AGRICULTURE (LA AGRICULTURA)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. ALLEGORY, MYTHOLOGY, HISTORY

SERIE: ALLEGORIES FOR THE PALACE OF GODOY (PAINTING, 1801 - 1805) (1/4)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1801 - 1805
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	Diámetro 227 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Tempera on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	21 Feb 2010 / 13 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	96 (P02547)

HISTORIA

The King and Queen of Spain gave Manuel Godoy a palace when he was appointed Prime Minister in 1792. From 1801, Godoy carried out a series of renovations to the palace, which were not completely finished until 1806. Meanwhile, he commissioned Goya to produce three circular allegorical paintings to decorate the interior - A*griculture,* ***Industry***, ***Commerce***, and *Science* - which were hung in the hallway opposite the large staircase. Only three of these paintings survive today.

They stayed in their original location - which later became the headquarters of the Ministry of the Marine - until 1930. They then moved to the new headquarters of that ministry on Paseo del Prado.

In 1932, they were entrusted to the Prado Museum as a bequest from the Ministry of the Marine.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

The choice of themes for the four allegories was not fortuitous. Godoy wished to represent the pillars of the Enlightenment economy, demonstrating that he formed a part of this modern political thought. The paintings were hung above the lunettes of the vault of the hall, the anteroom of the great staircase where visitors waited to meet the influential favourite of Charles IV, and the ideal place to present political propaganda. In fact, thanks to photographs taken by Moreno, we know the exact position of each painting. *Industry* was on the eastern wall, opposite the staircase and *Science*, which was placed on the western wall. On the other sides of the hall, *Agriculture* hung on the north wall, and *Commerce* on the south. The room of the Prado Museum which houses these paintings today maintains their positions with the exception of *Science*, which has been lost.

As in the case of many other paintings by Goya, *Agriculture* was inspired by Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, and shows the goddess Ceres as she described in his book: a woman dressed in green, wearing a crown of ears of grain, a fertility symbol. At her feet, Goya has placed farming tools, an allusion to work in the countryside. This monumental goddess of agriculture is holding an apple in her right hand, a wheat sheaf in her left. She is accompanied by a peasant who is placed in the middle ground of the composition. He carries an offering of a basket full of flowers and fruit, and is admiring the beauty of the goddess. We can make out the symbols of the zodiac Libra and Scorpio in the sky, representing the harvest season. The composition is similar to the Rubens and Snyder work entitled *Ceres and Pan* (Prado Museum, Madrid) which Goya would have seen in the Palacio de Oriente in Madrid.

This work, as in the case of its companions, is painted in tempera, which gives it the feel of a fresco painting. There are many compositional likenesses to the tapestry cartoons, in particular the overdoors which were also designed to be viewed from below. Goya once more places a triangular figure in the foreground, adding a second in the middle ground in order to create a sense of depth. In the cartoons he often introduced an element between both figures, but in these compositions he uses light to distinguish the different planes, leaving the furthest away in the shadows.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya
Palacio de Pedralbes Barcelona 1977
from April 12th to June 30th 1977
cat. 35

Goya. 250 Aniversario
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996
consultant editor Juan J. Luna. From March 29th to June 2nd 1996
cat. 117

Goya. La imagen de la mujer
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2001
from October 30th 2001 to February 10th 2002. Exhibitied also at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, March 10th to June 2nd 2002, consultant editor Francisco Calvo Serraller
cat. 53

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ENLACES EXTERNOS