WHAT DISEASE WILL HE DIE OF?

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (40/85)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1797 - 1799
DIMENSIONES	216 x 152 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Aguafuerte, aguatinta bruñida, punta seca y buril
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	14 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

De que mal morira? (at the bottom)*40.* (in the upper right-hand corner)

HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

In the first printings the title appears without a question mark until the error was corrected.

Two preparatory drawings for this engraving have survived (*1*) and *(2)*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A donkey dressed in a suit takes care of a dying man who has his mouth ajar, as if he were in agony. He grasps the man's wrist with his hoof on which an ostentatious ring can be seen. The animal seems to be really concentrating on what he is doing, his expression is serious and meditative, although he has not removed the jewel that could prevent him from carrying out his task properly. In the background, Goya has depicted the shadows of two figures awaiting the doctor's verdict for the sick man who has little chance of overcoming his illness.

The manuscript in the National Library provides a clear and concise reading of this engraving, which reads as follows: "It is not necessary to ask what ailment the sick person who pays attention to beastly and ignorant doctors has died of".

Francisco Gómez de Quevedo (Madrid, 1580 - Villanueva de los Infantes, 1645) had already pointed out the lack of training with which doctors approached their profession in his Sueño, Visita de los Chistes: "(...) dealing more with mules than with Doctors, they graduated as Doctors". Somewhat further on, he insists: "If these others are made of these, it is not much that these others will unmake us".

The 18th century was a time of great advances in medicine. It was precisely at this time that figures such as the Englishman William Cullen (Hamilton, Lanarkshire, 1710-Edinburgh, 1790) and the Danish Hermann Boerhaave (Voorhout, 1668-Leiden, 1738) emerged. In Spain, the contributions of Andrés Piquer y Arrufat (Fórnoles, 1711-Madrid, 1772) should be highlighted. In addition, during the reign of Charles III, in 1771, the medical teaching at the University of Salamanca was revised and updated on the basis of Boerhaave's contributions.

In this engraving Goya lashes out harshly against doctors and the ignorant, but also against the imprudence of those who put themselves in their hands. Thus, the title of the print questions whether the cause of death was the illness or the incompetence of the doctor.

In some cases this image has been interpreted as a veiled reference to Manuel Godoy (Badajoz, 1767 - Paris, 1851) and the nefarious manner in which he governed the country.

This engraving forms part of the group of prints known as "asnerías", between 37 and 42, in which the images feature donkeys that serve to censure human stupidity.

CONSERVACIÓN

The plate has a scratch on the upper part from the first edition (National Chalcography, no. 211).

EXPOSICIONES

Goya dans les collections suisses
Fundación Pierre Gianadda Martigny 1982
consultant editor Pierre Gassier. From June 12th to August 29th 1982
cat. 51

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. 138

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 40, p.67

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. 46

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. 40, p.155

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
p.33

Goya et la modernité
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
cat. 145

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.
HARRIS, Tomás
p.112, cat. 75
1964
Bruno Cassirer

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
p.181, cat. 529
1970
Office du livre

Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp.228-231, cat. 136-138
1992
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
p.95, cat. 129
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.226-229
1999
Museo Nacional del Prado

Francisco Goya. Los Caprichos
POU, Anna
pp.46-47
2011
Ediciones de la Central

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 207
2013
Pinacoteca de París

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

PALABRAS CLAVE

CAPRICCIO ENFERMEDAD MÉDICO

ENLACES EXTERNOS