

[11]

SPANISH SCHOOL

Satire of Don Fabián and his Guide or Scandal received and not given

LATE 18TH CENTURY

BLACK CHALK AND GREY-BROWN WASH / BLUE TINTED PAPER. 559 X 796 MM

INSCRIBED:

AT THE BOTTOM (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT): "SI TAN AL [sic] PARA ACABAR DE SOMBRERAR ESTE QUADRO, QUE REPRESENTA EL ESCANDALO RECIVIDO, Y NO DADO: ESPLICADOS YA LOS AFFECTOS, ACCIONES, Y DICHS/DE LAS PERSONAS QUE EN EL SE VEEN, Y DEFENDIDO EL PROCEDER INOCENTE DE D^N FABIAN CON SU LAZARILLA EN UN QUINTERNO DE RIMAS; EL BUEN D^N JUAN BENGOCHEA ES / SATYRIZADO EL ICOGNITO, QUE SE LE ENCAJA EN EL APOSENTO ENMASCARADO POR NO SER CONOCIDO DE EL, Y LE LARGA EL PAPEL QUE CONTIENE LA SATYRA. / JUAN [illegible], CONOCE EL VENESIA DE LA COPLA PIDE TIEMPO PARA LA RESPUESTA, ESCUSANDOSE POR HAORA FRÍVOLAMENTE EN DOS QUARTETAS, BIEN MALAS. /

FIG 1/. VIENDO FRAY JUAN DE [illegible] / AL BUEN CIEGO CON [illegible] / CEGAD, MUGERES, DE [illegible] / A FRAY GIL, Y A [illegible]. /

[FIG 2] /. [illegible] ARROJO / [illegible] Y PRESTA / [illegible] RESPUESTA. / [illegible] EL OJO. /

FIG 3/. SI BASTA LA CEGUEDAD, / MUGER, A TI YO ME PEGO, / QUE POR DETRÁS ESTOI CIEGO, / DESDE MI NATIVIDAD. /

FIG 4/. NO OS MATEIS FRAYLES GOLOSOS, / POR TERESA Y CATALINA, / QUE YO SOI MAS TRIDENTINA, / PARA POVRES RELIGIOSOS. /

FIG 5/. HUIENDO LAS DEMÁS TÍAS [sic], / CUMPLIERON CON SU DEBER, / AUNQUE NO ME QUERRÁN CREER / TAL VIRTUD EN NUESTROS DIAS. /

JUAN A LA / MASCARA. / FIG 6/. LA RESPUESTA TE DARIA, / PERO ME FALTA PAPEL, / Y (AL SOLITO) ADEMÁS DE ÉL / TODO EL OF^ºZIO DEL DIA. / CON QUE POR ELLA TE ACUERDA / DE VENIR A MEJOR HORA, / PROVISIONALMENTE HAGORA, / VETE EN PAZ, ANDA À LA MIERDA. /

MÁS / CARA. / FIG 7/. [illegible]. /

ON THE PARCHMENT HELD BY THE FIGURE ON THE RIGHT: "PARA PERDER LA CHAVETA, / TIENES QUANTO HAS MENESTER / PUESTO QUE HAS LLEGADO A SER, / PINTOR, MÚSICO Y POETA".

ON THE BOOKSTAND ON THE RIGHT: "DENFENSA DE D^N FABIAN, / Y SU LAZARILLA. / RIMAS / COMO POR UNA DONCELLA / AVRE LOS OJOS ADÀN, / TRAS ESSO TAMBIEN CON ELLA / ANDA EL POVRE D^N / FABIAN".

ON THE MUSICAL SCORE: "ARIA DE / GENOVA".

The considerable interest of the present drawing, which is a preparatory design for a print, lies in the fact that it takes the form of a satire, a genre characterised by irony in both its literary and pictorial forms. The intention of satire is to moralise or simply mock the human vices, follies, abuses and deficiencies of a person or group. It is, in other words, an intelligent attack on reality that makes use of humour. This genre was particularly popular in 18th-century Spain and was used by writers and artists with the intention of reforming society and ridding it of its excesses. Journals such as *El Censor* (1781-1787) brought Enlightenment ideals to all parts of the country and all sectors of society¹. Satire also played an important role in 18th-century Hispanic literature, which saw the presence of brilliant figures such as Diego de Torres y Villaroel, José Cadalso and Leandro Fernández de Moratín.

It was the 18th century that witnessed the rise of the satire within the field of the graphic arts, primarily in the media of drawing and printmaking. The subjects and themes depicted were varied ones, ranging from political satires such as the anonymous *Satire against Napoleon Bonaparte* (Madrid, History Museum, 1808)³, which uses the same model and format as the present image, to burlesque images such as Goya's *Capricho* number 7, *Ni así la distingue* (Madrid, National Calcography)⁴, on the subject of a gentleman's clumsy inability to identify a prostitute. Goya's set of the *Caprichos* (1799) is, in fact, the most important and outstanding example of 18th century satire in the graphic arts. Through the prints in this series Goya offered a humorous but merciless critique of the defects that he observed in society, ranging from religious fanaticism to superstition, the Inquisition, unjust laws and more. In addition to Goya,



Francisco de Goya
y Lucientes, *Ni así
la distingue*. Madrid,
National Calcography

artists such as Eugenio Lucas Velázquez, Leonardo Alenza and Eugenio Lucas Villaamil regularly produced visual satires.

As the inscription at the bottom indicates, the present drawing, which the unknown artist entitled “scandal received and not given”, must have been part of a small book of rhymes known as a *quinterno* as it was sewn from five folded sheets of paper. The image firstly criticises the clergy (characters 1 and 2 at the lower right corner) for allowing themselves to be “blinded” by women, thus resulting in their perdition (characters 4 and 5, upper right and left), and secondly makes fun of homosexuality (character 3, lower left), in the form of a sarcastic individual who indicates “I’m blind behind”. The image also criticises the nobility, represented by Don Fabián (character 8, in the centre), accusing aristocrats of dishonestly taking advantage of the people who serve them, in this case Don Fabián’s guide (character 8, also in the centre). In the drawing, all these vices are being portrayed by a seated painter who creates a notably theatrical scene with a popular air, suggesting some of the cartoons for tapestries made for the Spanish royal residences during the reign of Charles IV.

1 Uzcanga (2005).
2 *El Censor* (1781), p.115.



Anonymous Spanish
artist, *Satire against Napoleon
Bonaparte*. Madrid,
History Museum

The canvas being painted in the scene offers a generalised satire on the period and a way of life. Outside the canvas, the image includes a second, more specific satire. The focus of criticism is the now unknown artist Juan Bengoechea (character 6), possibly an invented name concealing the identity of a real person of the day, whose abilities in the three arts that he practices are questioned by the Mask (character 7, right-hand corner), who remarks: “You’ve got everything necessary for being weak in the head / given that you’ve managed to be / a Painter, a Musician and a Poet”. These three art forms are also included in the image: painting in the form of the composition on which the artist is working and which forms the principal satire within this drawing; poetry, in the form of the book-stand in the right-hand corner where the titles of the verses are supplied; and music, in the form of the score, the violin, flute and bassoon.

Illustrations of this type, many of which were sold in huge numbers as part of printed lampoons, were created with the intention of raising the consciousness of the general public in 18th-century Spain in order to introduce and disseminate Enlightenment ideas throughout the country.

3 Exhibition *Wellington* (1988), p.391, cat. no. 5.1.3.
4 Various authors (1996), vol. II, no. 7.

