THE FATES (LAS PARCAS)

CLASIFICACIÓN: MURAL

SERIE: BLACK PAINTINGS (WALL PAINTING AND SKETCHES, CA.1820-1823) (8/14)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1820 - 1823
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	123 x 266 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil painting on plaster transferred to canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	27 Oct 2010 / 04 Mar 2024
INVENTARIO	399 (P00757)

HISTORIA

See *Leocadia*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

This painting was located on the first floor of the house, on the left-hand wall. It is a large composition dominated by the main figures in a scene that seems to be taking place at night. The figures are superimposed on a primitive landscape. They represent the Fates, the Daughters of the Night who control the thread of human life. In this work they are shown floating on a cloud, accompanied by a man whose arms are held behind his back. Atropos can be identified as the figure on the right of the painting from the scissors she is holding: according to Arnaiz, she is making a rude gesture with her fingers which could be interpreted as the painter mocking death. Clotho, who is usually depicted spinning the thread of life, in this case holds a doll in her hands - perhaps as a sacrifice - which is attached to her right hand by a thread. In the background is Lachesis: she normally holds the thread of life, although here she is shown with an object in her hand which has been interpreted variously as a magnifying glass with which she examines the thread of life, a mirror symbolizing time and transience or a snake biting its tail, a symbol of eternity.

The lighting of the scene is striking, since it seems to be bathed in moonlight which picks out the objects carried by the Fates.

It has not been possible to find a global explanation for the scene; however, the identification of Atropos as the Fates by Brugada and Yriarte was very clear, and is the reason behind the title they gave to the painting. According to Bozal, the symbolic meaning of the Fates is altered by the changes Goya introduces in his representation, as well as by its relationship with the other Black Paintings.

CONSERVACIÓN

The figure of Atropos is the one that underwent the most changes due to the intervention of Martínez Cubells: based on x-ray analysis, it is believed that he overpainted a tear in the paint in the area of that figure.

EXPOSICIONES

Pinturas Negras en la Exposición Universal de París
Palacio del Trocadero París 1878
from may 20th to November 10th 1878

Goya. 250 Aniversario
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cat. 165

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

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GUDIOL RICART, José
vol. I, p. 378, cat.708
t. I
1970
Polígrafa

Las pinturas negras de Goya, Alcobendas
BOZAL, Valeriano
p.87-88
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T.F. Editores

Goya, pintor de retratos, t. I
BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de
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Goya's Black Paintings: Truth and Reason in Light and Liberty
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Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
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ENLACES EXTERNOS