

# 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 *The 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 Revolutionen. 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. Fundetodos 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 Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014

cat. 186

Hamburg 2019

cat. 100

2022

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

**Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.**

HARRIS, Tomás

p.90, cat. 55

1964

Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et oeuvre 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 Paris

**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**

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