THE CHINCHILLAS

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (50/85)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1797 - 1799
DIMENSIONES	207 x 151 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Aguafuerte, aguatinta bruñida y buril
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	20 Aug 2013 / 29 May 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

Los Chinchillas. (at the bottom)

50. (in the upper right-hand corner)

HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

Two preparatory drawings for this engraving are preserved (1) and (2).

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Two men, with gawking faces, appear immobilised and wrapped in stiff heraldic costumes. Their eyes are closed and their ears are covered by two thick padlocks. One of them is lying on the ground with a rosary in his hand, while the other is standing with a sabre. He is wearing a tabard of some sort underneath and something that hangs down to the ground, possibly an executioner's certificate. A strange figure, wearing donkey's ears and a blindfold, serves him a spoonful of food from a cauldron between the two Chinchillas. We cannot tell whether it is a man or a woman as, although his clothes look rather feminine, he has an incipient curly beard.

The Aragonese painter has created intense contrasts of light and shade, so that the Chinchillas are strongly illuminated, as are the hand and the spoon of Ignorance, the latter being decisive in emphasising the disability of the two figures.

In the manuscript of the National Library we find a very specific explanation for this engraving: "The foolish ones, precious as nobles, are always with their executoria at their breast, reclining desidiously, praying like fanatics the rosary and yawning. Ignorance feeds them coarsely and keeps their minds padlocked.

In this picture, Goya lashes out against those who flaunt their noble pride, against the corseted and blind aristocracy that is fed by Ignorance. However, this explanation does not quite justify the meaning of the title, to which Edith Helman seems to have found an answer. The specialist argues that Goya based his work on a popular comedy, *El dómine Lucas,* by José de Cañizares y Suárez (Madrid, 1676-1750). The painter was familiar with Cañizares's literary output as one of his patrons was the Duke of Osuna, for whom the painter produced a series of paintings between 1797 and 1798 to decorate his country house called The Caprice. For one of these works *Flight of Witches*, the Aragonese painter had already been inspired by this work by Cañizares.

In the book, the main character Lucas de Chinchilla and his uncle, Don Pedro de Chinchilla, belonged to a family attached to their aristocratic privileges and noble coats of arms, which made them believe they were superior to others. This work must have been very popular at the time, so that the public must have quickly understood the meaning of the title of this engraving.

CONSERVACIÓN

The aquatint of the plate is somewhat weakened. (the National Chalcography, no. 221).

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. Gemälde Zeichnungen. Graphik. Tapisserien
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953
from January 23th to April 12th 1953
cat. 327

De grafiek van Goya
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam 1970
from November 13th 1970 to January 17th 1971
cat. 37

Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
cat. 36

Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1988
from October 6th to December 18th 1988. Exhibited also at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, January 18th to March 26th 1989; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York, May 9th to July 16th 1989, Madrid curator

Manuela B. Mena Marqués

Goya. La década de Los Caprichos
Madrid 1992
organized by Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando sponsored by Fundación Central Hispano, Madrid, consultant editor Nigel Glendinnig. From October 26th 1992 to January 10th 1993
cat. 121

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 50, *p.*77

Manuela B. Mena Marqués, scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre
cat. 55

Francisco Goya. Sein leben im spiegel der graphik. Fuendetodos 1746-1828 Bordeaux. 1746-1996
Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996
from November 21st 1996 to January 1997
cat. 56

Goya e la tradizione italiana
Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di Traversetolo (Parma) 2006
consultant editors Fred Licht and Simona Tosini Pizzetti. From September 9th to December 3th 2006
cat. 50, p.158

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
p.37

Goya et la modernité
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
cat.8

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1955
Fundación Lázaro Galdiano

Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.
HARRIS, Tomás
p.123, cat. 85
1964
Bruno Cassirer

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
p.182, cat. 551
1970
Office du livre

Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
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1992
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
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1996
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

El libro de los caprichos: dos siglos de interpretaciones (1799-1999). Catálogo de los dibujos, pruebas de estado, láminas de cobre y estampas de la primera edición
BLAS BENITO, Javier, MATILLA RODRÍGUEZ, José Manuel y MEDRANO, José Miguel
pp. 270-273
1999
Museo Nacional del Prado

Goya. Die Kunst der Freiheit
TRAEGER, Jörg
p.93, fig. 31
2000
Verlag C. H. Beck

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 66
2013
Pinacoteca de París

Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp. 42-75
2016
Norton Simon Museum

PALABRAS CLAVE

CAPRICCIO DON PEDRO DE CHINCHILLA IGNORANCIA NOBLEZA CLERO CRÍTICA

ENLACES EXTERNOS