *Hospital General* (now part of the *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*). These years also witnessed the construction in this area of several scientific or technical institutions, which taken collectively were a cornerstone of the Enlightenment program envisioned (though not always carried out) under Charles III. Among them were the *Royal Porcelain Factory* (founded in 1759), the *Royal Silverwork Factory* (founded in 1778), the *Royal Botanical Garden* (founded in 1755, with the new garden on the *Paseo del Prado* inaugurated in 1781), and the *Royal Observatory* (begun in 1790). In addition, the *Paseo del Prado* played a central role in the social life of the capital during this period; its shady, tree-lined promenades were a favored place of recreation for members of the social elite, as is chronicled in travel accounts and shown in works of art.²⁷

The location chosen for the museum-academy was the sloping site adjacent to the north side of the *Royal Botanical Garden*. Originally, a chemical laboratory and school had been envisioned for this spot; drawings for them survive and have been attributed to court architect *Francisco Sabatini* (1722–1797). That scheme gave way to one for a building to house the *Royal Cabinet of Natural History* and a projected but never-realized academy of sciences (the *Spanish Royal Academy of Sciences* was founded only in 1847). The *Cabinet of Natural History* had been founded in 1752. Beginning in the early 1770s it shared with the *Royal Academy of Fine Arts* a renovated palace on the *calle de Alcalá*.²⁸ The *Count of Floridablanca* (1728–1808), who served as first minister to Charles III and Charles IV from 1777 to 1792 and was the guiding force behind the enlightened policies of the period, reveals in his political testament his hope that the *Academy of Fine Arts* and the *Cabinet of Natural History* will continue to coexist in the new building.²⁹ As for the academy of sciences, Charles III and *Floridablanca* first conceived this institution sometime around 1779 and intended that it include schools of botany and chemistry.³⁰

The commission for the museum-academy went to *Juan de Villanueva* (1739–1811). Born into a family of artists and architects, *Villanueva* emerged in the 1780s as the most important architect of his generation and the leading exponent of Neoclassical architecture in Spain.³¹ He held a series of prestigious posts at court, in the municipality of *Madrid*, and in the *Royal Academy of Fine Arts*. In the final years of his life he was to serve as principal architect and inspector of royal works to *Joseph Bonaparte*. Among *Villanueva's* most significant commissions were assignments undertaken at various royal sites,

including the Prado, Aranjuez, and Buen Retiro palaces, as well as the palace and monastery of El Escorial.

During the first months of 1785 Villanueva worked up two proposals for the museum-academy.³² One of these designs survives in the form of a set of plans, sections, and elevations, dated May 30, 1785, and now in the collection of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts.³³ Villanueva's other scheme, which was chosen in early June, exists only as a wooden maquette, presumably built in preparation for construction of the building itself (and now in the Prado's collection).³⁴ The relationship between the museum-academy and the adjacent Royal Botanical Garden is indicated in another sheet of architectural renderings, which shows the southern entrance of the building on an axis with the garden's northern entrance, also designed by Villanueva. This set of undated drawings demonstrates that, as would be expected, Villanueva's design evolved during the process of construction (fig. 9-3).³⁵ It may be that Villanueva created this sheet to accompany a twenty-two-page manuscript entitled *Descripción del Rl. Museo* (Description of the Royal Museum) and dated June 21, 1796.³⁶ In that text, the architect notes that he has "already greatly moderated [the building's] arrangement, giving it a new form in general; I don't know if it is simpler and more suitable, but it is certainly less costly."³⁷

Villanueva's manuscript is a key document for understanding the building, as it outlines the program of the commission and the architect's solution to it. The tripartite structure conceived by Villanueva corresponded to the three purposes the building was to serve. Each function was fulfilled in a distinct zone that was spatially autonomous from the other two and, owing to the slope of the site, was afforded its own ground-level entrance. The upper, principal floor was to house the Royal Cabinet of Natural History; the vitrines in which its scientific specimens and machines were to be displayed are visible in Villanueva's drawings of 1785 and about 1796 (fig. 9-3). The entrance to this institution was to be through an Ionic portico on the north facade of the building, accessed via the ramp visible in early views and removed in the later nineteenth century (see fig. 9-1). Visitors would have passed through an Ionic rotunda before entering the long central gallery (fig. 9-4). The academy of sciences was to be housed in the lower level, its Corinthian entrance located on the south side, facing the Royal Botanical Garden. Finally, the west facade, facing the Paseo del Prado, has a Doric portico, which is the grandest and most impressive of the three points of entry. It would have led to the *Salón de Juntas*, a meeting room clearly inspired by religious architecture and intended to serve a variety of institutions, including the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, which would have held its triennial prize-giving ceremonies in this space. As seen from the Paseo del Prado (see figs. 9-1, 9-2), and as represented in Villanueva's renderings of about 1796 (see fig. 9-3), the building comprises a northern and southern pavilion connected by a gallery that is punctuated by a

Doric portico. Thus its composition can be summarized as A-B-C-B-A.

As mentioned earlier, one of Villanueva's two designs was approved in June 1785. The few notices we have regarding the progress of construction indicate that work had commenced by September 1785, with the foundation completed in 1788. The walls were constructed of brick and granite, and Colmenar stone was used for capitals, bases, and other decorative elements. Proceeds from the sale of property seized from the Jesuits after their expulsion from Spain and its territories in late 1767 paid for construction, as they did for the erection of the nearby Royal Observatory, begun in 1790. By the late 1790s the north and west facades had been finished, and the south facade was under way; the roof of the main gallery was not yet completed. When construction came to a halt in 1808 three facades and the roof had been finished, but the walls of the *Salón de Juntas* were completed only up to the second impost block.

The building fell into a state of ruin during the French occupation, and Villanueva, who died in 1811, never lived to see its revitalization. In early August 1813 one of Villanueva's students, Santiago Gutiérrez de Arintero, was commissioned to examine the building and to recommend steps that could be taken to repair it. On August 24 he issued a report detailing the extensive water damage it had sustained.³⁸ The following month, Antonio López Aguado (1764–1831), assistant principal architect of Madrid and another of Villanueva's followers, was assigned to determine the cost of repairing the building. A year later, in the fall of 1814, Aguado was put in charge of overseeing its rehabilitation, though it seems that no particular purpose for the building had yet been defined.³⁹ It was at this juncture that the Council of Castile suggested that Villanueva's building would be the most appropriate location for a royal museum of painting and sculpture, and that the king endorsed this idea.

In repurposing an existing building to house a public art museum, Ferdinand VII and his agents adhered to a practice common in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The quarters of several prominent museums discussed elsewhere in this volume, including the Capitoline Museum in Rome (1734), the Uffizi in Florence (1769), the Belvedere (predecessor of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*) in Vienna (1784), and the Louvre in Paris (1793), had likewise originally been constructed for other uses.⁴⁰ In Madrid the building chosen to serve as a museum of art had been designed to function at least in part as a gallery, albeit for the display of natural-history specimens. Nonetheless, significant repairs and modifications were necessary once the decision was made to establish the Real Museo here. The northern pavilion and the rooms on the lower level were the best-preserved sections of the structure, though the latter (originally designed to house the academy of sciences) would require extensive modifications in order to convert them into galleries (see fig. 9-3). The ceilings of the long central gallery on the upper floor had sustained significant damage.

The first published reference to housing a museum of art in Villanueva's

building dates from 1818, several years after Ferdinand VII had approved the idea. An article in the *Gaceta de Madrid* of March 3, 1818, notes the lamentable state of “the magnificent building of the Museum of sciences” and indicates the king’s desire to renovate it.⁴¹ As stated in the article, his intention at this time was to install within it both a museum of natural history and a museum of art. The article goes on to cite the king’s decree that “the part destined to be the gallery of fine arts be concluded first . . . and that the many valuable paintings that adorn the royal palaces be located in it so that they can be preserved for the study of artists and the enjoyment of the public.”⁴² In the end the plans for the natural-history museum fell away, and the entire building was given over to the display of painting and sculpture.

This *Gaceta* article was one of several official notices regarding the museum that make a point of noting the involvement of Ferdinand VII’s second wife (and niece), María Isabel de Braganza (1797–1818), in the institution’s founding.⁴³ Whatever part she may have played, it came to an end with her death on December 26, 1818, eleven months before the museum opened to the public. Nonetheless, a full-length posthumous portrait executed in 1829 by Bernardo López y Piquer (1800–1874) presents Isabel as founder and protector of the museum (fig. 9-5).⁴⁴ This life-size canvas shows the queen resting one hand on sheets of imaginary plans for the galleries and gesturing with the other toward an open window that looks out onto the entrance and facade of the museum. This view of the museum, from the northwest, was lifted directly from a print (see fig. 9-1) that had been included in the first volume (1826) of the collection of lithographic reproductions of paintings in the royal collection, a project discussed later in this essay.

The museum’s first director, José Gabriel de Silva Bazán (1772–1839), the tenth Marquis of Santa Cruz, oversaw preparations for the opening. As a member of the nobility with close ties to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, the Marquis of Santa Cruz was typical of the museum’s directors during its first two decades. Since the museum functioned as part of the royal household, the marquis’s position as *mayordomo mayor* (chief administrator) of the Madrid Palacio Real made him ideally suited to oversee the transfer of works of art from the palace to the museum.⁴⁵ His brief tenure ended in March 1820, when he resigned in order to begin an appointment as ambassador to France.

Paintings began to arrive on July 27, 1818, with the majority coming from the Madrid palace. By the end of 1818 some 850 works were in the museum’s possession.⁴⁶ Once delivered, canvases were kept on the lower level of the building, where workspace was established for cleaning, restoration, and framing. First court painter Vicente López was charged with overseeing these operations, aided by two assistants. In early February 1819 the king paid a visit, reported in the *Gaceta*, to witness the progress firsthand.⁴⁷ Although work was completed by the summer of 1818, the public opening was delayed until late fall

so as to coincide with the arrival of the new queen, María Amalia of Saxony, but in the end, the inauguration took place without ceremony.

The Real Museo del Prado, 1819–1833

As noted at the outset, the galleries of the Real Museo were first opened to the public in November 1819. Initially, the visiting hours were restricted to Wednesdays from nine o'clock to two o'clock, a schedule similar to that of other museums during this period, such as the Belvedere in Vienna. Foreign visitors could arrange to see the collection at other times, and Saturday hours were eventually added when the museum reopened in 1828 after a closure for major renovations that lasted nearly two years.

At the time of the 1819 inauguration, only the northern pavilion had been rehabilitated (see figs. 9-1, 9-3). The rotunda at its center (see fig. 9-4) served as a transitional entry space to the galleries, an arrangement that the Prado shared with the Altes Museum in Berlin, inaugurated in 1830 (see chap. 11, figs. 11-3, 11-5, 11-6). The galleries were located on three sides of the rotunda and comprised two large rectangular spaces on the north and south of the pavilion and the much smaller anteroom that led to the still-unrestored grand gallery that stretched from the north to the south pavilion. (They are visible at the left of the upper ground plan in fig. 9-3.) From the more than 1,500 works of art transported to the museum in 1818 and 1819, first court painter Vicente López—in his role as artistic adviser to the museum—chose 311 paintings by Spanish artists to place on view for the opening.

Unfortunately, no contemporary accounts by visitors to the museum during its first years have come to light.⁴⁸ In the absence of such documents, we are left to reconstruct the experience of early visitors by examining the catalogue published by the royal press to coincide with the opening of the galleries.⁴⁹ Since there were no wall labels identifying works, the catalogue—in reality little more than a small pamphlet—would have been an essential element of the viewer's experience; the numbering of its entries corresponded to the order in which the works would have been encountered as one walked through the galleries.

Although not credited on the title page, Luis Eusebi (1773–1829) authored the first catalogue, as well as subsequent ones published during this first phase of the museum's history. A noted Roman miniaturist who came to Spain around 1795, Eusebi possessed considerable knowledge of the history of European art.⁵⁰ In April 1819 he was named the museum's *conserje*—the equivalent of associate director—and he compiled the catalogue over the course of the next seven months.

This slender volume (comprising just twenty-one pages) indicates that 154 works were displayed in the first gallery (to the right, or west, of the rotunda)

and 136 hung in the second gallery (to the left, or east, of the rotunda). Unlike subsequent editions, the original catalogue contains neither a prologue nor a preliminary discourse. Rather, it simply lists the works, providing a descriptive title followed by the artist's name. Although no dates are given, a few entries for paintings by Velázquez and Jusepe de Ribera (1588–1652) indicate that a particular work belongs to the first phase of the artist's career, as is the case with Velázquez's *Adoration of the Magi* (1619). A handful of canvases are listed as belonging to the school of a particular artist, reflecting discernments of connoisseurship that would have taken place as paintings were cleaned, restored, and framed in preparation for hanging.

A perusal of the 1819 catalogue reveals that just four artists accounted for slightly more than half the paintings on view when the galleries opened. Three of these artists—Velázquez, Murillo, and Ribera—are to be expected, as they were, and remain today, the best-known painters of Spain's Golden Age. (El Greco was virtually unknown during this period, and interest in his work emerged only later in the nineteenth century.) Velázquez and Murillo were represented by forty-four paintings each, and twenty-nine were attributed to Ribera. It comes as a surprise, however, to learn that forty-three of the canvases hanging in the two main galleries were by the eighteenth-century still-life painter Luis Meléndez (1716–1780). These were drawn from Meléndez's major royal commission, a series of paintings cataloguing the foods grown in the Spanish climate, executed for Charles III and Charles IV to hang in the Palacio Real de Aranjuez. The sequence of numbering in the catalogue indicates that Meléndez's works, as well as flower paintings by several artists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were dotted throughout the two principal galleries for decorative effect.

Thus from the beginning, paintings in the Prado were arranged by national school. However, the hanging of works within the galleries did not follow the chronological approach that had emerged in other public museums, such as the Louvre, during the later eighteenth century. Rather, the installation at the Prado was aesthetically harmonious but unsystematic, as had been the case in the “gentlemanly” hangs of earlier aristocratic collections. We can assume that the Prado's first galleries in the northern pavilion in 1819 resembled the gallery visible in the background of Pedro Kuntz's 1833 view of the rotunda (see fig. 9-4). Kuntz provides an oblique view of the museum's central grand gallery (where in the autumn of 1820 Italian works were to be on view), showing the cheek-by-jowl hanging of paintings. The gilded frames of the paintings are fitted together, according to size and shape, into a giant jigsaw puzzle.

The anteroom that opened onto the central gallery of the main floor (hidden behind the monumental door in Kuntz's painting) featured twenty-one works by artists still living or recently deceased. Among them were Luis Paret (1746–1799), Mariano Maella (1739–1819), Francisco Bayeu (1734–1795), José de

Madrazo y Agudo (1781–1859), and José Aparicio (1770–1838). Goya—the only one of these artists known today to nonspecialists—was represented solely by his equestrian portraits of Charles IV and María Luisa (both 1800–1801). By contrast, six paintings (or nearly one-third of those in the anteroom) were from the series of 120 works by Mariano Sánchez (1740–1822) depicting Spanish ports, bays, and arsenals, commissioned by Charles III. In the absence of a strict temporal division, the first gallery, too, contained works by Paret, Bayeu, and Maella (in addition to the many paintings by Meléndez), and the second included works by Bayeu and Antonio Carnicero (1748–1814). Most of those were works in minor genres rather than narrative in character: landscapes, flower paintings, and genre scenes that had served as cartoons for the Royal Tapestry Factory.

A few of the works chosen for the museum's initial installation were of clear political importance, including several relating to Ferdinand VII's Spanish Bourbon forebears. There was only one depiction of the museum's patron: Luis Paret's rather modest *Ferdinand VII's Oath as Prince of Asturias* (1791) hung in the first gallery. In the anteroom, however, were several large-scale works executed by court painter José Aparicio (1773–1838) that were overtly patriotic and nationalistic in character. These included *The Ransom of Prisoners in the Reign of Charles III* (listed in the catalogue as *El ultimo rescate costeadado por la España*), which in 1815 had served as the artist's presentation work for the Accademia di San Luca, in Rome, as well as *The Starvation of Madrid*. The latter painting employs the visual rhetoric of Davidian Neoclassicism to record the fortitude of *madrileños* in the face of the devastating effects of the Napoleonic invasion of the Spanish capital. It had been painted in 1818, just one year before the opening of the museum. In 1828 Aparicio's *Disembarkation of Ferdinand VII in Puerto de Santa Maria* (now destroyed) went on view. Considered the artist's most important work—and indisputable evidence of his role as the regime's chief propagandist—this painting glorified the restoration of Ferdinand VII by depicting his arrival in 1814 at the town that had served as the headquarters of the French army during the Peninsular War.

Once the initial galleries were open, efforts continued to expand what was on view, as well as to solve technical problems, the most pressing of which was how to warm the galleries in winter. Braziers and heaters were placed in certain rooms within a few years of the inauguration. The next major development was the installation of Italian painting in the central grand gallery, which runs from the northern pavilion and which, at the time, ended with a small window in the octagonal space at the core of the southern pavilion. Placing Italian art in the most prominent space in the museum reflected the primacy given to this school of painting in museums—and in aesthetic thought—throughout this period. This undertaking occurred under the supervision of the museum's second director, Pedro Tellez-Girón (1786–1851), Prince of

Anglona, brother-in-law of the Marquis of Santa Cruz, and son of Goya's great patrons the Duke and Duchess of Osuna. His tenure as director coincided with the so-called Liberal Triennium, from 1820 to 1823, during which an uprising forced Ferdinand VII to accept the terms of the Constitution of 1812, which he had repudiated at the outset of his reign. The hanging of the grand gallery was completed in the summer of 1820 and the gallery opened in October of that year. With 512 paintings now installed in the museum, Eusebi compiled a new catalogue, identical in format to the catalogue of 1819, which was published by the royal press in 1821. Among the six additional Spanish paintings it included were two from Francisco Zurbarán's series of the Life of Saint Pedro Nolasco (1629) and Goya's small-scale depiction of a *garrochista*, painted over an equestrian portrait of Manuel Godoy (1767–1851), royal favorite to Charles IV.⁵¹

A French edition of the museum's catalogue—the first in a language other than Spanish—appeared in 1823. Its publication coincided with the presence in the capital of the many Frenchmen who were part of the One Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis, a military expedition sent by Ferdinand's Bourbon relative Louis XVIII of France to forcibly bring the Liberal Triennium to an end in the spring of 1823.⁵² A Spanish version of this catalogue was published in an edition of a thousand copies the following year.⁵³

At the end of March 1826 the museum closed for two years to allow for extensive renovations and installations under the leadership of Agustín de Silva, the Duke of Hijar (1776–1863), whose directorship extended from 1826 to 1838.⁵⁴ When the galleries reopened in January 1828, visitors could enjoy not only Spanish and Italian painting but also canvases by French and German artists. Works of Flemish and Dutch art were on view when the southern pavilion was inaugurated on April 3, 1830. By now the entire upper floor of the museum had been completed. The catalogue of 1828 enumerated the 755 paintings that filled the galleries and was published in Spanish, French, and Italian editions.

The year 1828 also marked the completion of the *Salón del Descanso*. Located in the southern pavilion with a balcony overlooking the Royal Botanical Garden, this room served as a royal space during the king's visits to the museum, and he used it for the first time on August 19, 1828.⁵⁵ Goya's *Family of Charles IV*, which entered the museum's collection in 1827 and shows the future Ferdinand VII as Prince of Asturias (heir to the throne), was among the works installed in this room. In 1835 Francisco Martínez added ceiling decorations.⁵⁶

The one component of the museum's painting collection not organized by national school was the *Sala Reservada*. Installed in 1828 on the lower floor, this restricted gallery contained paintings deemed too risqué for public view. In Spanish opinion, that meant any work containing nudity, thereby encompassing some of the most famous paintings in the royal collection, including a considerable number of canvases by Titian and Rubens.⁵⁷ These works had been among the most prized paintings in the royal collection during the

seventeenth century, but they had only narrowly escaped destruction in the eighteenth century. In 1762 the devoutly Catholic Charles III ordered his first court painter, Anton Raphael Mengs, to gather together the nudes in the royal collection so that they could be burned.⁵⁸ Mengs managed to forge an agreement whereby these works were sequestered in his studio. In 1792, when Charles IV reiterated his father's intention to destroy the paintings, the Marquis of Santa Cruz—who, as mentioned earlier, was to become the Prado's first director—negotiated their transfer to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. They were put on view by the academy during the reign of Joseph Bonaparte and then hidden away once more upon the restoration of Ferdinand VII in 1814. In 1827 Ferdinand issued a royal order transferring them to the Real Museo, with the condition that they not be placed on public view, and they were installed in the Sala Reservada the following year.

Sculpture played a relatively minor role in the early history of the Prado, and this has remained the case ever since. Beginning in 1827, space on the lower level originally designed to house schools of botany and chemistry was renovated into a sculpture gallery that opened to the public on April 3, 1830. In keeping with Villanueva's original design of the building, this gallery was reached from an entrance on the lower level of the southern pavilion that faced the Royal Botanical Garden. This segregation of ancient sculpture and modern painting occurred in other early museums, such as the Capitoline Museum, the Louvre, the Royal Museum (predecessor of the Nationalmuseum) in Stockholm, and the Altes Museum in Berlin. The Prado was alone, however, in separating painting and sculpture utterly, in galleries accessible only from entrances at opposite ends of the building. This lack of communication between the two levels (which lasted until an internal staircase was inserted later in the nineteenth century) kept the Prado from establishing for viewers a relationship between ancient sculpture and modern painting, as museums elsewhere did.

The west facade, along the Paseo del Prado, contains important examples of Neoclassical sculpture that were conceived at the time the sculpture gallery was installed (see fig. 9-2). They were intended to announce unambiguously the purpose to which the building had been put and who had been responsible. For the attic of the monumental Doric portico of the main facade, Ramón Barba designed and began a large-scale bas-relief depicting *Ferdinand VII Receiving Minerva and the Fine Arts*. Not installed until 1842 (over a decade after Barba's death), it depicts the monarch as protector of the arts, sciences, and manufacturing, which are shown as allegorical figures bearing traditional attributes. Classical gods stand behind Ferdinand's throne, lending the weight of classical authority to his rule.

The lower level of the west facade features allegorical statues and portrait medallions of painters, sculptors, and architects. The subjects of the medallions were chosen in 1828 by the art historian Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez (1749–

1829), whose landmark *Diccionario histórico de los más ilustres profesores de las bellas artes en España* (Historical dictionary of the most illustrious exponents of the fine arts in Spain), published in six volumes in 1800, established him as the leading expert on the history of art in Spain, and continues to be an important reference. That all of the artists portrayed on the exterior of the building are Spanish is further evidence of the nationalist sentiments that underlay the creation and early history of the Real Museo del Prado.

A final aspect of the early history of the museum is the project to reproduce paintings using lithography. Like the museum itself, this effort to make known the principal works of the royal collection—above all, those of the Spanish school—brought to fruition a project first envisioned in the eighteenth century. In 1789, during the early years of the reign of Charles IV, first minister Manuel Godoy established the *Compañía para el Gradabo de los Cuadros de los Palacios Reales* (Company for the Engraving of Paintings in the Royal Palaces). Although that enterprise began ambitiously, it resulted in the creation of just fifty engravings, mostly of Spanish paintings, and was a financial failure.⁵⁹

The origins of the new initiative to employ printmaking for the dissemination of the national artistic patrimony date from 1825. In that year court painter José de Madrazo (1781–1859) went to Paris at the king's expense in order to master the new medium of lithography and to recruit practitioners.⁶⁰ Upon his return to Madrid later the same year, Madrazo introduced lithography to Spain by founding the Royal Lithographic Establishment. That institution was given exclusive rights for a ten-year period to reproduce paintings in the royal collection, including those in the recently established museum. The result was the *Colección litográfica de cuadros del Rey de España el Sr. Don Fernando VII* (Lithographic collection of the paintings of the king of Spain, His Majesty Ferdinand VII).⁶¹ An article in the short-lived journal *El artista*, entitled “Litografía,” proudly described the project as “a work of which few nations can offer an example” and went on to claim that “certainly we can show it to foreigners with pride and sureness in the fact that nothing can be presented to us in this genre that is superior.”⁶²

Beginning on March 19, 1826, with the presentation of the first completed works to Ferdinand VII, and continuing for the next twelve years, the Royal Lithographic Establishment issued images produced by a team of Spanish, French, and Italian lithographers. The prints appeared in groups of four that were eventually bound as three volumes containing 62, 72, and 64 prints, respectively. The images were accompanied by written descriptions, the first forty-six of which (with one exception) were written by Ceán Bermúdez before his death in 1829. The first volume (issued in 1826) linked the project to the Real Museo. A prologue by Madrazo outlined in broad terms the foundation and evolution of the museum. This was followed by a two-page description of the building by Antonio López Aguado, the architect responsible for its reno-

vation, which was accompanied by a print of the museum, viewed from the northwest (see fig. 9-1).

Postscript

The first phase in the history of the Real Museo del Prado came to an end in the early 1830s. The death of Ferdinand VII on September 29, 1833, gave rise to questions over whether works in the museum would be passed on to his heirs (in the end they were not).⁶³ The end of his reign also marked the beginning of a long period of political strife (known as the Carlist Wars) over the ascension of his infant daughter, Isabel II (r. 1833–68). Antonio López Aguado had died two years earlier, in 1831, and in 1834 his son Martín López Aguado (1796–1866) was named to succeed him as the museum's chief architect. The very successful directorship of the Duke of Híjar ended in 1838. José de Madrazo was named the museum's fifth director and served in that capacity until 1851; other members of his family followed him in that role later in the century. Madrazo's appointment marked the transition from directors who were members of the nobility to ones who were prominent artists, who in turn would give way in the twentieth century to art historians. In 1843 José de Madrazo's son Pedro de Madrazo (1816–1898) succeeded Luis Eusebi as author of the Prado's catalogue. Editions of the catalogue continued to be issued under Pedro de Madrazo's authorship until 1920—several decades after his death. Finally, the Revolution of 1868 brought to an end the contentious reign of Isabel II. Among the reforms that followed was the nationalization of the Crown's patrimony. Thus the royal museum that had been founded as a monument to post-Napoleonic nationalism now fell under the purview of the modern Spanish state. Yet another chapter in the Prado's history had begun.

NOTES

- All translations are by the author, unless otherwise noted.
- 1 *Gaceta de Madrid*, November 18, 1819, p. 1179.
 - 2 *Gaceta de Madrid* 1819 (note 1), p. 1179.
 - 3 Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 3–4.
 - 4 *Gaceta de Madrid* 1819 (note 1), p. 1179.
 - 5 The foundational study on the Spanish royal collection is Pedro de Madrazo, *Viaje artístico de tres siglos por las colecciones de cuadros de los reyes de España, desde Isabel la Católica hasta la formación del Real Museo del Prado de Madrid* (Madrid, 1884). For a more recent account, see Gonzalo Anes, *Las colecciones reales y la fundación del Museo del Prado* (Madrid, 1996).
 - 6 Although the idea of forming a collection for its own sake first took root in Spain under Isabel I of Castile (r. 1474–1504), her collection was dispersed and no works in the Prado have definitively been traced back to her.
 - 7 Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, “The Prado Museum,” in Anna Pallucchini et al., *Prado, Madrid* (New York, 1968), p. 10.
 - 8 Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *Historia del Museo del Prado (1819–1969)* (León, 1969), p. 35.
 - 9 Anton Raphael Mengs, “Carta de Don Antonio Rafael Mengs á Don Antonio Ponz,” in *Obras de D. Antonio Rafael Mengs*, edited by José Nicolás de Azara (Madrid, 1797), pp. 220–21.
 - 10 On Urquijo, see Pedro Beroquí, *El Museo Real (1819–1833)*, vol. 1 of *El Museo del Prado (notas para su historia)* (Madrid, 1933), pp. 54–56.
 - 11 Quoted in Beroquí, *Museo Real* (note 10), p. 55.
 - 12 Sánchez Cantón mentions the Louvre as a source of inspiration for Urquijo’s museum initiative (“Prado Museum” [note 7], p. 12). A letter by the art historian and collector Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez, dated August 17, 1803, indicates that the Palacio Real was the intended location for Murillo’s paintings (Beroquí, *Museo Real* [note 10], p. 55), but Rumeu de Armas discusses Villanueva’s building as a possible site for the envisioned museum (Antonio Rumeu de Armas, *Origen y fundación del Museo del Prado* [Madrid, 1980], p. 101).
 - 13 A poem by Juan Nicasio Gallego that was read at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts on September 24, 1808, alludes to the idea of forming a museum of art in the unfinished museum-academy on the Paseo del Prado. For the text of the poem, see Rumeu de Armas, *Origen y fundación* (note 12), p. 101.
 - 14 Urquijo was first minister under Joseph Bonaparte from July 7, 1808, until June 27, 1813.
 - 15 On the preparations for the so-called Museo Josefino, see María Dolores Antigüedad, “La primera colección pública en España: El Museo Josefino,” *Fragmentos* 11 (1987), pp. 67–85.
 - 16 *Gaceta de Madrid*, December 21, 1809, p. 1554.
 - 17 Anes, *Colecciones reales* (note 5), p. 77. In 1816 Quilliet was to publish a compendium of Spanish artists entitled *Dictionnaire des peintres espagnols*, which was little more than a French adaptation of Ceán Bermúdez’s *Diccionario histórico de los más ilustres profesores de las bellas artes en España* (1800). On Quilliet, see Miguel Lasso de la Vega, Marqués del Saltillo, *Mr. Frédéric Quilliet Comisario de Bellas Artes del Gobierno Instruso, 1809–14* (Madrid, 1933).
 - 18 Designed in 1777 by Pedro de Arnal for Goya’s patron the thirteenth Duchess of Alba, the palace was one of the most important examples of domestic architecture in late-eighteenth-century Madrid. It was given to royal favorite Manuel Godoy in 1807 and today houses the headquarters of the Spanish army.
 - 19 Article 2 of the December 20, 1809, decree called for the creation of “a general collection of the celebrated painters of the Spanish school, which we will offer to our august brother the Emperor of the French... [which] will serve as a pledge of the most sincere union of the two nations” (*Gaceta de Madrid* 1809 [note 16], pp. 1554–55). Although fifty paintings were chosen for the Musée Napoléon and were prepared for shipment, they did not leave Spain until the spring of 1813, and arrived in Paris in July. See Beroquí, *Museo Real* (note 10), pp. 67 and 152–53; Cecil Gould, *Trophy of Conquest: The Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre* (London, 1965), pp. 98–99; and Ignacio Cano Rivero, “Seville’s Artistic Heritage during the French Occupation,” in Gary Tinterow and Geneviève Lacambre, with Deborah L. Roldán et al., *Manet/Velázquez: The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003), pp. 93–113.
 - 20 See Jeannine Baticle, “The Galerie Espagnole of Louis Philippe,” in Tinterow and Lacambre, *Manet/Velázquez* (note 19), pp. 175–89; and Alisa Luxenberg, *The Galerie Espagnole and the Museo Nacional, 1835–1853: Saving Spanish Art, or the Politics of Patrimony* (Aldershot, 2008).
 - 21 Having reigned briefly in 1808, Ferdinand was forced to abdicate in favor of Napoléon’s brother Joseph and spend the Peninsular War in exile at the Château de Valençay. News of Ferdinand’s return to power generated considerable anticipation in Spain, as evidenced by contemporary references to him as the “Desired One.” This enthusiasm quickly dissipated when he refused to recognize the constitution that had been adopted by the Cortes of Cádiz in 1812, thereby initiating the protracted struggle between liberals and conservatives that was to mark nineteenth-century Spanish politics. Having restored absolute monarchy to Spain, Ferdinand invoked his royal prerogatives with particular ferocity, aided by the reestablished Holy Office of the Inquisition. He was, perhaps, the worst king in Spanish history. For a recent analysis of Ferdinand’s reign, see Miguel Artola, *La España de Fernando VII*, 3rd ed. (Madrid, 2008).
 - 22 Beroquí, *Museo Real* (note 10), p. 77. On the Museo Fernandino, see Joaquín Martínez Frieria, *Un Museo de Pinturas en el Palacio de Buenavista: Proyecto de la Real Academia de las Nobles Artes de San Fernando* (Madrid,

- 1942); and Valentín de Sambricio, "El Museo Fernandino," *Archivo Español de arte* 15 (1952), nos. 51, 53, and 54.
- 23 Beroquí, *Museo Real* (note 10), pp. 89–90. These paintings were eventually to end up in the collection of the Prado.
- 24 Beroquí, *Museo Real* (note 10), p. 82.
- 25 Antonio López Aguado, "Descripción del Real Museo . . .," in *Colección litográfica de cuadros del Rey de España el Sr. Don Fernando VII. . .* (Madrid, 1826), n.p. Aguado's text was reprinted in *El artista*, together with a lithograph of the south entrance viewed from within the Royal Botanical Garden (*El artista* 1, no. 6 [1835], pp. 61–63).
- 26 For an exhaustive history of the Paseo del Prado during the early modern period, see Concepción Lopezosa Aparició, *El Paseo del Prado de Madrid: Arquitectura y desarrollo urbano en los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Madrid, 2006).
- 27 See, for example, the half-dozen variations on the theme of a fashionable crowd on the Paseo del Prado in front of the gates to the Botanical Garden executed by Luis Paret and his circle around 1790. Two of these charming, small-scale Rococo works are in the collections of the Museo del Prado and the Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid.
- 28 Two fundamental sources on the founding and early history of the Royal Cabinet of Natural History are María de los Angeles Calatayud Arinero, *Pedro Franco Dávila: Primer director del Real Gabinete de Historia Natural fundado por Carlos III* (Madrid, 1988); and Agustín J. Barreiro, *El Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales (1771–1935)*, edited by Pedro M. Sánchez Moreno (1944; repr., Madrid, 1992).
- 29 Antonio Rumeu de Armas, *El testamento político del Conde de Floridablanca* (Madrid, 1962), p. 161.
- 30 Rumeu de Armas, *Testamento político* (note 29), p. 161.
- 31 On Villanueva, see Pedro Moleón Gavilanes, *La arquitectura de Juan de Villanueva: El proceso del proyecto* (Madrid, 1988); and Pedro Moleón Gavilanes, *Juan de Villanueva* (Madrid, 1998).
- 32 Villanueva's work along the Paseo del Prado was not limited to the museum-academy. For the Royal Botanical Garden, he designed the greenhouse pavilion (begun in 1781 and expanded in 1794) as well as the northern entrance, known as the Puerta Real, which was completed in 1789. He also conceived the Royal Observatory on the nearby San Blas hill, construction of which commenced in 1790.
- 33 These are reproduced in Moleón Gavilanes, *Juan de Villanueva* (note 31), pp. 200–201, with details of the drawings on pp. 202–3.
- 34 On the selection of this design, see Rumeu de Armas, *Origen y fundación* (note 12), p. 37.
- 35 The Spanish inscription reads: "Plantas, Alzado, y Perfil del edificio del Museo, inventado y dirigido en su execucion por Don Juan de Villanueva Arquitecto Mayor de S.M. y A.A. y de la Villa de Madrid. &.&." For a discussion of this drawing, see Moleón Gavilanes, *Juan de Villanueva* (note 31), pp. 231–35.
- 36 See Pedro Moleón Gavilanes, *Proyectos y obras para el Museo del Prado: Fuentes documentales para su historia* (Madrid, 1996), p. 29.
- 37 Moleón Gavilanes, *Proyectos y obras* (note 36), p. 29. The full text is given as appendix 15 in Moleón Gavilanes, *Arquitectura de Juan de Villanueva* (note 31), pp. 399–401. Villanueva's manuscript is now in the library of the Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid, which issued a facsimile edition in 1995.
- 38 The report is quoted in Moleón Gavilanes, *Proyectos y obras* (note 36), p. 47.
- 39 Aguado was Villanueva's leading pupil and, together with Isidro González Velázquez (1765–1829), the favored royal architect during the reign of Ferdinand VII. Trained at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Aguado served as the academy's director of architecture and was named principal architect to the king and to the city of Madrid. Among his foremost designs are the Teatro Real (not finished until much later) and the Puerta de Toledo.
- 40 Notable exceptions are the galleries in Düsseldorf (1709–14) and at Sanssouci (1764), near Berlin, which were purpose-built for the display of art.
- 41 *Gaceta de Madrid*, March 3, 1818, p. 227.
- 42 *Gaceta de Madrid* 1818 (note 41), p. 227.
- 43 The queen is also mentioned in the *Gaceta de Madrid* notice of November 18, 1819 (note 1), announcing the opening of the Spanish galleries. There is, however, no documentary evidence to indicate her particular role in the creation of the museum (Anes, *Colecciones reales* [note 5], p. 87).
- 44 The queen's likeness is based on a bust-length portrait painted after 1816 by Bernardo's father, Vicente López.
- 45 Gaya Nuño, *Historia* (note 8), p. 65.
- 46 Mariano de Madrazo, *Historia del Museo del Prado, 1818–1868* (Madrid, 1945), p. 94.
- 47 *Gaceta de Madrid*, February 5, 1819.
- 48 Javier Portús Pérez, *Museo del Prado: Memoria escrita, 1819–1994* (Madrid, 1994), p. 32.
- 49 *Catálogo de los cuadros de escuela española que existen en el Real Museo del Prado* (Madrid, 1819).
- 50 On Eusebi, see Carmen Espinosa Martín, "Luis Eusebi (1773–1829): Pintor miniaturista y primer conserje del Museo del Prado," *Goya* 285 (2001), pp. 332–38.
- 51 The equestrian portrait of Godoy was executed in August 1795 as the study for a painting that is now lost. Goya probably altered the figure into a *garrochista* during the Peninsular War, which began shortly after the fall of Godoy during the Aranjuez Mutiny in March 1808. I thank Manuela Mena for consulting with me on the question of dating.
- 52 Portús Pérez, *Museo del Prado* (note 48), p. 46.
- 53 Gaya Nuño, *Historia* (note 8), p. 71.
- 54 The Duke of Híjar was preceded by the Marquis of Ariza, who served as the museum's third director from 1823 to 1826. Since the marquis lacked any artistic knowledge or experience, Vicente López was effectively the director during this period. See Gaya Nuño, *Historia* (note 8).
- 55 The royal visit was reported in the *Gaceta de Madrid*,

- September 4, 1828, pp. 427–28.
- 56 Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, “El autor de la decoración del Retrete de Fernando VII en el Prado,” *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 19 (1986), pp. 33–38.
- 57 On the Sala Reservada, see Javier Portús Pérez, *La sala reservada del Museo del Prado y el coleccionismo de pintura de desnudo en la corte española, 1554–1838* (Madrid, 1998).
- 58 These events are summarized in Janis A. Tomlinson, “Burn It, Hide It, Flaunt It: Goya’s Majas and the Censorial Mind,” *Art Journal* 50, no. 4 (Winter 1991), p. 61.
- 59 See Juan Carrete Parrondo, “La Compañía para el Gradabo de los Cuadros de los Reales Palacios,” *Cuadernos de bibliografía* 1 (1979), pp. 61–74.
- 60 Beginning in 1803, Madrazo had studied in Paris in the studio of Jacques-Louis David. He spent the years from 1806 to 1818 in Rome, before returning to Madrid to assume a teaching post at the Academy of Fine Arts. Madrazo’s best-known work, *The Death of Viriatus* (1807), is a pastiche of Davidian motifs. It was on view in the anteroom when the museum opened in 1819. On Madrazo, see Carlos González et al., *El mundo de los Madrazo: Colección de la Comunidad de Madrid* (Madrid, 2007).
- 61 See Enrique Pardo Canalís, “La Colección litográfica de cuadros del Rey de España,” *Revista de ideas estéticas* 117 (1972), pp. 49–70; and Jesusa Vega, *La origen de la litografía en España: El Real Establecimiento Litográfico* (Madrid, 1990).
- 62 *El artista* 1, no. 7 (1835), p. 86.
- 63 For a detailed account of the legal questions regarding Ferdinand VII’s legacy as they relate to the royal collection, see Anes, *Colecciones reales* (note 5).