

FRANCISCO DE GOYA

Portraits of friends: Zapater and Moratín

Bilbao Fine Arts Museum



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**BILBOKO ARTE
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Of all Goya's output, it was the portraits that his contemporaries most appreciated. A master at faithfully capturing his subject's expression, the artist's handling of flesh tones and modelling volume ensured that the people he portrayed retained over time the freshness and liveliness of the day they first posed.

With Goya, the portrait genre can be divided into three large groups: portraits of relations, portraits of friends and commissioned portraits. In the latter, the artist's determination to get it right and conquer fame—not to mention fame's constant companion fortune—is quite clear. With that achieved and his reputation assured, what mattered most was the artist's degree of empathy or closeness to his sitter, the latter being subjected to a genuine character dissection. This was particularly true of the "friends" group,

Once we have established this distinction, in Goya's case we might also introduce another classification to reflect the stages of his training, where increasing ease or fluidity of hand evidently played a part in the way his paintings evolved. Greater speed, mastery and economy of means eventually led to the mere outlining of shadow and light. Even so, he would never lose the personal, non-transferable instinct for setting up a portrait. Only the materials and the amount of paste used would change, as we shall see later on.

The Bilbao Fine Arts Museum collection holds a pair of magnificent portraits by Goya featuring Zapater and Moratín, which clearly fit into the "friends" group. Of the two, Goya's closest, genuinely intimate friend was *Martín Zapater y Clavería* (1747-1803) [fig. 1]. Proof of this is to be found in the profusion of letters Goya wrote to Martín, many of which have survived to provide a goldmine for those interested in the artist's preoccupations, family life and professional advancement, roughly in parallel with Zapater's own career, although on a rather different tack.

A reference in one of the letters to Zapater's physique—"you will no doubt look much as you did at Padre Joaquín's school"—led Francisco Zapater¹, nephew of Martín, to assume that Goya's friendship with Zapater dated back to the desks of the Escuelas Pías school in Saragossa. After Jeannine Baticle² had called the theory into question, José Luis Ona decided to set the record straight. He produced a magnificent piece

1 Francisco Zapater y Gómez. *Goya : noticias biográficas*. Zaragoza, 1868, p. 45.

2 Baticle 1995, pp. 30-31.



1. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Martín Zapater, 1797
Oil on canvas, 83 x 65 cm
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
Inv. no. 82/10

of work³ based on some painstakingly inclusive research of the records of the parishes and congregations providing free education in Saragossa, with particular attention paid to the custom of the time that decreed that children went to the nearest school in the parish they were registered in. The resulting study provides some invaluable information concerning the childhood of the two friends, as well as on the *modus vivendi* of their community.

Goya was born in Fuendetodos on the 30th of March, 1746. Born in Saragossa a little over a year later on November the 12th, 1747, Martín was baptized in the parish of La Magdalena. From this, Ona deduced that the Zapater family lived in the *calle* (street) of Puerta Quemada with the Vidal family, which is where they were registered in 1748. They would soon move house, as their name no longer figures in the 1752 register.

We pick up the Zapater family trail in 1757, living as sublessees in the home of wagon and cart maker Gaspar Lorés, on the other side of the city, in the parish of San Pablo, which is where the congregation of the Escuelas Pías was established.

As Ona⁴ points out, the fact that they always figure as sublessees in districts largely populated by craftsmen confirms the family's modest origins. Nevertheless, Martín's luck was to change when, at the age of ten, he was taken in by a rich branch of the family as a *pupilo*, or ward, as was often the lot of relatives of lower social status, in Francisco Alduy's large house in the Coso, opposite the *palacio* or mansion house of the Count of Sástago, in the parish of San Gil. As a ward, it is no surprise to find his name included with the servants in the parish records. However, this social status would change as his intelligence and good nature won over his rich relatives, who learnt to put their trust in him and who, when they died, left him their money and goods.

In the meantime, from 1747 to 1757, Goya lived in the house of the Morería Cerrada, with three schools close by: the Convent of San Francisco, run by Franciscans; the College of Santo Tomás de Villanueva, run by Augustinians and finally, opposite his home, the Convent of San Camilo, run by regular priests called *Agonizantes*. Through an association of ideas with the name of his brother Camilo, who was also a regular priest, we may assume that Goya's early schooling took place in the Convent of San Camilo.

All trace of the painter's family is lost until 1761. In 1762 the Goya family moved to the *Subidita* del Trenque, hard by the Coso, where the fifteen-year-old Zapater was already living. Here they coincided for the first time, in the parish of San Gil, where the future painter would receive his Confirmation in the Catholic faith. There was a Jesuit school in the parish, in a place known as las Piedras del Coso, next door to the house Goya lived in from 1762 to 1766.

What this evidence points to is the likelihood of the friends meeting for the first time at the Jesuits, rather than in the Escuelas Pías (also known as *Escolapios*), particularly as Goya never actually lived in the parish of San Pablo, seat of the congregation. And it would be in San Gil where, together and quite naturally, given their age and the time-honoured local custom, they would take part in the *cantazos* or stone throwing fights against youths from other parishes.

Having shared a humble background, the two friends and correspondents likewise rose in society⁵. Zapater acquired his social standing⁶ through commerce and the backing of the legacy of his aunt, Joaquina Alduy, while Goya progressed with the sole aid of his brush, although not without the occasional handout⁷ from his brother-in-law Francisco Bayeu.

3 Ona González 1997, pp. 56-61.

4 Ibid., p. 58.

5 Ibid., p. 61.

6 Ansón 1992.

7 Arias Anglés 1998.

Based on mutual admiration, the friendship was helped greatly by a shared taste for, among other things, shooting small game, bullfights and music. The nickname *Lizano*⁸ and its variants *lizanero* and *lizarrón*, which they applied indistinctly to each other, are all linked to their liking for the *cantos a desafío*, forerunners of the still popular regional folk song-and-dances called *jotas de picadillo*.

Zapater owned a collection of paintings and prints by Goya that he left to his nephew Francisco Zapater y Gómez. Some of them can be traced in Goya's correspondence and in his brothers-in-law's letters.

The first reference occurs shortly after Goya's departure for Madrid⁹, in a letter from Fray Manuel Bayeu¹⁰ to Zapater, dated February 15th, 1775: "It now occurs to me to present you with 4 designs representing the Cardinal Virtues, which it seems to me will not look out of place as adornment in your room, in between the large paintings of my Goya". And in a specific, separate note: "The 4 paintings are of my hand and are painted *al fresco* in the dome of this Temple". Judging by the date, the paintings Fray Manuel refers to must have been executed in Saragossa.

Another, undated letter from the same correspondent¹¹ refers to a preliminary sketch by Goya: "... I would be most pleased to see the sketch by Goya when God sees fit to give me occasion as I have yet to see anything by him since he left and he wishes me not to have that pleasure [...] The Fathers have read with amazement the sentence passed by Olabides'. The reference to Olavide¹² enables us to date the letter to December, certainly later than one dated December the 8th, 1778¹³.

This is probably the same sketch Goya offered Zapater in a letter of December 7th, 1778¹⁴. "Sabatini came at me about some sketches I had, and I had already assigned, and you were not to come off badly, and he more or less cleaned me out: the older one I had of the dance in la Ronda with the church of San Francisco el Grande in the background, if you want it, you can have it and hang it in a corner because it's no use to me". Something about the style must have made Zapater doubt that it really was by Goya, as the latter writes on the 9th of January, 1779¹⁵: "That sketch you have, the idea is Francisco [Bayeu]'s, the execution mine; but it does not signify, it matters not whether it is mine or his, and has no value". Which goes to show that no painter of prestige, or one completely sure of himself, appropriates, or takes responsibility for, other people's works.

Goya continued to give Zapater sketches over the years. In a letter of August 3rd, 1781¹⁶ he writes: "I am resolved that one of the sketches shall be yours". Two years later, on January 15th, 1783¹⁷, the gift involved one of the group of San Francisco el Grande: "I shall also send you one of the sketches for the painting of San Francisco, on the understanding that it is very tentative and the original is very much changed, but even so you may still form an idea".

We also know, through his nephew, that the sketch of the *Santa Cena* (Last Supper) for the church of the Santa Cueva in Cadiz was in his collection, as were three for the church of San Fernando de Torrero in Saragossa¹⁸, the only surviving fragments of the work, as the French destroyed the church during the Peninsular War, including the three altar paintings that Jovellanos¹⁹ so admired as he journeyed into exile.

8 For further explanations of the term *lizanero*, Rodríguez Torres 1995, pp. 64-68.

9 Goya left Saragossa on January 3rd, 1775, arriving in Madrid on the 10th, according to his *Cuaderno Italiano* (facs. ed., Madrid, 1994, p. 47 [a]).

10 Bayeu y Subías 1996.

11 Ibid., p. 77, letter no. 27.

12 The sentence was given in October 1778. He was condemned to eight years' reclusion in a convent in Sahagún.

13 Bayeu y Subías 1996, p. 75, letter no. 26.

14 Goya 1982, p. 48, letter no. 7.

15 Ibid., p. 49, letter no. 8.

16 Ibid., p. 66, letter no. 22.

17 Ibid., p. 93, letter no. 38.

18 Ansón 1992, p. 216.

19 Diary of Jovellanos, 7th of April, 1801. Jovellanos 1988.



2. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Martín Zapater, 1797
 Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
 Stretcher

The sheer number of sketches in Zapater's possession indicates his preference for the genre, although his taste was not exclusive, as he also commissioned religious works, including a Virgin of Mt. Carmel and a Saint Christopher, to which Goya alludes in the correspondence.

And as was only fitting, given their friendship and the artist's remarkable skill, Goya painted Martín's portrait on several occasions. Goya refers to one of these portraits, painted in 1790 and formerly in the Cramer collection in The Hague, in a letter²⁰: "Wherefore do not mock, you big-nosed son of a sod, as I am going to have them prepare the canvas for your painting and I shall have no peace until I do it for you". From a paragraph in another letter, dated the 5th of August, 1789: "if you can not come, I shall not be able to paint you and now it would not be like the other time", we deduce that there was another portrait²¹.

But the best example is undoubtedly the one in the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, the subject of our study. From the collection of Francisco Zapater in Saragossa, it then passed into the hands of one Portabella, a lithographer in the same city. Sold in 1906 to Paul Durand-Ruel, of Paris, it was acquired by Ramón de la Sota y Aburto and bequeathed to the museum in 1980.

Dedicated, signed and dated: "Goya to his Friend Martín Zapater 1797", the painting today is an oval, but it was not always so. We have this in testimony provided by Desparmet²², who says that when he saw the painting in 1903, at Portabella's house in Saragossa, the portrait was inscribed in an oval on the rectangular canvas and measured 110 x 90 cm. The technical file includes a reproduction of the original note pointing out the poor condition of the portrait, with crackling and paint lifted or scaled at the edges. Traces of two older restorations were visible in the central zone. The same note specifies that the canvas was reduced later to the size of the oval: 83 x 64 cm. He probably saw it again *chez* Durand-Ruel, who was most likely responsible for removing the damaged edges in a bid to «cure» it, as the stretcher [fig. 2] is French. The mention of both measurements, before and after reducing its size, confirms the information.

20 Goya 1982, pp. 195-196, letter no. 113.

21 In the Widener collection (Philadelphia), mention is made of a portrait of Zapater about which we know nothing.

22 Desparmet Fitz-Gerald 1928-1950, no. 376, text vol. 2, p. 94: "Portrait de Martin Zapater y Claveria/ Peint en 1797/ Toile: Hr 1,10 x Lr 0,90/ Il est représenté de face, grandeur naturelle, vu à mi-corps, dans un ovale peint sur la toile rectangulaire [...] / N.B. – Ce portrait était en très mauvais état lorsque je l'ai vu, en 1903, chez Don Portabella, lithographe à Zaragoza. On remarquait au bord de la toile de nombreuses craquelures et des parties écaillées. La partie centrale portait les traces de deux restaurations déjà anciennes. La toile fut réduite plus tard (Hr 0,83 x Lr 0,64); dimensions de l'ovale/ Dans les bas de l'ovale on lit: *Goya a su Amigo Marr Zapater 1797*".



3. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of the Poet Moratín, 1824
Oil on canvas, 60 x 49.5 cm
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
Inv. no. 69/101

Ansón Navarro²³ calls this into question, on the basis of the fact that the Count de la Viñaza, who saw it at Francisco Zapater's house, describes it as an oval in his publication of 1887. However, four sketches for *The Family of Charles IV*, which came into the possession of Fernando VII's daughter María Luisa and which were to be found in the Palacio de San Telmo, are also included as ovals. None of them were in fact oval, despite having been framed that way; they figure as ovals in the captions to the photographs taken by French photographer Laurent. In 1925 Mayer²⁴ also describes them as "oval in a rectangular frame".

Linked to the Bilbao portrait is a jovial letter²⁵ with a drawing at the end which, on the characters' own admission ("all drunk") would not pass the breath test, while confirming the popular song:

Cuando un pobre se emborracha	When a poor man gets drunk
Y un rico en su compañía,	And a rich man in his company
La del pobre es borrachera,	The poor man is plain drunk
La del rico es alegría.	And the rich man just happy.

Although Goya didn't actually write the letter, he certainly had a hand in it, having put his name to the drawing, with a curious epithet: "Francisco de Tus Glorias o de Goya". The words probably allude to him being the engineer of his friend's "passage to posterity" through having sat for his portrait; even today, we still say people have been "caught for posterity" when they have their photograph taken. The letter is undated, but from the reference to the lottery prize they were celebrating on behalf of the lucky winner, Zapater²⁶ himself, who had sent them good food and wine to fuel the celebrations, and from the seasonal greetings, we can safely say it was written in December 1797.

Oh Mighty, Most Generous, and Splendid Gentleman Martín Zapater.

Our Dear Sir, to whom all veneration and respect. Overwhelmed by our appreciation and acknowledgement of the bountiful generosity of yr Exc., and how much more of the exquisite delights, delicate Wines and smooth Liqueurs, with which on yr orders we have celebrated the happiness that Luck has seen fit to sanction your enviable state and fortune, we cannot give yr Exc. (as is our obligation, the which we hereby acknowledge and admit) such fulsome and expressive gratitude as that of which yr magnanimity and generosity is worthy: Who might have thought, or imagined, that a mean, hard-hearted villain such as yr. Exc. would with such bounty surprise our spirits, disposed (and so concerned) to celebrate, and applaud yr happiness; no-one; the which explains we became so enthusiastic as to be immoderate in our enjoyment: Oh, the toasts! Oh, the repetition of bottles! Ma fois! The coffee *plus que* coffee! What bottles, what glasses gracing the air! When I tell you, the glassware of the House was replaced and still and all were heard the merry cries of Viva Zapater! A good fellow, and greater Friend: Viva, and again Viva, let us have more Lots and Lots more, My God but you have true Friends who celebrate your fortune, and give thanks to the Almighty that He should exercise his bounty with men so worthy of it; and as we brought to a fitting conclusion the celebration in unbounded joy and good cheer, what new surprise awaited us! A servant brings a Cab and a missive from the same Gtlemn who has invited us all, to the effect that we have the Balcony over the Borough reserved for our diversion, and for us to rest from the fatigues of such rejoicing. Oh Great day, oh Happy day, on which such excellent sallies, such happiness and such generosity have been applauded: yr Exc. shall no doubt receive this present in quite the same spirit. How you shall applaud! How you shall celebrate it! And as you admit they are true Friends and that they desire nothing other than the satisfactions of yr Exc., your happiness and delight, we remain Sir your grateful Friends and Servants. Whose Humble Respects They Pay.

23 Ansón 1992, p. 216.

24 Mayer 1925.

25 Goya 1982, p. 228, letter no. 136.

26 He won two *lotes*, of 1,500 and 6,000 *reales*, in the lotteries of the Real Empréstito, in late November and early December 1797.

Served by ladies and not by *zambombos* (literally, "loonies")
 Merry Xmas
 Pedro de Garro
 Francisco de Tus Glorias o de Goya
 Season's greetings Julian Baquero
 The last congregant of the Louts of the Parish of Sta. Maria Happy Christmas: In the seraglio of M'sieur
 Signed. In witness whereof [a cross]
 Miguel Escorial
 All Drunk
 El Rojete
 Season's sincerest greetings to your Ill. Person, Oh generous Aragon! From: Your somewhat rarefied friend Francisco Diz
 Season's greetings Josef Zamora
 Happy Xmas and lashings of good health and health to found this good and pious work Antonio Ferrer
 Season's greetings from Nicolasa Lázaro, with a pancake the size of a cartwheel
 A really delicious eel pie, excellent
 Josefa Bayeu.

The portrait of Leandro Fernández de Moratín (1760-1828) [fig. 3] comes from the collection of the Marquis of Silvela in Madrid. The writer bequeathed it, with all his goods²⁷, to Victoria Silvela, niece of his great friend Manuel Silvela, and his testament states that Goya "made it in Bordeaux". The Bilbao Fine Arts Museum acquired the painting in 1932.

Goya arrived in Bordeaux in late June 1824, on this occasion staying just three days before moving on to Paris, where he was to remain until September. In mid-September he returned in the company of his son's father-in-law, Martín Miguel de Goicoechea, his daughter Manuela and her husband, José Francisco Muguero, settling definitively in Bordeaux, where he died four years later, in 1828.

Although the portrait is undated, Moratín's correspondence with abbé Juan Antonio Melón provides us, not without irony, the information needed to place it in the autumn of 1824. The first reference comes in a letter dated the 20th of September²⁸: "Goya is here, with his Lady wife and the children, in good, well-furnished rooms, and in a nice place: I should think he will manage to spend winter there in sufficient comfort. He wants to do my portrait, which will give you an idea of how handsome I am, when such skilful brushes seek to multiply my copies".

Goya must have started on the work shortly after. Despite its look of having been painted quickly, despatched in a couple of imperious brushstrokes, it is in fact a well thought-out portrait to which—as we shall see—many modifications were made in a process that had Moratín posing several times. Indeed, it may well have been tiresome enough to account for his complaint in a letter dated the 30th of September²⁹: "this blasted Goya gives me nothing but trouble, and won't leave me for a second".

The next Goya-related titbit in Moratín's correspondence comes in a letter dated the 23rd of October³⁰: "Goya is here with his Lady wife Leocadia; I've yet to notice much harmony between them". This sort of bickering is not an easy thing to appreciate on just one visit; people usually need to see others regularly over a longish

27 Except for the house in Pastrana, which he donated to the founding hospital of Madrid, and his manuscripts, which went to Manuel Silvela, with whom he stayed in Bordeaux.

28 Fernández de Moratín 1973, p. 594, letter no. 307.

29 Ibid., pp. 595-596, letter no. 308.

30 Ibid., p. 596, letter no. 309.



4. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Leandro Fernández de Moratín, 1799
Oil on canvas, 73 x 56 cm
San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Madrid
Inv. no. 671

period to notice. The observation may well be the result of the sessions needed for the portrait particularly as, from now on, news of Goya becomes much more sporadic. Nothing more is said until the 22nd of December, and the next mention of the painter comes in March of the following year.

It's an intimate, informal portrait, with Moratín seated and writing and, to judge by his clothes (a grey-brown cloth dressing-gown and dark blue, almost black trousers³¹), painted, or at least drawn, at the poet's home.

Goya has quite evidently improved Moratín's looks, largely by leaving out the deep, broad pockmarks left by childhood smallpox³², a disfigurement that, understandably, left him timid and withdrawn³³. Only some incisive strokes, close to the nose, achieved by dragging the paint with a rigid object, probably the brush handle, hint at one of these marks. He had already performed this face-lift, much more drastically, in an earlier portrait, now in the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid [fig. 4], one of the rare examples, in Goya's work, with no brush marks or any roughness whatsoever. So smooth is the face, as if the painter had gone over it with a cloth, that one might almost describe it, without losing sight of the obvious differences, as a work by Mengs. Moratín makes a brief mention of this portrait in a diary entry for the 16th of July 1799: "To Goya's, portrait"³⁴. He bequeathed the portrait to the Academy, where it became part of the institution's collection on the 21st of January 1829³⁵.

The "prettifying" of Moratín in the Bilbao portrait is fairly generalized; the hanging lower lip and jowls are hinted at discreetly, being less noticeable than the same features the artist gives himself in his self-portraits

31 This suggests the use of black pigment, as does an inspection by optical microscope. However, the spectrum obtained by electronic microscope revealed a high iron and aluminium content suggesting Prussian blue. Large particles of this blue were observed on a thin strip from the sample.

32 Andioc 1998.

33 In his biography, Moratín confessed that his disfigured face marked his character for the rest of his life: "The confidence in my opinions disappeared, and I began to fear I erred in my discourse, the which turned me silent and taciturn; if at home with my family I was happy and unreserved, should someone arrive that I knew not well, he found in me a reserved, rather unsociable boy".

34 Fernández de Moratín 1968.

35 Piquero/González de Amezúa 1996, no. 671; Julián Gállego Serrano in Saragossa 1996, p. 186.

of 1815. Which makes it impossible to tell whether the dark hair, completely free of grey and with just a few reddish touches to relieve the monotony of black, is natural or another part of the “prettifying” process.

Brushstrokes as fluent and sure as these would seem to give the lie to the painter’s complaint in a letter to Ferrer: “no vision, no pulse, [...] I have naught, save an overriding determination”³⁶.

Technique of the portraits

Although it’s virtually impossible to see with the naked eye, Goya followed the same general steps for both portraits. The technique involved making a highly elaborate, abundantly shadowed drawing of the head on the previously applied ground, and then applying a slight layer of flesh tones, leaving part of the drawing uncovered. The most illuminated areas were then reinforced with plenty of paste. To see this better, both paintings need to be compared closely using traditional external observation, in conjunction with the now essential physical-chemical methods.

In the Zapater portrait [fig. 5], the grey strokes of the drawing break through on the right side of the face and the shadowing of the nose comes through the flesh tones. With Moratín [fig. 6], the difference lies in the use of a denser, darker material in the drawing, which, to judge by its aspect and the absorption of infrared radiation, must be charcoal.

As the already fine paint layer thinned as it dried, the heavy black drawing showed through rather more than Goya would have wanted. The lady in *Portrait of a Lady with Mantilla* in the Saragossa Fine Arts Museum has “grown” a thick moustache for the same reason [fig. 7]. The same procedure was used in a portrait, dated in 1820, now in New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art, showing Goya’s close friend, the architect Tiburcio Pérez, who took Rosarito Weiss in when the artist left for France in 1824.

Another difference we need to take account of is the age of the sitter. In Zapater’s case the flush and vigour of youth is shown in the application of broad reddish stains in the cheeks and all over the face, while Moratín is presented in a more uniform tone suited to the dull, dried-up look of mature skin.

This was not always the case, however. There are exceptions, particularly when Goya paints ruddy-faced people; the red, over the years, is intensified by the transparency of ageing skin, which accentuates capillarity.

One characteristic detail is the painting of the eyes [fig. 8], which look as if they had been kohled, and are surrounded by a black line, like eyelashes, fine in the lower part and thicker above in the upper lid, to form an almond into which the different parts of the eyes are inserted. But rather than placing the eyes, the lines are there to highlight them; they act as a frame, one that was added *a posteriori*. A dot of light in the pupils, which he systematically enlarges a little, is what distinguishes him from other painters of his milieu, disciples and imitators alike.

He resolves the shine of the sclera with some small white brushstrokes around the pupil. In his late period, these brushstrokes for the eyeball are replaced by a thinly-painted pecking or dotting action capable of giving the same effect from further away, being blurred from very close up, as is the case in the Moratín portrait.

The black brushstroke separating the lips is more tenuous in the early portraits than the later ones, where the use of charcoal makes the separation much wider. This gives the greater sensation of depth appreciable in the portrait of Moratín.

36 Goya 1981, pp. 389-390, letter no. 273.



5. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Martín Zapater, 1797
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
Detail



6. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of the Poet Moratín, 1824
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
Detail



7. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Lady with Mantilla
Oil on canvas
Zaragoza Fine Arts Museum
Inv. no. 91.13.1



8. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Martín Zapater, 1797
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
Detail

Another common feature is the long, continuous stroke profiling the right side of the face from the forehead, following the curve of the temple to the chin, although this is impossible to appreciate in the more dirt-darkened portraits.

Touches of red in the tear ducts and pinks in the upper lids and cheeks, and a thin pinkish line along the length of the nose from bridge top to cartilage, enliven and emphasize the vivacious aspect of the portrait.

To round it off, a heavy stain with abundant lead white lights up the forehead. From there, the lead white surrounds the eyebrows, sharply penetrating the bridge between. To the naked eye it looks milky in some areas, as if the thinner (turpentine) had been overdone. There are some small touches at the tip of the nose and on the muscles lifting the lips to the smile. Even though, in the case of Zapater, it's the faintest of smiles, Goya captures it.

X rays are particularly useful for observing all this, as well as for discovering aspects not appreciable under visible light. Two white spots below the eyes, for instance, suggest that they were originally lower down.

The X ray of the Zapater portrait [fig. 9] shows quite clearly the intensity of the lit patch on the forehead produced by dragging the paste with the brush, and which is identical to the ones found in other portraits. The patch on the forehead of the *Clothed Maja*, which the X ray points up, is particularly eye-catching, even to the naked eye. Another point of powerful luminosity is the cravat, slightly smaller than initially conceived, and the waistcoat, where the type of brush used can be identified by the horizontal traces left by dragging the paste.

One curious detail is provided by the apparently black hair. The X ray confirms that Goya used a large amount of lead white in the pigment mixture, particularly at the brightly lit point where it starts, and on the right side, which is precisely where the light falls. The left side has virtually no X-ray contrast at all.

In the Moratín portrait, the X-ray image [fig. 10] is attenuated by the abundant lead white in the ground and the high absorption rate of this pigment in oil, which provides a uniform whitish background. This prevents us from appreciating the great variety of strokes visible to the naked eye, particularly in the dark areas. As was to be expected, X-ray absorption is greatest in the shirt collar and the face. A broad patch lights up forehead and temple, with larger amounts of impasto on the cheek, the length of the nose and the corner of the mouth. The almost rounded point of light on the tip of the nose suggests a precise touch of the brush depositing a drop of paint. Some other, less significant brushstrokes model the low light-intensity zones of the nostril and lower lip, and soften the whole.

Other features visible beneath the face, in an advanced phase of creation, do not coincide with their final orientation. At first, the figure was placed in profile, with the right eye lower down and slightly to its left. The eye we see shows up less in the X ray as its lower line coincides with the lighting of the original eyelid. There must be a partial —at least— covering layer between the two compositions, hiding the lower layer, enabling Goya to draw the new face untrammelled. Over time the drawing has slowly surfaced, while the eye in profile is still hidden; without the abovementioned layer, this would also become evident. The change in the angle of the head complicates the X-ray image, because the superimposed impastos help to highlight the right-hand part of the face, which is much more brightly lit than in other areas.

The effect of this opacity is an image of sharp contrasts, where the transparency of shadows is accentuated, appreciable in the left hand side of the face, a slight reference to the eyelid being the only reference enabling us to situate the eye. A very fine layer of flesh tone accounts for the disappearance of the X-ray image in this part, being a zone of shadow, the layer lying directly on the background without coinciding with the composition underneath.



9. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Martín Zapater, 1797
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
X-ray. Detail



10. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of the Poet Moratín, 1824
Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
X-ray. Detail

Another feature that doesn't show is the upper lip, resolved with a stroke of red lake, and a black line to separate it from the lower lip, both materials being highly permeable to X rays, which make them totally transparent. They are located in negative, owing to the greater density of the lower lip and the supra-labial zone that frame it. A less consistent, liquid-looking impasto, as if containing excessive medium, partially covers the profile of the original nose.

Taken together with the typical movements that affect the support, this superimposition of faces accounts for the heavy crackling that further accentuates the darkish look of the face and produces a false impression of wear.

Against the undefined mass of hair, the ear stands out by being so far inclined that if we could turn the head to the central, full-on position, it would look as if it were being folded by the wind. Fortunately, this sensation disappears when we look at the whole painting, as the hair of the sideburn, which partly covers it, balances the image.

By changing the position of the head from profile to three-quarters, part of the original, more sloping shirt-collar has become Moratín's neck and jowl. Similarly, part has been covered by the dressing-gown collar, through which it can be faintly glimpsed. In the definitive version, it is visible only at the tip and at a fine line bordering the collar of the dressing gown. The diagonal white lines bearing on the poet's face are uncovered remnants of the old shirt-collar.

Lacking X-ray contrast, the body is delimited by tenuous white lines. On the right side, the double line indicates the reduction of the body mass, a correction also appreciable to the naked eye and one that enables us to reconstruct the image of a body turned further to its left. Some flimsy white patches on the dressing gown

reflect the fall of light on the cloth, with the form of the folds hardly being defined at all. A photographically dark zone in Moratín's chest could be a fault or an abrasion of the paint. The hand resting on the table seems to be holding a pen, marked by a diagonal line of greater radiographic absorption located between the thumb and forefinger. In suppressing this feature, Goya hid the thumb and folded the index finger holding the pen. He also corrected the profile of the sheets of paper, one of the corners of which curls over the edge of the table. That this is so is suggested by some lines of the table itself, where the imprints left by the brush are set at a different angle from the normal grain of the wood and recall the side of a book.

Colour and ground layer

A superfine paint layer is typical of Goya and common to both portraits. The difference lies in the ground layer. In the Zapater portrait [fig. 11], Goya resorted to one of his usual grounds, consisting in a double layer of similar thickness, being on average 181 μm ³⁷ thick, applied on the layer of animal glue³⁸. The lower orange-red is mostly composed of red earth, and the one above of yellow, where yellow ochre and mixed lead white (i.e. lead white with calcium carbonate) are combined. This is the same type of ground found in the sketches for the Church of San Fernando in Monte Torrero, in *The Family of Charles Carlos IV* and in a host of other portraits by his hand.

But it is completely different in the Moratín portrait. As usual, a layer of animal glue was applied to the support, a double ground of different colour and thickness being applied above it. The yellowy, very slightly orange-tinged lower part has a maximum measured thickness of 285 μm , and consists of lead white and earths³⁹, including yellow ochre, red earth with hematite and quartz. The lead white is found in greatest concentration in the first and third of the three hands applied. The upper one, which we shall call priming, is a thin white layer of lead white no more than 35 μm thick. The abundant presence of thick grains of quartz or sand in the first layer came as a surprise [fig. 12]. The grains cannot be silica, a natural accompaniment of the earths, because, on being ground together, the particles would be roughly the same size as the other components. This addition, intentional, suggests a local primer, proper to the sandy soils in the Bordeaux area, as we have a precise description of French, or at least Parisian, grounds from Mérimée, as comprising two or three layers of lead white as the only component⁴⁰.

Being perfectly blended in, the quartz in the ground layer is not the cause of the intense surface graining, present in most of Goya's late works. The granules are due to the presence of metal soaps formed when the medium, linseed oil, reacts with the massicot or red lead added as a drier.

The unusual nature of the ground and the regularity with which it is applied indicate the use of a canvas prepared commercially⁴¹ by a Bordeaux paint dealer. From a letter by Moratín⁴² to Juan Antonio Melón dated the 27th of June, we know the condition in which Goya arrived was not exactly ideal for him to get to grips with the fiddly, time-consuming task of preparing canvases: "Goya has indeed arrived, deaf, old and weak, and without knowing a word of French, and with no servant (which no-one needs more than him)".

37 Thicknesses are given in micrometres (1 μm = 0.001 mm).

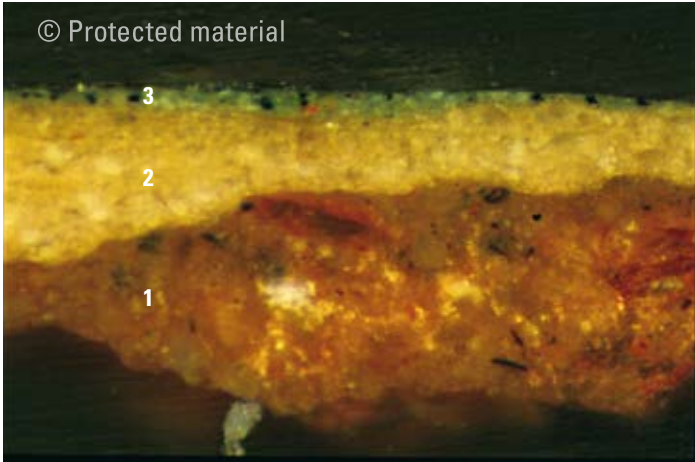
38 It fills the gaps left by the weaving of the canvas threads, covers any knots and irregularities in the canvas, preventing the oil, used as medium, from coming into contact with the fibres, thus avoiding their destruction.

39 Three components in larger or smaller proportions were found in the earths: common clays (alumina and potassium silicate) + calcite (calcium carbonate) and/or dolomite (magnesium calcium carbonate) + iron and/or magnesium oxides.

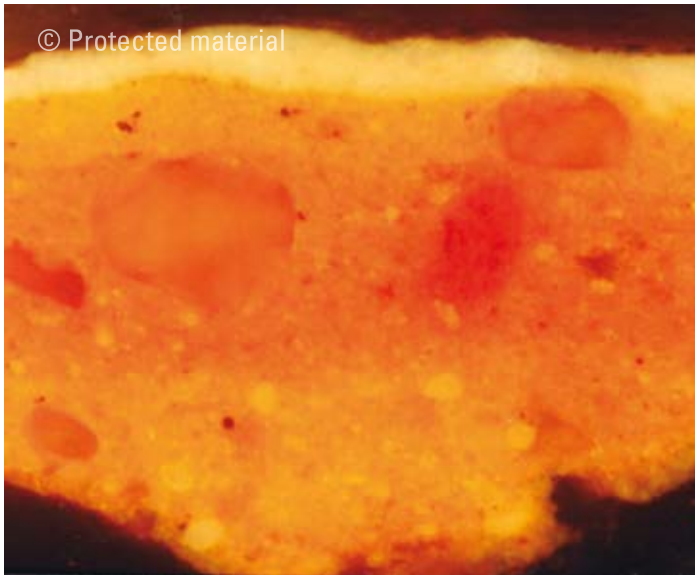
40 J. F. L. Mérimée. *De la peinture a l'huile*. Paris, 1830, p. 242. Mérimée was fascinated by the chemical processes for obtaining colours and made a number of journeys in search of information. One outcome of his experience is the treatise on oil painting in which he refers to Parisian grounds: "...after the glue a layer of lead white is spread with a knife, pumice when dry and apply a second and occasionally a third layer...".

41 It would be interesting to see if the portraits painted in Bordeaux of Galos and Pio de Molina, of the same size and technique as the one of Moratín, have the same ground.

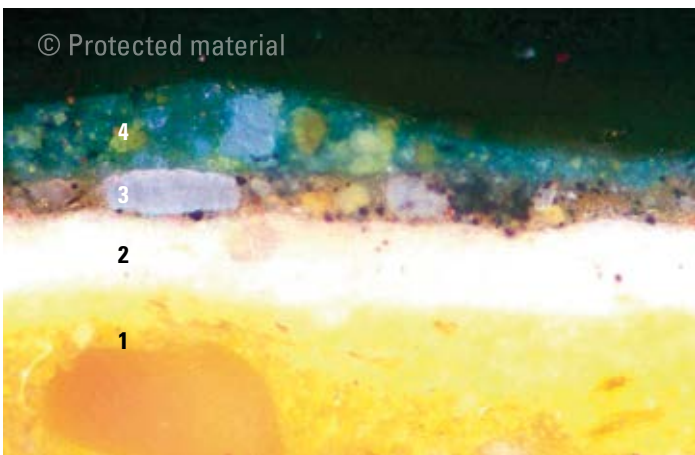
42 Fernández de Moratín 1973, p. 586, letter no. 302.



11. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Martín Zapater, 1797
 Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
 Transversal section of green background
 1. Ground: red earth, quartz, lead white, dolomite. 65-80 μm .
 2. Primer: lead white, dolomite, yellow ochre, traces of red earth and gypsum. 50-80 μm .
 3. Green paint layer: green earth, lead white, bone black. 10 μm . Image taken at 280x.



12. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of Leandro Fernández de Moratín, 1799
 San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Madrid
 Transversal section of ground. The thick translucent grains of quartz are clearly appreciable



13. Francisco de Goya (1746-1828)
Portrait of the Poet Moratín, 1824
 Bilbao Fine Arts Museum
 Transversal section of green background
 1. Ground: lead white, yellow ochre, red earth, hematite, quartz and traces of red lead. 110 μm .
 2. Primer: lead white. 25-30 μm .
 3. Grey-brown paint layer: lead white, dolomite, yellow ochre, bone black and traces of red earth. 10-20 μm .
 4. Green paint layer: green earth, lead white, antimony yellow (Naples yellow), bone black. 10-30 μm .

However, it is in the paint layers where we appreciate most clearly the artist's hand and mixtures, which remained unchanged over time. His manner involved applying them very thinly, usually one only; in many cases, they disappeared when playing with the ground, visible at many points on the surface. The thickness is remarkably similar, oscillating between 20 and 30 micrometres, except at the heavily lit points and certain details of dress, where they can be as thick as 125 µm.

A single exception to the simplicity of the technique is to be found in the background to Moratín [fig. 13], where there is a grey-brown sub-layer comprising grey-brown ferruginous earths, yellow ochre, animal black, lead white and traces of red earth. This layer might be associated with some other element in the background of the portrait that for some reason he decided to cover. The combination of pigments chosen for this background: green earth, Naples yellow, bone black and lead white, originates the middling tone he needed to distance Moratín's figure and for the figure to acquire volume. He thus managed to represent the third dimension in the plane.

Thanks to the artist's genius, who, in the words of Moratín⁴³ "paints like hell, and refuses ever to correct anything he paints" the divine "Inarco"⁴⁴ and the "big-nosed son of a sod" have passed into posterity free of the shackles of a commissioned work, but none the less worked on for that, as the X rays have shown.

To end, both portraits are superb examples of the "portraits of friends" group. No payments were made, emphasizing the artist's desire to give them the best gift he was capable of: by using his brushes. They are also the perfect illustration of something he says in one of his letters: "I want no more fame, than that of pleasing my friends"⁴⁵.

43 Ibid., pp. 629-630, letter no. 338, to Juan Antonio Melón, dated 28th of June 1825.

44 Inarco Celenio, pseudonym used by Moratín on entering the Academy of the Arcades in Rome. He occasionally signed letters from Italy to his friend Juan Antonio Melón with some variations: "Inarco Celenio Poeta Arcade" and "Inarco Celenio Poeta Arcade y férvido".

45 Goya 1982, p. 237, letter no. 142.

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