

THE UPDATED CATALOGUE VERSIÓN 2021: A USER'S MANUAL

This is a collection that was dispersed more than two centuries ago. The principal source for its reconstruction is the “Catalogue” composed by the French connoisseur Frédéric Quilliet toward the end of 1807, and dated 1 January 1808, less than three months prior to Godoy’s abrupt fall from power and consequent exile. It is the only known complete record of the collection when it was still intact. Godoy’s motive for the creation of a catalogue at this juncture was most likely his imminent move from the building where he had resided since 1792, known as the “House-Palace adjacent to the convent of D^a M^a de Aragón” (“Casa-Palacio contiguo a D^a M^a de Aragón”) to his recently acquired much grander Buenavista Palace. Quilliet’s motive was manifestly that of flattering Godoy in the hope of obtaining an official position as his “Curator of Fine Arts.”

Quilliet’s “Catalogue” (D.1) while absolutely fundamental for the study of this collection also presents multiple difficulties. It was drafted hastily: the works are listed with a bare minimum of information and were neither measured nor numbered, as in a more formal inventory. The paintings are organized within a scheme based on Quilliet’s taste and value judgments rather than alphabetically by artist or according to where they were hung. Thus there are three factitious “Galleries” conforming to the supposed merits or importance of the works, the “Grande Gallerie” (GG) for the superior ones, the “2^{ième} Gallerie” (2^e G) for those of medium quality, and the “3^{ième} Gallerie” (3^e G) for the inferior ones. As an example of the vagaries of taste, Goya’s now admired and famous *Majas* (CA 247 & CA 248) are in the third gallery! In Quilliet’s favor, he did record

signatures, dates and inscriptions when he noticed them (e.g. CA 175, CA 383 & CA 726), but there is a very high percentage of anonymous works even among those now known to be signed (e.g. CA 136 & CA 432), perhaps because they were skied and could not be examined. Attributions made by Quilliet to specific artists or their schools pose another problem, but erroneous past attributions are a familiar occurrence when dealing with historical inventories (see: "Índice de Cambios de Atribuciones").

Soon after Quilliet presented his "Catalogue," Godoy gave orders to begin the transfer of some of his more exceptional paintings to his provisional residence called the "Small House on Barquillo Street" ("Casa Chica de la calle del Barquillo"), part of the huge property of the Buenavista Palace, which was being refurbished and redecorated. There were 152 paintings in this "Small House" on 27 March 1808 (D.13 & D.14), and almost all of them can be clearly identified with works in Quilliet's "Catalogue," particularly the famous ones such as Correggio's *School of Love* (CA 117). The contents of the "Small House" were thoroughly plundered during the Napoleonic War period (1808-1813), and the remnants seem to have been allocated subsequently to Godoy's wife M^a Teresa de Borbón y Vallabriga, Countess of Chinchón.

In addition to Quilliet's "Catalogue" there are also three later judicial inventories of Godoy's former collection, as the government had expropriated all his properties. Spanish artists compiled these inventories of works located in the "House-Palace," but the collection had already suffered uncontrolled pillage by French troops and foreign art merchants. Whereas in late 1807 Quilliet had counted 972 paintings in Godoy's house, by the time the first legal inventory was carried out in the building in 1813 only 381 works were found there (D. 2).

Discounting the 152 paintings sent to his temporary abode in 1808, this means that 439 had disappeared. Of those remaining, approximately 100 were handed over to Godoy's wife, although the exact list of these works apparently is lost. She also might have been able to obtain some paintings previously in 1808, but this is unclear.

The rest of the canvases were transferred to a deposit called the "Glass Warehouse" ("Almacén de Cristales") where the second confiscation inventory was carried out in 1814-1815 (D. 3). Shortly afterwards these paintings were relocated temporarily to the "Small House" on Barquillo Street, and from there they were sent to the Buenavista Palace which at the time was being used as an assembly point for the huge volume of paintings that had been removed from their original emplacements in convents, churches, royal palaces and private residences during the war and French occupation of Madrid. It was here in 1816 that the third and last confiscation inventory was drawn up (D.4); these paintings were then sent to their final destination at the RABASF, and now form the only substantial group of approximately 230 items existing from the collection, after deducting the sales that took place between 1818 and 1826 (see: Rose 2001 [2003]).

In the confiscation inventories the works are numbered, described in greater detail than in Quilliet's "Catalogue," attributed more accurately –particularly in the case of Spanish artists- and measured, which is of great help in identifying them with known works. Nevertheless, correlating these canvases with those seen by Quilliet, particularly those he listed as anonymous, is a challenging process. The "Updated Catalogue" ("Catálogo Actualizado" - CA) incorporates information from all the inventories, as well as other documents such as the

royal medallist Pedro González de Sepúlveda's diary entries for November 1800 and April 1807 (D.8 & D.9), the posterior reclamations from convents for works that had been extracted by Godoy (D.6 & D.7), and the list of paintings chosen for him by the court painter Mariano Maella from the Testament of the XIIIth Duchess of Alba in 1802 (D.5).

In order to reconstruct the collection virtually, the arrangement of the "Updated Catalogue" is alphabetical by artist followed by anonymous works organized by schools (when known), and all items are numbered. Attributions are those given by Quilliet, except for the cases in which there is a reliable modern one. Within this system, Quilliet's quality categories have been maintained; for example, in the case of Goya the royal portraits (CA 236 to CA 239) precede the *Majas* (CA 247 & CA 248) because the former were in the "GG" while the latter were in the "3^e G." The numbers assigned to the works in this 2021 version are not the same as those of the original 1981/1983 study, due to altered attributions and new identifications. Each entry incorporates full quotations from the 1808 "Catalogue" and when applicable from the 1813 and 1814-1815 inventories, but not the 1816 inventory since the descriptions merely repeat those from the 1814-1815 listing, even in the instances when numbering is slightly altered. The length of individual entries is variable according to the relevant information discovered. Pertinent bibliography for each work is given in abbreviated format; the complete references are in the Bibliography section. It should be noted that Quilliet did not only include oil paintings in his "Catalogue," although these are the works that he counted (972). In addition he incorporated the occasional drawing, embroidery, tapestry, Sèvres porcelain, bas-relief,

enamel, mosaic and rock crystal pieces. These items have been maintained and numbered in the “Updated Catalogue,” thereby bringing the total to 1014.

The information given for identifiable works is basically that of provenance – where the work was located prior to entering Godoy’s collection and where it went afterwards. Investigation of provenance is particularly relevant in the case of Godoy’s collection because he obtained almost all of these works from ecclesiastical and aristocratic collections within Spain. Thus they reflect the great wealth of 16th and 17th century Italian, Flemish and Spanish paintings in the country prior to the upheavals of the Napoleonic war. There are a large percentage of religious subjects in the collection precisely because these paintings came from Spanish convents and churches. Even though it is highly probable that a substantial proportion of the collection was composed of gifts from private individuals, as in the documented case of Goya’s portrait of *General Ricardos* (CA 257), the loss of most of Godoy’s personal correspondence impedes confirmation of this hypothesis.

The “Supplement to the Updated Catalogue” (“Suplemento al Catálogo Actualizado” – SCA) consists of paintings and sculptures not included by Quilliet but which appear in other sources as having once belonged to Godoy. As in the case of the “CA,” the organization is alphabetical by artist succeeded by anonymous works. There are separate indexes to the “CA” and “SCA,” as well as three further indexes to assist in finding specific artists, themes and collections respectively.

Aside from the problems posed by Quilliet’s “Catalogue:” old attributions, the difficulty if not impossibility of identifying almost 300 anonymous works listed with scarce information (e.g. “Anonymous. Saint Jerome Praying,” CA 967), and

the absence of dimensions or any form of visual record, there are other elements of confusion involved in the study of this collection. The principal one concerns the identification of some 100 paintings obtained by Godoy through the inheritance of his wife from the prior collection of her father, the Infante Don Luis de Borbón (d.1785). Due apparently to the absence of a list of these works as well as to the chaos of the postwar period, when the Countess was compensated for them in 1813 those assigned to her were not necessarily those that had entered Godoy's collection from this source. She sent these paintings to the former palace of her father in Boadilla del Monte where they were hung along with works that had pertained to the Infante: from then on they were all assumed to have come from his collection. Thus, for example, Velázquez's *Crucifixion* (SCA 35) obtained by Godoy from the Madrid convent of San Plácido in 1807 was thought to have belonged to D. Luis.

Another complication is the association between Godoy's collection and the royal collections. On one hand he was accused of having taken paintings from the king's palaces, but on the other during the disorder of the war period and its aftermath, a number of paintings extracted from Godoy's collection were taken to the Madrid Royal Palace for safekeeping. As for the denunciation of "theft," there are fewer than twenty paintings that can be associated with direct gifts from Carlos IV or having been located previously in a royal possession. Such is the case of the four Honthorst's from the Aranjuez Palace that Carlos IV gave to Godoy prior to 1798 (CA 285 to CA 288), of three paintings from the unoccupied royal property in the Madrid Casa del Campo (CA 225, CA 344 & CA 345), and of perhaps eight from the likewise unoccupied Buen Retiro Palace (e.g. CA 113, CA 114, CA 274, CA 583 & CA 693), hardly a ransacking of the

royal collections. During or shortly after the end of the war, at least six paintings extracted from Godoy's collection were taken to the Madrid Royal Palace and inventoried there in 1814 and afterwards. They do not bear numbers of earlier royal inventories and today are located in the collections of Patrimonio Nacional (e.g. CA 154 & CA 155) and the Prado Museum (e.g. CA 175, CA 319 & CA 639).

In 1981 I wrote that in the future further documents would come to light and that it would become possible to identify additional paintings. Effectively, this has been the case. At that time the RABASF had been closed for renovation since 1973 and did not reopen until 1985, so that neither documents nor paintings were available for study. Furthermore, the 1816 inventory was kept in a cabinet in the Director's office rather than in the Library/Archive and accessible to researchers. Documents concerning the paintings that Godoy sent to the "Small House" on Barquillo Street in 1808 emerged from a private collection in 2004. The data gleaned from these materials has been essential in constructing the 2021 version of the "Updated Catalogue."

Now almost all of the paintings in the Museum of the RABASF can be studied through the photos in their digital catalogue (www.academiacoleccion.com), which has been enormously useful for this revision. *The Virgin and St. Anne* (CA 175) by Bertholet Flémalle was identified in the Prado Museum in 2021; *Baco reclining in a landscape* (CA 645) in the "style of Titian" according to Quilliet was ascribed by an expert to Alonso Cano in 2020; Marcela de Valencia's miniature *Kindness* (CA 655) resurfaced at a German auction in 2016, and was purchased by the Prado Museum in 2021; Ribera's large *Adoration of the Shepherds* (CA 473) was determined to be in the Monastery of

El Escorial in 2008; Murillo's *Saint Augustine in Ecstasy* (CA 381) was donated by benefactors to the Seattle Art Museum in 2008 after passing through numerous private collections since being taken to France by Marshal Soult in 1809. The *Self Portrait with a gloved hand* (CA 613) by David Teniers II was identified in the Royal Palace at Aranjuez in 2003; *Ana and the blind Tobit* (CA 132) assigned to Rembrandt by Quilliet was found to be the Gerrit Dou in the National Gallery, London in 2002; the youthful portrait of *Manuel Godoy* (CA 34) attributed alternately to Agustín Esteve and Antonio Carnicero was proven to be by Francisco Bayeu in 2001; in 1988 the collector Juan Abelló acquired Luis Meléndez's *Still Life with Dead Partridges* (CA 356) on the international art market and returned it to Spain; in 1985 the Louvre Museum purchased Murillo's *Marquis de Velasco* (CA 383) which had been in diverse European private collections before winding up in Switzerland, but did not go on view until 2001 due to legal problems. These are just examples of the new information that has been incorporated into the 2021 version; clearly other materials will continue to appear. Thus even this renewed catalogue is still a work in progress.

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