THE INQUISITION TRIBUNAL (AUTO DE FE DE LA INQUISICIÓN)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. VARIOUS SUBJECTS

SERIE: CABINET PAINTINGS BY GARCÍA DE LA PRADA (PAINTING, CA. 1814-1816) (4/5)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1814 - 1816
UBICACIÓN	Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	46 x 73 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on wood panel
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	27 Apr 2010 / 15 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	328 (673)

HISTORIA

See *The Madhouse*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

For a history of the whole series, see *The Madhouse*.

This painting reveals another moment of madness in Goyaesque society. Without a doubt this is the most macabre of the series: an Inquisition tribunal with its autos de fe (accusations of heretics), another spectacle considered fit for public attendance. The Sanctum Officium had been condemning heretics since the Middle Ages. Although the ritual was abolished by the Cádiz Cortes, it was re-introduced on the return of

Ferdinand VII, and once more embarked on its particular brand of persecution against liberals and francophiles, mixing political and religious motives. Goya himself was asked to justify his paintings *The Naked Maja* and *The Clothed Maja.* Criticism of the Inquisition and its extreme and unjust sentences thus became a partly personal theme for the artist, although Goya was always concerned about irrationality of the society in which he was living.

The numerous spectators watching the event, their heads lost in the gloom of the depths of the room, are gathered around a podium in a medieval hall with enormous ogee arches typical of public buildings. Raised up on a platform is a cleric who is reading the sentence, and on the same level on the left-hand side we can make out veiled women. The scene is dominated by the magistrate, identifiable by his dress. He is comfortably seated on the left, as if he were attending a poetry recital, his gaze is directed at one of the four condemned. Their bodies twist in panic as their sentence is dictated. They are wearing the penitential sanbenito garment and coroza or conical hat decorated with flames which anticipate their impending death by fire. Behind them are seated religious figures from various orders identifiable by their habits - Dominicans, Franciscans, Carthusians, and so on. In the very centre of the composition, the great inquisitor makes an implacable gesture, as if he were a Roman emperor who held the life of a slave in his hands.

As in the other paintings in the series, Goya's criticism in this painting consists simply in faithfully portraying the events of these autos de fe, which continued right up to the end of the bloody Inquisition in 1834.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya 1900
Ministerio de Instrucción Pública and Bellas Artes Madrid 1900
consultant editors Aureliano de Beruete, Alejandro Ferrant, Marqués de Pidal and Ricardo Velázquez. May 1900
cat. 12

Goya. El Capricho y la Invención. Cuadros de gabinete, bocetos y miniaturas
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1993
from November 18th 1993 to February 15th 1994. Exhibited also at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, March 18th to June 12th 1994 and The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, July 16th to October 16th 1994, consultant editors Manuela B. Mena Marqués and Juliet Wilson-Bareau
cat. 97

Goya: Prophet der Moderne
Alte Nationalgalerie Berlin 2005
from July 13th to October 3th 2005. Exhibitied also at the Kunsthistorischemuseum, Vienna, October 18th 2005 to January 8th 2006, consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués
cat. 120

Goya en tiempos de guerra
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2008
consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués, from April 14th to July 13th 2008
cat. 130

Goya
Basle 2021
p. 306

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vol. I, p. 241, cat. 212
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pp. 256, 266, cat. 966
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1993
Museo del Prado

Goya en tiempos de guerra

MENA MARQUES, Manuela B.
pp. 379-380, 386, cat. 97 y p. 387 (il.)
2008
Museo Nacional del Prado

ENLACES EXTERNOS