

# THE PLAZA MAYOR AND THE SHAPING OF BAROQUE MADRID

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*The Plaza Mayor and the Shaping of Baroque Madrid* examines the transformation of Madrid from a secondary market town to the capital of the worldwide Spanish Habsburg empire. Focusing on the planning and building of Madrid's principal public monument, the Plaza Mayor, it is based on an analysis of archival documents, architectural drawings, and the surviving built fabric of the city itself. Jesús Escobar demonstrates how the shaping of the city square and its environs reflects the bureaucratic nature of government in Madrid, chosen in 1561 to serve as capital of Spain. He also examines the careful planning of the city, with particular regard to the necessities of housing and public works that accompanied its new status as capital. The process reveals the sophistication of town planning in late-sixteenth-century Spain and forces a reconsideration of Spanish urbanism within the contexts of contemporary European and Spanish colonial developments.

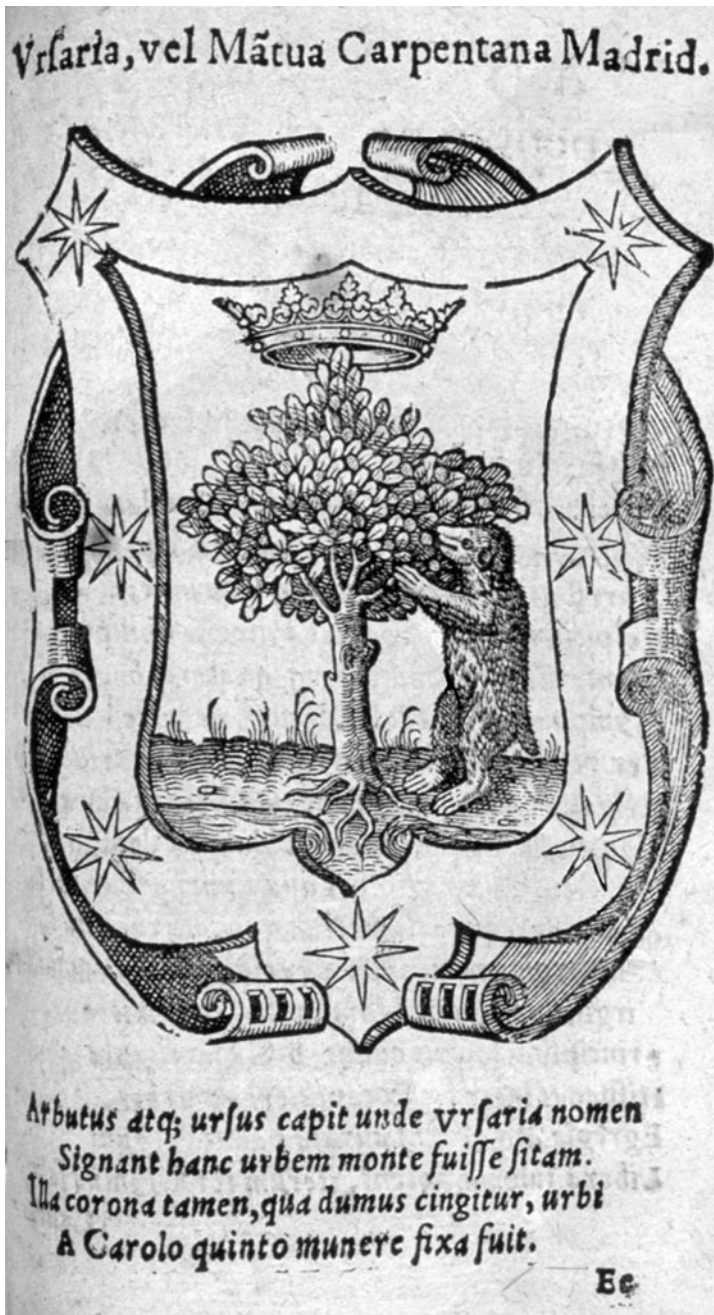
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Juan López de Hoyos, Arms of Madrid, folio 1 recto of *Declaración y Armas de Madrid* (Madrid: Pierres Cosin, 1569). (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, R 12870; photo, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid.)

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*JESÚS ESCOBAR*

*Fairfield University*



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The genesis of this book is in my father's hometown of Valle de Guadalupe, Michoacán. There, at the age of nine, I walked in a nocturnal procession of an image of Mexico's patron saint, the Virgin of Guadalupe. With a candle in hand, I accompanied my grandmother along the streets of the town staring in wonder at the houses we passed. Some were decorated with ephemeral chapels for the occasion; others stood illuminated for all to appreciate. Just as the procession had begun, it ended amid crowds gathered in *la plaza*.

In Valle de Guadalupe, life revolves around the plaza, or town square. With two stores, a small jail, and the town church in its perimeter, it is the place where the civic and the sacred meet. The role of Valle de Guadalupe's plaza as the nucleus of a community is reenacted in countless towns and cities throughout the Spanish world. This book seeks to offer a contribution toward an understanding of that centrality by examining one of the most important of all Spanish city squares, the Plaza Mayor of Madrid.

Although my interest in public space evolves in part from childhood experiences in Mexico, it is informed more substantially by the study of Renaissance and Baroque architectural history. For this knowledge and the pursuit of it, I am indebted to many institutions and individuals. I owe my primary institutional debt to Princeton University. Princeton provided the initial funding for archival work in Spain when this project was a dissertation, and, years later, awarded a subvention from the Publications Committee of the Department of Art and Archaeology for a much-expanded book. Other research support came from a Fulbright Fellowship, a Chester Dale Fellowship from

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on the edge of Sacramento became transformed into a plaza. There, under the shade of a sycamore tree and in full public view of passersby, family members and friends gathered and shared stories of our loss for the length of three hot, summer days. I dedicate this book to the memory of my father and to my mother, Sara García Escobar, who continues to reside at that new plaza in the heart of California.

New York City, January 2003

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## A NOTE ON THE SOURCES

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The primary materials for this study derive from the municipal and notarial archives of Madrid. All documents cited in the text have been transcribed as faithfully as possible. I have capitalized all proper names, employed modern punctuation conservatively, and omitted diacritical marks where they are not used. Additions to the original text are marked by square brackets, and omissions or difficult passages have been set off by angled brackets. Superscripted items are incorporated into the body of the text in square brackets. Unless noted, all translations are my own.

The archives consulted for this study employ distinct cataloguing methods for their particular holdings as is evident from the notes. The most common term for a file of documents is *legajo*, but the scholar interested in further work in Madrid should be aware of other terminology. Materials at the municipal archive, the Archivo de Villa de Madrid, are largely arranged by *legajos*. In contrast, the acts of the town council are bound in *libros*. As at the municipal archive, the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid and the Archivo General de Simancas differentiate *legajos* from historically bound collections of documents, or *libros*. Documents in the Archivo Histórico de Protocolos Notariales de Madrid are largely arranged by year and by the name of the scribe in bound volumes called *protocolos*. The *legajos* of the Altamira Collection at the Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan in Madrid are organized by *envíos*, whereas documents from the same collection at the Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu in Madrid are kept in boxed files, or *carpetas*.

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Where possible, I have provided page numbers and dates for documentary citations. When foliation is not available, I have used the abbreviation “n.p.” The abbreviation “no.” is reserved for loose documents that are numbered, although often not kept in order. In many instances, dates alone are given for documents filed in a *legajo* of otherwise unorganized documents. For briefs that are folded and written on both sides (*recto* and *verso*), I have numbered the pages individually (i.e., one folded sheet of paper is considered as two and is numbered 1r, 1v, 2r, and 2v).

Measurements from the documents are given in Castilian feet (*pies*), which are roughly equivalent to today’s American and English measures. The base unit of currency employed in documents is the *maravedí*, although the silver *real* was the good coin of early modern Spain. According to George Kubler in his *Building the Escorial*, a day laborer in the 1570s could earn 2 *reales*, or 68 *maravedís* a day. Allowing for fluctuation, the *real* equaled 34 *maravedís*, and a Spanish ducat was the equivalent of 375 *maravedís*.



## ABBREVIATIONS

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The following abbreviations are used in the notes and figure captions:

<i>AEA</i>	<i>Archivo Español de Arte</i>
AGI	Archivo General de Indias, Seville
	MP                      Mapas y Planos
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid
	CC                      Cámara de Castilla
	CSR                    Casas y Sitios Reales
	MPD                  Mapas, Planos y Dibujos
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid
	Clero                  Clero Secular y Regular
	Consejos              Consejos Suprimidos
	FC Hac. Mad.        Fondos Contemporaneos, Delegación de Hacienda de Madrid, histórico
	MPD                  Mapas, Planos y Dibujos
AHPM	Archivo Histórico de Protocolos Notariales de Madrid
<i>AIEM</i>	<i>Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños</i>
AVM	Archivo de Villa de Madrid
	Contaduría            Archivo de la Contaduría
	Secretaría            Archivo de la Secretaría
BFZ	Biblioteca Francisco de Zabálburu, Madrid
BNM	Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid
<i>BSEAA</i>	<i>Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología</i> (University of Valladolid)

<i>carp.</i>	<i>carpeta</i>
IVDJ	Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, Madrid
<i>JSAH</i>	<i>Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians</i>
<i>leg.</i>	<i>legajo</i>
<i>lib.</i>	<i>libro</i>
MAHC	Virgilio Pinto Crespo and Santos Madrazo Madrazo, eds., <i>Madrid, Atlas Histórico de la Ciudad: Siglos IX-XIX</i> (Madrid, 1995)
<i>Memoria</i>	Francisco de Sotomayor, <i>Memoria de las obras de Madrid</i> (AGS, CSR, <i>leg.</i> 247-1, no. 257)
MM	Museo Municipal de Madrid
Ms.	manuscript
<i>Noticias</i>	Eugenio Llaguno y Amirola and Agustín Ceán Bermúdez, <i>Noticias de los arquitectos y arquitectura de España desde su restauración</i> , 4 vols. (Madrid, 1829)
ÖNB	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna
<i>prot.</i>	<i>protocolo</i>
RABM	Ayuntamiento de Madrid, <i>Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas, y Museos</i>
RBAM	Ayuntamiento de Madrid, <i>Revista de la Biblioteca, Archivo y Museo</i>
SECCFC	Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V

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