THEY ARE ALREADY PLUCKED

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (20/85)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1797 - 1799
DIMENSIONES	218 x 152 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Etching, burnished aquatint and drypoint
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	29 Nov 2010 / 29 May 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

They are already plucked (at the bottom).

20. (in the upper right-hand corner)

HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

Three state proofs with burnished aquatint and drypoint are known.

Three preparatory drawings for this engraving have survived (1), (2) and (3).

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

This print continues the narrative begun in the previous Caprice, No. 19, *All will fall*, as it depicts how, once the bird-men have been captured and plucked, they are treated with broomsticks. A young woman in the foreground pushes two of these strange beings with a broom, who defend themselves with difficulty, as if helpless. Further back, two old men, perhaps friars, although it has also been suggested that they may be procuresses, watch this scene. In the background, a young woman raises a broom over her head and prepares to crush a bird-man who is running in terror towards the background, trying to get out through a door through which the light is penetrating. In the upper right corner a bird is copulating with a bird-woman, unaware of what awaits her next.

Goya has used aquatint to achieve two tonalities which he distributes appropriately and burnishes it to produce the effect of a wash. The silhouette of the chicken at the door shows a tonal degradation of the aquatint. The rest of the hybrid creatures have been modelled with small touches of drypoint.

The manuscripts provide an interpretation for this image; the Ayala manuscript reads: "After the birds have been plucked, they are thrown out: one comes down lame and viscous, and two very reverend fathers, with their rosaries on their belts, hold their swords for them and celebrate the mockery". In the manuscript of the Prado Museum it is commented that "if they have already been plucked, go away: others will come. They will all fall". Finally, the manuscript in the National Library is more precise, stating that "after the copulation of the avechuchos, the whores throw them out with broomsticks, plucked, lame and crestfallen: two very reverend friars watch their backs, and they are the ones who celebrate with mockery with rosaries around their waists".

Prostitution became widely known in Madrid, where it was a clandestine practice, as Nicolás Fernández de Moratín, son of Leandro, an illustrious friend of the Aragonese painter, refers to it. In *Chant II,* page 51 of *The Art of Whores,* which he wrote in 1769, he states the following: "(...) in Madrid there are more than a hundred brothels because there is not a single one allowed as in other cities, which do not lose because of this; and you Madrid, you would lose nothing, but rather give less scandal that way".

In this engraving the painter develops the negative consequences of prostitution for those who resort to it, which he warned about in the previous engraving. The women, once they have been paid, expel their clients from the brothels with very bad manners. Violence is unleashed against men who have not been able to resist their instincts and who have the complicity of the two characters in the background, who are probably the promoters of this activity.

CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in poor condition with the aquatint notably deteriorated (National Chalcography, no. 191).

EXPOSICIONES

El arte de Goya
Museo de Arte Occidental de Tokio Tokyo 1971
from 16th 1971 to January 23th 1972. Exhibited also at the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, January 29th to March 15th 1972.
cat. 64

Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
cat. 26a

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, scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre
cat. 44

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. 89

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 20, p.47

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. 26

Goya artista de su tiempo y Goya artista único
The National Museum of Western Art Tokyo 1999
from December 1st to July 3th 1999
cat. 105

Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie e disastri della guerra
San Donato Milanese 2000
Opere grafiche della Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta
cat. 20, p.22

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. 20, p.150

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
p.27

Goya et la modernité
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
cat. 185

Expérience Goya
Lille 2021
cat. 42

2022

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Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.
HARRIS, Tomás
p.90, cat. 55
1964
Bruno Cassirer

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
p.178, cat. 491
1970
Office du livre

Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp.150-151, cat. 89
1992
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
p.84, cat. 108
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.142-147
1999
Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 251
2013
Pinacoteca de París

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

Expérience Goya (cat. expo)
COTENTIN, Régis
p. 91
2021
Réunion des Musées Nationaux

TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN MEDINA, Víctor
p. 36
2022
Museo de Bellas Artes de Badajoz y Diputación de Badajoz

PALABRAS CLAVE

CAPRICCIO MUJER-PÁJARO PROSTITUCIÓN

ENLACES EXTERNOS