

# THE CHINCHILLAS

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (50/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

207 x 151 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Aguafuerte, aguainta bruñida y buril

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

20 Aug 2013 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Los Chinchillas.* (at the bottom)

50. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter.*

Two preparatory drawings for this engraving are preserved (1) and (2).

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Two men, with gawking faces, appear immobilised and wrapped in stiff heraldic costumes. Their eyes are closed and their ears are covered by two thick padlocks. One of them is lying on the ground with a rosary in his hand, while the other is standing with a sabre. He is wearing a tabard of some sort underneath and something that hangs down to the ground, possibly an executioner's certificate. A strange figure, wearing donkey's ears and a blindfold, serves him a spoonful of food from a cauldron between the two Chinchillas. We cannot tell whether it is a man or a woman as, although his clothes look rather feminine, he has an incipient curly beard.

The Aragonese painter has created intense contrasts of light and shade, so that the Chinchillas are strongly illuminated, as are the hand and the spoon of Ignorance, the latter being decisive in emphasising the disability of the two figures.

In the manuscript of the National Library we find a very specific explanation for this engraving: "The foolish ones, precious as nobles, are always with their executoria at their breast, reclining desidiously, praying like fanatics the rosary and yawning. Ignorance feeds them coarsely and keeps their minds padlocked.

In this picture, Goya lashes out against those who flaunt their noble pride, against the corseted and blind aristocracy that is fed by Ignorance. However, this explanation does not quite justify the meaning of the title, to which Edith Helman seems to have found an answer. The specialist argues that Goya based his work on a popular comedy, *El dómine Lucas*, by José de Cañizares y Suárez (Madrid, 1676-1750). The painter was familiar with Cañizares's literary output as one of his patrons was the Duke of Osuna, for whom the painter produced a series of paintings between 1797 and 1798 to decorate his country house called *The Caprice*. For one of these works *Flight of Witches*, the Aragonese painter had already been inspired by this work by Cañizares.

In the book, the main character Lucas de Chinchilla and his uncle, Don Pedro de Chinchilla, belonged to a family attached to their aristocratic privileges and noble coats of arms, which made them believe they were superior to others. This work must have been very popular at the time, so that the public must have quickly understood the meaning of the title of this engraving.

## CONSERVACIÓN

The aquatint of the plate is somewhat weakened. (the National Chalcography, no. 221).

## EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Gemälde  
Zeichnungen. Graphik.  
Tapisserien**  
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953  
from January 23th to April 12th  
1953  
cat. 327

**De grafiek van Goya**  
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam  
1970  
from November 13th 1970 to  
January 17th 1971  
cat. 37

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der  
Revolutionen. Kunst um  
1800 (1980 - 1981)**  
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 36

**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. 55

**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. 121

**Francisco de Goya**  
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996  
exhibition celebrated from  
September 22nd to November  
17th.  
cat. 50, p.77

**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. 56

**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. 50, p.158

**Goya. Opera grafica**

Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006  
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007  
p.37

**Goya et la modernité**

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

cat.8

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

**Los Chinchillas de Goya**

HELMAN, Edith  
pp.162-167  
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1955  
Fundación Lázaro Galdiano

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

HARRIS, Tomás  
p.123, cat. 85  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p.182, cat. 551  
1970  
Office du livre

**Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet  
pp.202-205, cat. 119-121  
1992  
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

**Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
p.100, cat. 139  
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. 270-273  
1999  
Museo Nacional del Prado

**Goya. Die Kunst der Freiheit**

TRAEGER, Jörg  
p.93, fig. 31  
2000  
Verlag C. H. Beck

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo  
p. 66  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

**Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**

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

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

**CAPRICCIO DON PEDRO DE CHINCHILLA IGNORANCIA NOBLEZA CLERO CRÍTICA**

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**