Interweaving Visual Language of the Spiritual and the Secular: Goya, Spanish Spiritualism, and the Sublime

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INTERTWEEING VISUAL LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRITUAL AND THE SECULAR:

GOYA, SPANISH SPIRITUALISM, AND THE SUBLIME

by

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ABSTRACT

INTERWEAVING VISUAL LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRITUAL AND THE SECULAR:
GOYA, SPANISH SPIRITUALISM, AND THE SUBLIME

Stirling Goulart
Old Dominion University, 2016
Director: Dr. Anne H. Muraoka

This thesis explores how Francisco Goya adapted traditional methods of representing religious subjects to create a modern visual language that addressed contemporary themes while maintaining continuity with the past and Spanish identity. The methods used to investigate this topic center on primary and secondary literary sources along with visual comparisons and analysis of selected works. Through this method, it is established that Goya formed a modern innovation of traditional religious style in order to confront and discuss secular and current social issues.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The late eighteenth century was witness to vast amounts of social change and new perspectives on education, culture, and industry. It was the beginnings of how we know the world today. The rising of new governments led by a growing middle class challenged the imperial structure of Europe that had persisted for many years. The increase of secular powers challenged the dominating Catholic Church. As an expected trend throughout history, artwork from this period reflected these social and cultural shifts and changes. David Brown sums up the artistic response of the time stating: “Romanticism was born in opposition and sorrow, in social or national crisis and in individual trauma.”¹ This statement begins to generate an image of the artist by describing the environment of the time that confronted each individual. His statement could also double as a biographical note to the life of Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828; Fig. 1). Goya’s work would serve as a bridge to the past and a model for future artists. Through his work, we see the beginning of the rise of the individual artist as he takes creative control outside of the hierarchy of the patronage system that once dominated artistic subjects and reacts to the world around him. Goya addressed contemporary issues that concerned him in his work by using an existing framework of visual art that was steeped in Spanish tradition that allowed for accessibility of thematic content and connected to cultural identity in a way that modernized it for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Francisco Goya, active at the height of the European Enlightenment and working across essentially three different artistic movements consisting of the waning years of the Rococo, the Neoclassical, and Romantic periods, is regarded as one of Spain’s most important painters. He is
also referred to as the first artist of the modern period because of his future influence on Spanish Cubists and Surrealists. With contemporary events and personal opinions reflected throughout his work, Goya’s role as a history painter may be viewed as editorial and documentarian. He was an intellectual and the ideas of the Enlightenment were an apparent influence on the artist and his work.

In order to consider this topic accurately, attention must be given to the socio-political climate of Spain during Goya’s time. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Spain was experiencing economic hardships as its imperial prowess began to fade sending the kingdom sinking into debt under Phillip IV (r. 1621-1665). This combined with near constant war and extraordinary weather phenomena, would lead the Spanish public into poverty and periods of famine due to low food stores. Coup and French invasion and the subsequent reclamation of the Spanish crown ensured a tumultuous political atmosphere in Spain as well. This created an environment of confusion and presented a crisis of identity in the country.² Goya saw this decline into turmoil firsthand. As painter to the royal court, it was his duty to create images of regents meant to be synonymous with Spanish identity. However, ineffective leadership, political shifts in power, and French invasion undermine the symbolism of those images, and created social turmoil and doubt among a populous that caused it to fracture. What is seen in Goya’s work is not necessarily glorification of these leaders and events, but an exploration into Spain itself and commentary on what it means to be Spanish through reclamation of identity in his painting.

Goya does not ignore the situation of Spain around him, but seeks to explain it by reaching back to its “Golden Age” of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when Spanish identity went hand in hand with religious practice. This identity was transmitted
visually through art in a process that was outlined in *Arte de la pintura*, a work by artist and censor of the Inquisition, Francisco Pacheco (1564-1644). The intertwining of secular and religious culture in Spain during the Baroque period was an attempt to bring unity through religion to its growing empire. The monarchy was taking advantage of the intense spiritualism and practices held by the Jesuits and using them as a way to combine religious and military strength. This not only presents a stance of strict adherence to Catholic law and practice put forth by the Council of Trent (1545-1563) as a response to Protestant views, but also provides divine justification for political action. Spanish spiritualist practices emanating from the Counter-Reformation would become deeply engrained in its culture and highly visible in the artwork of Spain’s prominent painters of the time.

By modeling his work on the formal threads of spiritualism exhibited in that time of Baroque painting, Goya established a line of continuity that reached back before the time of structural and political upheaval that unfolded during his lifetime. During Spain’s “Golden Age,” its empire saw steady growth and wealth from the Americas despite military conflicts that accompanied governing such a large and diverse territory and people. This allowed for a period of cultural growth, coupled with the reform policies of the Catholic Church, which led to new social and artistic practices that promoted piety as good citizenry. The specific visual didactic language in Baroque religious art was used as a controlling device by the monarchy, thereby unifying the population through the Church.

However, during his time, Goya’s goal was to secularize those themes and give them a universality that would allow the audience to go beyond religious dogma, and use those same practices to consider socio-political themes. This can be seen in his paintings as a court painter as well as his independent artistic production. By using familiar techniques, Goya made his
images approachable to a wide Spanish audience. These images would allow viewers to relate modern issues and social themes through traditional methods. The juxtaposition of secular content with methods usually reserved for spiritual subjects created an identifiable contradiction between style and subject that would have led the viewer to think about Spain’s present and future. He wanted to inspire a sense of *patria* in the individual. In order to do this, Goya would need to be able to utilize a visual language that was familiar to all. During the eighteenth-century, Edmund Burke wrote his essay *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. This text was available to Goya and he was likely familiar with it. As it pertains to art, the sublime provides an intellectual experience through interaction with a work. This mainly has to do with the work possessing a transformative effect on the audience that would engage the imagination and emotionally involve the viewer. By using the secular theory of the sublime, which was closely related to long-practiced spiritualist concepts, Goya presented a familiar but progressive language in his work that would allow for the contemplation of Spanish identity through painting. The viewer would already have been familiar with the language of sacred imagery. Goya formulated a means in which his secular subjects and themes fit directly into the framework of that existing visual language to address modern themes.

This thesis will discuss the interactions between Goya, and the philosophy of the sublime during the eighteenth-century Romantic period. My goal is to establish that Goya’s use of the sublime reflects not only its meaning at the time but also reaches back into Spanish history and parallels deeply ingrained religious spiritual practices thereby acting as a tool by which he was able to form a new modern Spanish identity in art and continuity with that tradition. In order to reach this conclusion about Goya and his work, comparison of Spanish spiritualist practices during the Baroque and Counter-Reformation period with the philosophy of the sublime during
the eighteenth century will reveal the framework for the visual language that Goya would utilize in his work. This bond links Baroque painters and deep-seated Catholic spiritualist traditions from Spain’s “Golden Age” to Goya, as he looks to past traditions in order to address and comment on the Spanish social and cultural conditions in a manner that would help to modernize Spanish painting. By examining these past traditions, it is apparent Goya was approaching his work using formal techniques that would have been familiar to his general audience allowing for a continuity of the themes that helped to make up Spanish cultural identity in art that were deeply embedded within the culture.

The central objectives of this thesis are to identify and examine how Francisco Goya interacted with the eighteenth century idea of the sublime in his art, and how that perception of the sublime can be linked with late sixteenth-century Spanish spiritual practices during the Baroque. It will become clear that Goya’s understanding of this parallel allowed him to form a modern Spanish identity in art that still holds deep traditional cultural roots. The relationship between the sublime and spiritualism is important because of the uncanny similarities of the philosophy of the sublime, as established by Edmund Burke in the eighteenth century, to spiritual ideas and practice that preceded it centuries earlier in Counter-Reformation Spain. Goya’s representation and acknowledgement of this similarity allows his work to resonate with his audience, while also allowing him to establish a new, secular conversation about Spanish identity. As a painter who has been referred to as the first modernist and a precursor to what would become Spanish Surrealism, Goya was able to become a driving force behind notions of Spanish painting by continuing this thread forward from the past utilizing inherent parts of Spanish culture.
Corollary questions revolve around how ideas that deal with spiritual practice are interwoven with art during the Baroque, and how those ideas would relate with later concepts of the sublime. How does Francisco Goya’s innovation of this tradition impact Spanish cultural identity during Goya’s lifetime and in the future?

This project will rely on literary resources and prior scholarly research to explore this historical influence on Francisco Goya. This will provide insight into his method of joining secular “enlightened” ideas by using modes associated with culturally ingrained spiritual practices in order to re-establish Spanish identity in a traditional manner while simultaneously beginning a more progressive conversation that addresses the Spanish people and their future.

Francisco Goya is a figure primarily investigated within the context of his own era. He presents “a new kind of ‘history painter’: one whose subject matter…is bound up with the specifics of his own times but who himself remains an inventor of resonant, convincing images, not a recorder of the factual.”6 This line of reasoning continues to present Goya as a product of his environment, which in many ways is accurate; however Goya’s use of the sublime was not limited solely to its eighteenth-century theory and definition, it also had deeper roots in Spanish culture that lead back to the Baroque. We can see Goya take Burke’s ideas on the sublime during this period and apply them to his paintings to make images that are more powerful.

This similarity between the eighteenth-century view of the sublime and Spanish spiritualist practices established in the late sixteenth-century suggests an influence of the latter on the former that must be addressed. As an intellectual figure, Goya would have been familiar with both. This poses him as an initial guiding figure representative of the early modern world; a starting point. Though useful and accurate, not much attention has been paid to the guiding principles and ideas that may have helped Goya develop his personal style. The merging of
secular philosophies of the Enlightenment with Spanish spiritualism suggest, however, that he was thinking back to Spain’s “Golden Age” in an attempt to connect the fervent religious history of the country to a modern perspective in a manner that could intellectually contemporize aspects of Spanish identity. Romanticism celebrated larger-than-life themes that heroically transcend the individual to question social morals and ethics, and Goya can be seen as promoting a modernized and proud Spanish people. On the opposite side of that spectrum is the struggle of the individual and artist to locate and ground himself within that tradition while facing an uncertain time.

This project has been outlined to first contextualize Goya within Spanish history beginning in the late sixteenth-century up until his death in 1828. Much of what was later echoed in Goya’s time began in the Baroque. After this familiarization with the Spanish environment before and during Goya’s lifetime, this project turns toward an analysis of the sublime presented by Edmund Burke, a contemporary of Goya in the eighteenth-century. With this in mind, a comparison between the philosophy of the sublime established by Burke and Spanish Baroque writings of spiritualist authors will highlight the similarities between these two secular and religious concepts. The interaction of Spanish spiritualism and Baroque art outlines the practices that the most notable Spanish artists at the time were using to approach sacred imagery in a manner that promoted spiritualist and Counter-Reformation ideals.

Once the driving philosophy behind Counter-Reformation art is explored, attention will be turned towards the methods of essential Spanish Baroque artists. Francisco Pacheco was a prominent figure in Seville during the late 1500s as doctrines on spiritual exercises began to be published and wielded more authority in practice within the Catholic Church. Pacheco’s *Arte de la pintura* describes the importance of the religious image and its role in benefitting and improving the spirituality of the viewer. Pacheco is a starting point from where painting of
religious images emphasized and coordinated with spiritual exercises during the Counter-Reformation in Spain. This would be reflected in the works of Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664; see Figs. 12, 15, and 16) and Diego Velázquez (1599-1660; see Fig. 13) in what would come to be known as the “Golden Age” of Spanish painting. These three Baroque Spanish painters in Seville during the “Golden Age” of the early 1600s, tie together visually to become the foundational concepts of spirituality that are later evolved and reinterpreted into sublime images of eighteenth-century Romanticism.

These modes of transmission would have a lasting impact, as Goya would later incorporate these techniques of religious art into secular themes. This would establish a familiar language with which viewers could interact and be able to interpret images so that Goya was able to connect his contemporary work and themes to a traditional cultural past. His adaptation of that Baroque spiritual visual language links the Counter-Reformation and Enlightenment despite their apparent differences. The relationship of these spiritual connections and their transmission through Baroque painting in the works of prominent Spanish painters of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries help to illustrate how the Counter-Reformation Catholic spiritualist practices evolved and connect to philosophical ideas of secular spiritualism.

Francisco Goya took those long-established aspects of Spanish culture and used them as familiar anchors within his work in order to help develop a modern and progressive Spanish identity through his art. The importance of the final section of this project is that it will attempt to reveal Goya as more than a starting point in the early roots of modernism, and present a figure who saw benefit in the acknowledgement of the past in order to address contemporary issues.
In the sixteenth century, Spain held a commanding status as a growing imperial power. The German Hapsburg monarchy controlled peninsular Spain and most of Europe with Charles V’s (r. 1516-1556) reign as Holy Roman Emperor. Due to Spain’s expansive territory in Europe, Charles V was forced into commitments of support of his realm against outside armies seeking to expand their own holdings; as Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V had to address the theological conflict brought on by Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. This would place a great financial burden on the Spanish kingdom that, despite its size, did not hold much wealth. That would begin to shift as expansion into the West Indies brought a steady stream of wealth. Spanish forces steadily conquered native civilizations in Central and South America and the Caribbean that, under their control, would be known as New Spain.

Counter-Reformation action prompted the first meeting of the Council of Trent in 1545. The Spanish Inquisition was already in place and actively seeking out heretics. The reign of Philip II (r. 1556-1598), after the abdication of the Spanish throne by his father Charles V in 1556, sought to further strengthen and unify the monarchy with the Catholic Church. Upon his accession, “Charles commended him to serve God, uphold the Inquisition, suppress heresy, dispense justice and hold the balance between his advisers.” Where his father’s rule was marked by military gains of power and territory, Philip II would seek to maintain the Spanish empire bureaucratically. He would do this by centralizing the Catholic Church in Spain with the monarchy in a manner that nationalized the religion and enforced it via the Inquisition. After the Council of Trent closed in 1563, strengthening the church’s position against Protestantism was a
major concentration in Spain. Reformers pushed for a return to the early roots of Christianity in order to legitimize Catholic practices in light of Protestant accusations.

This period of reform saw the rise in importance of Spanish confraternities as localized groups instrumental in promoting the reevaluated practices of faith established by the Council of Trent. Of these groups, most notably in Spain, was the influence of the Jesuit order founded in 1534 by Saint Ignatius of Loyola (d. 1556). During the final session of the Council in 1563, principles of the Jesuit order would guide reform measures that were immediately championed by Philip II as law. The Jesuits placed a great emphasis on meditation through prayer in order to present a more pure idea of spirituality as outlined in the writings of Saint Ignatius’ *Spiritual Exercises* that were published in 1548. The incorporation and impact of these reform measures would have an important and lasting effect on Spanish society and culture. Post-Council of Trent Spain saw these spiritual ideas take root as other figures contributed to this new canon of mysticism and spiritualist practice with contributions by Carmelites, Saint Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) and John of the Cross (1542-1591) further elaborating on the processes established by Ignatius and the Jesuits.

By 1581, Spain was at its imperial height, controlling territory across Europe, the Americas, and in the Pacific Islands. This time of economic and political prosperity ushered in Spain’s “Golden Age.” Support for education, arts, literature, and science grew in this time of prosperity. The Jesuit meditative practices and religious reform would have an impact on painters during this “Golden Age,” as the Church and monarchy relied on a unified front to maintain strength within Spain. As a booming port city, Seville would produce some of Spain’s most notable painters such as Francisco Pacheco, Diego Velázquez, and Francisco de Zurbarán. Pacheco would be a guiding hand for religious painting as an artist and censor for the Inquisition. As a
teacher to Velázquez, Pacheco stressed realistic naturalism in religious images that was reflective of Jesuit spiritual philosophy. Religious painting placed a great emphasis on the visual image as a spiritual aid, and its use as an instrument of meditation that displays naturalism to the effect that the viewer can imagine themselves within the very scene. Zurbarán, a contemporary of Velázquez also working out of Seville, would also display this quality with a form of super-realism in his religious work (see Figs. 12, 15, and 16). This was primarily due to guidelines for religious painting established by the Council of Trent in 1563, and later reemphasized more specifically in writings by Pacheco. Velázquez would take this characteristic of religious painting and apply it to his secular court paintings under Philip IV (r. 1621-1665) in the 1620s (see Fig. 17).

While the Hapsburg reigns of Charles V and Philip II grew Spain into an imposing imperial world power, they did so at great cost. The monarchy of Philip II marked the longest any regent has held the Spanish throne and his policies and practice would have a lasting resonance in Spanish politics. The following rules of Philip III (r. 1598-1621) and Philip IV inherited a kingdom of great affluence and political power, but also one riddled with debt.

The monarchy of Philip IV, would try to uphold Spain’s global position of power and compensate for the high cost of maintaining its empire through ambitious military campaigns. The Thirty Years’ War would compromise Spanish armies and resources. Spain’s borders began to shrink back to the confines of the Iberian Peninsula as it lost territory to war and revolts in Europe and its colonies in the new world. By the end of the Thirty Years’ War, the Treaty of Westphalia had granted independence to Holland from Spanish control and European power had shifted away from Spain’s Hapsburg monarchy to the French. Politically, by 1659, Spain’s “Golden Age” was essentially over, and it would never again hold the same power it once had.
Spanish territory may have been receding at this point, but the distance between the noble ruling classes and the common Spaniard was steadily growing. Hardship and depression would befall the interior population of peninsular Spain from about 1599 until the mid-seventeenth century. A shift in climate upended the normal agrarian routine resulting in food shortages and outbreaks of plague epidemics sent the population reeling. This resulted in a severe population decline that was augmented by the expulsion of the Moriscos, who were Christian converts, to create a more pure Catholic Spain in 1609. This event, during the reign of Philip III, exacerbated Spain’s financial issues since a large part of the tax-paying population was now gone. The decrease in population would also make the demand for manpower in Spanish armies more desperate as it pulled from a shrinking labor force. With a smaller population and outstanding debt, Spanish nobility and landed gentry levied heavier taxes and rent on an already threadbare society that would result in outbreaks of rebellion soon after Philip IV assumed the throne and continuing beyond his reign. By the seventeenth century, the Spanish nobility had grown ostensibly from profitable periods in the 1500s, but debt and economic drop-off “impelled the privileged to protect their profitability [while] failing to protect the unprivileged.” This form of social stress would be a persistent issue in Spain throughout the next century.

The death of Charles II in 1700 effectively ended Hapsburg rule in Spain. French influence would enter the regency with the Bourbon reign of Philip V (r. 1700-1746), whose dominion over Spain would be heavily influenced by King Louis XIV of France. However, this transition between ruling families was not without opposition as power and influence shifted on the Iberian Peninsula. Differing powers would soon bring about the War of Spanish Succession (1702-1713) as the Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I, sought to contest the line of succession to the Spanish throne, and maritime powers such as the English and Dutch sought more control over
Mediterranean and American trade routes and territory.\textsuperscript{16} This conflict would essentially involve every major power in Europe at the time. Louis XIV brought French armies into Spanish territories to assist in the conflict, while pro-Hapsburg forces took Gibraltar and major peninsular cities including Madrid.\textsuperscript{17} The war would end with Louis XIV consolidating his losses. Franco-Spanish forces gave up Spanish holdings in the Netherlands and focused on preserving the territorial integrity of peninsular Spain until the Treaty of Utrecht was drawn up securing Philip V’s monarchy and Spanish trade rights and territory in the Philippines and Indies.\textsuperscript{18} French involvement in Spain would wane after the war with Philip V’s second marriage to Elizabeth Farnese (1692-1766) of the Italian Duchy of Parma.

During this period of Bourbon rule in the eighteenth century, Spain saw the beginnings of recovery to the economic strain created by the once vast Hapsburg Empire. By ceding lands in Italy and the Netherlands, Spain was no longer obligated to militarily support those regions and thus relied less on foreign loans. This allowed for profits from the Americas to circulate within Spain instead of being paid out that created an atmosphere for economic growth. After the war, Philip V had also limited the power of the aristocracy effectively removing them from governmental decisions and stripped the principalities of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia of much of their political power due to their rebellious actions against the Castilian crown during the conflict.\textsuperscript{19} The result of these actions created a politically unified Spain that could be governed uniformly by the crown.

During this span of slightly more than 150 years, Spain had gone through a tremendous amount of changes. At its pinnacle of growth and wealth as an imperial power during Hapsburg reign, a nostalgic image of power and glory veils the vast amount of debt that was incurred to achieve it. Perhaps it is not an issue of financial mismanagement as much as it is the
overwhelming cost of maintaining an empire of such size and scope. Strong alignment with the Catholic faith would unify the population and the intense social indoctrination of religion offered a universal mode of control and justification for the monarchy. Undoubtedly, the aristocracy looked back wistfully to when fortunes were made in the sixteenth century as costs of maintaining their social status grew with inflation pushing families further into debt in the 1600s. However, it would be the poor and middle class who would suffer the most during the economic downslide, food shortages, and outbreaks of disease. With the rise of the Bourbon regime, early influences of the Enlightenment began to enter into Spain as regents embraced reason as enlightened absolutists.

The son of Philip V and Elizabeth Farnese, Charles III (r. 1759-1788) was a ruler most representative of the Enlightenment in Spain. Charles III entered the Spanish monarchy intent on reform. The regime would initiate an overhaul of Spain’s tax system in attempts to streamline it as well as allow for a broader distribution of fees that would facilitate domestic economic investment and growth while still generating sufficient revenue from international trade. In another attempt to stimulate revenue, the monarchy also sought to impose its secular power in an attempt to limit the financial ability of the Catholic Church in Spain by reclaiming and redistributing land that was tax exempt under ecclesiastical control. Due to the entrenchment of Catholicism in Spanish society, this was largely unsuccessful. Alternatively, the Bourbon regime would later expel the Jesuit order from all Spanish lands in 1767 where the state confiscated and absorbed the order’s property. Outside of attempts of financial reform, Charles III’s reign was marked with improvements to infrastructure and culture by supporting the publishing industry and allowing “ample liberty of expression.” This allowance of popular expression may have backfired on the regent during a 1766 Madrid riot that resulted in the exile
of his finance treasurer, the Marquis of Esquillache, but this is also reflective of Enlightenment philosophy that gave the public more agency to interact with government even under totalitarian rule.

Despite recognizing a need for change in Spain, the reign of Charles III ultimately did not lead to dramatic reform within the country. However, his application of policy as a ruler influenced by the Enlightenment would present a powerful example to many within Spain. Spanish Enlightenment author Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (1744-1811) praised Charles III to the Royal Society of Madrid stating:

Useful sciences, economic principles, a general spirit of enlightenment; these are what Spain will owe to the reign of Charles III…This pious sovereign, having decided to let light enter his kingdom, began removing the obstacles that could block its progress. This was his first concern. Ignorance continued to defend the trenches, but Charles ended up overrunning them. Truth fought alongside him, and all darkness disappeared at the sight of him…

Charles III’s emphases on practical and educated solutions within Spanish government are not only noted by Jovellanos. By surrounding himself with other powerful, enlightened men, his intention to better Spain through secular reason and education was clear. Charles III was a Catholic, but as a ruler, he saw the benefit of having some distance between the powers of church and state.

Francisco Goya grew up during the reign of Charles III and at the time of Charles’ death in 1788, had been working for the monarchy designing cartoons for royal tapestries and had achieved a role as a court painter just two years before the monarch’s death. This placed him among intellectual circles of the Enlightenment, which would contribute to the editorialist quality of his artwork, and a cultivation of a progressive social position. At this point, it was hopeful to think that with the reign of Charles III, Spain was modernizing and embracing
education and progress in order to adapt to a world that was slowly moving away from imperialism and strength through territorial domination in favor of obtaining power through economics and political discourse. This would not come to pass as Charles IV (r. 1788-1808) upheld, but did not enforce, the reformist endeavors of his father through a passive style of governing marked by the ambitions of several different prime ministers, which would again throw Spain into political turmoil.
CHAPTER III
GOYA’S LIFE IN SPAIN

Born March 30, 1746 in Fuendetodos, Spain, Goya spent most of his youth in Saragossa, a town located just southwest of the Pyrenees and the border with France. Goya grew up and was educated during a time of enlightenment in Spain under the rule of Charles III. Slowly, but steadily he trained as an artist eventually moving to Madrid to work, drawing cartoons for royal tapestries in the 1770s as well as reproducing important works in the royal collection by Velázquez. He was frequently in competition with other artists vying for positions in the court and was often rejected. In the 1780s he caught the attention of Charles III’s secretary of state the Duke of Floridablanca who helped involve the artist with affluent patrons and by 1786 Goya finally had gained enough recognition that he was given a position as court as a painter to the king along with commissions for more tapestry cartoons.

Goya had entered into an optimistic and politically stable court of Charles III, only to have that change in 1788 as the reign of Charles IV began. Goya was enjoying his first years of success when he was struck with illness in 1793. His hiatus from court would be marked with a period of independent creativity that enabled him to “[make] observations that commissioned works do not allow.” This allowed Goya to digest an explosive amount of political upheaval in Europe that had been triggered by the French Revolution of 1789. While violence was an issue, the social ideas promoted by French revolutionaries were direct threats to the status quo of European monarchies, as their absolute power was proven vulnerable. Floridablanca, fearing the impact of these ideas in Spain, imposed censors on literature and restricted people moving in and out of the country, which had the potential to arouse public support for the new French
government and the possibility of similar action against the Spanish crown.\textsuperscript{29} Needless to say, this went against Goya’s intellectual principles that had been so heavily influenced by the Enlightenment.

Beginning with his \textit{Caprichos} series of 1798-99 (see Figs. 19, 20, and 21), Goya began to live a creative dual life. On the one hand, he had his duties to Charles IV as court painter, while on the other he created work independently from his royal obligations that record the artist’s own response to the world around him. Occasionally, examples of his court painting appear to lean towards editorial commentary such as in the 1800 painting of \textit{The Family of Charles IV} (Fig. 2), but Goya had just as much trouble from shifts in Spanish leadership as he did from the content of his work. With the second appointment of Manuel Godoy (1767-1851) as Spanish Prime Minister in 1801, Goya found a patron who embraced the social ideals of the Enlightenment that promoted a different agenda than just the immortalization of lineage.

Godoy’s rise to power began in 1792 when he was first appointed Prime Minister under Charles IV and his career fluctuated depending on his political and military endeavors until he regained his post as minister in 1801 until 1808.\textsuperscript{30} The commissions by Godoy provide explicit examples of Enlightenment emphasis on science, reason and education, which includes a series of allegories representing agriculture, industry, and commerce.\textsuperscript{31} Seemingly, everyone involved in the reign of Charles IV was marked by corruption, including Godoy, but his patronage of Goya and choice of commissions may be indicative of shared social values between the two men (Fig. 3). In 1805, Godoy established a primary school in Madrid that he would fund lavishly until its closure in 1808.\textsuperscript{32} This public and outward support of education and civil science indicates that Godoy revered the ideas of the Enlightenment at least in the image he wanted to craft of himself through patronage. The idea of upward mobility was increasingly important for
the average person after the French Revolution, and Godoy served as an example of a man who rose in status and title. His commissions of Goya seem to reflect that Godoy’s own education was a key to his success.

In March of 1808, increasing political unrest led to Charles IV’s abdication as a populous uprising resulted in his son, Ferdinand VII, assuming power as king. This would only last a few months, as Napoleon’s forces would invade Spain and Madrid the following May to once again upset the balance of power. A Bonaparte, Joseph I (r.1808-1813) would put Spain under French control. This would lead to outright civil conflict in the Peninsular Wars and inspire Goya’s *Desastres de la Guerra* (The Disasters of War) series (Figs. 4 and 5). Goya would remain as court painter during this time until Ferdinand VII returned to power to reestablish the house of Bourbon on the Spanish throne. This appears to be more ceremonial as Goya, in his own testimony later, would claim that he cheaply sold off valuables in order to deny Bonaparte commissions.\(^3^3\) Despite his continual employ under Bonaparte, the “intruder king,” Ferdinand VII absolved Goya of any wrongdoing in 1814 after his return to the throne.\(^3^4\) Perhaps to reassert his patriotism under the restored king, Goya also accepted a royal commission to paint what would become two of his most famous public works of *The Second of May 1808* and *The Third of May 1808* (Figs. 6 and 7).

As Ferdinand VII ruled with increasingly absolutist power, Goya began to withdraw from the court and public life. After rejecting the populous constitution of 1812, Ferdinand once again sought to wield total control by reestablishing the laws of the Church and Inquisition over the will of the people in a conservative and repressive reign.\(^3^5\) It was here, during the final years of his life that Goya became increasingly reclusive and began producing what have come to be known as his “Black Paintings” (Figs. 8 and 9). These have been interpreted in many different
ways including as an indication of the onset of madness in the artist, defeat within his career, and his worldview as the ideas of the Enlightenment were being constantly repressed in Spain.

Goya would die in 1828.
CHAPTER IV

THE SUBLIME

The concept and definition of the sublime has shifted over the centuries. Though ideas of what the sublime is have varied over time, a common thread throughout is that it incites an emotional human reaction and is most often spoken of in terms of its effect on an audience. So how would we define the sublime? The Greek writer Pseudo-Longinus (ca. first century CE) leads the discussion with his reflections on the sublime based on the philosophical canon established by Plato. The sublime is not philosophically explored in great detail again until the eighteenth century. This can be attributed to the rise in availability of education due to the establishment of universities, and the importance placed on education by principals of the Enlightenment. From this point on, inquiries into the sublime and its role in art are readdressed to reflect the modern ideals of the world; feudalism began to wane and philosophers had more freedom to consider the rapidly expanding secular world. Coming from the ideals of the Enlightenment and Romanticism, Irish aesthetic theorist Edmund Burke (1729-1797) spoke of nature as generating the strongest emotions in an audience in his *Philosophical Enquiry*. His application of the word *sublime* was used to describe things that had a quality “beyond normal experience, perhaps even beyond the reach of human understanding [where] in its greatness or intensity and whether physical, metaphysical, moral, aesthetic or spiritual…was generally regarded as beyond comprehension and beyond measurement.”

Pseudo-Longinus, who explored the early Greek concept of the sublime, was not known for much else aside from his treatise *On the Sublime*. His biography is somewhat ambiguous, and even his authorship has been questioned due to prior mistranslations of this, his possibly lone
surviving work. Nonetheless, scholars still generally accept him as author despite the fact that most of his personal details have been lost to history.

Longinus approached the sublime in relation to its interaction with the Greek philosophical concept of genius, or academic mental ability. To Longinus the sublime is a product of genius as it pertains to oratory skill and not necessarily to aesthetics. The sublime is mental stimulation that is conducive to higher mental thought and a result of higher mental processes. He writes that “the human soul is naturally exalted by genuine sublimity, and anything grand and lofty fills it with pleasure and pride.”

This marks the sublime as beneficial and unique, which has the ability to transform a person intellectually. It is “an echo from greatness of mind.” This intellectual response helps to define the sublime as Longinus interprets it, but also links it to the emotional response that would become an important element of the sublime during the Romantic period.

While Longinus admits to an emotional response that occurs in conjunction with a sublime experience, he limits it to only rational, “noble emotions” that stir human passions; emotions such as pain and fear are considered lowly in this respect and do not stir the mind in an intellectually productive way. He makes his example through Homer’s narrative experience that the sublime effect is heroic due to the mentally transportive effects of the use of words and language. According to Longinus, “language is an illumination of thoughts.” It is the ability of skillfully used artful language that, to Longinus, stimulates productive imagination within the mind. It allows the audience to place themselves within the narrative. This “oratorical imagination,” enhances the language but artfully blends it in such a manner that can mentally persuade, “even enslave the judgment of the hearer.” Though he never really provides a concise definition of the sublime, Longinus does outline certain qualities indicative of a sublime
effect. For a subject to produce a sublime effect on the listener, there must be “grandeur in the conceptions” of the narrative where larger than life scenarios should be described through carefully chosen and “dignified” language in order to provoke emotion in the audience that is “vehement and uncontrollable,” and this should all be artfully composed in its presentation so that even the orator appears taken by the story.45

Although he was directing his theory towards spoken prose when he describes on the sublime, Pseudo-Longinus establishes a foundation from which future ideas of the sublime may have been built. The translator of the version cited here, Thomas Stebbing, refers to a prior English translation of Longinus in 1739 by Reverend William Smith and a French translation by Nicolas Boileau in 1733.46 This reference by Stebbing to the two prior translations indicate that the ideas presented by the ancient Greek, Longinus, embodied an active topic of the early eighteenth century that still held importance when Stebbing made his translation in 1867. Such discussions surrounding this work would have likely helped Edmund Burke develop his own thoughts surrounding the concept of the sublime.

It was in the mid-eighteenth century that Edmund Burke explored the concept of the sublime as it related to art. “[His] A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757)…broke the idea of the sublime down…discernible in the natural world and in natural phenomena.”47 At this time, the sublime and its representation was a challenge for artists to represent the sensations of experiences, which are seemingly impossible to represent outside of an individual imagination, and with that representation transfer those sensations to the audience.48

Before pursuing the sublime itself, Burke dispels the notion that such a theme is purely subjective and that the sublime has a broader and more universal quality. He speaks on taste as a
judgment device where some variances occur person to person, but there is a general “agreement of mankind” where pleasures and pains find universal consensus. This establishment of judgment by taste operates as a result of two influences according to Burke. The first involves the general society in which the consensus between what is “good” and “bad” takes place, and the second is the interior reaction of the imagination that triggers an emotional reaction (that Burke would later refer to as passion). In regards to artwork, the sublime can be recognized universally through the content of the work and may be experienced within the audience’s imagination.

Sublime subjects have a certain amount of power over the viewer that is intended to be mentally stimulating. Burke identifies the sublime as rooted in human passions, the simplest form of those being pleasure and pain. His interpretation reveres pain as the strongest passion and derives the sublime from it because of its extreme nature as an emotion. Ideas of pain and danger as threatening to self-preservation, according to Burke, are the most powerful when discussing the passions and it is from this realm that the sublime comes forth:

Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.

Almost more important than where the sublime is sourced is the human interaction with the emotions associated with it. Emphasizing the social nature of humans, the act of sympathy is essential to creating the atmosphere of the sublime. The distance separating one from another’s pain or tragedy allows for the experience of that pain but then relief and delight of not actually being in that circumstance. “One of [Burke’s] main contentions is that the aesthetic response is immediate, that nature and works of art operate on our sensibility directly without much
interposition of rational reflection between stimulus and feeling. This aspect of sympathy and the sublime allows the creation of an all-encompassing emotional response as it relates to terror and pain. “In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other, nor by consequence reason on that object which employs it.” This kind of consuming response to an aesthetic object indicates that not only is interaction by the audience required by the sublime, it is also unavoidable. However, as the audience is drawn in they are also able to step away from the same situation without actual harm or danger. A sublime experience is enticing and alluring. It draws in the viewer with an extraordinary situation where the viewer is intellectually aware that the experience is virtual. According to Stephen K. White:

A sublime experience is one evoked by something that confronts us with our vulnerability and is thus painful; however, the threat remains at a distance. This distance gives us the cognitive and emotional space necessary for the sublime. If the threat is too close or immediate, we simply experience the pain of being terrified and disoriented. Burke uses the word ‘delight’ to name this particular pleasure... The particular passions associated with this delight are typically astonishment, awe, reverence, and respect.

As Burke explains it, the aesthetic properties of the sublime require an emotional response and interested connection with the audience. That connection is what makes the sublime in an artwork effective. “The power of an object upon our passions [emotions]... is intended to affect the mind by the force of some predominant property, the affection produced is like to be the more uniform and perfect.” Via Burke’s “agreement of mankind,” this experience is shared among the audience to provoke a common reaction despite the sensation’s localization in the individual.

This sublime quality when applied to art becomes an intrinsic part of its character and an essential path of communication between the artist, the work, and the audience. Especially as art moved toward more themes reflective of the artist’s own feelings, there was an increasing trend
to go beyond orthodoxies. Across all artistic mediums, artists were exploring the depths of their own psyches and the extreme corners of the human condition. These corners are usually aligned with strong emotions that range from great sensual pleasures and beauty to sheer terror and the grotesque. “Visual artists became deeply intrigued by the challenge of representing it (the sublime), asking how can an artist paint the sensation that we experience when words fail or when we find ourselves beyond the limits of reason?”

Within the social confines of morality, these extremes are often taboo or infrequently experienced, but that does not stifle private intellectual curiosity. By means of the sublime qualities of works of art, the audience is able to circumvent any social, moral or physical obstacles to experience and participate in the sublime effect of the work. The sublime’s perception in the eighteenth century built a foundation that has had a lasting influence into the present day despite a contemporary shift in meaning to more positive connotations of the term.

What is interesting is that historically the Greek concept of the sublime established by Longinus returned in popularity during the mid-eighteenth century, precisely when Edmund Burke establishes his modern take on the subject. The sublime was not lost in the time between them, but the rise of Christianity surely impacted how it was treated. Perhaps something that inspired such strong emotion needed to be related to the religious controlling power under the banner of divine inspiration. In fact, when considering Burke’s view on the sublime, he intends it to have an effect on the viewer that goes beyond temporal reason to play in the emotional depths of the imagination. This form of temporal transcendence is similar with Catholic methods of spirituality before Burke’s secular application of it during the Enlightenment.

The Romantic period of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century would incorporate and display many aspects of the Enlightenment. At this time, the Neoclassic movement was
reflective of the academic learning and scientific advancement of the Enlightenment. Much like
the Renaissance, it referenced the philosophy of Classical Greek and Roman thinkers. The
Neoclassic movement was driven by nostalgia based on assumptions of a moment in human
history that was logical, ordered, and ideal. In this way, the modernizing world of the late
eighteenth century compared itself to the great figures of the past. The Romantic point of view,
on the other hand, made use of education and social sciences during the Enlightenment, as the
public became more conscious of social truths and was able to utilize that knowledge to
comment on the social atmosphere. According to David Blayney Brown, “Romanticism
emphasized individual experience, feeling and expression.”

The sublime, as described by
Burke, provided a ready venue for the artist’s individual expression. Goya, along with his
Romantic contemporaries, used this as a way to communicate love, tragedy, social ills, and to
emotionally engage the audience on an individual level.

The emotional connection of these subjects creates a sublime interaction that draws in the
viewer, engages their imagination and promotes what could be related most plainly as a spiritual
experience. Blayney notes that “Romantics…looked for the God in themselves, or for a religion
that appealed to the emotions, the senses and the eye rather than the intellect.”

The appeal to
the senses and detachment from intellect bares a strong similarity to Catholic spiritualist
practices that arose from the Counter-Reformation more than two hundred years earlier. The
secular experience promoted by the sublime was something that would be second nature to a
Spanish artist like Goya, who was brought up in a culture that was heavily indoctrinated by
Catholicism. Not only would he have been familiar with the concepts surrounding the sublime,
his application of it in his work would have been a readily-consumable visual language to his
Spanish audience.
CHAPTER V
COUNTER-REFORMATION AND SPANISH MYSTIC LITERATURE

During the Council of Trent, which met in twenty-five sessions from 1545 until 1563, the Catholic Church attempted to address spiritual and moral issues of corruption presented to them by the Protestant Reformation. During this time of the Counter-Reformation, all aspects of spirituality and practice were under close scrutiny. Several powerful voices begin to emerge in the latter half of the sixteenth century seeking to reform the Catholic Church and establish spiritual guidelines creating a kind of spiritual mysticism that was to be embedded in Spanish religious practice. The final session of the Council of Trent in 1563, would address the spiritual purpose and use of images within the Catholic faith. The Archbishop of Milan, Carlo Borromeo (1538-1584), and Archbishop of Bologna, Gabriele Paleotti (1522-1597) were integral to the development of the decree on images at Trent. Paleotti would publish his *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images* in 1582 that went into further detail on the roles of religious artwork.  

Paleotti was heavily influenced by the writing of Luis de Granada (1505-1588) who, as a Dominican friar in Spain, published his *Libro de la Oración, y Meditación*, which was a spiritual guide to prayer and meditation in 1554. Granada’s book would become the most “successful religious book of the Spanish Counter-Reformation.” The scale of its popularity undoubtedly would have impacted Borromeo and Paleotti’s treatment of images as spiritual devices during the Council of Trent. Paolo Prodi also references this influence of spiritualist writing on Paleotti, specifically of Granada’s contemporary Saint Ignatius of Loyola, in his introductory essay to William McCuaig’s translation of the *Discourse*. These early spiritualist texts would shape the doctrines established during the Council of Trent as well as establish a framework that the Jesuit
and Carmelite orders would later expand upon when considering prayer and spirituality.

The 1563 decree on images established at the Council of Trent briefly outlined the duty of sacred images as didactic tools and their utility as objects of spiritual faith along with the specific criteria such an image was to meet. The Council recognized the didactic value of images, stating that:

in matters relating to intercession and invocation of the saints...and the legitimate use of images, teaching [the faithful] that the saints who reign together with Christ offer up their prayers to God for men, that it is good and beneficial supplicantly to invoke them and to have recourse to their prayers...in order to obtain favors from God.\textsuperscript{64}

By recognizing the use of images as tools of faith, the Council of Trent authorized their use as a way that an average person could make a connection with sacred images that allowed a temporal step to a greater spiritual end. This responsibility also fell on religious leaders who were to speak in conjunction with the images so that the examples the scenes presented were illuminated in such a way that helped the faithful to visualize themselves within the moment “and be moved to adore and love God and cultivate piety.”\textsuperscript{65} Due to the spread of Catholicism to the New World and the mix of culture and language that the religion interacted with abroad and in Europe, the physical text of the religion was not always universally understood. While Protestant reformers rejected the incorporation of sacred images, Catholic reformers embraced it as a visual language that could reach a broad and diverse audience beyond language and literacy barriers. The images highlight a religious narrative that is meant to be “constantly reflected upon...[where] the people are reminded of the benefits and gifts bestowed upon them by Christ” and these are to serve as examples that those considering the images can use to structure their own lives in a holy and pious way.\textsuperscript{66} The contemplation and reflection exhibited by the faithful viewer of a religious image becomes an essential component to the flourishing of Spanish
spiritual practices during this time of reform in the Catholic Church.

Luís de Granada published his *Libro de Oración*, promoting spiritual practice that would be foundational to future Spanish spiritualist writings, which also went hand in hand with the Council of Trent’s validation of images through its didactic, and especially, its affective function. In his *Libro de Oración*, Granada sets out a daily regimen that was designed to aid and guide the practitioner to a higher level of spirituality and a closer relationship with God. By doing so, spirituality and aspects of Catholicism that were criticized as fantastical or supernatural by Protestant writers and theologians are reestablished as intellectual experiences. The week-long meditation process Granada established required contemplation and admission of one’s sins followed by a recognition that earthly pursuits and the pains of life are temporary; by week’s end, the participant has considered death and sin meditating on the power of God and the benefit of his grace. This action of prayer and meditation is supplemented by specific narratives from the Bible that help to illustrate Granada’s intentions in this exercise, and also create a tangible reference for the practitioner.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises* of 1548 was in many ways a companion to Luís de Granada’s *Libro de Oración*. As a contemporary of Granada, his guide to meditation would follow a similar structure. In an effort to spread Catholicism in a manner that would allow for the least amount of corruption, Saint Ignatius created a program of spiritual preparation that challenged the participant increasingly as they advance through the weeks. This daily routine is very structured and rigorous, calling for periods of meditative prayer. The goal is to detach oneself from the physical world through this form of contemplative prayer. By meditating on a certain event, the imagination is called on to animate the subject of the particular contemplation (such as the Nativity) with the idea that by the end, one should be able to mentally become a
witness to the actual event.\textsuperscript{70} This detachment from the temporal world and humility is the method to access pure spirituality. Although not as philosophical as a month long program with strict rules, Ignatius continually reaffirmed the practices that help progress spiritual enlightenment through sacrifice of temporal and physical aspects of the world that allow the practitioner to approach an elevated spiritual perspective.

Teresa of Avila founded the “first Reformed Carmelite convent [with] the desire to minimize the ravages being wrought…by Protestantism.”\textsuperscript{71} In Teresa of Avila’s \textit{The Way of Perfection},\textsuperscript{72} written just after the closing of the Council of Trent, Teresa hoped to teach and inspire a deep and lasting love of prayer. Its function, much like the goals of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, is to teach the reader a method to unify their soul and spirit with God. Written for her fellow Carmelites, it serves as a resource for the spiritually successful nun. In a process similar to that of Saint Ignatius, her writing focuses on prayer as a form of spiritual meditation. Her requirements focus on a process of fraternal love, detachment from created things, and true humility.\textsuperscript{73} According to Teresa of Avila, the goal of spiritual thought and action is a state through prayer that she calls “sublime,” that is, otherworldly.\textsuperscript{74} This “otherworldliness” refers to the spiritual realm of God, and it cannot be experienced through temporal means. “He grants what we are asking Him [through prayer]…of eventually attaining to a perpetual enjoyment of what on earth He only allows them to taste.”\textsuperscript{75} She calls for detachment from the temporal world through meditative prayer. Teresa of Avila recognized the difficulty in separating from family and events of the world, but emphasized the reward of spiritual unification with God that in turn becomes a new, higher, spiritual family.\textsuperscript{76} Once one has achieved this level of detachment, it leads to individual humility that allows for a more pure, spiritual connection with God to be sought through prayer.
The writing of Saint John of the Cross, a contemporary of Saint Teresa of Avila and someone whom she enlisted to help in Carmelite reform, combines the spiritual practices of Saint Ignatius and Saint Teresa to promote an elevated and pure spiritual union with God in his *Mystical Doctrine* of around 1585. At this point, Spain is well into the Counter-Reformation and John of the Cross strives to present a spiritual path that is realistic to practices of the devout but still accessible to the average person who may not be able to be as dedicated, or more importantly, directed solely to the converted Catholic. In addressing the question of whether or not God calls to all who deserve it or only to the few, the answer, apparently, is dependent on how well one listens:

He (God) is willing that all should embrace it. But He finds few who permit Him to work such sublime things in them. There are many who shrink from the labour and refuse to bear with the dryness and mortification, instead of submitting, as they must, with perfect patience.

Simply, in order to be connected with God, one must relinquish themselves to Him and His process of purification. The endgame of which is achieving a “union of the soul with God.” Once again, there is the presentation of the necessity of detachment from the temporal world through purifying, meditative, and mental processes, which are essential for spiritual elevation where one’s soul has processed beyond the comprehension of the world to something imaginatively higher that can be perceived as real.

John of the Cross does this through meditative trials similar to those outlined by Saint Ignatius. He calls for the necessity of suffering during these trials of purification for the soul to be able to ascend to the spiritual level of God. “So great are the trials…if they will attain to perfection, that no human learning can explain them, nor experience describe them.” One has to make a considerable effort through meditation, striving after difficult goals, and separating the
soul from the pleasures and desires of temporal life in order to enter a “cleansing dark of the
night of the senses.” John of the Cross pushes for the detachment of the soul because any
earthly attribute is “very little and unlike God.” Spiritual things taken through the senses are to
be rejected and the imagination is to be fixed on the things of God. These goals are to be
reached through meditation.

On the path to devotion and spiritual unity, John of the Cross feels that the ultimate goal is
the complete detachment of the soul. “The detached soul is made to suffer from the failure and
withdrawal of its natural powers (during purification) occasionally felt so acutely that the soul
seems literally to suffer the pains of hell.” From here, the soul is in darkness where it burns.
“God makes the soul die to all that is not God, that, being denuded and stripped, it may clothe
itself anew.” In other words, it is through a meditative and contemplative process that one
detaches themselves from the temporal, experiencing the pain of leaving earthly desires, which
creates an emptiness of the soul that is then ready to be filled by God, thereby creating spiritual
union in an elevated mental plane.

While ideally one is supposed to reach these goals on one’s own, John of the Cross notes
thoughtfully that not everyone can immerse themselves so intensely, that some will progress
faster than others, and even more will be content to reach a certain point spiritually and remain
there. He does not condemn those who fall into these categories nor discourages them, but rather
addresses the issue realistically. Here, in his section for the spiritual beginner, he brings up the
usefulness of images, objects, and places that help reinforce devotion that are not necessary for
the more advanced spiritual man. The image was utilized as a temporal stepping stone to
divine contemplation that provided an environment in which one could mentally visualize
themselves within the narrative and lead to deeper spiritual thought and consideration.
Although these mystics remained somewhat outside of mainstream theology and stirred controversy in the view of Spanish religious authority, their writings and ideas surrounding spiritualism during and after the Council of Trent had influential guiding principles for Catholic reformers. Meditation and prayer was stressed as a practice of pure Christianity that was also validated by its place in the early history of the religion. It provided a mode of solidarity through Catholicism that would allow Spain to reassert its political power as a Catholic nation. However, with a rising middle class, not everyone could devote themselves as thoroughly as men like Granada and Loyola would require. The Council of Trent and the later writing of John of the Cross recognized the need for accessibility to spiritual doctrine by a wider audience of class and background. Religious images could teach the illiterate and those in the Spanish Americas where language barriers could alienate new converts, as well as functioning as a focal point to help those in prayer explore the narratives of the Bible. Granada’s use of a textual aid was a notion that became visualized in the consideration of images during the last session of the Council of Trent. Visual aids remained an important part of Catholicism, and by regulating them, the Council was able to purpose them as didactic elements and tools for spiritual meditation. After Trent, Paleotti expounded further on the use and guidelines for religious imagery and their importance to Catholic practice.

Paleotti’s *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images* established how sacred images should be represented, the benefits they provide, as well as how certain subjects are to be considered. He intended his *Discourse* to be widely disseminated throughout Catholic Europe so that it could reach collectors, patrons, and artists of religious works to create uniformity in sacred representations that was also “a means of transforming sacred style into a more suitable, pious, and affective vehicle to reach the general populace.” Paleotti’s work stressed the potential and
value that sacred images had in contributing to the promotion and comprehension of the Catholic religion. The use of effective religious images shortens the distance between the viewer and content that results in a tangibility of a potentially amorphous subject that is accessible. Anne Muraoka notes that Paleotti found value in painting that “served as living Scripture for the Christian populace, fostering an intimacy and connection that sacred stories heard or read could not.” As these images served a didactic purpose, Paleotti stressed truthfulness in their representation and a naturalistic style that would allow for tangibility in the images’ narrative.

A student of Paleotti, and cousin to Carlo Borromeo, Federico Borromeo (1564-1631) would follow his mentor’s 1582 treatise with his own writings concerning the use and utility of sacred images in 1624 in his *Sacred Painting* followed by *Museum* in 1625. Borromeo’s writing is reflective of a consolidation and simplification of Paleotti by reaffirming the values of sacred art set forth in the earlier *Discourse* and the added benefit of time to have seen how such ideas had been implemented by artists. One of his more prominent points was that a legitimate sacred image could only be properly executed by a pious and knowledgeable artist. Borromeo relates that “every painter must first arouse some sense of religious devotion in his own mind, or he will not be able to impart to his own works the devotion or a sensibility that one can praise.”

Similar to Paleotti, Borromeo also expounds on sacred imagery as pertaining not only to Biblical narrative, but also with representations of nature. As God was viewed as a creator, “contemplation of nature was a means of becoming close to [God], because his presence was to be found in all things.” This recognition of nature as a divine source of inspiration and contemplations aligned it with the benefits of the intellectual pursuits of spiritualism at the time.
CHAPTER VI
SPANISH BAROQUE ARTISTS AND MODES OF TRANSMISSION

As Spain moved into the Baroque around 1600, a notable and conscious application of the ideology and iconography surrounding these spiritual practices in religious imagery began to emerge. Francisco Pacheco (1564-1644) who made his name as a painter in Seville, and also acted as a censor for the Inquisition, particularly championed this in his own work and in his teachings to his students. His use of religious iconography “was much influenced by the Jesuits who stood in vanguard of the Counter Reformation and were now major patrons of art…Pacheco owned a plaster cast of the death mask of Saint Ignatius of Loyola and he had painted a statue of the Jesuit founder for his beatification in Seville in 1610.” With his interest in Saint Ignatius, Pacheco would have also been aware of the work of Saint Teresa of Avila especially as Pope Gregory XV canonized both together in 1622. “[What] Pacheco admired most in the Jesuits was their attention to detail…[but] Jesuit influence on art in early seventeenth-century Spain went beyond formalism and attention to detail. It centered on a profoundly materialist ethos that promoted a high degree of realism.” This amount of realism was essential to the meditative practice developed by Saint Ignatius so that the viewer had all the elements, sights and smells at hand to mentally transcend life and spiritually occupy that moment. This became a process known as *encarnación* where a sculpture would be painted in a manner that the viewer could meditate on the sculpture and it would appear as if it were alive.

This process of polychrome on sculpture was a method to venerate representations of religious figures and Francisco Pacheco took this as a very serious practice. This was mostly because sculpture was not a high form of art in his opinion, as it lacked the depth and narrative
capabilities that painting provided. Pacheco called for an impeccable amount of realism where the object would be able to present an image that the viewer could imagine as real or in the process of happening. By polychroming a sculpture, one would elevate it into this position. An excellent example of this is a crucifixion executed by sculptor Juan Montañés and Pacheco between 1603-6 (Fig. 10). At the demand of the patron “Christ was ‘to be alive, before He had died, with the head inclined towards the right side, looking to any person who might be praying at the foot of the crucifix, as if Christ Himself were speaking to him.” This creates a spiritual transformative atmosphere in which, through meditation and contemplation, one can transcend the temporal and experience the actual religious event.

As he notes in the first chapter of his *Arte de la pintura*, Pacheco thought painting was a higher pursuit than sculpture because of its ability to represent accurately spiritual narratives realistically. His posthumous treatise represents a clear set of values and guidelines pertaining to painting and religious imagery that follows the methods Pacheco championed during his life. Strong religious images were essential to spiritual union with God in Spanish mysticism. Pacheco highlights a story about a sinful painter in 1252 that tried and failed many times to paint the face of the Virgin Mary; he went to confession and tried again. Cleansed, he produced a perfect rendition of her portrait. Events such as this confirm to Pacheco that God has the ability to speak through and influence religious painting elevating its importance. Naturally, Pacheco would concentrate more on painting than polychrome but he would stress a sculptural style to convey realism in painting.

This practice of Pacheco seemed to influence Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664), who was not a student of Pacheco, but his paintings reflect a very sculptural approach to his work influenced by the polychrome technique to bring realism to the image. This sculptural realism
would also be evident in Pacheco’s student, and Zurbarán’s contemporary, Diego Velázquez (1599-1660). A fitting comparison that highlights this technique would be that of Pacheco’s 1614 *Christ on the Cross*, to Zurbarán’s version in 1627, and Velázquez’s in the early 1630s (Figs. 11, 12, and 13). All three paintings denote a heavy reliance on physical reference to sculpture to create a high level of realism within each painting.\(^99\) In each case, “the Crucifixion [is isolated] from its narrative and so encourages the viewer to believe he is witnessing a ‘real’ event.”\(^100\) Set in front of a dark field, each image of Christ is detached from the world in order to provide a venue for contemplation that allows the viewers to transport themselves into the moment of a different spiritual reality. The importance of this particular grouping of paintings seemed to resonate with Goya, as he would create his own *Christ on the Cross* in 1780 (Fig. 14). The direct similarities reveal Goya’s study and understanding of the modes of spiritual transmission in painting promoted by Pacheco. Christ, still being alive in Goya’s representation, is also reminiscent of Montañés and Pacheco’s polychrome sculpture crucifix mentioned earlier.

Zurbarán was successful in that he was able to “fuse the arts of painting and sculpture [to] create a convincing reality of the sacred.”\(^101\) He concentrated on devotional images and conformed them to the tenets of Spanish spiritualism as presented by Saint Ignatius. Zurbarán’s mobility between realism and mysticism is apparent in his representation of *Saint Francis Kneeling* (Fig. 15). Painted in 1639, the artist was still coping with the death of his second wife, which apparently affected him more than the death of his first.\(^102\) What we see in the devotional image of the saint is a contemplation of death, darkness, and an unclear divide between life and death. The image is representative of what the eighteenth century would call “sublime.” His *Saint Francis in Meditation* (Fig. 16) of the same year is similar in representation. “The master's most frequent subjects were devotional, single figures of Angels, Apostles or other Saints...All
female Saints and, until 1636, practically all standing figures of male Saints are placed indoors against a plain grey background. Once again, this technique highlights the theme of detachment and contemplation on the spiritual in these devotional images. Zurbarán was active in Seville from about 1616 to 1630. While there, he was also influenced by the “Spanish alumbrados, a [mystic] Quietest movement preaching inner withdrawal, ‘to be alone with God.’” The Spanish alumbrados, like Loyola, Avila, and John of the Cross, insisted on the spiritual ideas of detachment and transcendence to become spiritually united with God, and that by way of religious imagery anyone could pursue that relationship. This is reaffirmed in the discovery that Zurbarán’s religious paintings of saints are not the saints themselves, but modeled after common or local people adopting the qualities of the saint. This pushes that tenet of Spanish spirituality of the average person’s ability to devote and elevate him or herself to that saintly level of spiritual connectedness.

As a student of Pacheco, Diego Velázquez trained in the representation of spiritual elements in religious painting as well as conveying an encapsulating attribute of realism in his work. As he became court painter to Philip IV in 1623, his spiritual knowledge, acquired from Pacheco, would begin to evolve into applications that are more political. Spain was trying to elevate itself as a country of political power and one strictly aligned with the Catholic Church in the light of the Counter-Reformation. Velázquez’s artistic endeavors would begin to center around the “glorification of the Spanish Monarchy and its adherence to the principles upheld by the Council of Trent as related to the containment of the Protestant secession and as well as the emerging influence of secular humanism.” The Habsburgs would pursue a close identification with Jesuit philosophy as a way to “aggressively campaign for the Catholic Church [while] elevating Philip IV.” The monarchy was taking advantage of the intense spiritualism and practices
promoted by the Jesuits and used them as a way to combine religious and military strength. For this, Velázquez was a perfect candidate.

Promoted by Pacheco, Velázquez would use his talents as a portraitist to gain favor and eventually a position as court painter. What is interesting is that even though he was painting secular portraits, many of these could be viewed in the same manner as representations of religious figures for veneration. Both exhibited an isolated subject and striking realism as required by mystic spiritual images. Velázquez was celebrated for his ability to capture a moment, a skill no doubt encouraged by Pacheco within the goals of religious art. Velázquez is also known for the outward gaze of his subjects towards the audience. His realism, ability to capture a moment, and connection with the viewer all collide in his Las Meninas (Fig. 17). As Robert Havard has noted, “Velázquez’s Pacheco-based approach has much in common with the intensified Loyolan reconstruction of reality…to propel the work beyond the real.”

Much of what Velázquez was doing was very progressive in that he was taking these concepts of spiritualism and religious iconography and merging them with secular subjects as a means of elevating their status and aligning them with religious doctrine. By depicting the scene in the example of Las Meninas with such acute attention to detail, Velázquez creates an environment much like a devotional image where the viewer can place themselves within its moment. It is not a religious image, but because it was held to the same standards of production, it has the potential to be a companion to one. Velázquez did not limit this to his affluent subjects. Similar care was taken in his genre scenes of daily life, such as The Waterseller of Seville (Fig. 18), where he has presented an everyday scene with the same thoughtfulness in representation that would have been given to a religious moment. This elevates the common man as a part of Spanish society that is just as integral as religion. By using the same visual language, it presents
a silent message of the patron’s piety in upholding secular imagery to the high standards of sacred imagery that unifies regent and religion. With Velázquez’s application of spiritualistic technique to secular subjects, he set a precedent of representative truthfulness that would later be taken up by Goya.

Through religious reform and representation in art, these mystic and spiritualist practices had permeated thoroughly into Spanish thought and culture. It is a natural step for its principles to be applied in other aspects beyond purely religious iconography even in the early Baroque. Archbishop Federico Borromeo was already pursuing this kind of adaptation in Milan beginning in the 1590s. “Borromeo’s collection of landscapes and still lifes lies in his theology…because, as a Christian optimist, he regarded nature as a manifestation of God’s goodness.”

To Borromeo, one could pursue the same contemplative experience in images of nature as in venerated religious images. Not all images had to be overtly religious to serve this meditative purpose of spiritual transcendental connection. Even still lifes held similar properties as a spiritual venue that would later create a mode of transmitting the secular spirituality embodied in the sublime.

The final goal of the spiritualist theology is to transport and unify one’s soul with God. Gabrielle Paleotti, in his Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images, relates to this ability of natural imagery to provide “delight” to the viewer and a renewed connection with God after contemplating the content. Federico Borromeo acknowledged that there are different avenues to accomplish this through both representational narrative and accurate examples of nature. Francisco Pacheco insisted on portraying religious scenes with impeccable accuracy following the guidelines established by Paleotti. Zurbarán's religious works emphasize meditation, detachment, and spiritual solidarity that are essential goals of the faithful in order to transcend
their soul closer to God in meditative practice. Velázquez used the truths of realism to depict religious scenes, though not numerous, that express the spiritual notions of detachment, meditation, darkness, and separation that one would need in order to reach the goals outlined by Saint Ignatius. These methods then begin to appear in his secular works as a means of elevating the subjects. The combined works of all three “Golden Age” artists create a unified method of constructing intellectually transformative religious images.
CHAPTER VII
THE COUNTER-REFORMATION AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Counter-Reformation and the Enlightenment are easily contrasted, most obviously by their religious and secular differences. It may seem far-fetched to relate them as the Enlightenment sought to dilute the absolute power conveyed by religion by promoting education, reason, and science. However, when viewed as movements of reform to existing paradigms, they share many commonalities. Up until this point, much of this project’s focus has centered on Spanish spiritualism during the Counter-Reformation and the artists who incorporated those ideals into their work meticulously during the Baroque period. The reform during the Counter-Reformation was centered upon validating Catholic practices by founding them historically in the early beginnings of Christianity. Late sixteenth-century spiritualist writings grounded these practices in intellectual pursuits. This required a certain education on the part of the practitioner with an ultimate goal of mass accessibility.

The Enlightenment was also about intellectual reform, but instead of enveloping a population within a religious structure, it was more concerned with the sovereign power of the individual. Through education and independent intellectual growth, Enlightenment values pushed back against forms of absolute powers over society in favor of communal contributions of thought by the populous. Enlightened thinkers had to determine how to approach subjects that would have traditionally been attributed to aspects of religion but that may not have been fully explained rationally. The vast and powerful forms of nature, often viewed as acts of God, were still just as mysterious and amorphous. The power and imagination of the human mind was the tool of spirituality and an important asset to the enlightened mindset, but still just as mysterious. As the
Counter-Reformation established policies with the aim of creating a stronger connection between the religion and the faithful, the new secular ideas of the Enlightenment could use that mass familiarity to be more tangible and readily accepted by the eighteenth century individual.

Much of what Burke described in his writing on the sublime are found in the pursuits of Catholic spiritual practice, and it is very possible that these Catholic practices born of the Counter-Reformation provided the framework for which Burke could apply these subjects to a secular point of view. Both involve a process designed to engage the viewer and isolate them from their current reality. This is achieved through that detachment that allows the viewer to transcend into a different reality apart from his physical one. The resulting effect is a spiritual thrill that has a tremendous impact on the viewer. What has also been noted is that this imagery, even during the Baroque, did not have to be overtly religious. Growing up with a Catholic mother, Edmund Burke was a stout defender of the Catholic struggle in Ireland and Great Britain keeping close Catholic ties throughout his life. His support and compassion towards Catholicism would have given him an intimate knowledge of the religion even though it was not his own. Its influence may be reflected in how he would also address the sublime as a spiritual experience removed from the potential conflicts that come with religion and tethering it to nature instead. The Romantic sublime is contemporary to Burke’s writings that connect it to experiences of awe and terror. This takes the transformative effect a step further and attempts to specify a relationship of the sublime with pain and danger instead of a merely interactive experience.

Turning back to these practices established in the mid-sixteenth century, the spiritual routine of Saint Ignatius was designed to clear one’s mind through meditation and initiate a detachment from the temporal world. By transferring that mental state from the physical world and utilizing
the imagination to enter a sacred event, a stronger connection can be forged between the faithful and higher spiritual power. This call on the imagination places piety and the soul on an intellectual level that transcends worldly boundaries. As this process resided in the mind, its practice was accessible to all because it did not require physical trappings. Moreover, it was an intimate, personal pursuit. Spanish spirituality born of the Counter-Reformation was concerned with the soul of the individual. In 1585, John of the Cross would update the practices of Loyola. He emphasized spiritual growth through the senses in order to detach the soul from earthly things, as those attributes were not of God. If spiritual detachment through meditation and prayer was the goal for a transcendent soul, the Council of Trent recognized the necessity of visual aids in order to achieve that.

The utilization of visual language during the Counter-Reformation was important in spanning language and literacy barriers in the narrative teachings of Catholicism, and as a meditative tool to aid the imagination. Confronted by a sacred image such as Zurbarán’s *Saint Francis Kneeling* (Fig. 15), the viewer can absorb the image as if it were pictured in their own mind. The dark background references the depths of the mind and the increasing distance between the viewer and the temporal as the world fades and is obscured during the focused contemplation of the scene at hand. At the height of that detachment, the realism of the image enables it to become real to the viewer and allowing for a sense of spiritual elation. This approach to sacred imagery became the norm during the Counter-Reformation and was also highly structured to create a standard formula of how religious works were created along with the utilitarian purpose they were meant to have. Due to this standardization of the sacred image and the close relationship between the Spanish regents and the Catholic Church during the Counter-Reformation, such images were widely disbursed and displayed throughout Spain and their spiritualist purpose
avidly promoted. Use of the sacred image as a spiritual aid was synonymous with Spanish Catholicism and created a cultural tradition that became an essential component to Spanish identity.

The viewer is able to make a personal, intellectual connection that heightens their spirituality by meditating on a sacred image. That concept is also essential to the manner in which sublime imagery of the Romantic period aimed to affect its audience. It is a transformative and cerebral experience. This presented a secularized form of spirituality where, instead of religious epiphany, the viewer was free to apply that to their own curiosities and experience. The image becomes an intimate and personal experience for the viewer, but it also creates a contemplative experience for the artist in its production. A similar scenario can be derived from Goya’s “Black Paintings” (see Figs. 8 and 9). This was a personal production of paintings meant only for the artist. Just as Zurbarán’s *Saint Francis* was a way for the artist to spiritually confront his feelings after the death of his wife, Goya used the same reference to the depths of the mind to invoke the secular spirituality of the sublime to explore his own. While the goals Catholic spiritualist practices of the Counter-Reformation were mirrored in a secular manner in the ideas surrounding the sublime during the Enlightenment, it was still very difficult for Spain to move away from religious dogma.

What emerged was a conflict between deeply engrained religious tradition that the monarchy had relied on for centuries as a moral and political source of power and the threat of losing that power in the name of intellectual progress as the general population becomes more active and demanding of government. The long-standing religious tradition would have been the most familiar and comfortable and provided an established sense of Spanish identity from which many might have been reluctant to deviate. The Counter-Reformation and the Enlightenment both
covered broad aspects of society and for the purpose of this project only a narrow sample of each are being compared. However, the ease with which the visual language of sacred images, that was incredibly important to the Counter-Reformation, could be adapted to secular ideas of the sublime in the Enlightenment shows the affinity of the ideas of these two reform movements.

The Counter-Reformation left an imposing mark on Spanish society; however, scholarship has been considering some aspects of early seventeenth-century Spain as holding the first emergences of enlightened thinking. The Enlightenment found a cautious foothold in Spain during the reign of Charles III, but the tricky relationship he negotiated between secular progress and religious dogma had prior incarnations. *Novedores*, or innovators, as early as the turn of the seventeenth century promoted progressive ideas that bordered on heresy, which would later develop into concepts embraced by those in eighteenth-century Enlightenment. This history indicates that Spanish intellectuals were working within the confines of the Counter-Reformation to cultivate progressive theory and thought within the constructs of that system. It makes sense that Spanish intellectuals like Goya, who supported the Enlightenment, would have been familiar with and inclined to use methods of transmitting modern secular ideas by means of those established during the Counter-Reformation. The recognition of the deep integration of nontraditional ideas just beneath the surface of those long observed would allow them to work effectively within those existing structures. By relating the two—adapting the visual language of sacred imagery to communicate secular ideas with the same amount of gravity—provided a familiar setting that was more accessible to the general populace.

There is no doubt that Spain was a difficult place for the Enlightenment to outwardly thrive, and most circles of intellectuals would have had to censor themselves to avoid ruin by the Inquisition. Goya would have been able to witness firsthand the benefits of the enlightened rule
of Charles III as a young man, and he certainly enjoyed relationships with other intellectuals in court who embraced enlightened ideals. A spark of hope may have come to him through the commissions brought to him by Godoy as his patron. However, after the French invasion of 1808 and subsequent reestablishment of Ferdinand VII as regent in 1813, Spain would witness a resurgence of Counter-Reformation dogmatic rule as Ferdinand reinstituted the Inquisition and a return to the traditional form of absolute power of the monarchy in solidarity with that of the Church. At this point it appeared that any hopes of the Enlightenment outwardly revolutionizing Spanish society as it did in France and England were lost; this necessitated a return to the subtle methods of promoting ideas within the existing structure.
CHAPTER VIII

GOYA AND THE EVOLUTION OF VISUAL LANGUAGE

As has been noted, Goya is often viewed as a product of his time and responsive to the world around him. While the artist’s body of work has been viewed as reflexive to his environment, it seems that Goya was looking beyond that. As a proponent of the Enlightenment due to the content of his work and the intellectual circle in which he ran, he seems to be looking at Spain as an evolving entity in much of his work. There is a certain stubbornness to Spain and her traditions that cannot be ignored, and that would have needed to be considered in the proposal of any nontraditional or new ideas. Goya contrasted the past with his present politically and philosophically while simultaneously combining them, and by doing so promoted a message that the hopes of modern Spain resided in her people. By playing off the visual language of sacred imagery established during the Counter-Reformation and the Baroque, Goya was able to convey secular ideas and commentary on his contemporary subjects in a manner that a Spanish Catholic audience would readily understand. This technique grounded Goya’s work in the weight of tradition and provided it with the authority that was long associated with religious themes.

It has been speculated that Goya’s loss of hearing in 1793 caused a shift in his perspective of the world and a strengthening of his moral position. However, his hiatus from court due to his illness precipitated an increase in production by Goya.118 There were some stylistic changes to his work that do seem to be influenced by this change in condition. The most notable appears to be a “new interest in gesture and expression…[and] open-mouthed figures implying sound or speech…[highlighted] his desire to make his drawings ‘speak’ through the frequent addition of captions.”119 With deafness would have come the reality of learning how to communicate
without being able to hear a response. For Goya, as a visual artist, it led to an emphasis on the importance of clear visual language. By not being able to hear the world, Goya would have had to rely on his other senses to interpret it. Things like voice inflection and tone would have been lost on him. However, perhaps it made him realize that the utility of gesture and other visual information could speak inaudibly with even superior effect.

The reliance on visual communication through an image, as earlier discussed, had been thoroughly established during the Counter-Reformation and the art of the Baroque. Francisco Pacheco led the way during the Baroque and fostered the technique that was to define Spanish religious painting during that time. He stressed the hyper-real that would later appear in his student and son-in-law, Diego Velázquez’s paintings, thus solidifying him as a Spanish master. In secular portraiture as well as religious scenes, Pacheco emphasized truthfulness and accuracy as paramount qualities that even supersede good painting. This was noted in his writings on art and is reflective of his role as a censor for the Inquisition where artistry in religious painting was unacceptable. Realism and truth in representation in sacred images was essential to their didactic purpose as proposed by the Council of Trent. This recognizes that the images are part of a visual dialogue that makes their teachings accessible even when literacy, words, or even sound, fail.

Given the distance of time and what is known about the reign of Charles IV, Goya’s portrait of the *Family of Charles IV* (see Fig. 2) comes across as cruel commentary surrounding his own feelings towards them. It may not have been entirely subtle at the time either, but it was still accepted. While Goya certainly had his opinions of the monarchy of Charles IV, he is not outright expressing them here. However, he is expressing them by using traditional paradigms of artistic representation established by the Counter-Reformation over two hundred years earlier.
One of the reasons why this painting is frequently compared with Velázquez’s *Las Meninas* (see Fig. 17) is due to Goya’s use of intense realism. As in *Las Meninas*, nothing is hidden from the viewer or idealized in the subjects themselves. Goya’s commentary resides in the honesty of the family’s portrayal. As of the date of this work in 1800, the French Revolution had shaken the foundation of the status quo and monarchs were no longer seen as idealized rulers on high. In this painting, the family hierarchy is dubious and the figures draped in their finery do not hold the airs of leadership. Where Velázquez elevated the simple nobility of the common man in his *Waterseller* (see Fig. 18), Goya used the same method to call attention to the costumed nobility embodied by the Spanish royal family.

As accuracy was traditionally stressed in Spanish painting and portraiture, Goya did not have to flagrantly reveal his position. If anything, he can be viewed as standing behind their rule both literally and figuratively, which could absolve him of accusations of slander. Instead, Goya presented them honestly as an example to posterity as how the decadence of the monarchy led to ineffectual rulers and the disparity between the ruling classes and the rest of the population. It was with this traditional regulation of Spanish painting that allows present viewers to garner this information and would have communicated a similar message during its time. In one painting Goya has incorporated the mastery of Velázquez, that would have served as a compliment to any sitter, while using detailed observation to remove the pomp of the monarchy by showing them as they were. What the viewer infers about them falls on their own person and not Goya, in a very subtle yet poignant commentary by the artist.

Goya’s *Caprichos* (Figs. 19 and 20) are obvious social commentary that blatantly conflicted with the rules of censorship in Spain, but they had also managed to be printed and circulated before their confiscation by the crown. Appearing prior to his *Family of Charles IV*, these prints
were destined for an intellectual audience in 1794-1799. “[Goya] declared that painting, like poetry, was qualified to offer moral commentary on ‘human vices and errors.’”\[^{121}\] This series was a creative exploration by the artist that allowed expression of his own opinions as an autonomous person, and suggested that the visual image could be repurposed as more than just a record of an event or people or a religious scene. “The *Caprichos*…build a philosophical foundation for his [Goya’s] creative impulses.”\[^{122}\] Here, Goya was also innovating tradition. In the *Caprichos*, he wanted to invoke the imagination of viewers by means of images born of their mind but represented in a realistically tangible fashion. In perhaps his most well-known plate, *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters* (Fig. 21), Goya offers himself as an authorial everyman bent over a desk while owls and other winged creatures appear to accost him. Goya’s caption reveals the narrative explicitly as ignorance would lead to only negative consequences not only for the individual, but society as a collective. “In this he is true to his roots in the eighteenth century with its concerted attack upon ignorance, superstition and immorality, while the future is viewed with trepidation.”\[^{123}\]

Like most of the prints in this series, the impact on the viewer of *The Sleep of Reason* relies heavily on Burke’s philosophy of the sublime. The anonymity and realism of the subject would allow the viewer to engage their own imaginations by placing themselves in a similar position. They could entertain and empathize with a similar scenario to fully comprehend Goya’s intended message. Reason and knowledge embodied in the man at the desk begin to appear as a possible form of martyrdom where perhaps instead of sleep, he is shielding his writing from the monsters of ignorance. This form of contemplation of an image involving the viewer imagining themselves within the scene was a familiar tool of Baroque art emanating from the Counter-Reformation, and another example of Goya’s innovation of traditional methods of representation.
Sacred images of devotion of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century were to have similar effects on the viewer. Returning again to Zurbarán’s *Saint Francis Kneeling* (see Fig. 15), the viewer is meant to meditate on the image so that they may imagine themselves in such a scene in order to reap the spiritual benefit and teaching of the saint. This spiritual elevation was to bring one closer to God and piety. Saint Francis is obscured by his robe just as Goya is given anonymity by having his head down on the desk, and this allows viewers to insert themselves within the event of the image through their imagination. Goya trades spiritual joy for a sense of terror in his image, but he alludes to the power and importance of knowledge and the mind.

Jesuit spiritualist dogma requires oneness with God as savior of the soul, while the philosophy of the Enlightenment championed the power of reason as savior of society. By using similar modes of spiritual transmission with secular themes intermingled with the striking similar goals of the sublime, Goya finds common ground between traditional and current visual language to convey contemporary themes.

After the restoration of Ferdinand VII to the Spanish throne following French occupation, Goya once again melds tradition with innovation in a public work that would blend documentarian realism of prior paintings like the *Family of Charles IV* with his own creative artistry that was seen in the *Caprichos*. His 1814 painting, *The Third of May 1808* (see Fig. 7) may reflect the artist’s patriotism, but it also may reference his financial distress, or simply his loyalty to the restored king. Regardless of his reason, Goya used this opportunity to create a strong image that, instead of idealizing the monarchy or commemorating an event, deified the Spanish people who suffered war at the hands of kings and rulers with whom they had no control. In May of 1808, a populous uprising against the fleeing Spanish royal family and French soldiers was reprised the following day by French firing squads methodically executing any suspected
citizen believed to have participated in the riot. *The Third of May 1808* was commissioned to commemorate that day.

Until this point, the only large-scale paintings meant for public consumption were found over altars. Goya seems to achieve just that in this work. The central figure stands anonymous, in an orant pose, as the soldiers fire their rifles. In the language of sacred images, this resembles a scene of martyrdom. Here Goya has constructed a scene that is of his imagination of an event that truthfully occurred. The figures have been generalized that again imply them as being any Spaniard, while the French soldiers are shown as a faceless mechanism of death. In contemplating the event, the viewer can imagine being there at that moment and experience it. That is the power that religious images of the Baroque hoped to have upon their viewers, and the same transcendent power is the goal of the Romantic sublime. The familiarity of the former method opens the viewer up to a stronger impact of the second. Goya inserts the secular so that in lieu of feeling the religious connection with the pain of the saint, a connection is established between fellow countrymen and the general audience.

Is the emblazoned figure pleading for salvation the last flicker of the Enlightenment in Spain as totalitarian rule began anew? This question is particularly interesting as France was a bastion for the Enlightenment, but was at this time under totalitarian rule under Napoleon. Deep shadow surrounds the central image that in sacred imagery of the Baroque could be explained as the “darkness of the soul.” John of the Cross presented this as venue for the soul to find the light of God, but would this secular spiritual detachment instead plunge the world into ignorance and social subjugation? It appears that Goya presents the Spanish people as martyrs for the moral follies of those not willing to embrace modernity. Once again, he invokes the sublime feeling of terror as the viewer considers this scene, and he has done so by juxtaposing it with imagery
reminiscent of devotional representations of martyrdom in order to convey his message in a manner that would reach the widest range of the population.
CHAPTER IX
CONCLUSION

Goya executed these three examples, and others, with an intended audience in mind: The Spanish population. He was well aware that the royal family and their predecessors—thus an audience of a higher social class—would be the primary viewers of the portrait. His Caprichos were meant to stir the minds of the intellectual public, those reading and discussing new ideas. Finally, the public work of The Third of May 1808 was meant to reach all Spaniards. He had a desire to show the truth. To leave a message. To inspire people to be part of their country. This is a big claim to make, and one that can be debated. However, it is Goya’s innovation on tradition that helped to establish a new incarnation of Spanish painting that would preserve the long traditions of the Spanish people while simultaneously addressing modern issues and nontraditional ideas. This could only be achieved through an accessible, common, established visual language.

By utilizing Counter-Reformation methods of painting, Goya tapped into a deeply ingrained thread of Spanish history and identity. It is glaringly apparent that Catholicism in Spain was wielded as an instrument of authority and power by the monarchy. However, one cannot ignore that the measures of reform promoted from the late sixteenth century and through the Baroque were not only aimed at justifying the religion in light of Protestantism, but also as a means of establishing methods of universal accessibility of faith to spiritually benefit Spanish society. The transcendent quality of sacred images allowed the viewer to visualize themselves within the most spiritually enlightened moments of Christian faith to help them mentally experience its intangible concepts. The development of this visual language was important because it was comprehensible by the masses and became an essential component to Spanish religious art. With
artists such as Velázquez applying those techniques to secular art, non-religious subjects were heightened to highest levels of piety and importance and unified political figures with religion.

During Goya’s time, Edmund Burke’s philosophy surrounding the sublime presented striking parallels to the long-established methods and ideas of Spanish spiritualist practices. In terms of visual art, both intended a transportive, intellectual experience on the part of the viewer that would lead to a comprehension of ideas that held greater meaning beyond that of the sphere of the individual. Both were intended to help the viewer reflect thoughtfully on a particular subject, and both were often presented in similar ways. The sublime, however, veered away from religious inspiration. In Goya’s work, he used it to encourage the awareness of the individual’s place within a larger society in an attempt to bring issues affecting the public to the forefront of social conversation. His manner of conveying social messages within the paradigm of long-established religious painting maintained a visual language that could be readily interpreted. This also allowed his images to connect and resonate a nostalgia of Spain’s “Golden Age” that during the tumultuous period of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries allowed for the viewing public to grasp onto a firmer concept of national identity and an idealized image of “Spain.”

The juxtaposition of content and method by Goya also brought to light the contradictions and corruption within Spanish society. By using methods usually reserved for religious subjects, Goya sought to shift the viewer’s contemplation from spiritual well-being to social well-being. *The Third of May 1808* was presented in such a way that highlighted the suffering of the Spanish public, who trying to gain a voice, have been repressed in a manner on par with Christian martyrs. Goya’s application of established religious visual language to the secular content of a history painting placed the contemporary Spaniard within the long tradition of spiritual images.
This created a cultural link of historical identity, and proposed the notion that methods of spiritual advancement could be successfully adapted to confront modern, social issues.

By initiating this reapplication of traditional religious visual language, Goya reached back into Spanish history and deeply ingrained spiritual practices in order to form a new modern Spanish identity in art. With his use and acknowledgement of traditional methods, he was able to present social commentary in an unprecedented way to a broad audience that respected the past, and promoted modern ideas of the Enlightenment designed to generate a visual conversation about the present and future.
Fig. 1. Francisco Goya, *Self Portrait*, 1815, oil on canvas. Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid.
Fig. 2. Francisco Goya, *Family of Charles IV*, 1800, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.
Fig. 3. Francisco Goya, *Portrait of Manuel Godoy*, 1801, oil on canvas. Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid.
Fig. 4. Francisco Goya, *Amarga presencia* (Bitter Presence), plate 13, *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (The Disasters of War), etching and aquatint. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Fig. 5. Francisco Goya, *Tampoco* (Not [in this case] either), plate 36, *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (The Disasters of War), etching and aquatint. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Fig. 6. Francisco Goya, *The Second of May 1808*, 1814, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

Fig. 7. Francisco Goya, *The Third of May 1808*, 1814, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.
Fig. 8. Francisco Goya, *Saturn Devouring One of His Sons*, 1819-23, mural painting transferred to canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

Fig. 9. Francisco Goya, *Two Old Men Eating*, 1819-23, mural painting transferred to canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.
Fig. 10. Juan Martinez Montañés and Francisco Pacheco, *Cristo de la Clemencia* (detail), 1603-6, gesso and tempera on wood. Catedral de Santa Maria de la Sede (Seville Cathedral), Seville.
Fig. 11. Francisco Pacheco, *Christ on the Cross*, 1614, oil on canvas. Instituto Gómez Moreno Fundación Rodríguez, Granada.

Fig. 12. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Christ on the Cross*, 1627, oil on canvas. Art Institute, Chicago.

Fig. 13. Diego Velázquez, *Christ on the Cross*, 1632, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.
Fig. 14. Francisco Goya, *Christ on the Cross (Cristo crucificado)*, 1780, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

Fig. 15. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Saint Francis Kneeling*, 1639, oil on canvas. National Gallery, London.

Fig. 16. Francisco de Zurbarán, *Saint Francis in Meditation*, 1639, oil on canvas. National Gallery, London.
Fig. 17. Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, 1656, oil on canvas. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.
Fig. 18. Diego Velázquez, *The Waterseller of Seville*, 1618-22, oil on canvas. Apsley House, London.
Fig. 19. Francisco Goya, *Nohubo remedio* (Nothing Could Be Done About It), plate 24, *Los Caprichos* (Caprices), 1799, etching and aquatint. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco.

Fig. 20. Francisco Goya, *Si Sabrá mas el discípulo?* (Might Not the Pupil Know More?), plate 37, *Los Caprichos* (Caprices), 1799, etching and aquatint. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, San Francisco.
ENDNOTES


7 Known as Charles I in terms of Hapsburg line of succession.


12 Kamen, *Spain 1469-1714*, 139.


33 Tomlinson, *Goya in the Twilight*, 133.

35 Tomlinson, *Goya in the Twilight*, 162.


47 Llewellyn and Riding, “British Art and the Sublime.”

48 Llewellyn and Riding, “British Art and the Sublime.”


57 Llewellyn and Riding, “British Art and the Sublime.”


61 Luis de Granada, *Libro de la Oración, y Meditación: En el Qual se Tracta de la Consideración de los Principales Mysterios de Nuestra Fe* (Salamanca: Con Privilegio de Castilla, y de Aragon, 1566).


65 *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 216.

66 *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 216.


69 Saint Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*.


Saint Teresa of Avila, *Way of Perfection*. 


Saint John of the Cross, *Mystical Doctrine*.


Muraoka, *Path of Humility*, 121.


Borromeo, *Sacred Painting/Museum*, 47.


96 *Sacred Made Real*, 25.


99 *Sacred Made Real*, 29-32.

100 *Sacred Made Real*, 32.

101 *Sacred Made Real*, 40.


103 Soria, *Paintings of Zurbarán*, 22.


106 Ackerman, *Baroque Vortex*, 11.


111 Paleotti, *Discourse on Sacred and Profane Images*, 113.

113 Llewellyn and Riding, “British Art and the Sublime.”


121 Stephanek and Ilchman, “Goya Between Order and Disorder,” 17.

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123 Havard, *Spanish Eye*, 44.

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*References available upon request