WHAT A TAILOR CAN DO!

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (52/85)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1797 - 1799
DIMENSIONES	218 x 151 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Aguafuerte, aguatinta bruñida, punta seca y buril
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	21 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

Lo que puede un Sastre! (at the bottom)

52. (in the upper right-hand corner)

HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

In the first printings, the exclamation mark in the title does not appear, which was later corrected.

The proof bears two handwritten numbers, 2 and 52, which could correspond to the hypothetical arrangement that Goya considered for this print.

A *preparatory drawing* of this engraving is in the Prado Museum.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A crowd kneels before a rickety tree covered with a monk's habit that looks like a gigantic puppet raising its arms. In the foreground a young girl is shown in adoration, the child behind her seems to be afraid, while others are praying and, in some cases, we see faces expressing withdrawal or indifference. In the sky, in the background, a group of witches can be seen flying.

This print can be read in two ways, in which the unifying element is appearance. On the one hand, it is a criticism of superstition, as can be seen in the manuscripts of Ayala and the National Library. However, the Prado Museum manuscript provides a second guideline for the interpretation of the engraving: "How often a ridiculous bug is suddenly transformed into a phantom that is nothing and appears to be a lot! So much can be the skill of a tailor and the foolishness of those who judge things by what they seem". In short, Goya censures those who rely on appearances without going into depth.

The Aragonese painter tackled this theme once again in engravings 66, *Strange Devotion! a*nd 67 *This is No Less* from the series *The Disasters of War*, in which he criticised the superciliousness and those who use sacred images to exalt their own image, to obtain a dimension and social projection which they do not really have.

A close analysis of the preparatory drawing for the engraving reveals modifications to the engraving designed to make the message of the print less obvious. Thus the artist concealed the clear reference to the monk by adding a topknot to the hood of the habit, which makes it look like a tied sack. He also sketched the witches flying in the sky that he developed in the print. In this way, the anti-clerical criticism is camouflaged under a scene of witchcraft.

One of the possible visual sources Goya could have drawn on for this image is the painting by Pierre Subleyras (Saint-Gilles-du-Gard, 1699-Rome, 1749) *Charon Passing the Shadows* (ca. 1735, Musée du Louvre, Paris), in which the Frenchman creates the spectral figures by means of an excellent *panneggio* work.

CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in rather poor condition, with the aquatint very worn (National Chalcography, no. 223).

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. Gemälde Zeichnungen. Graphik. Tapisserien
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953
from January 23th to April 12th 1953
cat. 238

De grafiek van Goya
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam 1970
from November 13th 1970 to January 17th 1971
cat. 38

Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
cat. 45

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. 53

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 52, p.79

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. 58

Goya artista de su tiempo y Goya artista único
The National Museum of Western Art Tokyo 1999

Goya e la tradizione italiana
Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di Traversetolo (Parma) 2006
consultant editors Fred Licht and

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December

from December 1st to July 3th 1999
cat. 129

consultant editors Fred Licht and Simona Tosini Pizzetti. From September 9th to December 3th 2006
cat. 52, p.158

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. 160

Goya: Order and disorder
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014
cat. 168

Madrid 2017

2022

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.
HARRIS, Tomás
p.125, cat. 87
1964
Bruno Cassirer

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
p.182, cat. 555
1970
Office du livre

Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp.87-90, cat. 52-54
1992
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

Goya. El capricho y la invención. Cuadros de gabinete, bocetos y miniaturas
MENA, Manuela B. y WILSON-BAREAU, Juliet (comisarias)
p.46, fig. 19
1993
Museo del Prado

Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
p.101, cat. 141
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.278-281
1999
Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 225
2013
Pinacoteca de París

Goya: Order & Disorder
ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie L. (comisarios)
p. 255
2014
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

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

CALVO RUATA, José Ignacio, BORRÁS GUALIS, Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ HERRANZ, Amparo
p. 188
2017
Gobierno de Aragón y Fundación Bancaria Ibercaja

TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN MEDINA, Víctor
p. 44
2022
Museo de Bellas Artes de Badajoz y Diputación de Badajoz

PALABRAS CLAVE

CAPRICCIO MONJES SUPERSTICIÓN CRÍTICA

ENLACES EXTERNOS