

Luz y sombra

Goya and Spanish Realism

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FOREWORD

It is with great pride and heartfelt anticipation that I introduce EUROPALIA ESPAÑA, the 30th edition of our festival and the second devoted to Spain, exactly four decades after the first in 1985. This moment resonates deeply—not only as a celebration of the enduring cultural ties between Belgium and Spain, but also as a renewed call to reflect, engage, and connect through the transformative power of the arts.

Since 1969, EUROPALIA has been driven by an unwavering belief in art's capacity to bring people together and foster understanding across boundaries. We create spaces where cultures meet in an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect, where heritage enters into dialogue with contemporary art, and where artists are encouraged to explore new horizons. Our festival serves as a catalyst for meaningful encounters that transcend borders, connecting past and future, tradition and innovation. In an increasingly complex world, we remain committed to building bridges between communities and opening new perspectives through inspiring encounters with the unknown.

At the heart of this edition is Francisco de Goya, whose artistic legacy embodies the profound tensions and enduring hopes of his time—so strikingly relevant to our present. The exhibition *Luz y sombra. Goya and Spanish Realism*, opening at Bozar in Brussels, anchors a rich, multidisciplinary programme that spans over 100 events across Belgium and brings together more than 170 artists and 80 cultural institutions.

This ambitious undertaking would not have been possible without the exceptional vision and support of Max Jadot, General Commissioner of EUROPALIA ESPAÑA, to whom I extend my deep gratitude. I also wish to warmly acknowledge the outstanding EUROPALIA team, whose commitment continues to be the engine behind every success, past, present, and future.

We are profoundly grateful to our Spanish partners for their invaluable support and trust: the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation Development (AECID), Acción Cultural Española (AC/E) for co-organizing the exhibition about Goya, the Ministry of Culture and its museums, the Instituto Cervantes, and the Commissariat for the Celebration of 50 Years of Freedom in Spain.

EUROPALIA ESPAÑA is not only a festival; it is a lasting testimony to shared histories and creative futures. This book, like the programme it accompanies, is meant to endure. It offers readers a window into a vibrant and multifaceted Spain—one that questions, reinvents, and connects through art. We hope it will inspire continued dialogue and reflection, long after the final curtain has fallen.

Let us celebrate together the enduring power of culture—rooted in heritage, alive in the present, and vital for the world we wish to shape.

Baron Philippe Vlerick
Chairman of the Board
EUROPALIA

INTRODUCTION

EUROPALIA ESPAÑA

Goya: Between Tradition and Innovation — A Mirror for Our Times

With the 30th edition of EUROPALIA, we return to the heart of Spanish culture, focusing on the enduring legacy and contemporaneity of a visionary artist, Francisco de Goya. Forty years after Spain's first participation in the festival, this exhibition invites a contemporary reflection on Goya's prescient artistry and its relevance today and invites us to experience the richness of Spanish culture.

In these turbulent times, when society faces numerous challenges, Goya's work offers a particularly relevant lens. As a master of tensions – between Enlightenment and tradition, rationality and emotion, social engagement and personal expression – his oeuvre reflects in a remarkable way the complexity of our contemporary reality.

The exhibition presents Goya not merely as a historical figure, but as a genius who continues to confront artists and the public with fundamental questions about conflict, power, social justice, and human vulnerability. His graphic series such as *Caprichos*, *Disparates* and *Desastres de la guerra* demonstrate with unsettling directness the universal themes that challenge us today. At the same time, we find in his portraits and scenes of everyday life a celebration of human dignity and vitality that inspires and encourages us.

This exhibition is the result of an extraordinarily fruitful collaboration between Spanish curators and the EUROPALIA ESPAÑA artistic team, supported by outstanding cultural institutions. Through their shared passion and expertise, a dialogue has emerged that transcends the traditional boundaries of art appreciation.

Luz y sombra. Goya and Spanish Realism represents the beating heart of EUROPALIA ESPAÑA, a festival celebrating the vibrant Spanish cultural scene through more than 100 events including other exhibitions but also performances, concerts, debates, etc. across Belgium. We invite visitors to further explore this dialogue between tradition and innovation, from classical music to contemporary dance, from literature to cinema.

As directors of this special collaboration, we have personally experienced how culture builds bridges – not only between Belgium and Spain – but also between past and present. It can offer different perspectives, foster communication, and share diverse narratives among people. In a world where division often dominates, Goya's legacy shows us that art remains a powerful medium for reflection, dialogue, and mutual understanding.

We invite you to visit this exhibition and experience it as an invitation to a conversation about who we are and who we want to be in the complex, challenging, yet extraordinarily rich times in which we live.

Christian Salez
General Director
EUROPALIA

Santiago Herrero Amigo
Director of Cultural and Scientific Relations
Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)

Goya and Us: Forms of Self-Representation in Contemporary Spanish Art



Fig. 1 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *La nevada o El invierno* [The Snowstorm, or Winter], 1786, oil on canvas, 27.50 × 29.30 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (Inv. P000798).

'Buried in Goya's grave is old Spanish art, the forever vanished world of bullfighters, majos, manolas, monks, smugglers, thieves, bailiffs and witches, all the local colour of the Peninsula. He arrived just in time to collect all this and fix it in place. He thought he was only indulging in "caprices", but he has produced the portrait and the history of the old Spain while believing he was serving new ideas and beliefs. His caricatures will soon be historic monuments.'

— Théophile Gautier, 1843/1845¹

On 16 April 1828, Francisco de Goya passed away in Bordeaux. Less than two decades later, in 1845, Théophile Gautier's *Wanderings in Spain* helped to construct the myth of Goya as a faithful chronicler of his era. Through the French romantic traveller's outsider gaze, the construction of the image of the people in Goya's oeuvre gradually took hold of the collective imagination and was reproduced again and again until it became a stereotype.

From then on, the images produced by Goya were identified with the idea of Spain, or of the 'two Spains', and they were recurrently revisited in various exercises of national self-representation during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and on down to the present day.

Before reflecting on how contemporary Spanish art has returned repeatedly to the image of the 'populace' constructed by Goya, before reflecting on the mythologized narrative of how Goya constructed those images, we must start at the beginning. In the last third of the eighteenth century, when the painter arrived at the Spanish royal court, a process of national identity formation was under way in response to a crisis in the values of the ancien régime. The nation was a political and administrative unit that needed to be defined through a concept of the people with which it could collectively identify. To this end, a common heritage was needed that could be recognized as proper to a territory because of its opposition to the foreign, thus giving rise to national types.

The popular tableaux that Goya reproduced in his tapestry cartoons responded to a collective image of the 'clean-living and hard-working' people,² an expression of the modernizing ambitions of the Spanish monarchy. From 1774 to 1792, Goya completed seven series of cartoons for rooms in the royal palaces of El Pardo and El Escorial.

Over nearly two decades, Goya evolved from the formal academicism of the hunting scenes of the first series for the dining hall of the Prince and Princess of Asturias at El Escorial (1775), such as *Hunter Loading His Shotgun*, to the scenes of the last cartoons for the bureau of Charles IV (1791–1792), thematically much more complex and imbued with stronger social criticism, as in *Women Carrying Pitchers* (fig. 2). In contrast with the hieratic and descriptive figures included in collections of character types and costumes, such as those by Juan de la Cruz Cano y Olmedilla (1778–1788) (fig. 3), the clothing of Goya's young women shows signs of poverty and use, situating them in the reality of a specific time and place. In this way, he steadily introduced a new vision to these idealized scenes of popular life and customs.

This ambiguity in the treatment of popular scenes comes to the fore in the seasonal cartoons Goya created for the dining room of the Prince and Princess of Asturias at the palace of El Pardo (1786–1787). While *Autumn* and *Spring* retain a certain Rococo air, *Winter* (fig. 1) and *Summer* display a greater charge of realism.

These country scenes, described as 'paintings of jovial and agreeable subjects', helped to reinforce the definition of the people through the country folk and the vernacular traditions they guarded. The enlightened monarchies of Europe invented a common heritage rooted in rural life, where the essence of the popular was still retained in opposition to incipient citizen demands for areas of empowerment in the cities. In this process of forming an identity, simply inventorying that heritage was not enough. It had to be invented.³

The period's encyclopedic zeal for classification and order also affected the popular heritage, with a series of norms then being standardized for manifestations of material culture, such as costume, and for intangible traditions, such as dance, festivities, and bullfighting.⁴ This gave birth to a kind of erudition on popular affairs that in turn led to various fashions, such as that of the *majos*, and a taste among the elite classes for taking part in rural processions and country dances.

In the preparatory sketches for the set of tapestries for the decoration of the bedchamber of the infantas in the palace of El Pardo (1788), Goya used this festive iconography, portraying the *majos* and *majas* of Madrid in several scenes centred on the feast of San Isidro, the farmer saint and patron of Madrid. In the sketch for *The Meadow of San Isidro* (1788, fig. 4), the action



Fig. 2 [cat. 1] Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *Las mozas del cántaro* [Women Carrying Pitchers], 1791–1792, oil on canvas, 262 × 160 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (Inv. P0008000).



Fig. 3 Juan de la Cruz Cano y Olmedilla (before 1760–1790), *Criada* [Maid], from *Colección de trajes de España, tanto antiguos como modernos, que comprehende todos los de sus dominios* [Collection of Spanish Costumes, Ancient and Modern, Covering All Its Domains], 1777–1778, etching and burin on laid paper, 305 × 210 mm. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (Inv. G006933).

is set outside the city walls in the intermediate space between the urban and the rural, the old and the new, where Goya himself was then in the process of settling. The scene shows a crowd sharing a space in which they indulge in various festive activities. The city appears in the background, clearly defined by some of its most representative buildings, like the Royal Palace and San Francisco el Grande. The artist's viewpoint is now a different one. He does not linger over a depiction of stereotypes, the usual approach in collections of character types and costumes, but instead portrays the multitude. The distinguishing attributes of the *majos* and *majas* can be made out in the foreground, while in the rest of the scene the crowd fills the space in cheerful disorder. Two opposed ways of representing the people are now contrasted. One is identified with the nation through stereotyping, while the other is identified with the mass, with minorities, and with the rabble (figs. 5 and 6), a focus that would grow in Goya's work until it became the protagonist of many of the prints in the series of the *Caprichos* (1797–1799) and *Desastres de la guerra* (Disasters of War, 1810–1814).⁵

In 1792 Goya concluded his working relationship with the Royal Tapestry Factory, and that same year he signed a report requested from him by the Academy of San Fernando on the teaching of the fine arts.⁶ Now a sick man, he went to Sanlúcar and executed a series of cabinet paintings in which he no longer fixed his gaze on the popular prototype but on minorities, the excluded, the comic, and the mad (fig. 7). These were the years when he worked on the prints of the *Caprichos*, the first of his collections of engravings on questions that enlightened friends like Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos had been denouncing in their writings. The series was announced in the *Diario de Madrid* in 1799, reinforcing ideas on artistic creation that Goya had already voiced in his report for the academy: 'Painting (like poetry) chooses from universals what it judges most apposite for its ends. It brings together in a single imaginary being circumstances and characteristics that are distributed in nature among many, and from this combination, ingeniously arranged, comes that felicitous imitation whereby a good artificer acquires the name of inventor rather than servile copyist.'⁷



Fig. 4 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *La pradera de San Isidro* [The Meadow of San Isidro], 1788, oil on canvas, 41.9 × 90.8 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (Inv. P000750).



Fig. 5 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *No hubo remedio*, serie *Caprichos* [There Was No Remedy, series *Caprichos*], 1797–1799, etching and burnished aquatint on laid paper, 285 × 200 mm. Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Inv. R-3450-1).

Fig. 6 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *Populacho*, serie *Desastres de la guerra* [Rabble, series *Disasters of War*], 1863, wash, etching, burnisher, burin, and drypoint on wove paper, 2400 × 3180 mm. Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Inv. R-3534-1).



Fig. 7 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *La casa de locos* [The Madhouse], 1808–1812, oil on panel, 45 × 72 cm. Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Inv. 0672).

The distance that separates these works from the first cartoons on both a formal and conceptual level demonstrates Goya's evolution as an artist and his adoption of a political stance. He now showed the reverse side of those happy and jovial scenes through a denunciation of abuses of power, violence, ignorance, and superstition.

However, let us return to the French romantics, since the fashion for Goya initially came from France.⁸ In 1838 Valentín Carderera (1796–1880) wrote the following with regard to the success of the *Caprichos* among the French romantics: "The French enthusiasts have for some time been seeking them out with greater passion than our own devotees, and today we see their little goblins and bailiffs reproduced and transformed in the engravings and lithographs that come in from abroad without any attempt to conceal their plagiarism" (fig. 8).⁹

Those 'little goblins' represent everything that the conservative painters of the generation after

Goya rejected in his work so as to set his oeuvre in a picturesque place of its own. The goblins stand for 'the triumph of genius over taste, of nature over the norm, of romanticism over classicism'.¹⁰ Invoking them means aligning oneself with naive beliefs and heterodox, popular, anarchic, or irrational ideas.¹¹ This was the romantic attitude criticized by the conservative artists who dominated the academy in the mid-nineteenth century, with José de Madrazo (1781–1859) foremost among them, who relegated the painting of popular custom by Goya's followers to a peripheral and secondary place. It was then that an adjective, Goyaesque, began to define the trend, which was identified with a 'wild vein' of painting with vernacular roots that succumbed to sentiment and nature. Goyaesque was reserved as a label for a type of minor art or genre painting, and Goya's most direct followers, Leonardo Alenza and Eugenio Lucas Velázquez (fig. 9), were consigned to a place of low prestige in the history of art.



Fig. 8 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *Si amanecemos, nos vamos*, series *Caprichos*, no. 71 [If Day Breaks, We Leave, series *Caprichos*, no. 71], 1797–1799, etching, burin, and burnished aquatint on laid paper, 285 × 200 mm. Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Inv. R-3497-1).



Fig. 9 Eugenio Lucas Velázquez (1817–1870), *Sermón de las máscaras* [Sermon of the Masks], 1855, oil on copper, 26 × 40 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (Inv. P004417).

In this continual movement back and forth over the work of Goya, a series of repeated ideas gradually constructed the myth of the artist in the collective imagination both in Spain and abroad. The *Caprichos* had already made him a free and politically committed painter who bore witness to his time. The foundations had been laid for turning him into the first contemporary artist.¹²

However, in the construction of the myth of both the Spanish people and Goya, the Peninsular War was to prove a crucial element. As Álvarez Junco indicates, 1808 marked the key moment in the beginning of Spain's contemporary era, laying the basis for an 'ethnic patriotism' shaped out of a reaction to the foreign, placing the 'other' opposite 'us' as a means of defining the nation.¹³ Paradoxically, precisely this reaction to Frenchness helped to design an imaginary which was then used by French travellers to propagate a visual catalogue of Spain.

Some of the basic symbolic elements in the declension of the national soul had been defined towards the end of the eighteenth century. These included the typical landscape, the picturesque quality of character types and costumes, the customs, and so on. The Peninsular War contributed the missing elements: heroes and monuments. In this way, the list of essential elements for defining the idea of a homeland was completed.¹⁴

In contrast with the plebeian vices criticized by the thinkers of the Enlightenment, the image of the people was transformed during the war into one of heroism. The defence of Madrid turned the popular *majos* foreshadowed by the tapestries into a fashion. The people are shown as a collective hero in numerous paintings and prints, above all images of 2–3 May 1808 (fig. 10). A few famous names also emerged among the heroes and heroines of the war, such as Luis Daoíz y Torres, Pedro Velarde y Santiyán, and Agustina de Aragón. Like the collections of character types and costumes, the images



Fig. 10 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *El 3 de mayo en Madrid or Los fusilamientos* [The Third of May in Madrid or The Executions], 1814, oil on canvas, 268 × 347 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (Inv. P000749).

of these personalities were spread through prints, as in the case of the portraits of heroines in the *Ruinas de Zaragoza* (Ruins of Zaragoza, 1812) by Juan Gálvez and Fernando Brambilla (fig. 11).

Much has been written about Goya's position on the war. The *Desastres* diverge from the prints of patriotic exaltation engraved by his contemporaries. Or perhaps this is not so much the case; perhaps merely his standpoint was different, and this allowed the prints to be reused in the twentieth century to express the theme of resistance to foreign invasion. More than in any other series, the masses play a leading role. The rabble on this occasion moves on a terrain of contradictions, being both the victim and the accomplice of the events that unfold (fig. 12). The war was to transform the ignorant mass that made up this rabble into the heroic horde that fought against the invader, but in Goya, once again, the reading is more complex.

He engraved the first prints of the *Desastres* in 1810, and his creative process is well known because most of the works he produced have been preserved. These include nearly all the preparatory drawings, numerous proof states, the plates, and a first copy that he gave to his friend Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez, bearing the title *Fatales consecuencias de la sangrienta guerra en España con Buonaparte. Y otros caprichos enfáticos* (Fatal consequences of the bloody war of Spain against Napoleon. And other emphatic caprices). In 1863, when the Royal Academy of San Fernando put the first edition of the series up for sale, it gave it the title by which we know it today, *Los desastres de la guerra* (The Disasters of War), thus eliminating its historicist connotations and converting it into a universal testimony to the barbarity of any and every war, a message upheld during the Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939.¹⁵



Fig. 11 Juan Gálvez (1773–1846) and Fernando Brambilla (1763–1834), *Ruinas de Zaragoza* (Casta Álvarez) [Ruins of Zaragoza (Casta Álvarez)], 1812–1813, etching and aquatint, 545 × 435 mm. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España (Inv. ER/3199).



Fig. 12 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *Yo lo vi*, serie *Desastres de la guerra* [I Saw It, series Disasters of War], 1863, etching, burin, and drypoint on wove paper, 240 × 318 mm. Madrid, Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Inv. R-3550-1).



Fig. 13 Jean Laurent (1816–86), *Perro en la arena* [Dog on the Sand], from the *Pinturas negras* [Black Paintings] series, 1874, albumen print. Madrid, Instituto del Patrimonio Cultural de España, Ministerio de Cultura (Inv. VN-06583).

In the last third of the nineteenth century, after the start of the Sexenio Democrático in 1868, Goya became established for Spanish as well as foreign critics as a painter of great genius and the finest portrayer of the Spanish people. In 1875 the Museo Nacional de Pintura y Escultura, now the Museo del Prado, opened the so-called Goya Room, where the tapestry cartoons, rediscovered by Cruzada Villamil at the Royal Palace in Madrid, were displayed for the first time.¹⁶ They were joined in 1881 by the *Pinturas negras* [Black Paintings], which had been rescued from the walls of the Quinta del Sordo, the painter's last residence in Madrid on the banks of the River Manzanares (fig. 13).

In this way, when the great crisis of national identity began in 1898, intellectuals and artists found a vast repertoire within the work of the Aragonese painter



Fig. 14 Anonymous, *Traslado de los restos de Goya a la Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida* [Transfer of Goya's Remains to the Hermitage of San Antonio de la Florida], published in the newspaper ABC, 30 November 1919. Madrid, Archivo ABC.

with which to construct their revision of the 'question of Spain'. Popular indifference to the loss of the colonies, the sign of an evident lack of patriotism, precipitated measures aimed at the 'nationalization of the masses'.¹⁷ This drive towards education, postponed since the Enlightenment, led to the creation in 1900 of the Ministry of Public Instruction, one of the most important regenerationist measures. That same year saw the beginning of a movement to dignify Goya and his Enlightenment friends Leandro Fernández de Moratín, Juan Meléndez Valdés, and Juan Donoso Cortés by transferring their remains to a mausoleum in the cemetery of San Isidro. A few years later, in 1919, Goya's remains were moved again to San Antonio de la Florida, the chapel by the Manzanares whose vaults were decorated by the painter with popular scenes in 1798 (fig. 14).



Fig. 15 Ignacio Zuloaga (1870–1945), *Detail of the Model for the First Scene of the Opera 'Goyescas', by Enrique Granados, 1919*, volume model with cardboard and wooden sticks. Paris, Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra, Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Inv. MAQ-1009).

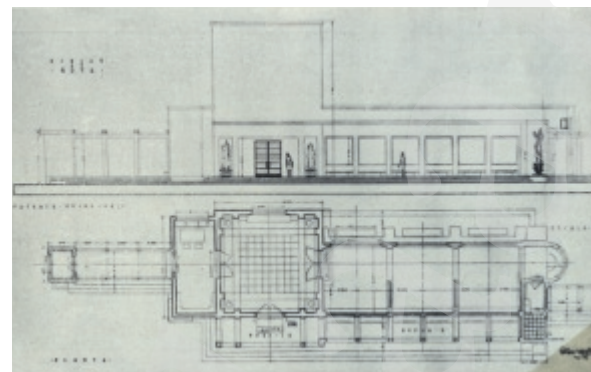


Fig. 16 Fernando García Mercadal (1896–1985), *Rincón de Goya en Zaragoza* [Goya's Corner in Zaragoza], published in *Arquitectura* 111 (1928): pp. 226–231, general floor plan; ink and pencil on paper. Madrid, Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid (COAM).

The reinterment of Goya's remains became an affair of state reflecting the growing importance of his figure in the first decades of the twentieth century. The painter's birthplace in Fuendetodos had been acquired in 1915 by the painter Ignacio Zuloaga, and the same year saw the premiere in Paris of Enrique Granados's opera *Goyescas*, which was presented again in Paris in 1919 with set designs by Zuloaga himself (fig. 15).

The first decades of the twentieth century also brought a renewed taste for *costumbrismo*, the painting of popular custom, and for Goyaesque fashion as a vindication of the 'wild vein' that had received so much criticism from the academicist painters of the central years of the previous century. One outstanding example of this revived taste for genre painting is the opening in 1924 of the Museo Romántico in Madrid, now called the Museo del Romanticismo, at the initiative of the Marquis de La Vega-Inclán, then the royal commissioner for tourism, which was starting to go hand in hand with the Goyaesque.

Goya fever was nearing its climax, and the ground was being prepared for the great celebration of the centenary of his death in 1928. For the occasion, a National Centenary Committee was set up whose members included the artist Ramón Acín, the academicist Eugenio d'Ors and the architect José García Mercadal. The latter was commissioned to design a building in Zaragoza, El Rincón de Goya (The Goya Corner), for the holding of tributes in his home city (fig. 16). The texts written for the centenary make clear

how Goya was viewed by the Spanish intelligentsia of the period. 'What other Spanish artist is there', asked García Mercader, 'either before or after Goya, who brings together the whole national microcosm in his oeuvre?'¹⁸ D'Ors's assertion may stand as a reply: 'Even if Goya had not become the living symbol of Spanish Painting, he would always have been that of the picturesque Spain.'

In the regenerationist project, Goya was largely approached through the idea of the construction of the popular. Interest was then reviving in classifying popular character types while studying the various artistic manifestations produced by the populace. This was no longer treated as a passive subject. Rather, popular art started to be valued, and its procedures were researched and incorporated into the avant-garde artistic languages. One example of this attempt to express vernacular roots through avant-garde forms is the Escuela de Vallecas (Vallecas School).¹⁹ Founded in 1927 by Benjamín Palencia and Alberto Sánchez, the school vindicated rural life and the Castilian landscape from a contemporary standpoint linked to the thought of the 1898 generation.

These were the years of wandering from one country dance to the next in search of the *duende*, the spirit that allows uncertain paths to be traced out. The arrival of a *duende*, Federico García Lorca writes in *Juego y teoría del duende* (Play and theory of the *duende*), 'always presupposes a radical change in all forms on old planes, it produces totally new sensations of freshness with the quality of a newly created rose, of a miracle that comes to arouse an almost religious enthusiasm'.²⁰ Maruja Mallo, a painter

of country festivities like so many other avant-garde artists (fig. 17), reflected on the popular, experimented with artisanal productions, and compiled her ideas in a publication that is crucial for an understanding of her work and the context in which it was created, *Lo popular en la plástica española a través de mi obra, 1928–1936* (The Popular in Spanish Art Through My Work, 1928–1936).²¹

The work done in the previous years by the Institución Libre de Enseñanza (Free Teaching Institution) and the Spanish excursionist societies had contributed a great deal to this interest and knowledge. Among such enterprises, the *Exposición del traje regional* (Exhibition of regional costume) of 1925 played a particularly important role. In the manner of *tableaux vivants*, the exhibition was arranged in a succession

of dioramas that represented the typical settings and costumes of each region of Spain, recreating the images that the *costumbrista* painting of the previous century had deposited in the collective imaginary.

This exhibition was the origin of the Museo del Pueblo Español (1934), or Museum of the Spanish People. The only museum created by the government of the Republic (1931–1939), it underscored the role of the populace as the creator of the folklore and material culture that represented the national essence.

The images produced by Goya were now fully inscribed on the mind's eye of the Spanish people and accompanied by all the epic literature on his life and work that had been written over the course of a century by both Spanish and foreign authors.



Fig. 17 Maruja Mallo (1902–1995), *La verbena* [The Fair], 1927, oil on canvas, 119 × 165 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Inv. AS01985).

When the Spanish Civil War broke out on 18 July 1936, these images unsurprisingly came to the fore once more, and Goya was turned to as a witness of the barbarity of war. The Peninsular War was recognized by everyone as a glorious triumph of the people over an invading army, and it was in this sense that it was retrieved and used as a reference by both sides in the Civil War.²² In the Republican case, the enemy was the army that had risen with the support of the foreign troops of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, while the Nationals saw themselves as defending Spain against the communism imported from Moscow. The executions by firing squad on 3 May (fig. 18) and the prints of the *Desastres* were reproduced in magazines and propaganda on both sides of the front, although the Republicans showed the greatest interest in Goya's oeuvre, with a new edition published in 1937.



Fig. 18 Germán Horacio (1902–1975), *1808 mayo 1937: Esto lo vio Goya, esto lo vemos nosotros: Entonces y hoy España lucha por su independencia* [May 1808–May 1937: This Was Seen by Goya, This We See Today: Then and Now Spain Fights for its Independence], 1937, lithograph, 480 × 370 mm. Salamanca, Centro Documental de la Memoria Histórica (Inv. PSCARTELES 942).



Figs. 19, 20 and 21 [cat. 2] Delhy Tejero (1904–1968), *Nosotros-Ellos* [Us-Them], 1940–1945, pencil, pen, Indian ink and gouache on paper, 389 × 328 mm; 249 × 325 mm; 241 × 323 mm. Madrid, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Madrid (Inv. 2006/1/3; 2006/1/5; 2006/1/10).

The Civil War was the first war to be covered by photojournalists, who sent their pictures to newspapers around the world, making it the first mediatic conflict on an international scale. The photographs of the bombings, the piles of bodies, and the people fleeing in terror were intended to be compared with the prints of Goya, who had explicitly created similar scenes using the means of mechanical reproduction at his disposal in 1810. The analogy between Goya and the contemporary photographers is drawn from the viewpoint he chose, focusing on a particular moment that is frozen almost like an image taken by a camera.²³

With the war, a new panorama of 'us' and 'them' held sway over Spain, with the territory divided physically, as depicted by Delhy Tejero in her drawings (figs. 19, 20 and 21), and above all emotionally. The notion of 'two Spains' was revived once more, but this time in a literal and highly violent sense.

Once the war had been lost by the Republicans, associated with modernity and the avant-garde, Francisco Franco's new government (inaugurated on 1 April 1939) had to construct a new aesthetic with which the regime could be identified. Goya's revival as national painter now adopted a festive approach based on the popular, luminous, and endearing compositions of the tapestry cartoons. By the 1940s, the cinema had acquired widespread popularity and become a key tool for the construction of the new state and the idea of nation attached to it. One prominent production in

1942 was Benito Perojo's film entitled, like the opera by Granados, *Goyescas*. Starring Imperio Argentina, several scenes passed successively over the screen in the manner of *tableaux vivants*.²⁴ The whole visual repertoire of the cartoons was emblazoned once more on the mind's eye of the national public.

In 1946 the celebration of the bicentenary of the painter's birth became a key moment for a review of his life and work, though distilling only those aspects which were of interest to the regime. Contributors included intellectuals like d'Ors and José Ortega y Gasset.²⁵ In the collective imaginary, the image of Goya established by Francoism was that of *costumbrismo*, popular games, and country dances, meaning once more the scenes of the 'clean-living and hard-working' people constructed to the taste of the monarchy of the late-eighteenth-century Enlightenment. This left no room for the Enlightenment critique of the *Caprichos*, the *Desastres*, or the *Disparates*, nor for representations of the masses.

The 'populace' represented on the tapestries was shown again and again on every type of support. Overexhibited, it became a stereotype for export in a new tourist operation on a global scale.²⁶ In 1964 Spain approached the New York World's Fair with the clear objective of attracting American tourists. Among the works by old masters that travelled to the fair were Goya's two *majas*, the naked and the clothed, which were shown alongside other treasures from the Spanish artistic heritage (fig. 22). These were the years of the tourist slogan 'Spain is



Fig. 22 Juan Ramirez de Lucas and Carlos De Miguel Gonzalez, *Photograph of the New York World's Fair*, published in *Arquitectura 68* (August 1964): p. 21. Madrid, Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid (COAM).



Fig. 23 Antonio Saura (1930–1998), *El perro de Goya* [Goya's Dog] (plate 4), 1972, screen print on paper, 68.6 × 49.9 cm. Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Inv. AS06493-002).

different', of the celebrations of '25 Years of Peace', and of the propaganda both inside and outside Spain showing images of a happy and prosperous country.

Franco's regime had made its choice, and from the contradiction between light and shadow upon which the critics had been building their reading of Goya for decades, it selected the luminous Spain. The distribution of roles was simpler now than it had been during the Civil War. If the regime chose light, the artists who sided with the political opposition unhesitatingly chose shadow.

The manifesto of the El Paso group was published in 1957, written by the critic José Ayllón and signed by the painters Rafael Canogar, Luis Feito, Juana Francés, Manolo Millares, Manuel Rivera, Antonio Suárez, Antonio Saura, and the sculptor Pablo Serrano. In a clear attempt to detach themselves from the aesthetic of

the regime and embrace the artistic trends of the time, they proclaimed the following:

We believe our art will not be valid as long as it does not contain an unease coinciding with the signs of the age, passionately establishing contact with the most reformist artistic tendencies. We are heading towards a revolutionary art—in which our dramatic tradition and our direct expression will play a part—that responds historically to a universal activity.

Once again, tradition and avant-garde came together in the search for a universal artistic language that would allow them to escape from autarky. Goya was the referent for the dramatic tradition upon which the artists of El Paso worked, particularly the radically aggressive expressiveness they found in his last works, the *Pinturas negras* [Black Paintings]. The gesturalism and violence of the paintings of the Quinta del Sordo is evident in the expressionism espoused by all the members of the group, but Saura (and to a lesser extent Millares) made the most literal approach to the oeuvre of his fellow Aragonese (fig. 23).²⁷

The international exhibitions of contemporary Spanish painting²⁸ allowed this different approach to Goya's oeuvre to reach an audience abroad, helping at the same time to nourish the dramatic, dark, and mysterious image which had been projected onto Spain since romanticism.

Just two years later, in 1959, Estampa Popular was created. First founded in Madrid by José García Ortega, it then spread to other cities with the objective of producing a 'realist' art that would help to arouse critical judgement and transform the political and social situation. Opposed to an elitist and commercial concept of art, its members used the technique of engraving to create economically affordable works. This, together with the reproduction of their prints in other media, enabled their anti-Francoist stance and their impugning of the dictatorial system to reach a wider public. The plastic language of the *Caprichos*, the *Desastres*, and the *Disparates* was recovered, and the visual representation of the crowds and the masses vindicated, seen on this occasion as a popular force capable of pushing for change (see cats. 165 and 175).

In 1975, after the death of the dictator, the 'populace' had to reflect anew on its role and its image in

the construction of a new Spain. The resulting identity crisis was in this case already defined by the aesthetic that had been built up in the circles of resistance during the final years of Franco's regime.

The first major international display of Spanish art was the country's participation in the 1976 Venice Biennale with the exhibition *Spain: Artistic Avant-Garde and Social Reality (1936–1976)*.

For some decades, Spanish art tried to evade Spain as a subject and to flee from the obsession with reflecting the signs of national identity. It was a time to be more international and to leave aside the eccentric, the unearthly, and the disproportionate as a kind of fatality inherent to 'Spanishness'.²⁹

After a few years of working on a clean slate, artists started to ask themselves once more about the question of Spain and its idiosyncratic way of understanding the traditional, the avant-garde, the cultured, and the popular. The first decades of the twenty-first century

thus saw a heterodox return to various aspects of Spain's history and individuality.

The complex relation between tradition and avant-garde—how the weight of the past is continually borne on contemporary shoulders—as a differentiating element of the Spanish case has been analysed in several recent works. In her series *Folklore* (2006–2009, fig. 24), Patricia Esquivias addresses Spain's problematic relationship with modernity and the tension between concept and practice in the avant-garde in relation to popular culture.

In this continual journey to the past in which Spanish art acts as a medium, the revision of the avant-gardes always passes through popular culture. References to Goya are now hardly ever literal (though some are) but traverse the imaginary vision of the people and the popular that has been constructed over nearly two centuries.

This is how Pedro G. Romero works on the artistic practices of the rabble and the cultural manifestations of the marginalized, those who were portrayed by Goya



Fig. 24 Patricia Esquivias (1979), *Folklore IV*, 2009, video, frame at 2' 55". Madrid, Collection of the artist.

and then went on to appear in sweetened form in the *costumbrista* pictures. This new return to the concept of the popular is not restricted to its external form, for as Oteiza points out, popular eccentricity (*el disparate popular*) is the *cante jondo* of flamenco song.³⁰

The 'clean-living and hard-working' people of the tapestry cartoons also returned to the scene through a vision of contemporary country life, its uprootedness, and, once again, the 'question of Spain', with the heritage of the failed agrarian reforms of Jovellanos, the Republic, and the dictatorship. The resort to rural and popular tradition as a way of adapting to the environment in a context of climatic crisis finds artistic formulation in works like those of Asunción Molinos Gordo.

Among this contemporary revival of reflections on tradition is work directed at the echelons of power that employ various forms of violence to impose a definition of what the people, tradition, and the homeland are and ought to be. As a privileged place where these power structures are built up, Madrid, the capital, has been the central setting for the construction of the image of the nation since 2 May 1808. This has been the object of projects like David Bestué's *Flor Hispania* (Hispania Flower, 2015)³¹ and Álvaro Perdices's *Espejo y reino / Ornamento y estado* (Mirror and Realm / Ornament and State, 2022). For the present exhibition on Goya, Perdices proposes an exercise in popular resignification for the power structure of the Church as an accompaniment to *La última comunión de san José de Calasanz* (The Last Communion of Saint Joseph of Calasanz, 1819, figs. 25 and 26).

The eternal return to the 'question of Spain' and to the popular as something unresolved, inherent to Spanish idiosyncrasy and our way of representing ourselves, is perhaps partially rooted in that construction of our definition as a people through the gaze of the other. While Spanish art seemed in the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth to endorse d'Ors's dictum that 'all that is not tradition is plagiarism', the artists of the twenty-first century are moving away from that dark and clammy atmosphere to rethink Spanishness in terms of other sites of enunciation where plagiarism becomes an essential part of the game.



Fig. 25 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828), *La última comunión de san José de Calasanz* [The Last Communion of Saint Joseph of Calasanz], 1819, oil on canvas, 303 × 222 cm. Madrid, Colección Padres Escolapios.

Notes

- 1 Théophile Gautier, *Wanderings in Spain* (1843/1845; London: Ingram, Cooke, 1853). Gautier's narration of his 1840 travels in the Iberian Peninsula was initially published as *Tra los montes* (Paris: Victor Magen, 1843), then republished as the now more familiar *Voyage en Espagne* (Paris: Charpentier, 1845).
- 2 Álvaro Molina and Jesusa Vega, 'Imágenes de la alteridad: El "pueblo" de Goya y su construcción histórica', in *La Guerra de la Independencia en la cultura española*, ed. J. Álvarez Barrientos (Siglo XXI, 2008), p. 131.
- 3 Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La creación de las identidades nacionales; Europa: Siglos XVIII–XX* (Ézaro Ediciones, 2010), p. 13.
- 4 At the request of the Royal Academy of History, Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos drew up a report on the games, spectacles, and public entertainments habitual in the provinces of Spain; it was made public in 1796. Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, *Toros, verbenas y otras fiestas populares* (Reino de Cordelia, 2011).
- 5 When discussing the popular, Pedro G. Romero places the focus on the clash between the 'two ideas of the people: the major one, which identifies it with the nation, and another minor one, which is that of the excluded, the minorities and the rabble.' Pedro G. Romero, *Máquinas de trovar: Índices, dispositivos, aparatos* (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2022), p. 27.
- 6 'Informe sobre el estudio de las artes', Madrid, 14 October 1792, Archivo-Biblioteca de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando.
- 7 Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez, *Goya. Caprichos. Desastre. Tauromaquias. Disparates* (Fundación Juan March, 1996), p. 34.
- 8 Ángel González, 'La noche española', in *La noche española: Flamenco, vanguardia y cultura popular 1865–1936*, exh. cat. (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2008), pp. 27–42.
- 9 Quoted in Francisco Calvo Serraller and A. González García, 'Goya y el romanticismo español', *Goya: Arte y libertad*, Historia 16, no. 28 (August 1978), p. 106.
- 10 Calvo Serraller and González García, 'Goya'.
- 11 Georges Didi-Huberman, 'En el aire conmovido...', exh. cat. (Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2024), p. 90.
- 12 Fred Licht, *Goya and the Origins of Modern Temper in Art* (Universe Books, 1979).
- 13 José Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa: La idea de España en el siglo XIX* (Taurus, 2002), p. 129.
- 14 Thiesse, *La creación de las identidades nacionales*, p. 14.
- 15 On the series' historicist connotations, see Molina and Vega, 'Imágenes de la alteridad', p. 153.
- 16 On the works' rediscovery, see Guillermo Juberías Gracia, 'Ideología y poder en los discursos museográficos: La creación de "salas Goya" en los museos españoles (1875–1915)', *Potestas*, no. 14 (2019): p. 147.
- 17 Álvarez Junco, *Mater dolorosa*, p. 589.
- 18 José García Mercadal, *Goya, pintor del Pueblo* (Publicaciones de la Junta Organizadora del Centenario de Goya, 1928), p. 27.
- 19 Francisco Calvo Serraller, *Del futuro al pasado: Vanguardia y tradición en el arte español contemporáneo* (Alianza Forma, 1988), p. 11.
- 20 Federico García Lorca, *Juego y teoría del duende* (Athenaica ediciones, 2018).
- 21 Maruja Mallo, *Lo popular en la plástica española a través de mi obra, 1928–1936* (Editorial Losada, 1939).
- 22 In 1938 the artist Josep Renau wrote an article entitled 'Goya y nosotros, nuevo por nuestra independencia' (Goya and us, new for our independence) for the magazine *Nuestra bandera*, no. 1 (January–February 1938). It is from this article that I have taken the title of the present essay.
- 23 Licht, *Goya*, p. 132.
- 24 Francisco Javier Lázaro Sebastián and Fernando Sanz Ferreruela, 'Goya en el cine documental español entre las décadas de los cuarenta y los ochenta: Tratamientos sociológicos, ideológicos y estéticos', *Artigrama*, no. 25 (2010): pp. 185–208.
- 25 As María Rosón and Jesusa Vega indicate, this anniversary 'was the opportunity to domesticate his figure and his oeuvre, and especially that "wild vein" which caused so much discomfort'. See: 'Goya, de la República al Franquismo. Reinterpretaciones y manipulaciones (1936–1950)', in *XIV Jornadas Internacionales de Historia del Arte: Arte en tiempos de guerra* (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2009), pp. 245–259.
- 26 The repetition of the same images contributes to the creation of popular stereotypes and is key to the construction and diffusion of folklore as a central axis of the instrumentalization of the popular by totalitarian systems. Didi-Huberman, 'En el aire conmovido...'; and Thiesse, *La creación de las identidades nacionales*.
- 27 Antonio Saura, *Después de Goya: Una mirada subjetiva* (Gobierno de Aragón, 1996).
- 28 Jorge Luis Marzo, 'Arte moderno y franquismo: Los orígenes conservadores de la vanguardia y de la política artística en España' (Girona, 2006), https://www.soymenos.net/arte_franquismo.pdf.
- 29 Calvo Serraller, *Del futuro al pasado*, p. 37.
- 30 Jorge Oteiza, *Goya mañana: El realismo inmóvil: El Greco, Goya, Picasso* (1949; Fundación Museo Jorge Oteiza, 1997), p. 40.
- 31 *Flor Hispania*, exh. cat. (Caniche, 2022) is a collective continuation of the work begun with *El Escorial: Imperio y estómago* (Caniche, 2021).