

INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Habsburg dynasty met its end in 1700. Madrid's Royal Palace, the reign's most symbolic building, would suffer the same fate three decades later, after a fire broke out late on Christmas Eve 1734. One palace servant lost her life in a blaze that raged at full force for four days. Material losses included numerous sculptures, more than five hundred paintings, and, of great significance to the history of architecture, a collection of drawings that documented projects built or imagined for Madrid and places far beyond. Damage to the building, which had been transformed from a medieval castle into a modern palace over the course of more than a century, was so extensive that it was demolished and then replaced. As a result, the architectural seat of government for a monarchy with territorial possessions in Europe, Africa, and the Americas, as well as islands in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, was lost to history.

An engraving dating to 1704 provides one of the best visual records of the vanished building (fig. 1). The image depicts the south façade of the Habsburg palace as backdrop to a parade featuring Spain's first Bourbon monarch. At west and east, four-story towers built primarily of brick, with stone ornament and slate-covered steeples, frame two palace wings built entirely of stone. At the center of the composition stands a monumental portal, or *portada*. Pairs of half columns in the Tuscan order adorn the main entrance at ground level and support a royal balcony, which, in the print,

is occupied by court women. Higher up still, the royal arms crown the building as a sign of royal beneficence and good government. Carved of marble, the arms are those of the Spanish Habsburgs. And so, too, the setting before which this scene plays out was one of the singular urban spaces of Habsburg Madrid.

In the legend that appears at the top of the print, the engraver identifies the Royal Palace with the letter *E*, which appears twice along the roofline of the building's wings. At far left, in the middle ground, the indicator *G* denotes the mountain range to the northwest of Madrid, before which stood another great Spanish Habsburg monument, San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial (fig. 2). Built from 1563 to 1584, the complex encompassed a monastery, royal residence, basilica, library, and college within a highly unified composition of stone cloisters and walls as well as slate-covered roofs. The survival of this august building has made the Escorial, despite its primarily religious purpose, a point of reference for historians interested in the built legacy of the Spanish Habsburgs. Whether intentional or not, a focus on the Escorial has come at the expense of a deeper understanding of the monarchy's secular seat of government, the Royal Palace in Madrid.

Philip II (1527–1598, r. 1556–98), the ruler who oversaw the sixteenth-century transformation of Madrid's Royal Palace and also built the Escorial from the ground up, prized both monuments. In



Figure 1 Nicolas Guérard, after Filippo Pallotta, *Aspecto del Real Palacio de Madrid y sv Plaza*, 1704. Engraving, 15 1/2 x 21 13/16 in. (39.3 x 55.5 cm). Bibliothèque nationale de France, GE-DD2987 (1643). Photo: BnF.

Madrid he located his office on the first story of the palace's west tower. Its adjoining terrace, clearly visible in the engraving, allowed for optimal views in the direction of the Escorial and the mountains beyond. Legend has it that Philip II and his Habsburg successors ruled from the Escorial. It is

true that important legislation was signed by Spanish monarchs there and at other royal estates, such as Aranjuez, located to the southwest of Madrid, and Valsaín, situated just outside Segovia, to the north of the capital. Yet it was the Royal Palace and a variety of court spaces throughout the urban fabric of Madrid, including convents and private residences, that served as the consequential settings of Habsburg governance. Decisions made in Madrid caused ripples felt across the composite realm of the Spanish Habsburgs, an idiosyncratic grouping

of kingdoms and domains, complete with their own laws and customs, that spread across the globe and was unified in the person of the king of Spain. The realm was called the *Monarquía Hispánica*, or Spanish Monarchy.¹

With around one hundred thousand inhabitants in 1600, Madrid ranked among the most populous cities in early modern Europe.² Moreover, the city covered a territory three times the area it filled when Philip II in 1561 chose it to serve as the court of the Spanish Habsburgs.³ That monarch and his successor, Philip III (1578–1621, r. 1598–1621), established building practices and laws that guided Madrid's expansion. The decades of the 1620s and 1630s, during the long reign of Philip IV (1605–1665, r. 1621–65), were critical to this enterprise.

Much of what had been built since 1561 was erected quickly owing to the necessity of housing the court and its vast bureaucracy as efficiently as possible. In 1628, only seven years into Philip IV's reign, Madrid's municipal leaders began to draw up a plan of the city's limits and subsequently erected a nondefensive wall to curb growth.⁴ Although that wall would have to be repaired in 1642, building in the capital rarely surpassed its limits as municipal and court builders reshaped the city's architectural profile.

Figure 2 Juan Bautista de Toledo, Juan de Herrera, and others, Monastery of San Lorenzo el Real, El Escorial, 1563–84, aerial view from the southwest. Photo: iStock / Syldavia.



Domes, portals, and towers of churches, convents, and monasteries were easily understood signs of architectural distinction in seventeenth-century Madrid. Religious architecture is not the focus of this book, but some initial comments are merited, given the amount of church-owned land within the confines of Madrid and the enormous impact church buildings had on the city's overall building trade.⁵ Ecclesiastical patronage exploded with the settlement of the court in the 1560s, and it resumed at a rapid pace in 1606, following a five-year transfer of the court to the Castilian city of Valladolid. The move north had been brought about by the political machinations of Philip III's *valido*, or royal favorite, Francisco Gómez de Sandoval, the first Duke of Lerma (1553–1625), who sought greater influence for his territorial homeland by having the court situated in northern Castile.⁶ In Valladolid and in his titular village of Lerma, the duke invested heavily in religious patronage, as he would do in Madrid following the court's return.

The increase in patronage of church institutions in Madrid followed from the expansion of religious orders in the early modern period and also from the private support of the elite, who considered themselves morally bound to help found religious houses.⁷ Mendicant orders such as the Dominicans and Mercedarians attracted patrons, as they had for centuries, while reformed orders such as the Discalced Carmelites also raised funds to build houses of worship in Madrid. Additionally, Philip III showed interest in reviving his father's plan to build a cathedral in the city. The project was masterminded by Lerma, who is associated with an anonymous manuscript dated around 1611–16, which outlines a scheme for a large collegiate church. As with a cathedral, a religious building of this scale would have required

approval from Rome.⁸ The document suggests four possible sites for a church that would have rivaled the royal basilica at the Escorial, including one immediately south of the Royal Palace, near Madrid's oldest parish, Santa María la Mayor.

A drawing by the royal architect Juan Gómez de Mora (1586–1648) of a partial façade and bell tower inspired directly by a mid-sixteenth-century print for St. Peter's in the Vatican has been associated with the cathedral project, although studies of the image are inconclusive, as is the seriousness with which the project was received, given Lerma's weakening position at court. Nonetheless, planning for a cathedral was pursued anew in the early years of Philip IV's reign, with sponsorship credited to his first queen, Isabel of Bourbon (1602–1644). Despite the preparation of now-lost drawings in 1623 and the survey of a large building site adjoining the Monastery of San Gil, located in the immediate vicinity of the Royal Palace, the project was abandoned by 1624.⁹ Prior efforts related to a cathedral for Madrid had faced opposition from church officials in Toledo; and it seems likely that Toledo's powerful archbishop—who held canonical jurisdiction over Madrid—also resisted early seventeenth-century proposals. Although never realized, the cathedral project involved the studio of the Junta Real de Obras y Bosques (Royal Committee of Works and Forests), which, for simplicity, I call the Royal Works,¹⁰ and in this way, the designers responsible for the government buildings studied in this book can be understood to have been involved with religious enterprises in Madrid.

The relocation of the court to Valladolid from 1601 to 1606 was a failure, and numerous officials had a lot to say about the matter, including some who directly addressed the topic of architecture. In a treatise penned in 1606 arguing for Madrid's

rightful role as court seat, the political theorists Juan de Jerez and Lope de Deza comment not only on the city's sizeable population but also on the substantial size of noble households. Addressing a societal, and architectural, change of the first order, they write, "Without a doubt, the house of any grandee [in Madrid] today has as many people and offices as that of past kings."¹¹ Like noble residences addressed by Jerez and Deza, public architecture, too, received renewed attention after the court's return. The seventeenth-century architect and theorist Fray Lorenzo de San Nicolás (1593–1679) explains the importance of public buildings in his 1639 treatise *Arte y uso de arquitectura*.¹² In a section dedicated to the proper training of builders, Fray Lorenzo contends that skilled artisans are necessary to society, as the work they do contributes to the reputation of a place: "In their kingdoms, the Catholic monarchs of Spain have palaces, *alcázares*, and fortresses, some to exhibit their greatness, others for life's enjoyments, and others for the defense of their realms. All lend authority to their owners, to [the realm's] cities, and to the reign itself, as it is an established fact that buildings aggrandize everything." He adds that cathedral chapters and town councils also commission buildings "that stand as ornaments of the reign and the republic."¹³

Ranking first among public works pursued in Madrid after 1606 was an ambitious project to redesign the south façade of the Royal Palace. But there were many more initiatives. The surviving paper trail in Madrid's municipal archive details the construction of market buildings, granaries, fountains, and countless infrastructure projects that suggest the herculean effort to provide the court city with the services—and buildings—necessary for good government. Much of the organizational work behind these architectural

undertakings fell to the town council: the Ayuntamiento de Madrid. As part of the deal brokered to secure the court's return from Valladolid in 1606, the municipality pledged enormous resources for projects such as renovations at the Royal Palace that primarily benefited the court.¹⁴ The economic arrangement led to the town council's subservience to the court, a dynamic that intensified over the course of the century.¹⁵

Public buildings are the focus of this book, yet I have also endeavored to write about the lived experience of architecture by Madrid's residents and visitors. Painted views of architecture and public spaces can help convey the impact of a monumental façade on passersby, but what about the experience of a building's interior? As illustrated already with the Royal Palace, many of the most significant public buildings of seventeenth-century Madrid do not survive. Consequently, we have no direct way of gauging their appearance. Even though a historian can face many pitfalls by attempting to reconstruct architectural interiors that have disappeared, I have embraced this challenge in order to conjure up the ways in which people moved through corridors, along halls, and up or down staircases as they inhabited government buildings.¹⁶

The most famous image of a seventeenth-century Madrid interior is Diego Velázquez's (1598–1660) portrait of the Spanish royal family, familiarly known as *Las meninas* (fig. 3). This quiet scene, painted around 1656, was set in a hall along the south façade of the Royal Palace, one located directly behind the seven westernmost mezzanine-level windows of the building as shown in the 1704 engraving. Velázquez depicts members of the royal household surrounding the infanta Margarita (1651–73), dressed in white, with one individual caught midstep as he departs the scene. In the



Figure 3 Diego Velázquez, *Las meninas*, 1656. Oil on canvas, 10 ft. 6 ³/₈ in. × 9 ft. 2 ¹/₂ in. (321 × 281 cm). Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, P001174. Photo © Museo Nacional del Prado / Art Resource, New York.

left middle ground, the artist himself moves back from his canvas to take in the arrival of an unseen visitor or visitors who occupy the same space as the viewer. Reflected in the distant mirror are the queen and king, Mariana of Austria (1634–1696; regency, 1665–75) and Philip IV. Velázquez captures a private moment, one in which the royal family and their servants can hardly be more removed from the city around them. Yet the individuals pictured in *Las meninas* often left the Royal Palace and moved through the streets and public

spaces of Madrid, sometimes for mundane reasons but on other occasions to participate in civic rituals that bound the royal family and its household to their court city.¹⁷ On these outings, they beheld the concerted efforts of municipal and royal officials to mold a showcase city.

Jurisdictionally, Madrid was unique among other urban entities in Spain. It was first a town, or *villa*, a title that signaled municipal independence. The title also indicated that the place lacked a cathedral or university, entities that would have allowed it to be called a *ciudad*.¹⁸ At the same time, Madrid served as the privileged seat of the *corte*, or royal court, an institution with an organizational structure that allowed it to function as a world unto itself.¹⁹ Madrid was thus called the *Villa y Corte*, or Town and Court, a title it still holds today despite having a population of more than three million inhabitants. For the early modern period, the title reflects the forced marriage of municipal and royal governments that shaped Madrid's identity after 1561.

The process of building in seventeenth-century Madrid was complicated by competing demands imposed by officials representing the town council and others acting on behalf of the Crown. Nonetheless, Madrid's outward appearance improved as the century progressed, and the last three Spanish Habsburg rulers—Philip IV, Mariana of Austria, and Carlos II (1661–1700, r. 1665–1700)—undertook projects to enhance the city's image. As I explore the process behind the creation of monuments between 1620 and 1700, I hope to illuminate the ways in which artists, historians, and court image makers—to borrow a notion from Peter Burke's exemplary study of the French court of Louis XIV—came to use the arts to forge consensus among subjects from near and far about the magnificence of Spanish Habsburg rule.²⁰ Because this

exalted image of Madrid contrasted sharply with social crises in Spain and across its vast empire for most of the seventeenth century, the architectural projects at the heart of this book must be understood to reflect changing ideals in politics as much as in taste or style. This is not a book about baroque architecture; rather, it is one about Spanish Habsburg buildings and public spaces.

THE SPANISH HABSBURGS

Architects, masons, and building crews were key agents behind Madrid's transformation in the seventeenth century. Yet equally important were the Habsburg rulers, who sought to project a renewed image of their capital city to residents and visitors, as well as to distant subjects, who might experience the place through written or visual descriptions. Understanding their contributions, however, requires a reconsideration of what has been written about them. Nineteenth-century Spanish historians characterized seventeenth-century Spanish Habsburg monarchs as despotic and inept, a sentiment that was tied both to the nation's loss of overseas imperial possessions in the 1890s and to a nostalgic recollection of Spanish expansion under Philip II in the late sixteenth century.²¹ The resulting myth of seventeenth-century Spain as a backwater has had a lasting influence on historiography, with the period described primarily as one of decline.²²

The seventeenth century opened with the twenty-two-year-old Philip III in the second year of his reign and his government largely in the hands of the Duke of Lerma. It was at Lerma's insistence that the court in 1601 relocated to Valladolid, where it remained for five years. Philip reigned during the so-called *Pax Hispanica*, a period of relative peace that began in the 1590s, during the last

decade of his father's rule. This peace was achieved owing to noninterventionist policies that came to be perceived as a weakness at the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, in 1618.²³ Political stability in the monarchy well into the second decade of the century helps explain the building boom in Madrid after the return of the court in 1606, as well as the many cultural achievements in arts and letters that would come to define a Spanish golden age.²⁴

Another Philip ascended the throne of Spain in 1621, during a period of conflict throughout Europe; this period found the monarchy at war on various fronts, including in the Low Countries and northern Italy. In the early decades of his reign, Philip IV relied heavily on the advice of his *valido* and *de facto* first minister, Gaspar de Guzmán, the Count-Duke of Olivares (1587–1645). Adopting an aggressive stance that signaled a new direction for the Spanish Monarchy, Philip IV decided not to renew a truce with the Dutch that expired in 1621, and to reinforce his alliance with the Austrian Habsburgs by supplying military as well as financial support.²⁵ By the late 1620s Philip began to be promoted by poets, artists, and political thinkers alike as the Planet King, evoking the monarch's rule over a vast domain and embracing Olivares's vision of a Union of Arms by which the realm's various kingdoms and territories would share political and military objectives.²⁶ To this end, manuscript documents as well as prints and book frontispieces defined Philip IV's position as "King of the Spains, and the New World." The capital city of this pluralistic realm, too, would be elevated as the "Imperial Villa de Madrid," a term that came into use by the mid-1630s.²⁷

The optimistic reign of the Planet King was soon met with political, as well as economic, challenges on the Iberian Peninsula. Olivares fell from power in 1643, a fate brought about in part by the revolts

of the Catalans and Portuguese against Castilian rule established three years earlier. In a number of important portraits of the era, painters associate Philip IV with the charged state of affairs.²⁸ One arresting portrait of the king by Velázquez depicts the ruler dressed for war in the midst of the Catalan conflict in 1644 (fig. 4). The king appears in a silver shirt with a white lace neckpiece and cuffs, over which he wears a red tunic with patterns stitched in silver thread. Velázquez renders the fabric with dazzling brushwork, and yet Philip's statue-like expression reveals the austerity and distance that are the norm for royal portraiture of the era.²⁹

Although the conflict with Portugal challenged the king for the duration of his reign, the Catalan revolt was settled in his favor in 1652. Velázquez's depiction of the king on the eve of victory at Fraga is one of only three paintings to depict a Spanish Habsburg monarch at war.³⁰ It is worth recalling that Castile itself remained remarkably stable during the upheavals of the middle decades of the seventeenth century.³¹ Defeats and setbacks certainly led to the perception of a belittled Spain, but new research indicates that the dire situation was one the last of the Habsburg rulers managed to control with considerable success. Even the Peace of the Pyrenees, signed with France in 1659, achieved a stalemate of sorts that contributed to an eventual settlement of the Portuguese conflict by Philip's widow, Mariana of Austria.³²

News of Philip IV's death in September 1665 was received by foreign courts as a bad omen for Spain. The unease surrounding the longevity of the Spanish Monarchy in the 1660s had a contemporary parallel in Madrid's theaters, where performances often included royal characters teetering between lofty ideals and the grim reality surrounding an uncertain political future.³³

Mariana of Austria, thirty-one years old at the time of Philip IV's death, assumed the reins of a regency government owing to the minority of Prince Carlos, not yet four years old. Until recently, legend has trumped historical accuracy with regard to Mariana, in large part because of her gender and foreign origin.³⁴ After her husband's death, Mariana donned a widow's habit, which court painters such as Juan Carreño de Miranda (1614–85) recorded in striking portraits like that from 1670 made for the Escorial and now in the Museo del Prado (fig. 5). Mariana's dress, the secular habit of a Franciscan nun, was understood in its day as a sign of a royal widow's claim to be a political heir.³⁵ This period reading of the costume was unknown to most modern observers, who mistakenly interpreted the habit as a sign of Mariana's extreme piety and, by extension, her inability to rule.

In a letter sent to the Spanish ambassador in Rome announcing Philip's death, Mariana acknowledges her newfound role as "tutor and caretaker of the king, my son, and governor of all the reigns and lordships of this monarchy."³⁶ In Carreño's portrait, Mariana sits at a marble-top desk with quill and inkwell at hand, going about the work of governing that she proclaimed she would do in her letter to the papal court. Moreover, she carries out her duties in the most magnificent room of the Royal Palace, the *Salón de los Espejos*, or Hall of Mirrors, which she used as the royal office during her regency.³⁷ With a spectacular illusionistic fresco painting overhead—unseen in the pictorial space—and rich rugs and tapestries, the very setting of the portrait stakes a claim about political power. As if to convey a message of even greater strength, Carreño includes, on the wall behind Mariana, Tintoretto's painting of Judith in the act of slaying Holofernes.³⁸



Despite late nineteenth-century contempt for Mariana, the historian of the early twenty-first century can see the regent queen in a new light. Recent research has revealed the ways in which she overcame many of the political challenges, both local and international, inherited from her husband and charted a course of political stability after 1670.³⁹ This would lead to important architectural projects in Madrid. That Mariana accomplished what she did with the help of advisors

Figure 4 Diego Velázquez, *King Philip IV of Spain*, 1644. Oil on canvas, 4 ft. 3 ¹/₈ × 3 ft. 3 ¹/₈ in. (129.9 × 99.4 cm). Frick Collection, New York, Henry Clay Frick Bequest, 1911.1.123. Photo © The Frick Collection.

Figure 5 Juan Carreño de Miranda, *Queen Mariana of Austria*, 1670. Oil on canvas, 6 ft. 11 ¹/₁₆ in. × 4 ft. 1 ³/₁₆ in. (211 × 125 cm). Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, P000644. Photo © Museo Nacional del Prado / Art Resource, New York.



was not a sign of weakness, as earlier historians claimed. Her manner of governing followed in the style of Habsburg administration instituted by Philip II, not to mention diplomatic norms exercised by all major European courts. As with Mariana's reign, that of her son Carlos II has been undergoing notable revision.⁴⁰ As the last member of the Spanish Habsburg line and a man unsuccessful in producing an heir, Carlos was subjected to judgments by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historians that often verged on ridicule and were anything but objective.

Luis Ribot, the historian who has done the most to revise the image of the king in recent years, asserts that Carlos was likely a reasonably intelligent man who worked much more diligently at matters of government than previously believed. Yet Carlos also ruled during a time of French political ascendance, which presented him with a daunting task. Nonetheless, period portraits convey messages of political strength that affirm the resilience of Carlos's reign on the wider European political stage.⁴¹ For instance, a 1681 portrait by Carreño depicts the king in armor standing in the Hall of Mirrors (fig. 6). The armor Carlos dons in the portrait dates to the 1550s and was associated with Philip II's victory at San Quentin over the French, a momentous military victory in earlier Habsburg history.⁴² Interestingly, the painting illustrated here is a copy of an original portrait made in 1679 and sent to France as part of the negotiations of Carlos II's marriage to María Luisa of Orleans (1662–89). It can be interpreted thus to proclaim fortitude in

Figure 6 Juan Carreño de Miranda, *King Carlos II in Armor*, 1681. Oil on canvas, 7 ft. 7 ¼ in. × 4 ft. 1 7/16 in. (232 × 125.5 cm). Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, P007101. Photo © Museo Nacional del Prado / Art Resource, New York.

light of Spain's precarious standing vis-à-vis the court of Louis XIV.

These portraits reveal that Mariana and Carlos both understood the ways in which art could be employed to shape a ruler's image. Likewise, the rulers were profoundly aware of architecture's potential to express messages about royal beneficence and power. They were fortunate to rule at a time during which Spain experienced an economic reprieve, which gave rise to a cultural flowering that had its greatest effect in and around Madrid, as illustrated by some of the monuments surveyed in this book. In his definitive study of Spanish painting, Jonathan Brown labels the art produced in the last decades of the seventeenth century a "grand finale" for the Spanish Habsburgs.⁴³ This book assesses the architecture of the era with an eye toward new scholarly currents and counters earlier scholarship that judged Madrid's buildings to be marginal and characteristic of Spain's political decline. Madrid was a receptor of architectural developments and ideas from elsewhere in the empire, but it was also a trendsetter. It is my hope that sustained contextual attention to these buildings will reveal the Spanish Habsburg court as a place of cultural innovation.

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE IN MADRID

As early as the 1550s, architects working for Philip II in and around Madrid introduced a variant of classical architecture labeled by historians with terms such as "Flemish phase," "court style," or even "Madrid style."⁴⁴ More recently, it has come to be called by scholars working outside Spain, myself included, the *estilo austriaco* to denote the House of Austria, as the Habsburgs were known in Spain.⁴⁵ Indeed, Madrid's historic core—where

the buildings discussed in this book are located—is today called *el Madrid de los Austrias*. The Habsburg style combined Spanish building traditions—such as symmetrical compositions with framing towers and monumental portals—with classical features derived from Italy and ornamental flourishes originating from the Low Countries. Philip and his architects encountered these architectural models firsthand during their travels. Dating to 1559–60, the Torre Dorada, or Gilded Tower, of the Royal Palace, seen at left in the engraved view that opens this introduction, was the first Madrid monument to exemplify the new style. The four-story tower was built primarily of brick that had been specially fired in the Low Countries and then imported to Spain. Stone courses divided each story, and additional stone was used for window frames and pediments, details that reveal Philip II's appreciation of Italian classical architecture and its associations with Imperial Rome. In a nod to contemporary architectural trends in France and the Low Countries, Philip's architects marked the tower's corners with quoins, or dressed stones. Finally, the tower was crowned by a high-pitched wood-framed roof covered in slate, which carried an artful steeple, or *chapitel*, an element inspired by the architecture Philip saw in the Low Countries and Germany.

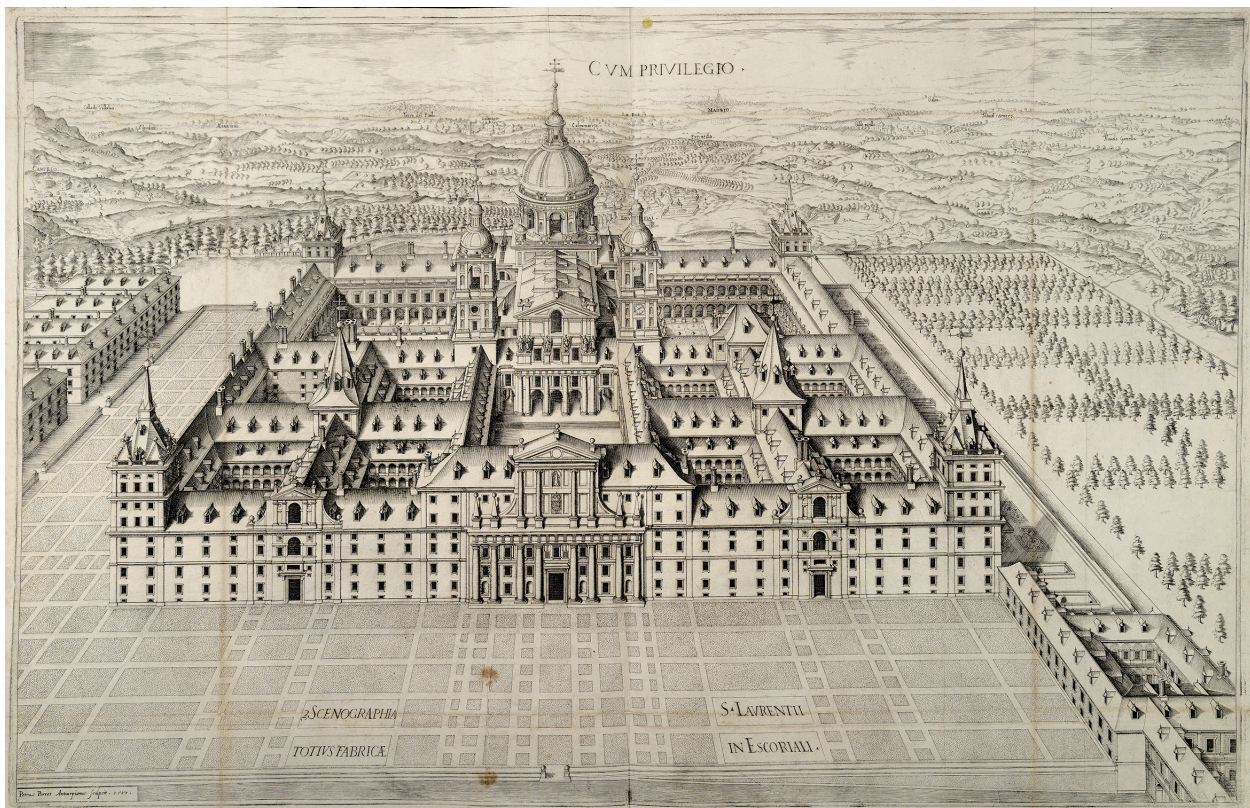
This regal architecture exalted the *grandeza*, a period term that can be translated as "grandeur" or "magnificence," of the Spanish Habsburgs. Like their composite domain, it was international in origin and represented the political reach of the realm. Erected at the western edge of Madrid as an appendage to a medieval fortress turned castle, the Gilded Tower and the Habsburg style that it inspired signaled a new development in Castilian architecture. It would take later generations of architects to complete the transformation of the

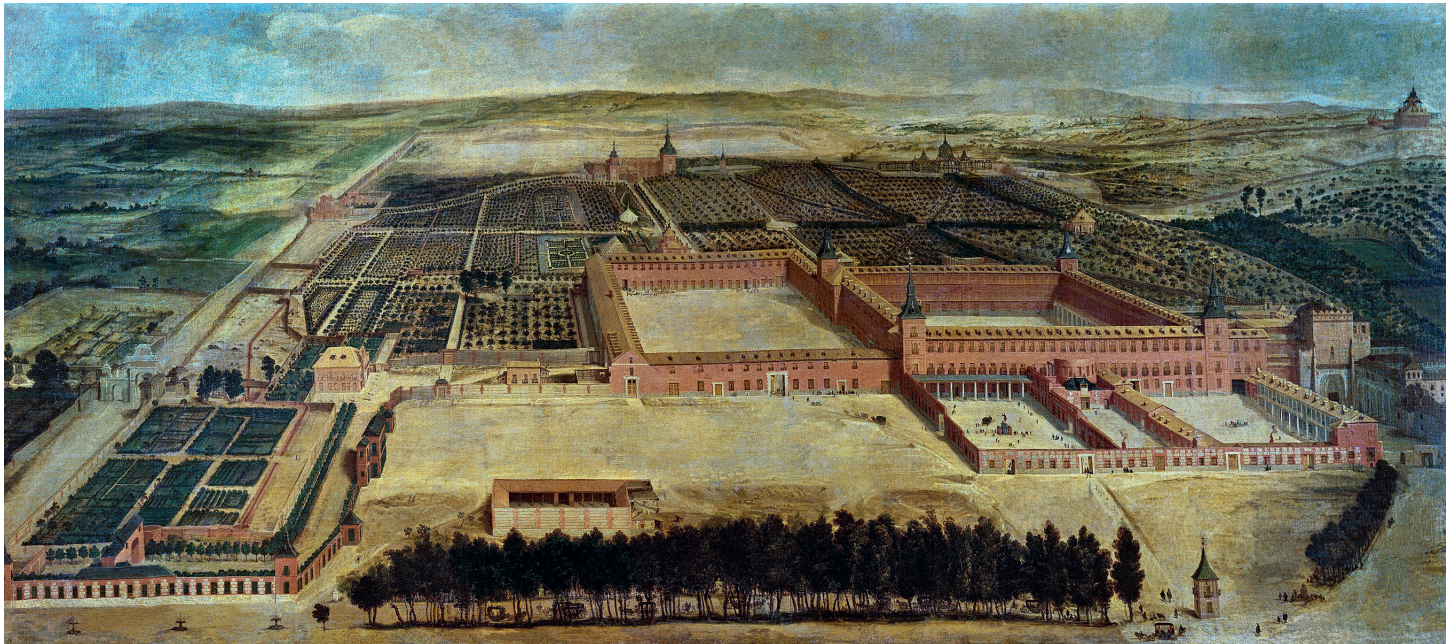
Royal Palace, as the building was realized by accretion over a long span of time.

In contrast, the monastery-palace of El Escorial was a Habsburg monument realized as such from the start. The Escorial was built by a team of architects led first by Juan Bautista de Toledo (ca. 1515–67) and, after Toledo's death, by Juan de Herrera (ca. 1530–97) with input solicited from other Spanish as well as Italian builders.⁴⁶ Upon its completion in the 1580s, Herrera undertook a

printing project to promote the monument and its Habsburg patron. He prepared a set of twelve drawings and imported Pedro Perret (1555–1625), a Flemish printmaker then active in Rome, to engrave the images in Madrid. The prints, known as *las estampas*, and their accompanying textual description asserted Philip II's fame by means of circulating a visual record of his architectural achievement.⁴⁷ Herrera and Perret's bird's-eye view of the monastery-palace captures the immensity of the project (fig. 7). The image's title appears in the pavement of the forecourt and proclaims to represent the building in its totality. Like the architecture, the letters, too, respond to the perspectival ordering of this idealized picture, which captures an imaginary privileged vantage symbolizing the

Figure 7 Pedro Perret, after Juan de Herrera, *Scenographia totius fabricae S. Laurentii in Escoriali*, 1587. Engraving, 19 ¹/₁₆ × 30 ⁵/₁₆ in. (48.8 × 77 cm). Newberry Library, Chicago, Novacco 4F 191 (PrCt). Photo: Newberry Library.





king's powerful gaze. Just as the monarch might stand in his city palace and look out toward the Escorial, this view indicates Madrid's presence along the horizon, a visual reference suggesting that the king's totalizing view encompasses his capital city and points beyond.

The chief building material of the Escorial is not brick but stone. Its ornamental features, such as Tuscan colonnades or slate-covered steeples, nonetheless continue to reflect Italian and Flemish inspiration. The building served as a direct inspiration for the seventeenth-century design of Madrid's Royal Palace façade, begun under Philip III and completed by Mariana of Austria, as well as for important religious buildings in and around the court. Although the Escorial was an undisputable model for many buildings in Madrid, one other royal project exemplifying the Habsburg style, the Buen Retiro Palace, had an impact of a different sort. Begun in 1630 and realized in slightly more than six years under the direction of the architect

Figure 8 Jusepe Leonardo, *View of the Palace and Gardens of the Buen Retiro*, ca. 1636–37. Oil on canvas, 4 ft. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. \times 10 ft. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (139 \times 308 cm). Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid, I.N. 10010009. Photo: Album / Art Resource, New York.

Alonso Carbonel (1583–1660), the Buen Retiro was erected alongside Madrid's eastern limits as a royal retreat intended for recreation.⁴⁸ An oil-on-canvas view of the sprawling palace adopts another idealized, godlike vantage (fig. 8). Attributed to Jusepe Leonardo (1601–1652) and made around 1636–37, the painting portrays the building's multiple residential and ceremonial wings organized around courtyards as well as orderly gardens whose walkways connect pavilions, hermitages, and an artificial lake in the far distance. Most of the palace was destroyed in a nineteenth-century blaze. One prominent wing on the main courtyard, containing a throne room known as the Hall of Realms, survives in a modified state, as does the ballroom

known as the Casón del Retiro, built just after Leonardo painted his view. Although the architectural follies that adorned the gardens have been lost, much of the ground on which they stood remains at the core of the modern Parque del Retiro, in which one can stroll to this day.

The Buen Retiro's rapid construction was demanded by the Count-Duke of Olivares, who, as governor (*alcaide*) of the royal site, was the palace's administrative overseer as well as its sponsor. The study of the building by Jonathan Brown and John Elliott establishes that Olivares pursued the Buen Retiro project in part as a diversion from mounting political crises in the Spanish Monarchy. The architecture of the Buen Retiro employed a familiar combination of brick, stone, and slate as primary building materials. Remarkably, the palace lacked a distinguished façade visible from the city. Instead, the main entrance fronted an enclosed forecourt, and Olivares's effort to aggrandize it with marble after a design by an unnamed Venetian architect in 1637 was abandoned owing to the exorbitant cost.⁴⁹ Observing the palace from the eastern limits of Madrid, a viewer was presented with stridently uniform stone and brick walls that stood in deference to the late-medieval façade of the Church of San Jerónimo, depicted at far right in the middle ground of the painted view. San Jerónimo was the preeminent monument for royal ceremonies before the construction in 1611 of the Royal Convent and Church of La Encarnación in the vicinity of the Royal Palace. Juan Bautista de Toledo, architect of the Escorial, designed royal apartments adjoining San Jerónimo in the 1560s. These formed the core of Olivares's Buen Retiro.

Without a classical façade such as the one fronting Madrid's Royal Palace, the Buen Retiro offered architectural splendor instead in its palace interiors, as well as in the extensive gardens. Although

the architecture of the Buen Retiro contributed little that was novel in Madrid, its construction required vast labor forces, thus drastically affecting contemporary building projects in the capital. The construction of a new courthouse for the Council of Castile (discussed in chapter 3) was wholly intertwined with the Buen Retiro project inasmuch as Olivares co-opted the architect in charge of the former project to supervise waterworks in the latter's gardens. Moreover, construction of the royal retreat sapped economic resources, thereby delaying construction of Madrid's town hall—revealing a domino effect that helps explain the rising prominence of the court over the town council in Madrid's formation.

Although supervised by the Count-Duke of Olivares in his role as *alcaide*, the Buen Retiro Palace fell under the official jurisdiction of the powerful Royal Works. The origins of the committee can be traced to 1545, when the Holy Roman emperor and Spanish king Charles V (1500–1558; reign as Carlos I of Spain, 1516–56, and as Holy Roman emperor Charles V, 1519–56) charged his son, Prince Philip, to oversee building projects in and around Madrid. Yet it was Philip II, as king, who formalized the committee in 1578 as Madrid began to function as a permanent capital.⁵⁰ The committee's territorial jurisdiction included royal retreats such as the Buen Retiro, the Casa del Campo, and the Casa del Pardo, the latter two located amid extensive hunting grounds to the west and north of Madrid, respectively, in addition to more-distant royal palaces in Granada, Segovia, Seville, and elsewhere.

Traditionally, the architecture produced in and around Madrid by the Royal Works studio has been considered insignificant when compared to that of other seventeenth-century European court cities. The mixed, and often unfavorable,

impressions recorded by foreign visitors of the period have had a weighty impact on scholarship. Visiting the city in 1610, for instance, a Scottish nobleman considered Madrid a mere “tent for the Court.”⁵¹ The observation is understandable given widespread construction that was underway in the immediate years after the return of the court from Valladolid. Yet context is crucial when weighing the words of foreigners, who were, as recent scholars have illustrated, often understandably biased sources of information about Spain.⁵² Madrid in 1610 looked considerably different from the city it became by midcentury and, then again, around 1700. Still, the negative assessments of elite visitors who knew places such as Rome, Paris, or Vienna were understandable. What is surprising is that Spanish intellectuals in the later eighteenth century joined the chorus.⁵³

In the first history of Spanish architecture, penned in the 1780s and published in 1829, Eugenio Llaguno y Amirola (1724–1799), an amateur historian and official of the Council of State as well as of the Royal Academies of History and Fine Arts, went so far as to equate late seventeenth-century architectural enterprises in Spain with child’s play. His book, *Noticias de los arquitectos y arquitectura de España desde su restauración* (Notices on the architects and architecture of Spain since its restoration), was edited by Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez (1749–1829), a founder of the discipline of art history in Spain.⁵⁴ For Ceán, the destructive force of Napoleonic troops was a principal impetus to publish the survey of Spanish architecture, although, following Llaguno, he had little interest in late seventeenth-century architecture, whose ornament he judged excessive and reflective of political decline.

Spanish Habsburg architecture was dealt another blow during the long regime of Francisco

Franco (1892–1975), which followed the Spanish Civil War of 1936–39.⁵⁵ Savaged by aerial bombing campaigns during the war, Madrid was reconstructed as the capital of a nation ruled by a Fascist dictator. Searching for historical inspiration to guide reconstruction efforts, Franco’s artistic advisors turned to the architecture of the Habsburg era, such as the Escorial and, surprisingly, the lost Royal Palace, as models for a new architecture of the state. To many observers, twentieth-century buildings faced with neo-Habsburg ornament reflected Fascist principles; actual Habsburg monuments came to be tainted by their contemporary reinterpretation. The resulting depreciation of Habsburg architecture seems to have been enough to condemn the architecture of seventeenth-century Madrid as unworthy of study for most of the twentieth century. Post–Civil War migration to Madrid pushed the physical limits of the city to new boundaries. Reconstruction included new streets and avenues as well as commercial and residential architecture, features that adversely affected what little remained of the city’s Habsburg fabric. The modern growth of the city lay behind one of the most important contributions to Madrid’s urban history, Miguel Molina Campuzano’s study of early modern maps.⁵⁶

Molina Campuzano’s book was published in 1960, the same year the eminent architectural historian Antonio Bonet Correa declared in an article about Diego Velázquez’s interventions at the Royal Palace that the history of urbanism in seventeenth-century Madrid had yet to be written.⁵⁷ In an influential article published in 1969, the art historian Julián Gállego wrote positively about the theatrical quality of urbanism in Habsburg Madrid but dismissed the city’s buildings as uninteresting.⁵⁸ Given the extent of modern urban interventions, one wonders how

it was possible to describe the theatricality of seventeenth-century Madrid, as Gállego did, when only a few of its architectural backdrops, not to mention visual and aural delights such as street sculpture and fountains, survived. Part of the challenge in reconstructing the built environment of early modern Madrid, as this book seeks to do, is to write architectural history without architecture.

The situation makes the systematic, if uneven, contributions of Virginia Tovar Martín crucial for scholars interested in early modern architecture in Madrid. Her books, the first of which appeared in 1975, the year Franco died, mined local archives to provide biographical data about late seventeenth-century architects, with a particular focus on Juan Gómez de Mora.⁵⁹ Archival research contributed significantly to some of the most innovative Spanish architectural history of the late 1970s and early 1980s, scholarship that sought to integrate Spanish building practice into wider European and transatlantic contexts and in addition move beyond dominant questions about style.⁶⁰ Tovar's work on Madrid, however, was more limited because of an overwhelmingly local focus that sought to elevate the prolific Gómez de Mora as a singular genius. Subsequent researchers have qualified many of Tovar's generous attributions to Gómez de Mora by paying greater attention to studio practice and the building trade.⁶¹

Transnational and transatlantic frameworks have driven my own scholarship on Madrid, yet, for this book, I have also stayed close to the ground owing to the richness of archival resources filled with details about individual people and their involvement with buildings and public spaces. Gómez de Mora plays a considerable role, but he is joined by an extended cast of characters, including other artists and architects, royal officials,

municipal bureaucrats, and private citizens. Among builders and designers alone, names such as Giovanni Battista Crescenzi, José de Villarreal, Gaspar de la Peña, José del Olmo, and Teodoro Ardemans emerge. Crescenzi and Ardemans were also accomplished painters, as were the well-known artists Claudio Coello and Antonio Palomino. Collaboration, competition, compromise—these are the characteristics that surface as constants in Madrid's seventeenth-century transformation. It could be argued that such was the case for any major city in the early modern period; research focused since the 1990s on the politics and processes behind the shaping of cities has made these characteristics evident.⁶²

Attention to the building process in Madrid necessarily expands the list of individuals whose labor helped Spanish Habsburg rulers refashion their capital with monumental architecture. As a rule, we know little about the men and women who toiled behind the scenes, yet their names often survive in period documents. As an example, the ledgers kept by the paymaster Luis Pablo for the Court Prison, the popular name for a Madrid courthouse, are illuminating. One graphically compelling folio summarizes spending at the work site over a seven-month period beginning mid-1640 (fig. 9). In six columns, Pablo itemizes costs and then offers a tallied summation in a seventh column, at far right. Itemized entries include expenditures for construction materials such as paving stones and brick as well as sheets of copper intended for a façade sculpture and paper used by the paymaster and scribes. Moreover, Pablo lists forty individuals by name. Countless others—whose background and race are unknown—remain anonymous in the *semanarias*, or weekly accounts of contracted labor, logged in the fourth column. Named individuals

Figure 9 Luis Pablo, accounting for construction and labor at the Court Prison, Madrid, June 1640 to January 1641. Ink on paper, 8 1/4 x 11 9/16 in. (21 x 30 cm). Archivo de Villa de Madrid, Contaduría, legajo 3-614-3. Photo: Archivo de Villa del Ayuntamiento de Madrid.

Handwritten accounting ledger with multiple columns listing names, amounts, and descriptions in Spanish. The entries include names like 'Came de los santos', 'Luis Pablo', 'Juan de los rios', and various monetary values such as '1 U 6 2 2 B', '1 U 3 0 0 B', etc.

include the Court Prison’s supervising architect, Cristóbal de Aguilera (d. 1648), whose salary was surpassed only by that of Bartolomé Díaz, a master mason who had succeeded his father of the same name at the site and was the grandson of a Madrid *alarife*, or municipal builder. Pablo also names five women: a wealthy property owner; the widow of a royal judge; two women who were likely employed as cooks; and Jerónima Navarro, the surviving daughter of a master mason who died during construction at the building. As these entries attest, Pablo’s record keeping illumines the complexity of a seventeenth-century building work site in both economic and human terms.

My approach to the architecture of Habsburg Madrid combines the visual analysis of buildings,

paintings, engravings, and drawings with a careful reading of written sources ranging from town-council-meeting minutes to accounts of urban life written by novelists, royal chroniclers, and political theorists. Period drawings rarely survive for the buildings under review in this book, so I have had to produce new ones. As Patricia Waddy’s groundbreaking study of seventeenth-century Roman palaces has revealed, architectural plans allow readers to approximate the experience of architecture from a spatial perspective.⁶³ My hope is that the plans created for this book promote an understanding of Madrid’s architecture beyond façadism and thus a recuperation of a sense of public buildings and the plazas before them as active spaces for the practice of power.⁶⁴

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The book opens with an exploration of the period concept of *grandeza* as it was manifested in seventeenth-century histories, views, and maps of Madrid. At the outset of the century, Madrid underwent a dramatic transformation. Chapter 1 illustrates the ways in which court historians, map-makers, and artists worked alone and collaboratively to represent this evolving place to the wider world. The first printed map of Madrid appeared in 1623, within months of the publication of the city's first official history. Both promoted Madrid's newfound prestige at a moment coinciding with the completion of major monuments, suggesting that artists and writers alike understood architectural distinction to be essential for a city's reputation. No greater printed testament to this idea survives than Pedro Teixeira's tapestry-like map of Madrid issued in 1656. A thorough consideration of Teixeira's map sets the stage for four subsequent chapters focused on sites where power was exercised in Madrid.

The chapters, dealing with two palaces, a courthouse and prison, a town hall, and four monumental city squares, are organized chronologically relative to construction start dates. Yet the reader should be aware that there is considerable overlap between chapters owing to the irregular pace of construction in Madrid brought about by political, economic, and climatic crises both local and global.⁶⁵ One of the book's featured buildings was begun in the 1640s and not completed until the 1690s; another, whose story begins in the 1610s, only ends in the 1670s. Chapter 2 examines the supreme symbol of government in the capital, the Spanish Habsburg Royal Palace. Philip II's earliest interventions in Madrid included renovations to the preexisting medieval castle known as the Real Alcázar, as well as construction of a royal armory,

horse stables, service buildings, gardens, and an enormous park that buffered the palace from the city and its hinterland. Modifications to the building's façade were carried out by accretion and were given a new urgency with the return of the court from Valladolid in 1606. The chapter focuses on the façade project largely completed in the 1620s, when it came to symbolize political power in the court city and serve as a model for other buildings. Additionally, I examine how interior spaces served the purpose of government, both ceremonial and procedural.

Important tribunals overseen by the Council of Castile in the Royal Palace were relocated to a new building erected over the course of the 1630s, the topic of chapter 3. Known in the seventeenth century as the *Cárcel de Corte*, or Court Prison, the building functioned as a courthouse for magistrates in charge of policing an array of urban matters in Madrid. It also included prison quarters, infirmaries and dormitories for both men and women, and cells for inmates of both sexes. The story of this building offers an example of the way in which monumental architecture helped redefine the prestige of a government institution in Madrid. Careful examination of the building's interiors and façade demonstrates how the design of the Court Prison reflected Spanish Habsburg ideals of justice and beneficence throughout the monarchy.

Chapter 4 pivots to consider the reputation and fortune of Madrid's municipal government in the seventeenth century by means of a careful study of its town hall. Although conceived at the same date as the Court Prison, this building's construction was delayed until the 1640s and then realized at a slow pace owing to the financial straits of the monarchy at midcentury. The program for the town hall included municipal chambers and offices in addition to a jail. Some of the town hall's principal

interiors were designated for ceremonial use by the royal household; as a result, this building's history illustrates how Madrid's municipality came to be co-opted by the court over the course of the seventeenth century.

Chapter 5 returns to the Royal Palace with a focus on the efforts led by Mariana of Austria in the 1670s to complete the building's façade after more than three decades of renovations to its interiors. I examine the project within the larger framework of Mariana's regency government and the emergency reconstruction efforts she exerted following fires at the Escorial and in Madrid's Plaza Mayor, heroic undertakings that led a prominent historian of the era to label the queen a "Spanish Deborah."⁶⁶ Whereas the Court Prison and town-hall projects were accompanied by minor

reshaping of the public spaces before them, the completion of the Royal Palace façade engendered a wholesale reconfiguration of the Plaza de Palacio that served to formalize its status as Madrid's premier court space. The book concludes with a consideration of Madrid's dual identity as *Villa y Corte* at century's end. I do this by examining a period map of the city and analyzing the completion of the Madrid Town Hall project in the 1690s, with special attention to a fresco painted on the ceiling of that building's principal chamber. Images such as the late seventeenth-century map and fresco conveyed messages about monarchical power similar to those communicated by the façades of buildings dedicated to government, as architecture was made to confirm and publicize Madrid as the capital of a global empire.