WHICH ONE DO THEY UNCHAIN IT!

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (21/85)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1797 - 1799
DIMENSIONES	218 x 149 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Etching and burnished aquatint
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	29 Nov 2010 / 29 May 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

Which one do they unchain it! (in the lower part)

21. (in the upper right-hand corner)

HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

There is a state proof with the full title in manuscript.

In the first proofs of the print run, the "ñ" appears without a tilde until the letter engraver corrected the error.

A *preparatory drawing* of this engraving has survived.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A bird-woman is attacked by a clerk and a bailiff, all of them with the face of a cat. This animal was defined in the dictionary of the Spanish language published in the 18th century as "the thieving thief who steals with cunning and deceit". The scene is being watched by a magistrate who sees how one of the men violently grabs the woman by the wing, which he bites off, causing the young woman to wince. Everything is taking place against a neutral background with no spatial reference.

Goya makes extensive use of a very grainy aquatint to create the neutral background in which he has suggested a certain luminosity around the figures. The white of the woman's torso and face, as well as the white of the hilt of the bailiff's sword, is obtained with a reserve of varnish.

The three manuscripts that explain the engravings of the *Caprices* series coincide in their interpretation of this engraving, which shows the complicity between the judges and the bailiffs and scribes in "fleecing" the prostitutes. Goya continues with the theme of engravings no. 19 and 20, in which the prostitutes took advantage of their clients' base instincts to extract money from them, although in this case he balances the scales by making them the victims of their clients. This way of establishing a parallel between two situations to demonstrate the parity between them is reminiscent of the way Goya censures violence in all its forms in engravings no. 2 and 3 of The *Disasters of War* (*Rightly or Wrongly ; The Same Thing*), without taking a position in favour of one or the other.

The bailiffs sometimes pursued prostitutes and extorted money from them, thus obtaining multiple benefits. Paradoxically, however, they were precisely the ones who were informed of the places where this trade was practised and gave directions to the brothels to all those who came from outside Madrid and wanted this type of service.

In *The Art of Whores* by Nicolás Fernández de Moratín (Madrid, 1737-1780) - a regular at the gathering at the Fonda de San Sebastián attended by José Cadalso (Cádiz, 1741-San Roque, Cádiz, 1782), Tomas de Iriarte (Puerto de la Cruz, Tenerife, 1750-Madrid, 1791) and Ignacio López de Ayala (Cádiz, 1745/1750-1789) - a space is devoted to the bailiffs. On p. 81, the following is said: "Everyone knows what perverse people the bailiffs and notaries are; they persecute the poor whores, not with the desire to extinguish the bad, because they eat with crimes, and their life hangs on lawless men, criminals, and holy virtue is their murderer; and although they know that swindling them is not the way to correct them, since they remain poor, they always go on whoring them, robbing them with the pretence of making amends". Likewise, in Quevedo's T*he Sheriff Bailiff,* the author refers to the prevailing corruption in the sphere of justice: "(...) the Judges are our pheasants, our gift dishes, and the seed that gives us devils the most profit and fruit; because from every Judge we sow, we take six Procurators, two Rapporteurs, four Scribes, five Letrados, and five thousand Negociantes, and this every day. From each Notary we take twenty Officers, and from each Officer thirty Bailiffs, and from each Bailiff ten Bailiffs".

CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is preserved in the National Chalcography (no. 192).

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. Gemälde Zeichnungen. Graphik. Tapisserien
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953
from January 23th to April 12th 1953
cat. 211

Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
cat. 27

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. 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. 91

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 21, p.48

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. 27

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. 21, p.151

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
p.28

Goya e Italia
Museo de Zaragoza Zaragoza 2008
organized by the Fundación Goya en Aragóna, consultant editor Joan Sureda Pons. From June 1st to September 15th 2008
cat. 322

Goya et la modernité
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
cat. 186

Hamburg 2019
cat. 100

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.179, cat. 494
1970
Office du livre

Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
cat. 90-91
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. 109
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. 148-151
1999
Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 252
2013
Pinacoteca de París

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

TACK, Ifee and PISOT, Sandra
p. 310
2019
Hirmer

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

PALABRAS CLAVE

PROSTITUCIÓN PROSTITUTAS CAPRICCIO

ENLACES EXTERNOS