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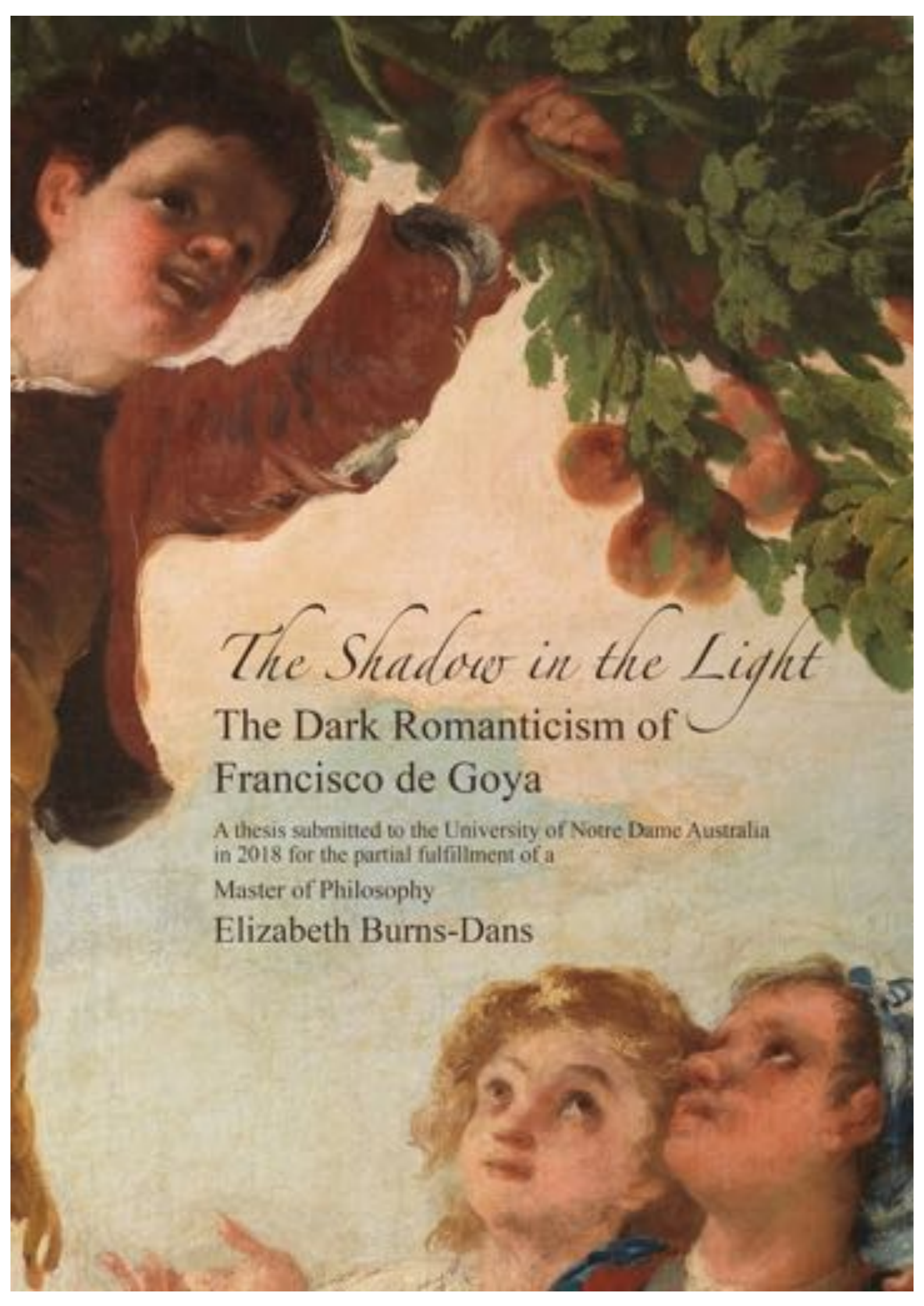
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The Shadow in the Light
The Dark Romanticism of
Francisco de Goya

A thesis submitted to the University of Notre Dame Australia
in 2018 for the partial fulfillment of a

Master of Philosophy

Elizabeth Burns-Dans

DECLARATION

I declare that this Research Project is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which had not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

Elizabeth Burns-Dans

25 June 2018



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CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	IV
CONTENTS	V
ILLUSTRATIONS	VII
THE MYSTERIOUS DARKNESS	10
<hr/>	
Research Aims	5
Method	6
Literature	7
Romanticism and Dark Romanticism	7
Francisco de Goya	8
The Tapestry Cartoons	10
Significance	14
FRAMING THE ROMANTIC SHADOW	17
<hr/>	
The Classical Clash	19
Romantic Scholarship	23
The Romantic Aesthetic	26
Dark Romantic Aesthetic	29
Dark Romantic Scholarship	31
The Dark Romantic Framework	34
Applying the Framework	38
Significance	40
SUBJECT AND TECHNIQUE	43
<hr/>	
Dark Romantic Subject	44
Fresh Eyes for Stale Tradition	46
The Wedding	47
A Moralising Turn	49
Flirting with the Dark	51
Dark Romantic Technique	53
A Shadowed Approach	55
Stark Simplicity and Thematic Sobriety	57
Conclusion	61

EMOTION AND INTERACTION	63
<hr/>	
Dark Romantic Emotion	64
Raging Emotions	65
Dark Romantic Interaction	69
The Paramount Category	71
Unavoidable Responses	72
Viewer Complicity	74
The Satirical Touch	76
Conclusion	78
AFTER THE CARTOONS	81
<hr/>	
The Cartoons and Later Darkness	82
Applying the Framework	87
Findings	92
Framework Evaluation	95
The Research Aims	95
Significance	97
BIBLIOGRAPHY	100
<hr/>	

ILLUSTRATIONS

Angelica Kauffman, <i>The Judgement of Paris</i> , oil on canvas, 1781, (Museum of Art of Ponce, Ponce).	19
Jacques-Louis David, <i>Napoleon Crossing the Alps</i> , oil on canvas, 1801, (Château de Malmaison, Rueil-Malmaison). & Théodore Géricault, <i>The Charging Chasseur</i> , oil on canvas, 1812, (The Louvre, Paris).....	20
Eugène Delacroix, <i>The Massacre at Chios</i> , oil on canvas, 1824, (The Louvre, Paris).....	23
J. M. W. Turner, <i>Snow Storm: Steam Boat off a Harbour's Mouth</i> , oil on canvas, 1842, (Tate, London).	25
John Constable, <i>Stonehenge</i> , watercolour on canvas, 1835, (Victoria and Albert Museum, London). 27	
Caspar David Friedrich, <i>Wanderer above the Sea Fog</i> , oil on canvas, 1818, (Kunsthalle Hamburg, Hamburg).....	28
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Witches' Flight</i> , oil on canvas, 1798 (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	29
William Blake, <i>Isaac Newton</i> , monoprint and watercolour, 1804 (Tate Britain, London).....	30
The Dark Romantic Framework, in its four quadrants: emotion, subject, technique and interaction (Elizabeth Burns-Dans, 2018).....	36
Henry Fuseli, <i>The Nightmare</i> , oil on canvas, 1781, (Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit).	39
The Dark Romantic framework as applied to <i>The Nightmare</i> (achieving a score of 21).....	40
Jan Steen, <i>The Doctor's Visit</i> , oil on canvas, 1658-1662, (Apsley House, London).....	45
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Wedding</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	48
Francisco de Goya, <i>Girls at the Well</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	49
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Stilt-walkers</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791- 1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	50
Francisco de Goya, <i>Summer</i> (fifth tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1786, (Museo del Prado, Madrid). 51	
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Wounded Mason</i> (detail) (fifth tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1786-87, (Museo del Prado, Madrid) & Francisco de Goya, <i>The Drunken Mason</i> (detail), oil in canvas, 1786, (Museo del Prado, Madrid)	52
Henry Fuseli, <i>Sin Pursued by Death</i> , oil on canvas, 1794-96, (Kunsthaus Zürich, Zürich).....	54
Ramón Bayeu, <i>Dance Near the Manzanares Canal</i> , oil on canvas, 1784-85, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	56
Francisco de Goya, <i>Dance on the Banks of the Manzanares</i> , oil on canvas, 1776-77, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	56
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Seesaw</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	58
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Little Giants</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	59
Francisco de Goya, <i>Boys Climbing a Tree</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid)	60
Francisco de Goya, <i>What One Does to Another</i> (Los Caprichos), etching, 1797-99, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	61
Francisco de Goya, <i>Boys Inflating a Bladder</i> (second tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1777-78, (Museo del Prado, Madrid)	66
Francisco de Goya, <i>Assault on the Coach</i> , oil on canvas, circa 1790, (Private Collection)	67
Francisco de Goya, <i>Boys Picking Fruit</i> (second tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1778, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	68
Francisco de Goya, <i>Boys Climbing a Tree</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-1792, (Museo del Prado, Madrid)	68
Henry Fuseli, <i>Mad Kate</i> , oil on canvas, 1806-07, (Frankfurter Goethe-Haus, Frankfurt am Main)	70

Francisco de Goya, <i>The Mannequin</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-92, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	72
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Blind Guitarist</i> (third tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1778, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	73
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Blind Guitarist</i> (detail) (third tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1778, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	73
Francisco de Goya, <i>Spring</i> (fifth tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1786, (Museo del Prado, Madrid); Francisco de Goya, <i>Autumn</i> (fifth tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1786, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	75
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Stilt-walkers</i> (seventh tapestry series), oil on canvas, 1791-92 (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	77
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Mannequin</i> , oil on canvas, 1791-92, (Museo del Prado, Madrid).....	83
Francisco de Goya, <i>Feminine Folly</i> (Plate 1, Los Disparates), etching, 1815-24 (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne).....	83
Francisco de Goya, <i>Love and Death</i> (Plate 10, Los Caprichos), etching, 1799 (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne).....	84
Francisco de Goya, <i>You who are unable</i> (Plate 42, Los Caprichos), etching, 1799 (The Met Museum, New York).....	85
Francisco de Goya, <i>Brigand Murdering a Woman</i> , oil on canvas, 1808-11 (Marqués de la Romana Collection, Madrid).....	87
Francisco de Goya, <i>The Madhouse</i> , oil on panel, circa 1812 (Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid).....	89
The Dark Romantic framework as applied Goya's <i>Brigand Murdering a Woman</i> (left, with a score of 23), <i>The Madhouse</i> (centre, with a score of 22); and <i>Swallow it, Dog</i> (right, with a score of 22).	90
Francisco de Goya, <i>Swallow it, Dog</i> (Plate 58, Los Caprichos), etching, 1799 (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne).....	91
The Dark Romantic Scores	93
The Dark Romantic Score: trends of Dark Romantic intensity in Goya's career	94



INTRODUCTION

The Mysterious Darkness

Introduction

“A gallery of pictures by Velasquez or El Greco is as harmonious and coherent, as a roomful of Goya’s is disconcerting”.¹

In 1955 Pierre Gassier boldly made this comment regarding the work of Francisco de Goya. Its diversity, he said, was ‘disconcerting’. Nearly sixty years later, in 2012 and 2013, Gassier’s claim was put to the test in landmark exhibition shared by Frankfurt’s Stadel Museum (Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie) and the Musée d’Orsay of Paris. Entitled “Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst”, the exhibition was the first to focus on the relationship between the visual arts and a genre already understood within literature: Dark Romanticism. The collection encompassed a broad spectrum of significant artists and historical periods, including nineteenth-century artists Goya, Johann Heinrich Fuseli, William Blake, and Théodore Gericault, as well as twentieth-century artists Salvador Dalí, René Magritte and Max Ernst. This unique grouping of artists, each celebrated in their own right, rested on their engagement with subjects of insanity, the supernatural, morbidity, death and misery. Within literature, these themes were recognised as Dark Romantic. The exhibition tested whether Dark Romanticism might be understood as a subgenre of Romantic visual art, in the same way that it had been understood within literature for decades.²

Focusing on an aesthetic that had been scarcely mentioned in visual art discourses at the time, curators of the exhibition attempted to define what they considered to be Dark Romanticism. They were also tasked with defining how works of the genre could be identified as being different to, or extensions of, Romanticism. Where Romanticism itself is generally understood to be a state of internal consciousness that celebrated beauty, extremes of human emotion and imagination, and the power and sublimity of nature, it also remains a contested aesthetic concept which I explore further in Chapter One. It was easy for the exhibition curators to engage with the plentiful discourse on the nature and definition of Romanticism; proposing a definition of Dark Romanticism was a greater challenge. The challenge, they claimed, lay in the absence of academic attention afforded to Dark Romanticism within visual arts. Looking both to literary scholars (notably Mario Praz) and the works collected within the exhibition, head curator Felix Krämer suggested that Dark Romanticism was “Romanticism’s irrational tendency towards the uncanny and the eerie, the fantastically unapproachable and demonically grotesque, as the configuration of fears, dreams, hallucinations and the nocturnal side of

¹ Pierre Gassier, *Goya*, trans. James Emmons, The Taste of Our Time (New York, U.S.A: Editions d’Art Albert Skira, 1955), 11.

² "Dark Romanticism. From Goya to Max Ernst," news release, 2012.

human”.³ Similarly, the press statement issued by the Stadel Museum for the exhibition’s opening declared that Dark Romanticism features tension between the horrific, miraculous and grotesque; and the Classical supremacy of the beautiful and immaculate.⁴ Within Dark Romantic artworks, legends, fairy tales and fascination with the middle ages compete with the ideals of antiquity, classical mythology, idealised human forms and visual balance. Rural landscapes became an increasingly favoured subject of the Dark Romantics, particularly when the bright light of day encountered the fog and mysterious darkness of the night, a theme which was pursued somewhat by Julia Alessandrini in her study of nineteenth-century, Romantic works.⁵ Ernst Ferdinand Oehme’s *Procession in the Fog* (1828) exemplifies this mysterious and dark landscape. The works collected within the exhibition therefore showcased themes of “loneliness and melancholy, passion and death...fascination with horror and the irrationality of dreams”.⁶ While it is clear that Dark Romanticism shares with Romanticism an interest in certain subjects and emotions, it is undoubtedly identifiable in its dark proclivities.

The works of Goya were dedicated an entire room within the exhibition space, affording us an opportunity to test Gassier’s assertion that a room full of Goya’s artworks would be disconcerting in its lack of coherence and stylistic harmony. The exhibition described Goya’s works, which included the *Witches’ Flight* (1798) and *Cannibals Contemplating Human Remains* (c.1800), as exuding a constant tension between the real and the imaginary, good and evil and, sense and nonsense.⁷ While such tensions are characteristic of Dark Romanticism, they are equally characteristic of Goya’s unique style.

Having produced some of the western world’s most esteemed and studied works of art, Goya’s skill—recognised and celebrated just as much today as it was by his contemporaries—has cemented his title as one of Spain’s most accomplished, prolific and talented artists. Yet for all we know of him, many periods of his life are shrouded in a veil of mystery—as are several of his masterpieces.⁸ One thing that is clear however, is that Goya was not artistically tied nor constrained to a particular style, theme or approach. Perhaps more than any other

³ Felix Krämer, "Dark Romanticism: An Approach," in *Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst*, ed. Felix Krämer (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012), 15.

⁴ "Dark Romanticism. From Goya to Max Ernst," 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*; see also Julia Alessandrini, ‘London fog’ and the Symbolism of Empire: Nineteenth-century artistic representations of atmosphere in London and other imperial sites’, PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, 2012.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸ Gassier, 11.

Introduction

formal or thematic characteristic, Goya's portfolio is defined by its range, contrast, and variety. No wonder that Gassier found them to be disconcerting as a whole.

However, elements of Goya's artworks do show consistency, even over time. One of these elements is Goya's artistic interests. The Museo del Prado's Manuela B. Mena Marqués suggested that despite the different manifestations on the canvas, Goya's artistic interests did not change throughout his lifetime; he always sought to communicate a strong message to the viewer, for instance.⁹ Additionally, Goya's works consistently expressed elements of the Dark Romantic aesthetic, including ambiguous forms, dark palettes and social critique. Krämer and the exhibition curators deemed him to be a Dark Romantic, indeed Marqués suggested that, in their dark and tragic beauty, his works are the embodiment of Dark Romanticism.¹⁰ Considered in this fashion, the diversity of Goya's oeuvre is perhaps not so disconcerting.

Some of the earliest examples of Dark Romanticism in Goya's career are his tapestry cartoons, several series of which were completed between 1776 and 1792, and which, in their simplified form, were intended to be used by weavers as patterns for tapestries. However, due to the level of detail that can be achieved by the use of oil paint, the cartoons are much richer in detail, expression and variety than the woven tapestries. The cartoons were the first major royal commission Goya received in Madrid, and signify the moment his talent was recognised by an increasingly elite audience. Across three decades Goya produced seven distinct series of tapestry cartoons, with each series focusing on a different theme or subject such as hunting, children's games or traditional iconography of the seasons. The completed cartoons were then woven into tapestries for decoration in various Spanish royal palaces, including El Pardo and San Lorenzo at the Escorial.¹¹

While my research has considered Goya's cartoons in their entirety, I have specifically appraised the seventh, final series, completed between 1791 and 1792. This commission, received in April 1790, stipulated that Goya produce a series of cartoons intended to decorate Charles IV's study in the Escorial, which would feature 'comic and rustic' subjects.¹² While Goya certainly satisfied the requirements of this commission, he also imbued each design with more depth and darkness than would be expected for subjects that were simply 'comic and

⁹ Manuela B. Mena Marqués, interview by Elizabeth Burns-Dans & Deborah Gare, 2017, Museo del Prado, Madrid.

¹⁰ "Goya and the Dark Beauty," in *Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst*, ed. Felix Krämer (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012), 54.

¹¹ Janis A. Tomlinson, *Francisco Goya: The Tapestry Cartoons and Early Career at the Court of Madrid* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 10; Harold Donaldson Eberlein, "Goya as a Designer of Tapestry," *Art & Life* 11, no. 7 (1920): 361.

¹² Tomlinson, 186-87.

rustic'. The tapestry cartoons in their entirety, but the seventh series especially, hint at the Dark Romantic aesthetic that was a consistent feature in Goya's later works. Though assuredly displaying a different approach to palette, hue and light, the tapestry cartoons debut a darkly Romantic tone and intention that foreshadow Goya's later artworks and intensification of Dark Romanticism. The tapestry cartoons are not precursors to his later greatness, nor footnotes in an otherwise triumphant career; they are masterpieces in their own right, and worthy of attention.

Research Aims

In an interview at the Prado in 2017, Marqués declared that elements of Dark Romanticism were evident throughout Goya's career—even in his earliest and brightest works. The bucolic scenes of the cartoons, for example, hinted at peril: a bountiful harvest implied that winter was coming; children's tree-top play threatened injury; a mannequin thrown at a spring-time festival was sinister.¹³ Inspired by both the Marqués interview and the propositions tested within the "Dark Romanticism" exhibition, I seek within this research to determine the degree to which Goya may be considered a Dark Romantic. In particular, I intend to determine whether the Dark Romanticism so evident in Goya's later works is also evident in his earliest.

Goya's cartoon series are an ideal source to consider from his earliest years of practice, and provide a powerful comparison to the better-known collections of his later years, such as the *Black Paintings* (1819–23) and the *Disasters of War* (1810–20). I therefore intend to interrogate the seventh cartoon series to understand them both as early expressions of Dark Romanticism, and as antecedent artworks that possess clear hallmarks of Goya's mature artistic style and approach. By conducting this close study, my research endeavours to better inform our understanding of Goya as a Dark Romantic artist, and thereby better understand Dark Romanticism itself as an aesthetic style and ideological movement.

My four principal research aims are, therefore, to:

- examine the philosophical, cultural and historical importance of the 'Dark' Romantic movement, consider how it may be understood within the broader context of Romanticism, and explain recurring aesthetic trends within its artistic expression;
- establish an analytical framework and criteria that may be used to identify and assess Dark Romanticism within visual art;

¹³ Marqués.

Introduction

- appraise the seventh cartoon series as an example of Goya's early works, and to measure them against the proposed framework; and, finally, to
- determine the degree to which dark romanticism was therefore evident even in Goya's early works, and whether we might conclude definitively that he was a Dark Romantic artist.

Method

To measure the Dark Romantic qualities of Goya's work, and to propose a framework with which to do so, I use Chapter One to establish principles of Dark Romantic art as it may be understood, and the means by which its works may be identified. Scholarly literature regarding Dark Romanticism in art is scarce, and definitions of the genre are still cautious. Using that which is available, I will demonstrate how Dark Romanticism can be measured through the emotions, subject, technique and interaction of a painting.

To establish an analytical framework, I draw on the work of Gillian Rose in *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*.¹⁴ Rose suggests the 'compositional interpretation' approach to visual analysis, which assesses numerous components of a single visual image, including a review of the circumstances of production, patronage and provenance, as well as the total composition, content, iconography, mood, the use of colour and lighting, and spatial perspective, both atmospheric and linear.¹⁵ Subsequently, Rose's methodology is highly appropriate to my research as it explicitly makes the artwork itself the focal point of the analysis. Rose's own analytical framework is called 'Sites and Modalities for Interpreting Visual Materials' in which interpretative elements are drawn as quadrants of a circle. My Dark Romantic framework is influenced by Rose's tool, taking the form of a circle in which Dark Romantic qualities are placed on gradients towards the centre of circle.

The framework identifies the principal characteristics of Dark Romanticism, its divergence in aesthetics from other styles, and identifies the social, political and economic factors that contributed to its rise. It enables us to determine how Dark Romantic works may be understood in relation to four elements: the subject, technique, emotion and interaction of art.

¹⁴ Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*, 4th ed. (London, UK: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2016).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 61-83.

Chapters Two and Three apply this framework to the seventh cartoon series, with the intention of determining whether the works might be Dark Romantic in style and, also, whether the framework itself is a successful tool. In Chapter Two I consider the subject and technique of the cartoons, while in Chapter Three I consider emotion and interaction. In my final chapter I determine the degree to which Dark Romanticism was evident even in Goya's early works, as well as his later, and conclude whether he might be known as a Dark Romantic artist.

My research clearly shows that Goya was an innately Dark Romantic artist, even from the earliest years of his work. The darkness of his later works is unmistakable and has been well-researched within scholarship. As such, my research concern is his early, more undervalued career, particularly the tapestry cartoons. An appraisal of the tapestry cartoons as early examples of Goya's 'darkness', reveals strong continuities between his early and late works. Illuminating these continuities supports my argument that Goya was always and innately Dark Romantic.

Literature

Romanticism and Dark Romanticism

The ideals and aesthetics of Romanticism, specifically Dark Romanticism, heavily inform my interpretation of Goya and his art. Accordingly, I engage with discussion on how the broader Romantic aesthetic might be defined. Establishing a firm understanding of Romanticism is vital in the first instance, being the context in which Dark Romanticism, itself, is understood. The work of several scholars will be interrogated in Chapter One in order to reach an understanding of Romanticism.

The most important debate currently evident within Romantic scholarship considers whether the artistic style is an isolated movement tied to a specific historical period, or an enduring attitude and feeling that has existed throughout human history. Arguably, it is both, and I borrow from both understandings in my research. Scholars including Morse Peckham, John Berger and Marcel Brion inform my discussion. Identifying what Romanticism actually looks like is also imperative to this discussion. As it is frequently understood in contrast to Classicism, the reigning aesthetic style of the Enlightenment, I provide a summary of how Classical and Romantic art can be visually identified and compared.

Dark Romanticism's definitions, ideals and its visual aesthetic, are directly informed by Romanticism. Yet as a genre (or subgenre) of its own, Dark Romanticism has received little

Introduction

scholarly attention. Krämer's catalogue from the "Dark Romanticism" exhibition is an important source, and includes work from Marqués, Johannes Grave, Franziska Lentzsch and Mareike Hennig. Within literary scholarship Dark Romanticism features considerably more than in the visual arts. Mario Praz introduced the term to literary discourse in the 1930s, with successive scholars including Peckham, Robert Hume and G.R. Thompson¹⁶ contributing to the discussion. While these scholars appraise Dark Romanticism as a literary concept, their comments on the traits and features of the movement can be applied to the visual arts.

Francisco de Goya

By contrast, Goya and his work has been studied extensively. The most important, recent scholarship includes work from Marqués, Janis A. Tomlinson, Robert Hughes and Juliet Wilson-Bareau. Such attention has bestowed on Goya what Gassier calls a 'halo of legend', which has been heightened by the veil of mystery that shrouds much of his life and art.¹⁷ Such mystery is not forged by a limited scope of works for, in fact, Goya's artistic legacy is immense. There are currently over 500 oil paintings, 280 etchings and lithographs, and nearly a thousand drawings ascribed to his hand.¹⁸ Within such an extensive portfolio, scholarship has been diverse. However, attention has been primarily afforded to his later nineteenth-century career, specifically his etchings, *Black Paintings*, and the iconic *The Third of May, 1808* (1814). However, more recent scholarship has progressively re-evaluated the lack of scholarly attention given to Goya's earlier career, and specifically to his tapestry cartoons.

Goya frequently took inspiration from the social, environmental and political context in which he lived. It was a period in Spanish history that was charged with both political tension, social conflict, and cultural change. Goya, himself, experienced significant change, which informed much of his style and approach. He was born in the rural town of Fuendetodos near Saragossa, Spain in 1746, to a modest family in the gilding trade. Such a modest beginning offered little indication of his later acclaim. As he matured his increasing prestige would, much like the dummy in his work *The Straw Mannequin* (1792), thrust him upwards into the world,

¹⁶ Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, trans. Angus Davidson (London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1933).; Morse Peckham, *The Triumph of Romanticism*, First ed. (Columbia, U.S.A: University of South Carolina Press, 1970).; Eberhard Alsen, ed. *The New Romanticism: A Collection of Critical Essays* (New York, U.S.A: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000).

¹⁷ Gassier, 11.

¹⁸ Ibid.

and raise him to great social and professional heights. This peaked in 1789 when he was appointed as court painter by Charles IV.¹⁹

Prior to this moment, Goya's early career was dominated by what Donald Rosenthal and Paul Bouvier describe as rococo gaiety, idyllic worlds, lightness both in colour and mood, and an overarching theme of happiness, festivity and tranquillity.²⁰ However, Marqués suggests such tranquillity masked his dissident, misanthropic and socially critical techniques and themes.²¹ A serious illness in 1792 that left Goya profoundly deaf, did not diminish his artistic skill or drive. Rather, Gassier argues that it released the pent-up creative forces within Goya and liberated him artistically.²² Robert Havard suggests that Goya's illness gave him more time to explore his personal artistic style, and to be more daring, if not critical, in his commissioned works.²³ This suggestion speaks to a broader theme in the literature concerning Goya and the contrasts within his work. Tomlinson argues that some scholars have used the events and illness of 1792 to fuel a 'crisis-narrative' understanding of Goya's life and work, suggesting that his move towards darker subject matter was explicitly prompted and fuelled by his own personal 'crisis'.²⁴ This argument, however, is contestable: it implies that Goya had not previously created socially critical and subversive works. Instead, Tomlinson and Marqués argue that years prior to his illness and subsequent deafness, Goya was already hinting at satirical, misanthropic, darkly playful intentions and approaches that were to inform so much of his mature work.²⁵

It is true, though, that Goya used dark colours—blacks, browns and greys—more frequently as he matured, and also that his subject matter increased in its gloom. Darkness and monsters, particularly of the human variety, grew more prevalent in Goya's work, particularly after Napoleon's invasion of Spain and the outbreak of the Peninsular War in 1808. Undeniably, Goya was deeply influenced by the horrors of this war.²⁶ His posthumous engraving series, *The Disasters of War* (1863), is perhaps the greatest indictment on human

¹⁹ Donald A. Rosenthal, "Children's Games in a Tapestry Cartoon by Goya," *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 78, no. 335 (1982): 14.

²⁰ Ibid. & Paul Bouvier, "Yo Lo Vi. Goya Witnessing the Disasters of War: An Appeal to the Sentiment of Humanity," *International Review of the Red Cross* 93, no. 884 (2011): 1109.

²¹ Marqués.

²² Gassier, 12.

²³ Robert Havard, "Goya's House Revisited: Why a Deaf Man Painted His Walls Black," *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* 82, no. 5 (2005): 620.

²⁴ Tomlinson, 22.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Bouvier, 1108; John Berger, "The Maja Dressed and the Maja Undressed," in *Selected Essays John Berger* ed. Geoff Dyer (New York, U.S.A: Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 2001), 132.; Gassier, 13.

Introduction

warfare in western art. Bouvier describes the series as the testimony of a mind that had truly witnessed the violence and harm that humankind was capable of inflicting on itself.²⁷ This fascination with the nature of the human condition and the dark side of humanity that came to characterise much of his later work, was equally present in his earlier productions. One such example is the portrait of a child, *Don Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuñiga* (1787). Infant portraiture is an innocent subject matter, typically used to communicate messages about a family's wealth and status. While Goya did satisfy his patrons with Don Manuel's portrait, he also placed within the work elements indicative of growing darkness. Three cats sit in the shadows of the canvas, their eyes hungry and transfixed by the bird in the foreground. While the child appears unaware, the viewer knows the chaos that is about to breakout. This underlying morbidity is an early example of Goya's Dark Romantic proclivities; indeed, feline monsters would reappear in Goya's satirical series *Los Caprichos* (1797-98).²⁸ Evidently, Goya was already working within themes and techniques that could be considered Dark Romantic. A significant example of Goya's growing misanthropy and satire is his tapestry cartoons.

The Tapestry Cartoons

Between 1776 and 1792 Goya produced 63 cartoon designs, most of which were woven into tapestries.²⁹ The tradition of tapestry design was long established in Spain. Customarily, compositions featured either an Arcadian, nostalgic idyll, populated by figures of pastoral innocence and purity, or grand heroic scenes from mythological or biblical stories. While both approaches were popular, neither possessed genuine cultural relevance, and nor did they reflect contemporary Spanish society. By this time, Spain's tapestry tradition was becoming increasingly removed from the society it sought to please.

Therefore, when Goya received his first commission, the artistic status and prestige associated with tapestries was in a state of decline, and tapestry was very much viewed as a lesser form of art.³⁰ This does not mean, that there were limited sources or examples for Goya to potentially draw on for inspiration. In fact, several of Goya's designs reference the compositions of others: José del Castillo (1737-93), Antonio González Ruiz (1711-88), and Ramon Bayeu (1746-93), all of whom had worked within the traditional expectations of the

²⁷ Bouvier, 1008.

²⁸ *Goya*. Discovering the Great Paintings (London, England: BJ Publishing Services, 1989), 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁰ Concha Herrero Carretero, "An Introduction to Goya's Cartoons and Tapestries," in *Goya: Images of Women*, ed. Janis A. Tomlinson (Washington, U.S.A: National Gallery of Art, 2002), 89.

tapestry genre. Notably, Goya's designs for the *Four Seasons* in his fifth series (1786-87) are directly informed by the works of Jacopo Amigoni (1682-1752). Yet, while maintaining aspects of the tapestry tradition, Goya also challenged the medium, seeking new subjects and themes, as well as more complex messages in his designs. These included rural pastoral figures and socially critical and satirical messages. While we should not consider Goya's tapestry designs to be revolutionary, it is plausible to say that his approach updated or, at the very least differed from, that of his predecessors in the genre.

Goya therefore brought a fresh perspective and revitalised an art form that was in decay. His approach to the commissions left no ambiguity as to its Spanish origins: figures, buildings, landscapes, plants and animals were all stamped with an Iberian flair.³¹ Additionally, Goya introduced new figures to his works, which served to communicate the socio-political virtues and vices of contemporary Spain. He painted figures from a broad spectrum of social status, including aristocrats, thieves, drunkards, people with disabilities, lovers and peasants. *The Picnic* (1776-1778), for example, depicts a merry pastime for wealthy young Spaniards, whereas *The Poor at the Fountain* (1786-1787) depicts a harsh reality for Spain's rural poverty-stricken. It is here that Goya's engagement with Dark Romantic themes and figures began to manifest and to foreshadow his later engagement with the aesthetic. Echoing the style that would gain him acclaim in his later career, Goya introduces a subtly satiric and critical tone to the tapestry genre.

The cartoons were intended only to be used as patterns for the tapestry weavers, which meant that many were either destroyed or stored for later use. For up to 40 years in the nineteenth-century, the cartoons were hidden from public view, having been inventoried in 1834 by the Royal Tapestry Factory and stored in the archives of the Madrid Royal Palace.³² It was only in 1869 that the cartoons were 're-discovered' and, following some restoration, displayed in the Prado in 1876.³³ Concha Herrero Carretero suggests that it was only this fortuitous re-discovery that prompted academic interest in Goya's tapestry designs, and set in motion the eventual slow growth of research into Goya's work as a cartoonist.³⁴ Still they have been frequently overlooked by scholars. Eberlein suggests that Goya's tapestries are much more underappreciated by the general population, and feature significantly less in his artistic

³¹ Eberlein, 362.

³² Isadora Rose-De Viejo, "Jean-Louis Gintrac and Goya's 'La Boda'," *The Burlington Magazine* 139, no. 1133 (1997): 529.

³³ Carretero, 89; Viejo, 529.

³⁴ Carretero, 89.

Introduction

narrative, because they have been overshadowed by the striking prowess and dark drama of his later paintings and etchings.³⁵ Similarly, Tomlinson suggests that the cartoons have received negligible scholarly attention because they appear to sit outside the narrative of the crisis-driven Romantic. In some minds, they have been considered unworthy of iconographic analysis and have been largely ignored by many critics³⁶ This trend has two-fold significance to my research: firstly, while I will certainly draw from a broad cross-section of scholarship pertaining to both Goya and Dark Romanticism, there is limited scholarly material regarding the cartoons on which I may draw; secondly, I therefore seek to contribute to this exemplary, yet undeniably smaller body of research and help inform a reappraisal of the cartoons.

The principal text that provides a detailed analysis of the cartoons is Tomlinson's 1989 work, *Francisco Goya: The Tapestry Cartoons and Early Career at the Court of Madrid*.³⁷ Tomlinson's contribution to scholarship of the cartoons is significant. Her substantial study encompasses the entirety of Goya's tapestry commissions, with in-depth, iconographic analysis given to individual series, as well as contextualisation of the works within Goya's broader career and within Spanish history. A few other publications regard the cartoons with importance, and will be used heavily, though many of these also reference Tomlinson's work. Naturally, I am wary of an overreliance on Tomlinson's ideas, interpretations and perspectives, but I am confident that an adequate balance has been afforded to supporting texts and contrary opinions.

Not everyone shares Tomlinson's perspective on the value of the cartoons. Gassier appears to dismiss them, suggesting that the cartoons simply encapsulated the "high spirits and charm of a people light-hearted, pleasure-loving and handsome by nature".³⁸ A face-value interpretation such as this overlooks the supremely rich and subversive levels of emotional, technical and interactive content which are present in many of the cartoons. Similarly, Wyndham Lewis and Kenneth Clark relegate the cartoons to side notes in their discussions, deciding they derive from the vibrant style of Tiepolo, suggesting they display Goya's own zest for life and pursuit of pleasantries, and concluding that they showcase a Spain that was pulsating with colour, high-spirits and radiance.³⁹ Clark did, however, acknowledge that there

³⁵ Eberlein, 359.

³⁶ Tomlinson, 227.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Gassier, 20.

³⁹ Kenneth Clark, *The Romantic Rebellion: Romantic Versus Classic Art* (New York, U.S.A: Harper & Row, 1973), 69; D.B Wyndham Lewis, *The World of Goya* (New York, U.S.A: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1968), 60.

was more to the cartoons than met the eye. Despite their Arcadian, Tiepolo-style appearance, he suggests there was something disturbing and suspicious pervading many of his compositions, presenting the viewer with a sharp-flavour, and a sense of impending unease.⁴⁰ Others are closer to Tomlinson in the value they ascribe to the cartoons: Folke Nordström, Harold Donaldson Eberlein, and Donald A. Rosenthal have all published research that will be discussed in Chapters Two and Three.

I have stated that while appraising the entirety of the tapestry cartoons, I will be giving specific attention to the seventh series. The rationale for this selection is as follows. Goya's first tapestry series should not be considered authentically his own, as it was informed by his collaboration with Francisco Bayeu, who worked in the traditional subject matter of tapestries.⁴¹ Goya was also a relatively new artist at this time and we can theorise that he would have been eager to please his patrons with his designs. The cynicism that becomes an integral aspect of his later tapestry commissions, especially the seventh series, is not evident in his earliest cartoons.⁴² Additionally, several works of the fifth series (1786-87)—wherein hints of Goya's growing misanthropy begin to show—have contested authorship, with Tomlinson arguing that they are in fact, the work of a lesser, later artist.⁴³ The seventh series, is the final series of Goya's tapestry commissions, after which he never returned to the medium. Goya was also resistant to take up this commission, having gone through a hiatus in tapestry design between 1788 and 1791. Rosenthal suggests that this hiatus can be accredited to Goya's growing disdain for the medium, perhaps seeing himself as having moved beyond the declining genre.⁴⁴ The finality of the seventh series is also a contributing factor in selection for close analysis. As Goya's final cartoons, we may consider the seventh series the culmination or height of Goya's artistic intentions for the medium. Additionally, we may also suggest that Goya's mindset and artistic interests had already moved beyond the tapestry genre, and that his new, Dark Romantic attitudes were inadvertently integrated into the seventh series. Regardless, the skill and repertoire of figures that were introduced in the tapestry designs were not left behind, and indeed informed many of Goya's later works.

⁴⁰ Clark, 70.

⁴¹ Tomlinson, 26.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 156.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁴⁴ Rosenthal, 14.

Significance

When the “Dark Romanticism” exhibition was launched in 2012, its curators declared it their objective to “stimulate interest in the sombre aspects of Romanticism and to expand understanding of the movement”.⁴⁵ My research interests were indeed stimulated, and the expansion in understanding of Dark Romanticism has driven this research. While the relationship between Goya’s cartoons and Dark Romanticism may not be immediately apparent, it is nonetheless evident. This quiet relationship, sees Goya introduce increasingly subversive elements to his tapestry design, using elements that recur in his later career. The significance of this early flirtation with Dark Romanticism, to Goya’s entire career and acclaim is immense.

An interrogation of the cartoons in this fashion is a significant contribution to scholarship. My work increases our understandings of Goya’s early works, as well as his engagement with Dark Romanticism. Further, through the application of my Dark Romantic framework, my research contributes meaningfully to existing scholarship of the genre as an artistic style, establishing a means to test and appraise visual evidence in a new form.

⁴⁵ "Dark Romanticism. From Goya to Max Ernst," 1.



CHAPTER ONE

Framing the Romantic Shadow

The use of such terms as Romanticism and Dark Romanticism requires careful consideration. Unanimity of opinion is rare within scholarship regarding Romanticism and its subgenres. The intent of this chapter is to establish a framework for the identification and assessment of Dark Romantic artworks, so that it may be applied in successive chapters to Goya's cartoons. In order to do so, I first explore what constitutes the broader genre of Romanticism, and identify how Romantic works may be understood—particularly in comparison to those of the preceding artistic age, Classicism. Secondly, I consider the sub-genre of Dark Romanticism, discussing how its aesthetic is both similar to and different from that of Romanticism. Finally, with reference to a methodological approach taken by Gillian Rose, I propose a tool with which Dark Romantic works may be identified and understood.

Romanticism is not an easily definable concept. The ideas at its core are transient, complex and heavily debated. Laconically, Romanticism may be considered an ideological movement which, irrespective of the period it occurred in, celebrates human emotion and imagination, as well as the power and sublimity of nature. While this definition remains a subject of academic discord, it does reveal truths about the ideology and intent of Romanticism. Romanticism may also be understood within the context of the 'Romantic period'; the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. Commonly, the art, literature, music and architecture that may be considered Romantic, comes from this period. Romanticism came to stand for authenticity, integrity and spontaneity,¹ and its expression in art across Europe was prolific. Given the difficulty in defining what indeed Romanticism is, it is easier to assess what Romanticism looks like or how it is expressed. Frederick B. Artz suggests that Romantics strove to celebrate and capture the individualistic and the subjective, and believed that truth may only sincerely be known through imaginative and emotional faculties, rather than reason.² Bold, contrasting colours and loose, painterly brushstrokes were used to communicate untamed emotions, as well as the artist's own internal struggle and Romantic state.

It is far easier to identify the expression or aesthetic of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Romanticism, rather than define its core values. As such, the best way to elucidate what Romanticism looks like is through analysis of the artworks themselves. For example, Théodore Géricault's, *The Charging Chasseur* (1812) is a work of Romanticism, but this fact is best demonstrated in comparison to a work such as Jacques-Louis David's, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* (1801), which is not Romantic. Different though the two artworks may be,

¹ Duncan & Boreham Heath, Judy, *Introducing Romanticism* (London, UK: Icon, 2010), 6.

² Frederick B. Artz, *From the Renaissance to Romanticism: Trends in Style in Art, Literature and Music, 1300-1830* (Chicago, U.S.A: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), 223.

they do aptly illustrate the stylistic clash between Classicism and Romanticism that waged in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. An understanding of Classicism is pivotal to the subsequent understanding of Romanticism, as it provides a visual example of what Romanticism sought to reject and define itself against.

The Classical Clash

Morse Peckham argues that a kind of cultural earthquake was experienced in Western Europe in the early nineteenth-century, which brought to the fore the age-old contest between emotion and reason.³ Kenneth Clark also notes that this earthquake facilitated one of the most dramatic episodes in the history of art, the struggle between Romanticism and Classicism.⁴ As the gleam of the promises made by the Enlightenment began to dull, fuelling disillusionment, a growing cultural revolution threatened to displace the preceding Enlightened ideological and artistic grip on society. For the Enlightenment, rationalism was the common language, and logic and reason were the keys to almost all worldly understanding.⁵ Science, rational thinking, objectivity and equilibrium were all valued over intuition, subjectivity and chaos. These guiding principles of Enlightened thought were simply not congruent with Romanticism's focus on emotion and introspection, and the growing ideological clash between the two had very real repercussions in the sphere of visual art.

Classicism was the favoured artistic style of the Enlightenment. Marcel Brion notes that like the Enlightenment, the guiding nature of Classicism was rationalistic rather than instinctive, and it was governed by principles of harmony, perfection, balance and logic. On the canvas, Classicism favoured the beautiful, the serene and the immaculate; and it cherished and strove to re-capture the perceived ideal of antiquity.⁶ Classicists



³ Peckham, 38.

⁴ Eric Newton, *The Romantic Rebellion* (New York, U.S.A: St Martin's Press New York, 1963), 10. & Clark, 7.

⁵ Heath, 7.

⁶ "Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst," news release, 2012.

Chapter One

such as Jacques Louis David (1748-1825), Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1780-1867), and Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) achieved reputable popularity and demand. However, their popularity was disrupted by the French Revolution, in which ‘classical authority’ was fundamentally undermined, and the growth of Romanticism. The polished façade of Classical art began to lose its gleam and popular appeal.

The linear approach and licked surfaces of David’s *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*—in which almost no evidence of brushstroke can be identified—evoke the smooth and polished sculptural forms of antiquity. Furthermore, the virtually imperceptible brushwork upholds the



Classical ideals of the immaculate, the serene and the perfect. The rich folds of the garment evoke the style seen in classical antiquity. David’s palette features more harmonious and unified colour shades and hues, with complementing creams, yellows and blues. A technique also evident is sfumato or ‘smoking’, of the colours and forms. Once again, this has the effect of creating greater intangibility, and evoking a remoteness from the viewer. Additionally, the ideal of the classical hero of antiquity is extremely evident in David’s depiction of Napoleon. The hand gesture, his assured yet grave facial expression, and controlled body positioning communicate this. Indeed, these gestural features and positioning bare great resemblance to

the monumentality of the Roman equestrian statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius.⁷ Napoleon also conveys little emotion in David's work; the subject's face is set in an unfeeling, yet stoic expression. Napoleon looks out to the viewer, but there is little emotion in his gaze, indeed the image could not be regarded as an insight into his person or psyche. David's work creates little opportunity for personal, emotional connection. Napoleon is presented as an intangible, almost deified hero-figure. His relatability as a human being is not emphasised, and thus the viewer's emotional or sympathetic connection with him is limited. There is little doubt that David's work is idealised, imposing, heroic and, most importantly, a work of Classicism. However, by the late-eighteenth century, Eric Newton suggests that the atmosphere of Classicism, while calm and constrained, had grown stagnant, and Romanticism acted to breathe fresh air into the realm of artistic pursuit.⁸ Romantic artists, both in literature and the visual arts, sought to upturn the deep-seated esteem of reason, and instead looked towards valuing its 'reverse'.⁹ This 'opposite' of reason manifested itself in imaginative depictions of the mysterious, the grotesque and the horrifying, as well as in a fascination with fairy tales and the romance of the Middle Ages.¹⁰ While consensus on the definition of Romanticism is still missing, most critics agree that it was the root cause of much of the stylistic symptoms which upset the balance, disrupted the serenity and interfered with the time-honoured conventions of Classicism.¹¹

By contrast, Géricault's *The Charging Chasseur* illustrates both this stylistic divide, and the Romantic aesthetic. Géricault's work exhibits a far looser and uncontrolled brushstroke, speaking directly to the emotional intensity and rapid action of the scene. The background forms are also far less delineated, adding to a sense of the unknown and impending potential threat. We cannot be certain what is there, and as such, we cannot be certain of the central figure's safety. Indeed, the horse, refusing to yield to his rider's command, is depicted in a moment of distress and fear. Géricault also employs a palette of starker contrast, most evident in the red accents of the chasseur's uniform. There is also greater variation of shade and use of chiaroscuro in Géricault's work, adding to the drama, intensity and emotion of the scene. Moreover, while the chasseur is equally sitting atop a rearing horse, is in a far more precarious position, his form twisting backwards, as though called upon to face an unseen foe. His facial expression, characterised by a taught and stern jaw, as well as a gaze that is locked on something out of frame, communicates a fearful yet powerful emotion. The chasseur, in

⁷ *Equestrian Statue of Marcus Aurelius*, bronze sculpture, 161-180 AD (Capitoline Museums, Rome)

⁸ Newton, 11.

⁹ "Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst," 2.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Artz, 13.

comparison to Napoleon, offers the opportunity for emotional connection, and increased relatability because of this. This highlights Romanticism's penchant for deep introspections of the human mind. The human and their emotions are given more attention and importance than the overall grandeur and balance of the composition. Though David and Géricault's works are at first glance, similar in terms of subject, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* and *The Charging Chasseur* are far more different than they are the same. Fundamentally, this difference is characterised by the contest between Classicism and Romanticism.

Also displaying elements of this stylistic contest is Eugène Delacroix's, *The Massacre at Chios* (1824). Rather than drawing inspiration from history or myth, *The Massacre at Chios* depicts the aftermath of a moment of bloodshed during the Greek War of Independence (1821-27),¹² a conflict which was contemporary to the exhibition in 1824 in which the painting was first displayed. Its scene is significant for it suggests a conscious move away from the tradition of depicting events and figures that were suggestive of antiquity and classical ideals, such as mythology, and towards a more contemporary, eye-witness, reportage-style of painting.

Compositionally, imposing and distressed figures dominate the foreground,¹³ pressing themselves towards the frontal plane and the viewer. The audience cannot escape the trauma that is occurring in the image, they are engaged and involved, whether they consent or not. This vision of trauma also leads to another point that is emblematic of Romanticism. Though Delacroix's work depicts a battle, it is in no way heroic: the work does not depict valour and bravery, but human suffering. Characteristic of Romanticism's heightened internal consciousness, Delacroix makes the human victims the central focus of the artwork—urging the viewer to consider the state of humanity.

Delacroix worked in a period of artistic transition and, as such, his works feature aspects of both Classicism and Romanticism. The approach taken to bodies in *The Massacre at Chios* is evidence of this combination of styles. Though the actual corporeal forms are highly classicised—with muscular, taut men, and smooth, voluptuous women—they are not glorified. Indeed, the ideal 'heroic man' of Classicism, is slumped in the centre of the composition, his body weak, tired and broken.

¹² Margaret MacNamidhe, "Delécluze's Response to Delacroix's Scenes from the Massacres at Chios (1824)," *Art Bulletin* 89, no. 1 (2007): 63.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Additionally, the fragmented, compressed bodies, the impasto paint across the surface of the canvas, and the highly detailed and varied facial expressions, further project the artwork towards a Romantic categorisation.¹⁴ The brushwork of the image is fluid and suggestive of rapid action, as well as the panic and fear experienced by its central figures. The licked surface and linear, delineated forms of Classicism have been truly ousted from the image. Delacroix has employed clever use of atmospheric perspective, blurring the background action, so as to ensure the viewer understands where their gaze



must be, this image is about the human suffering, not the war itself. Also, the stark contrasts in light and shade only further exemplify the drama and emotional charge of the scene. All of these factors work cohesively in a very inharmonious image, to achieve a truly Romantic artwork.

Romantic Scholarship

My discussion so far has only brushed the surface of scholarly discord regarding the Romantic movement. A definition of Romanticism has been attempted by numerous critics. Peckham ascribes to Romanticism two possible meanings, these being, (i) a general feeling and a permanent ‘romantic’ attitude that exists in all societies, and in all periods; and, (ii) an isolated historical movement of Europe and America in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.¹⁵ Both referents are valid, if slightly vague, though the latter is more recognised as ‘Romanticism’ in the twenty-first century. The struggle to define and categorise the movement persists.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Peckham, 3.

John Berger recognised the difficult task of defining the portfolio of such a vast artistic movement. Seemingly favouring the latter of Peckham's two referents, he proposed that Romanticism may only be adequately defined in relation to the specific environment that fostered it.¹⁶ Berger places Romanticism uniquely between the French and Russian revolutions, and declares it to be defined by its history.¹⁷ Even more specifically, Berger places Romanticism between Rousseau's, *Le Contrat Social* in 1762 and Marx's *Capital* in 1867.¹⁸ Fundamentally, Berger argues, the very nature of Romanticism is defined by social, political and economic circumstances. Brion shares this approach, looking to the contextual influencers of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries to describe Romanticism. Brion cites the French and American Revolutions, prevailing socio-political concepts such as equality and freedom, and the ruthless progress of the industrial revolution, as contributing factors to Romanticism's rise.¹⁹ Precepts of the revolutions, including equality and freedom gave rise to individualism, which saw an increasing focus on the rights, emotions and experiences of the individual human. Also at odds with individualism was the mass urbanisation and commercialisation of the industrial revolution which valued mass output over individual experience.

However, this contextual definition of Romanticism is not favoured by all critics. Felix Krämer asserts that Romanticism is an auxiliary construct that describes neither the artistic characteristics of its expression, nor the context of the period in which it manifests, but rather the inner stance or internal state of the artist.²⁰ This view is in adherence with Peckham's first referent. Romanticism, he argues, was not birthed by a set of chanced circumstances culminating in the nineteenth-century. Rather, it pre-existed the period and the events which Berger and Brion consider to define its character. The internal 'romantic' state of the artist, or indeed any human, exists today in the twenty-first century, just as it existed in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and in the recognised Romantic period. Indeed, Peckham suggests that the two distinguishing signs of a Romantic individual are a profound sense of isolation within the world and a terrifying alienation from society.²¹ As a result of such disillusionment with society, the Romantic frequently looks on the past with nostalgia and places great praise on the

¹⁶ John Berger, "The Dilemma of the Romantics," in *Selected Essays John Berger*, ed. Geoff Dyer (New York, U.S.A: Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 2001), 58.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Marcel Brion, *Art of the Romantic Era: Romanticism, Classicism, Realism* (New York, U.S.A: Praeger, 1966), 9.

²⁰ Krämer, 14.

²¹ Peckham, 40.

seeming idealism of the simple life and the common man.²² However, the cultural climate of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries allowed the established Romantic attitude—the inner stance and the pre-existing idea—to be expressed in philosophy, literature and the arts. Moreover, Duncan Heath and Judy Boreham define Romanticism, not by its historical period, but as an intellectual experience and as a new ‘romantic’ way of thinking and viewing the world.²³ This new world view or stance placed value on everyday human lives, as well as grand heroic stories; on the volatile and dangerous aspects of the natural world, as well as the serene and beautiful; and on confronting the uncomfortable and disconcerting in art, as well as the pleasant. For example, Romantic artist J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851) produced numerous seascapes that were far from pretty and idle scenes. His *Snow Storm* (1842) captures a natural world that is volatile, dangerous and outside the control of humans. The painterly, loose brushstrokes and muddy palette communicate a scene of rapid, almost frenetic movement.

Moreover, the reach of this new Romantic world view extended far beyond simply



fostering new directions in art, literature, music and philosophy, but rather brought forth new attitudes towards mankind and nature in almost all phases of life.²⁴ Romanticism was extremely radical and disruptive to almost all aspects of late-eighteenth century society, despite being far from a new term, nor a new idea.²⁵

It is clear that there is diverse opinion regarding the definition of Romanticism. Indeed, Peckham goes so far to argue that attempts to categorise Romanticism are useless and futile.²⁶ However, it is necessary to do so in order to interpret Goya as a Romantic and/or Dark Romantic. I support the opinion that Romanticism is not an isolated movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Rather, it is an internal attitude or way of viewing the world that can exist in all

²² Madelynn Dickerson, *The Handy Art History Answer Book* (Michigan, U.S.A: Visible Ink Press, 2013), 161. & Artz, 224.

²³ Heath, 3 & 5.

²⁴ Artz, 223.

²⁵ Newton, 9.

²⁶ Peckham, 58.

civilisations and in all periods. In the visual arts, it can be understood as the state of mind of the artist, irrespective of the period in which they are working. With this notion, it stands that the individual human, be it as artist or otherwise, is the core of Romanticism. Of course, the contextual period of the artist has great influence and should not be disregarded, but its importance does not exceed that of the individual. Ultimately, all artistic expression, be it destined for the canvas, the page or the brick, begins with a state of mind and ends with a work of art.²⁷ All forms of Romantic expression, that can then be used to categorise the Romantic aesthetic, are defined by the artist that created them. This statement is nowhere truer, than when it is applied to Romanticism and its proponents. Notable artists that are considered to be of the Romantic aesthetic and belonging to the Romantic period include J. M. W. Turner, William Blake (1757-1827), Théodore Géricault (1791-1824), Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) and, John Constable (1776-1837).

However, though Romanticism may be defined by the inner state of the artist, the Romantic period in which Romanticism may be understood also remains important, particularly within the present research. It is therefore my intention to engage with both of Peckham's referents: that Romanticism can be understood as an attitude and expression, and also that it can be identified within a unique historical period.²⁸ Goya may have had a Romantic state of mind, irrespective of the period in which he lived, but he also worked within and was heavily influenced by the prevailing aesthetic trends of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Both the combination of the Romantic state of the artist and the particular social, political and economic factors of the Romantic period constitute the formation of the Romantic aesthetic.

The Romantic Aesthetic

I have suggested that the common factor shared by Romantic works is not solely their expression on the canvas, but rather the state of mind or attitude of the artist who conceived them. However, assessing the state of mind of an artist is highly subjective. Thus, it is more useful to identify commonalities in the expression of the Romantic attitude, rather than define its core values. These commonalities inform understanding of the Romantic aesthetic. Foremost, within some literature the term 'aesthetic', is given a more complex and challenging, definition than I require. When employed in the present research, 'aesthetic' will refer to the collection of characteristics that can be used to identify, categorise and detail the visual

²⁷ Newton, 56.

²⁸ Peckham, 3.

expression of a specific concept, ideology or movement. Thus, the Romantic aesthetic, as it shall be understood and applied in visual analysis refers to the characteristics and qualities that came to typify artworks deemed to be Romantic of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

Classicism favoured the forms, iconography and serenity of the ancient world, ruled by linear forms, choreographed figures and high levels of human modelling. By contrast, Romantic artists sought inspiration and subject matter from the Middle Ages, with its gothic cathedrals and crusades; in the Orient, with its notions of exoticism and erotic mystique; and



in the extremes of untamed, rural landscapes.²⁹ Newton also suggests that the Romantic aesthetic favoured three main themes: mystery, abnormality and conflict.³⁰ These manifested in subjects of the mythological, legend, lunacy and catastrophe, but also in the mysterious appeal of the ‘organic’ and the Arcadian ideals of life and land. For

example, John Constable’s *Stonehenge* (1835) incorporates notions of both the rural, untamed landscape, and historical mystery and intrigue. To this day, Stonehenge garners a mysterious, almost mythological place in popular memory. Once again, in using painterly brushwork, the scene evokes notions of a virulent and rapid natural world; similar to those created by Turner.

Confronting on the canvas the unpredictable beauty and power of nature, Romantics fostered a cult of the sublime, and commonly portrayed ruins, storms, tempests and shipwrecks.³¹ Within the Romantic aesthetic, landscapes were frequently afforded a right and significance of their own. No longer simply backdrops for human subjects, the natural world was found to have a character all of its own. Moreover, Romantics frequently preferred scenes from autumn and winter, with their overtones of death, decay and darkness, often eschewing

²⁹ Artz, 230.

³⁰ Newton, 54.

³¹ Artz, 230.

the seeming lightness and virility of spring and summer.³² Nature in the Romantic aesthetic was no longer a serene and yielding playground.

Nor did Romantics shy away from the extreme irrationalities of the human mind, which, in the Romantic attitude, could be more frightening than nature itself. Romantic art featured themes of emotional abandon, self-expression, and a focus on the internal passions and subconscious of the human mind.³³ One of the most famed artworks of Romanticism features this emotional, human focus. Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above the Sea Fog* (1818) depicts a solitary figure surrounded by a sublime landscape which may be interpreted as his own internal turmoil or storm. Though we do not see the figure's face, the artwork is still arresting, and the tone is one of emotional intensity and turbulence. The irrational and illogical aspects of humanity, as well as the



societal downfalls of humankind were confronted both in literature and the visual arts. It is this fascination with the 'dark-side' of humanity, the corrupt core of human nature, and the underbelly of society, that came to feature heavily in the sub-genre of Dark Romanticism.

Massacre at Chios, *Snow Storm*, *Stonehenge* and *Wanderer above the Sea Fog* all feature subjects, techniques and themes that are customary to Romanticism. In other words, they conform to the Romantic aesthetic which frequently displayed one or more of the following qualities:

1. an awe of nature;
2. an aversion to and move away from antiquity and thus, Classicism;
3. heightened internal consciousness, as well as consideration of human emotion and imagination; and
4. liberality of stylistic form.

³² Ibid.

³³ Laura L. Casey, "Goya: 'In Sickness and in Health'," *International Journal of Surgery* 4, no. 1 (2006): 66. & Jessica Gunderson, *Romanticism* (Minnesota, USA: Creative Education, 2016), 10.

These qualities that may be used to identify and assess the Romantic aesthetic directly inform the aesthetic of its sub-genre, Dark Romanticism.

Dark Romantic Aesthetic

Based on the assertions of the “Dark Romanticism” exhibition curators, we may understand the concept of Dark Romanticism as a continuation or intensification of Romanticism. As such, Dark Romantic artworks veer towards subjects that are disconcerting, uncomfortable, socially critical, and perhaps even unpleasant for the viewer. This may include human vice, death, violence and sorrow; as well as loneliness, melancholy, passion and dreams.³⁴ Evidently, Dark Romanticism is not separate from Romanticism, but an intensification of the ‘darkness’ within its themes. There are, logically, points of commonality in subject, emotion, technique and interaction.

The first Romantic motif, the awe of nature, grows more sinister and threatening as artworks enter the sphere of Dark Romanticism. Awe of the natural world teeters into fear, or at the very least a sense of resignation that nature has more power than humans. J.M.W. Turner’s seascapes compellingly grasp this authority, wrath and danger, inherent in nature. As well as a franker exploration of the natural world, Dark Romanticism features a more pronounced occupation with the supernatural world. In seeking to give the metaphysical a physical form on the canvas,³⁵ Dark Romantic subjects included increasing numbers of the legendary, the paranormal and the mysterious. Artists produced fantastical, albeit troubling pictorial worlds that saw the imaginary triumph over the realistic.³⁶ One of Goya’s own works, which was included in the 2012 exhibition, *The Witches’ Flight*, exemplifies this dark characteristic. A



³⁴ "Dark Romanticism. From Goya to Max Ernst," 1.

³⁵ Alsen, 7.

³⁶ Felix Krämer, ed. *Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst* (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2012), 7.

group of witches are engaged in some kind of unnatural or freakish ceremony, producing an image that is neither relatable nor comfortable for the viewer.

A move away from antiquity was continued in the Dark Romantic aesthetic. The ideal of classical antiquity was countered by an occupation with legends and fairy tales, as well as a fascination with the middle ages.³⁷ Additionally, sourcing inspiration and subject matter from more secular sources, such as Goethe and Shakespeare, as well as the current events of the period gained more favour.³⁸ One of the most famous Romantic paintings (and possibly Dark Romantic), Géricault's *The Raft of Medusa* (1818) features an event contemporary to the time, in which sailors of a wrecked French frigate ship, the *Medusa*, were left adrift in the ocean. The event was a scandal, as many perished and some resorted to cannibalism before their rescue. When it was painted, the subject was neither historical nor mythological (the most esteemed categories of art within Classicism), instead it was current, instantly recognisable, and critical of contemporary society.

Consideration of internal consciousness, human emotion and imagination, the third motif of Romanticism, saw artists produce works that held up a mirror to society. The Romantic awareness of emotional passions and human nature boiled into critical, damning and despondent observations on the very darkest perversions, desires and sensations of humankind. Perhaps the most pertinent aspect of this motif for Dark Romanticism is that frequently artists



offered no hope or salvation for their subjects, nor for their audiences. This occupation with introspective subject matter also manifested in themes of social critique and satirical comment. Dark Romantic artists frequently used satirical and moralising content in order to impart broader and typically critical comments on the state of society and the nature of

³⁷ "Dark Romanticism: An Approach," 14.

³⁸ Johannes Grave, "Uncanny Images: The "Night Sides" of the Visual Arts around 1800," *ibid.*, 31.

humanity. Goya himself is arguably the greatest example of this Dark Romantic trait, but it featured also in the works of William Blake (1757-1827) and Henry Fuseli (1741-1825). For example, Blake's *Isaac Newton* (1804) depicts the scientist positioned in a classical manner, typical of heroic depictions favoured by Enlightenment ideals.³⁹ His body is angular and idealised in its geometric proportion and balance, moreover Newton is also leaning forward with a compass, studying a geometric diagram. Newton is completely absorbed by this rational, enlightened and scientific pursuit, and appears at odds with his surroundings. He is ignoring the thriving, living beauty of the natural world that surrounds him, and quite literally, supports him.⁴⁰ As a Romantic, Blake may be making critical comment on the value the Enlightenment placed on rational, measured, and scientific pursuit of answers. Perhaps, Blake is even implying that if Newton would only look up from his scientific pursuit, he would find the very answers he seeks, in the rich world around him.

Finally, liberality of technique and form is intensified within Dark Romanticism. In reaction to Classicism's linear form, and clear subject and meaning, artists employed increasingly non-conventional approaches. Grave suggests that by rejecting conventional compositional principles and providing the viewer with quite the contrary to what they expected, artists removed the power and control of the audience.⁴¹ Indeed, Grave asserts that the true provocative core of Dark Romanticism is seeing unfathomable horror before our eyes, and being unable to comprehend or control it.⁴² As such, works increasingly possessed more impactful colour choices, both brighter or duller palettes; looser, more frenetic brushwork; and mysterious or questionable meaning and subjects. Ultimately, ambiguity and subjectivity pervade the artistic output of Dark Romanticism, more than any of its stylistic predecessors.

Dark Romantic Scholarship

Dark Romanticism is no easier to define than Romanticism itself.⁴³ Dark Romanticism first appeared in scholarship in reference, not to the visual arts, but to literary studies.⁴⁴ Literary historian Mario Praz introduced the concept in his text, *The Romantic Agony* (1930).⁴⁵ While Praz indeed spoke of the broader characteristics of the Dark Romantic movement and aesthetic,

³⁹ George H. Gilpin, "William Blake and the World's Body of Science," *Studies in Romanticism* 43, no. 1 (2004): 41.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Grave, 36.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 38.

⁴³ Krämer, *Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst*, 7.

⁴⁴ "Dark Romanticism: An Approach," 15.

⁴⁵ Praz.

it was not until the German translation of his work in 1963 that the subtitle of “Dark Romanticism” appeared.⁴⁶ Praz may not have coined the specific wording, but he did ultimately introduce the concept to scholarship, which he used to describe the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century’s aesthetic penchant for the dark, demonic, uncanny and pathological.⁴⁷ Praz’s text deals explicitly with literature, but the themes identified can be translated to the visual arts. He argues that prior to Romanticism coming to fruition in the public sphere in the late-eighteenth century, the artist would never have sought to give material form to the grotesques and whimsies of the imagination, which, though contestable, is an interesting idea.⁴⁸ The Romantic, according to Praz, attempted to translate the wanderings of the imagination into real life.⁴⁹ Thus, all that appeared to have been produced by a disorderly or disturbed imagination, be it literature or visual art, was then labelled as Romantic.⁵⁰ Further, Praz identifies five recurring themes within Dark Romantic literature: the fatal man, the fatal woman, the persecuted woman, incest and the sadistic pleasure of torturing the innocent.⁵¹ Each theme ultimately engages with erotic sensibilities and explores Dark Romanticism’s fascination with evil.

Dark Romanticism has since received cautious attention by literary critics, frequently being understood interchangeably with “negative Romanticism”. Aspects of Dark Romanticism have also been encountered in explorations of Gothicism. Indeed, if one were to seek a definition of Dark Romanticism in the German text *Sachwörterbuch der Literatur*, ‘schwarze romantik’ (literally ‘black romance’, but often translated as Gothicism) would explicate the term as, “Romanticism’s irrational tendency towards the uncanny and eerie, the fantastically unapproachable, and demonically grotesque as the configuration of fears, dreams, hallucinations and the nocturnal side of human”.⁵² This is ultimately the same definition given by many critics for Dark Romanticism. While ‘negative’ and ‘gothic’ are not necessarily synonymous terms for ‘dark’, I will engage with them in my discussion of existing literature.

Praz is not the only critic to have considered Dark Romantic themes. Peckham pioneered the concept ‘negative Romanticism’ in his article, “Toward a Theory of

⁴⁶ Krämer, "Dark Romanticism: An Approach," 15.

⁴⁷ Johannes Grave, "Uncanny Images: The “Night Sides” of the Visual Arts around 1800," *ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁸ Praz.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁵¹ Alsen, 5.

⁵² Translated from Gero von Wilpert, *Sachwörterbuch der Literatur* (Stuttgart, 2001), p. 743 in Krämer, "Dark Romanticism: An Approach," 15.

Romanticism” (1951).⁵³ Looking again to the experience of the individual, Peckham suggests that the negative or Dark Romantic artist—both in literature and visual art—experiences doubt, despair, and a separation from reason, as well as religious and social isolation. As a consequence, they are unable to see beauty or goodness, nor significance or rationality in the world.⁵⁴ The artist’s universe, vision and expression becomes marred by negativity and darkness. The human characters that are conceived by Peckham’s notion of negative Romanticism are filled with guilt, despair and alienation; they are outcasts both from humankind and God, and they are destined to be wanderers on earth.⁵⁵

Robert Hume and G.R. Thompson have also contributed to the scholarship of Dark Romanticism. According to Hume and Thompson, there are four established traits of Dark Romanticism, being:

1. doubt, despair and alienation;
2. exploration of dilemma, ugliness and perversion;
3. fascination with evil and pain; and
4. disbelief in love and human compassion.⁵⁶

Thompson also argues that alienation, dilemma, evil and despondency are important elements in Dark Romantic works. He suggests that the hero figures of Dark Romanticism, be they fictitious or contemporary, are constantly aware and baffled by the presence of a supernatural realm, as well as being constantly perplexed and tormented by that which cannot be explained in the natural world.⁵⁷

Most importantly to the present research, the 2012 “Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst” exhibition was the first serious attempt to consider the interaction between the visual arts and the “dark side of the Romantic movement”.⁵⁸ Featuring works that spanned the late-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century, the exhibition detailed various artists and expressions of Dark Romanticism. Goya was a major component of this exhibition, which explored themes of loneliness and melancholy, passion and death, and sublimity and the irrationality of dreams.⁵⁹ With contributions from a diverse range of critics, the exhibition argued that Dark Romanticism was not separate to Romanticism, but rather an intensification

⁵³ Peckham, 3-26.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 22. in Alsen, 6.

⁵⁵ Peckham, 22.

⁵⁶ Alsen, 6.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁸ Krämer, *Dark Romanticism: From Goya to Max Ernst*, 9.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

of its ideals. Dark Romanticism shared with Romanticism many core elements—as shown in my discussion of the Dark Romantic aesthetic—but also introduced dark proclivities of its own. For the exhibition, Dark Romanticism was characterised by a, “fascination with extremes of emotion, death and social exclusion”.⁶⁰ Much of my understanding of Dark Romanticism is drawn from this characterisation, as well as numerous other arguments of the exhibition.

The Dark Romantic Framework

To identify and assess artworks deemed to be Dark Romantic, this research relies on a consistent analytical framework. Currently, no such framework exists. However, by drawing on the visual analysis models of various scholars, and the current state of scholarship on Dark Romanticism, I will propose a framework for Dark Romantic analysis. This framework will be used to interpret Goya’s artworks, specifically his tapestry cartoons.

The analytical framework that I will draw most heavily from is suggested by Gillian Rose in her text, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*.⁶¹ Rose’s framework, the ‘compositional interpretation’, allows for various components of a single work to be assessed in unison. The circumstances and techniques of production, patronage, the use of colour and lighting, spatial perspective and brushwork, as well as the iconographic composition, physical and expressive content, mood, tone and emotion, are all considered by the compositional interpretation approach.⁶² To compliment Rose’s framework, I have also been informed by the ‘iconological review’ suggested by Grant Pooke and Graham Whitham.⁶³ Their approach connects the formal imagery and iconographic symbolism of the artwork to the broader historical circumstances and realities. Ultimately, an artwork is interpreted and understood not simply through the image itself, but also in relation to its historical context.⁶⁴

The “Dark Romanticism” exhibition implied that Dark Romanticism itself cannot be cleaved from the broader genre of Romanticism. Rather, they can be understood as different points on a common scale or gradient. Therefore, my framework considers Romanticism as a spectrum, with a gradient of intensity. Dark Romanticism is the most concentrated or intense

⁶⁰ Ibid., i.

⁶¹ Rose.

⁶² Ibid., 61-83.

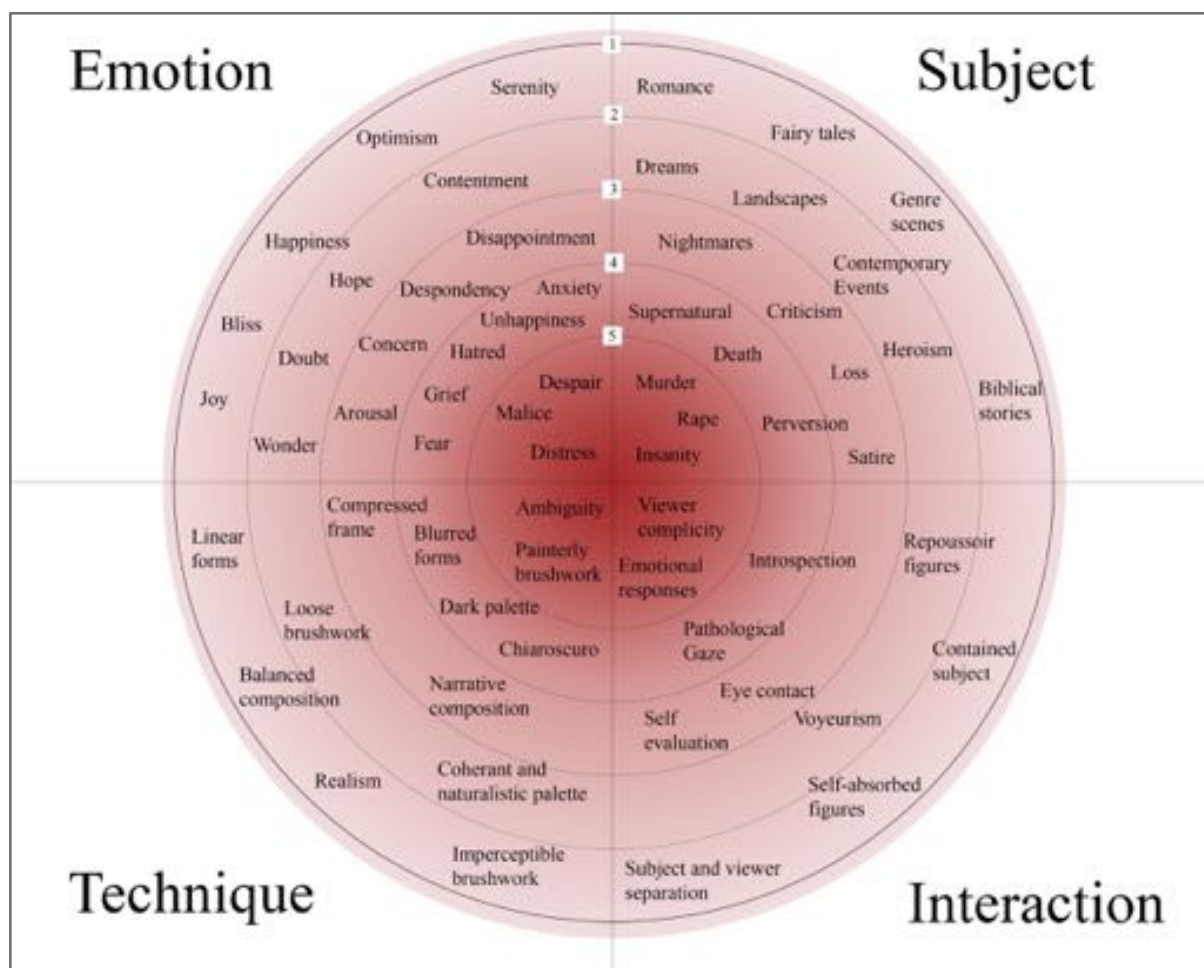
⁶³ Grant & Whitham Pooke, Graham, *Art History* (London, UK: Hodder Education, 2003).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 44.

point of the Romantic gradient. Visually, a circle helps to demonstrate this intensification of Romanticism. Rose prefers an interpretative tool she calls “Sites and Modalities for Interpreting Visual Materials”,⁶⁵ which takes the form of a circle. Multiple segments within that circle are used to measure the manner in which a work may be understood—in relation to the audience, provenance and technical approach. While the element discussed in each segment of the tool may be understood in its own fashion, the circular diagram is a reminder that, together, understandings of each element help us interpret a work as a complex whole.

My Dark Romantic framework makes direct reference to this form, being presented as a circle with four separate areas of analysis: emotion, subject, technique and interaction with the viewer. A gradient intensifies towards the centre of the circle, indicating the intensification of qualities from Romanticism to Dark Romanticism: ‘lighter’ qualities are placed closer to the outer perimeter, while ‘darker’ qualities are placed near the centre. The closer to the ‘dark’ centre a quality or artwork sits in this circle, the more it may be considered to be a Dark Romantic work. To understand how Romantic works might be understood in relation to each other, and to observe trends over time in Goya’s work, I have proposed a means of scoring each painting in a method not unlike a ‘spider chart’: paintings earn points from one to five in each quadrant, determined by where on the gradient it sits. I consider interaction with the viewer to be the most significant of the means with which to interpret Dark Romantic works, because it is the category that connects with the viewer most directly. For this reason, when calculating the final score, interaction will be weighted twice as much as any other category. The maximum points a painting can earn, therefore, is 25: five each for emotion, subject and technique, and ten for interaction.

⁶⁵ Rose, 25.



The Dark Romantic Framework, in its four quadrants: emotion, subject, technique and interaction (Elizabeth Burns-Dans, 2018).

The categories of the framework, emotion, subject, technique and interaction, can be understood as follows:

Emotion Emotions intensify and garner more negative association the more deeply an artwork engages with Dark Romanticism. Obviously, emotions such as hope and contentment sit on the ‘lighter’ end of the scale, but as we progress into darkness, emotions such as disappointment, doubt and caution become more ambiguous, culminating in the assuredly Dark Romantic emotions such as despair, horror and disgust. The emotional scale of Dark Romanticism measures the tone and sentiment of the work itself, and particularly the emotions of the characters within the artwork. Emotions of the viewer are explored in the fourth assessment area, interaction.

- Subject The most visually overt of the four assessment areas, the subject scale again sees lighter, more optimistic subjects placed closer to the Romanticism end of the scale, while troubling, and more sinister content at the Dark Romantic end. For example, depictions of picturesque and sublime nature, medieval romance and dreams are identifiably Romantic, while depictions of the supernatural, madness and death could be better considered Dark Romantic.
- Technique Dealing with how an image is painted, technique is less obvious than the emotion and subject. I believe that the guiding principle of this scale is ambiguity; the less identifiable, the less formally clear a subject is, the more it leans towards Dark Romanticism. Thus, delineated and linear forms, confusing or compressed compositions, coherent and realistic palettes, but with loosening brushstrokes are Romantic. Whereas, subjective forms, frenetic and painterly brushstrokes, and arresting and suggestive palettes are Dark Romantic. Such techniques also assist the emotional impact of the artwork, and the subsequent interaction with the viewer.
- Interaction The most difficult of the four assessment areas to articulate and indeed separate from Romanticism, interaction, refers to the engagement and connection between the artwork and the viewer, as well as the emotions elicited from that viewer. I argue there are higher degrees of interaction between viewer and canvas in Dark Romantic works, than there are in Romantic works, though marginal. A degree of separation between the subject and viewer is more obvious in Romantic works. Equally, Romantic subjects tend to be more self-contained and absorbed. The interaction in a Dark Romantic work is more distinct; pathological gazes⁶⁶ and eye-contact invite the viewer into the realm of the artwork, making them complicit in the action, and eliciting specific, emotive responses. Furthermore, the painterly techniques of Romanticism and Dark Romanticism facilitate

⁶⁶ Grave, 34.

greater levels of interaction as they encourage identification and relatability between viewer and subject.

These four assessment categories form my Dark Romantic framework, which will be applied to Goya's tapestry cartoons in the following chapters. The effectiveness and usefulness of the Dark Romantic framework will be tested rigorously. Additionally, in my concluding chapter, the framework will also be used to map Goya's works over his career, by which I will demonstrate that his engagement with Dark Romanticism was always evident, but that it intensified over time.

Applying the Framework

Having established the framework I intend to use in the interpretation of Goya's works, it is prudent to first demonstrate its effectiveness. Henry Fuseli's *The Nightmare* (1781) is a typically 'dark' piece of Romantic work. It depicts a voluptuous woman sprawled across the length of the image, a demonic, gargoyle-like figure is perched atop her torso, and a startling horse head appears inexplicably in the left corner of the frame. The title of the work suggests that this scene depicts a nightmare, but whose? Fuseli's, the woman's, our own, or perhaps all three? Additionally, that which is real and that which is of the dream world is not immediately clear, imbuing the image with a sense of mystery and intrigue. A horse head is not strange in itself, but its placement in composition of the work, as well as the expression of the horse is irregular. The subject of the image undoubtedly engages with the abnormal, the supernatural, and alludes to madness and perversion. All of which extend beyond simply being Romantic and enter the Dark Romantic. The overarching emotion of the image is one of horror, but also arousal. In immediately looking at the image, a tone of fright and danger is sensed. The direct gaze of the gargoyle-figure has a sinister quality that transmits into a feeling of unease in the painting. There is also a tone of eroticism and arousal, the woman is languishing across a bed, her full bodily form is exposed, and yet, the surrounding figures distort this arousal with the feeling of perversion and twisted desire. The tension elicited by these contrasting emotions of horror, fright, arousal and perversion, place the image firmly in the Dark Romantic sphere of the scale.

Ambiguity is rife in this image, we cannot, with absolute certainty, identify where the image is taking place, nor in fact, what is occurring. This is largely achieved with the strikingly dark palette. The shadows conceal forms from view, such as the horse's body, and distort those that are visible, such as the shape of the gargoyle. Such an effect is also aided by the very

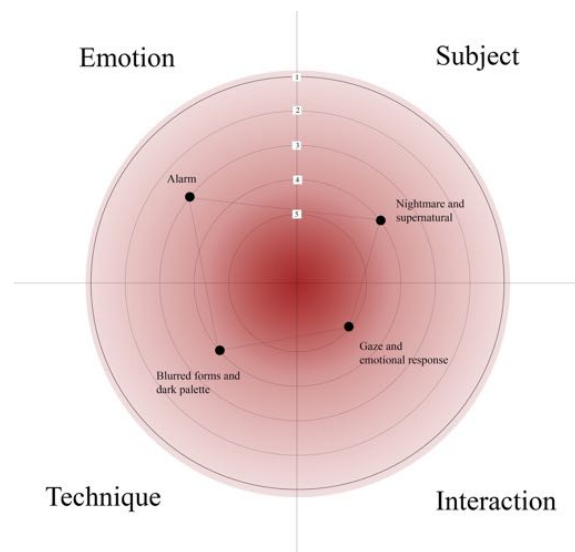


painterly brushstroke that has been employed for the surrounds, the horse and the gargoyle. However, a slightly more linear approach to brushwork has been used in painting the woman. This gives her more solidity and in fact, speaks to the artwork title, *The Nightmare*. The woman, with her clear form, is of the real world, but the painterly ambiguous form of the other figures makes the viewer suspect that they are of the dream world, and yet, we cannot be sure. This ambiguity brought forth from formal techniques allows the work to be categorised as Dark Romantic.

The work connects powerfully with its audience through the gaze of the gargoyle, which stares unashamedly out to meet that of a viewer. The effect is that the viewer feels as if they have intruded on something they should not have. The gaze of the gargoyle is almost accusatory, the viewer has interrupted him, and the gargoyle is now aware that the events of the image are being observed. Grave also suggests that this acknowledgement of vision and seeing involves the viewer in the image. He says that anyone, be it the viewer or a compositional figure, who is watching and observing an event is at risk of getting caught up in

it.⁶⁷ Ultimately, the gaze engages the viewer and makes them complicit in the action. This high level of unsettling, and potentially unwilling, audience interaction qualifies the image as Dark Romantic within the scale.

The framework enables us to determine the degree to which Fuseli's *Nightmare* may be considered a 'Dark Romantic' work, by interpreting how it is placed within four categories: emotion, subject, technique and interaction. In this instance, the emotional qualities of the work are moderately intense, evoking alarm and disquiet within the viewer; its subject is dramatic, though not murderous; its technique borrows from ambiguous forms and a dark palette; while, finally, the work is highly interactive—the gaze of the gargoyle meets that



of the viewer to evoke a visceral response. When scored within the framework, the painting achieves a rating of 21 and can be understood as a significant Dark Romantic work.

By contrast, the framework may also be used to identify works that are *not* Dark Romantic. For example, John Constable's iconic English landscapes belong firmly to the Romantic genre and can be measured as such. His *Wivenhoe Park* (1816), for example, is a bucolic landscape in which verdant grasses meet the shallow edges of a romantic lake; well-fed cows graze beneath a blue sky and gentle clouds. Its emotional resonance is one of serenity approaching bliss; its subject is an unchallenging landscape; its technique employs a bright palette and smooth linear forms; yet the viewer is charmed by but removed from the landscape—there is little room for interaction. Using my framework, I score Constable's work at 6 on the Dark Romantic scale.

Significance

For an artwork to be considered an example of Dark Romanticism in its emotion, subject, technique or interaction, I consider that it should sit within the fourth or fifth bands of the corresponding quadrant. (Additionally, it must be thought to 'trend' towards Dark Romanticism if it is within the third band). An artwork may not be 'dark' in each of the

⁶⁷ Ibid.

segments, of course, though it may be determined to be dark, overall. For example, the cartoons may not appear to be dark in their technique, but still possess ‘interaction’ and ‘subject’ qualities that make them persuasively Dark Romantic.

Romanticism and Dark Romanticism may not have explicit definitions or aesthetic conceptions, but regardless of their elusive natures, the effect of their presence in the sphere of visual art can be so substantially felt and seen. Indeed, my position is clear, Romanticism and Dark Romanticism are defined by their human manifestations; by the artists themselves, with their internal states of mind, attitudes and outlooks on life and art. Yet, measuring and assessing these intangible aspects of an individual’s nature and thinking, is not academically viable. Instead, we must use the expression of Romanticism and Dark Romanticism on the canvas, or rather, we must use the visual aesthetic in order to identify and assess it. My suggested criterion and Dark Romantic framework will be thoroughly tested in the ensuing chapters. Particularly, the framework will be tested against artworks of Goya’s career that are not necessarily obvious in their Dark Romantic tendencies; the tapestry cartoons.



CHAPTER TWO

Subject and Technique

Goya did not in his later career suddenly become a Dark Romantic artist. It would therefore be misleading to credit moments of crisis in Goya's life—such as his illness in 1792 or the Peninsular Conflict of 1808-14—as catalysts that prompted him to adopt a dark artistic style. Even from his very earliest works, the tapestry cartoons, there is evidence of his engagement with Dark Romantic themes, emotions and techniques. This chapter, as well as the following, seeks to analyse the tapestry cartoons, particularly the seventh series (1791-92). Using the Dark Romantic framework, it is possible to identify in the cartoons early examples of Goya's Dark Romantic penchant. As the framework possesses four distinct categories of assessment, my discussion will be divided across two chapters. Subject and technique will be discussed in this chapter, as what is painted and how it is painted are inextricably linked. Interaction and emotion will be discussed in Chapter Three, as the two categories rely on one another to influence the viewer's reaction. Much of my discussion is informed by various scholars, particularly Janis A. Tomlinson's publication, *Francisco Goya: The Tapestry Cartoons and Early Career at the Court of Madrid*, the only substantial text to engage directly with the cartoons. I intend to illustrate that the gaiety and seeming innocence of the tapestry cartoons in fact conceals subversive flickers of Dark Romanticism and foreshadows the works of Goya's later career, including *Los Caprichos*, *The Disasters of War* and the *Black Paintings*.

Dark Romantic Subject

Subject is concerned with what is immediately occurring on the canvas. The subject may include a person, object, theme or idea, as well as the significance and implications of their presence.¹ The subject of an artwork also includes the engagement with traditional iconography, established motifs, and archetypal figures and themes. For example, an artwork depicting Flora, the Roman Mythological goddess of Spring and flowers, employs an established archetypal figure as its subject, and likely engages with traditional iconography and motifs, in this example, floral motifs.²

The subject is essentially the story that the artwork tells. However, the story or the subject may not wholly reveal itself upon first interpretation. There can be more than one story at play in a single piece. As a result, there can be multiple interpretations of subject in a single

¹ Otto G. Ocvirk, *Art Fundamentals: Theory and Practice*, 12th ed. (New York, USA: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 2013), 10.

² Matilde Battistini, *Symbols and Allegories in Art*, trans. Stephen Sartarelli, *A Guide to Imagery* (Los Angeles, USA: J. Paul Getty Trust, 2005), 34.

artwork. Indeed, as hidden meanings of an image are detected, it is possible to discern a ‘surface’ subject, as well as a ‘base’ subject. A surface subject is concerned with the most transparent reading of an artwork, it articulates the obvious figures, interactions and settings. It is the front cover of the story beneath. However, very rarely is the subject of an artwork limited to its face-value. The base subject is more complex and ambiguous than its surface counterpart, and may offer a subversive, secondary meaning. The Dark Romantic framework seeks to assess the true subject or meaning of an artwork, thus it is primarily concerned with the base subject. However, the framework considers both surface and base subject as the two frequently rely on one another. An apt example is Dutch artist Jan Steen’s *The Doctor’s Visit* (1658-62), which, as the title suggests, depicts a Doctor checking the pulse of a sick woman. This is the surface subject. Closer inspection, though, reveals that the woman’s ailment may not be medical in nature; rather, she may be lovesick, as implied by the smiling Cupid figure in the left corner. Additionally, the woman’s gaze is directed at the dog by her feet. Traditionally, the iconography of the dog suggests fidelity, or perhaps lack thereof. Perhaps the woman has been unfaithful, or lost the love of another to his unfaithfulness. Consolidating the suggestion of lovesickness, the wall painting behind the main figures can be identified as a depiction of Venus and Adonis, mythological figures associated with seduction, love and amorous betrayal. All these aspects contribute to the base subject, and acts to add a tone of comedy, mockery and even admonition for misbehaviour to the artwork. A base subject need



not be explicit or obvious, it can be inferred or implied. Moreover, a base subject typically will impart some kind of commentary or moralising message on the story the artwork seeks to tell.

Many of Goya’s artworks, including the tapestry cartoons, make statements on morality—an important observation that is connected to the social criticism and introspection that is a characteristic of Dark Romanticism. I have made the decision to separate the analysis of moralising content and satirical content. Moralising content falls within the category of subject, whereas satirical content falls

within the category of interaction. Though, of course, the two are inextricably linked, this distinction is based on my conception that the moralising message of an artwork is directed at the figures themselves, thus it is directed at the subject. The figures and their actions are

condemned and made an example of. However satirical messages, while using the subject to illustrate its comment, are directed more so at the viewer and audience. Satire, though perhaps being prompted by the moralising content of a work, reflects back onto the viewer and prompts specific introspective thought and emotional responses. It is, by definition then, interactive. This distinction will be further discussed in Chapter Three.

Fresh Eyes for Stale Tradition

Though we can determine Goya's subject matter in the tapestry cartoons to have been the most conventional and non-confrontational of his career—particularly when compared to such later works as the Black Paintings—it is clear that they also hold base subjects that are provocative and complex. Harold Donaldson Eberlein argues that prior to Goya, the subject matter of Spanish tapestries was confined to grandiose historical heroics.³ Conventionally, artists had sought inspiration in grand mythological or biblical stories and figures, which as a subject were far removed from the lives of the Spaniards who commissioned and viewed them. When, in 1776, Goya was commissioned to design cartoons for a series of royal tapestries, his interest in contemporary Spanish life began to take shape on the looms of the Santa Barbara Factory in Madrid. He did not immediately cast off all traditional subject matter, and continued to draw some inspiration from motifs of his tapestry predecessors and contemporaries: including blind man's bluff, the swing and the personification of the seasons.⁴ However, Eberlein suggests Goya did away with the mythological paraphernalia that had pervaded earlier tapestries and, in contrast, featured new figures and subjects.⁵ He introduced a fresh and unashamedly local subject matter, with themes, characters and motifs that reflected and critiqued, but nonetheless appealed to contemporary Spanish society. Appraising the series as a whole, one can see a colourful and complete pictorial representation of late-eighteenth century Spanish life and custom.⁶ Additionally, a kaleidoscope of Spanish figures feature in the cartoons—high-and-low-born people converge on a single canvas in Goya's celebration of Spanish culture. However, beneath the rococo gaiety of these paintings were complex base subjects that foreshadowed the misanthropy and satirical treatment of his later works.⁷

³ Eberlein, 361.

⁴ Folke Nordström, *Goya, Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the Art of Goya* (Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1962), 11.

⁵ Eberlein, 361.; Nordström, 11.

⁶ Eberlein, 361.

⁷ Rosenthal, 14 & 20.

In Goya's earlier cartoons, his designs were imbued with his own personal experiences and social proximity to the figures he was depicting. Goya's birthplace was rural Spain, where he was born not into the elite, but into the working middle classes. Additionally, Goya had been further exposed to provincial life when he travelled to Italy in 1770.⁸ Far from a luxurious artistic holiday, Goya was instead travelling with a group of Spanish bull-fighters through the smaller, rural towns of Italy.⁹ He was exposed to the street life of regional Italy; and more than being simply an observer, he was a member of it. As a result, when it came to producing some of his first cartoon designs Goya sympathised with the figures he depicted. These earlier cartoons lack the condemnatory tone that pervades many of Goya's later tapestry designs. The figures in the early cartoons are not mocked for their pastoral simplicity, suggesting that perhaps Goya still felt connection to this life and world. Examples of this sympathetic treatment include, *The Picnic* and *The Kite*, both of the second series (1776-78). By the time Goya commenced the seventh series in 1791, his treatment of the figures he depicted had changed. As his social status rose and the gulf between him and his traditional subjects widened, the air of condemnation and eventual separation—particularly evident in the seventh series—becomes ever more apparent. This separation may also have been due to Goya's desire to gain acceptance and respect within the Spanish elite society in which he increasingly moved. This increasing alienation from the subjects which he had dutifully painted for close to 15 years took on a tone of mockery and judgement, one which would feature almost consistently in the engraving series and oil works of Goya's later career.

The Wedding

Such misanthropy is not immediately evident in Goya's tapestries. The surface subject matters are often light-hearted, and feature youth, children, games and amusements.¹⁰ Pastoral frivolity and gaiety is often a feature of the surface subject; stilt-walkers and dummies join with the activities of tree climbing, piggy-backs and seesaws. However, a deeper assessment of the series suggests Goya's subjects may have imparted critical and moralising content. For example, *The Wedding* (1791-92) hints at the scathing yet subtle satire of his famed print series, *Los Caprichos*, using what Isadora Rose De Viejo calls uniquely 'Goyaesque' devices.¹¹

⁸ Sarah Symmons, *Goya, Art & Ideas* (London, UK: Phaidon Press Limited, 1998), 25.

⁹ Eberlein, 360.

¹⁰ Rosenthal, 19.

¹¹ Viejo, 533.; Rosenthal, 19.

The Wedding depicts a rag-tag wedding party, oddly placed at the dilapidated banks of a bridge structure. The overarching theme of this particular artwork is a moralising condemnation of marriages of convenience and the ills of rising above one's station, according to Tomlinson.¹² Both bride and groom have something to gain from the marriage, which is evidently not love. Though the bride is a pretty, young woman, the groom is depicted as overweight, lecherous, and with features that are ape-like and animalistic. Tomlinson suggests that those viewers who would have been familiar with iconographic tradition would have recognised these indelicate facial features as illusions to the groom's base and lascivious nature.¹³ Similarly, though the groom's clothing is by far the most ornate and expensive of the entire party, it does not lend him any status. At the time of completion in 1792, the groom's

wide-cuffed, elaborate frocked coat, and the oversized and ostentatious blue hair bow would have been about forty years out of date.¹⁴ The upper-class eyes for whom this cartoon was intended, would have found the figures crude, provincial and laughable.



The bride fares little better at Goya's hands, though she is marginally more acceptably dressed. Her ignorance and rural simplicity is alluded to by the fact that her shoes appear to be worn on the wrong feet.¹⁵ Both the bride and groom are culprits of ambition. The groom is fat and grotesquely featured, yet he has secured a wife who is far prettier and younger than he. The wife has gained a husband who is her superior in terms of wealth, and with him, secured an elevated social status, as well as the freedoms and luxuries that would have been denied her otherwise. Scholars have previously interpreted the bride as a victim, and likely to have had little choice in the marriage. Yet as Tomlinson explains, the painting does not commiserate

¹² Tomlinson, 189.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 201.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

with the bride—she is no more a victim than the groom. Indeed, Aileen Ribeiro describes the bride's facial expression not as one of reserved innocence, but of boastful pride and disdain towards her groom.¹⁶ Ultimately, each of the figures have aspired to become something nature did not intend them to be. This was also a time in which social order was rigorously guarded. To Goya's wealthy patrons, the notion of the provincial lower-classes having ambition and rising above themselves, was not an idea to be encouraged. The couple are to be unhappy, the arid and infertile setting of the action is perhaps a harbinger of a barren marriage and a future of failure destined for the married couple.¹⁷ With just a simple analysis of *The Wedding's* subject matter, it is evident that a much more sinister and condemnatory base subject matter exists below the surface. A moralising message—the follies of a marriage of convenience and the ill-advised results of social ambition—is extremely potent in this artwork. Akin to the social criticism and introspective evaluation of one's society, moralising subject matter is one of the hallmarks of Goya's later Dark Romantic creations.

A Moralising Turn

The Wedding is an excellent example of the moralising subject matter evident in many of the seventh series works. By hinting at disorder, social failure, or sinister characteristics, Goya is displaying early evidence of Dark Romantic traits. Yet Donald A. Rosenthal suggests that the series is not, as a whole, condemnatory nor moralising in tone.¹⁸ Cartoons such as *Girls at the Well* and *The Stilt-walkers* are not convincingly 'dark', he says. However, Tomlinson and Ribeiro refute this claim, finding an equal measure of moralistic intent and satire present in both. While the surface subject of *Girls at the Well* is simple, it has a more complex base subject: here Goya alludes to female fertility, sexuality and most importantly, chastity. The jugs filled with water represent the women's chaste nature (or lack thereof).¹⁹ Tomlinson argues that the



¹⁶ Aileen Ribeiro, "Tapestries, Cartoons and Paintings," in *Goya: Images of Women*, ed. Janis A. Tomlinson (Washington, U.S.A: National Gallery of Art, 2002), 142.

¹⁷ Tomlinson, 202.

¹⁸ Rosenthal, 22.

¹⁹ Tomlinson, 205.

Chapter Two

relaxed grasp the women have on the jugs is suggestive of their loose morals. The older woman placed behind the two-central figures appears, due to her cropped hair and attire, to be a social outcast.²⁰ Her presence foreshadows the young girls' future, should they choose to guard their jugs with so little regard. Additionally, the scene is taking place at a water-well, which in iconographic tradition was associated with lovers and illicit rendezvous, as it alludes to the water which Cupid dips his arrows in, and lovers drink to fall in love.²¹ Rococo artists François Boucher and Jean-Honoré Fragonard both produced works of this theme. Mark Leonard, Ashok Roy and Scott Schaefer note that this subject of the allegory of romance, focusing on the 'Fountain of Love', had its origins in classical antiquity and the middle ages, but by the eighteenth-century was considered a contemporary genre subject.²² It is probable that Goya would have known of this iconography, rendering the subject matter of *Girls at the Well* much more complex and provocative than the surface subject may suggest.



The Stilt-walkers, by comparison, Ribeiro suggests Goya is making a cautionary, moralistic comment on the female power over men, as the youths on stilts are risking a great fall in the attempt to impress the village women.²³ Clearly, Rosenthal's claim that the series is not unified in its moralistic intent may be reconsidered. Tomlinson and Ribeiro suggest that the seventh series is rife with satire and condemnation—specifically, a warning against woman's power over man, and the follies and lascivious nature

of women generally.²⁴ Considering the framework category of subject, *The Wedding*, *Girls at the Well*, and *The Stilt-walkers* would certainly sit in the 'dark' portion of the gradient. In each work, the base subject offers a subversive secondary meaning, and imparts provocative,

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ M. Leonard, Roy, A., Schaefer, S., "Two Versions of "the Fountain of Love" by Jean-Honoré Fragonard: A Comparative Study," *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 29 (2008): 35.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ribeiro, 146.

²⁴ Ibid.

condemnatory and moralising comments. Using the framework, we can determine that, based on subject alone, all three artworks would qualify as Dark Romantic.



Flirting with the Dark

Goya's engagement with dark and complex subjects in his seventh series is also evident in many of his earlier cartoons designs and commissions. For example, Goya included in his fifth tapestry series (1786-87) personifications of the four seasons. This subject matter had strong iconographic tradition. Tapestry designer Jacopo Amigoni had completed his own four seasons series less than fifty years previously. Goya's designs adhered to convention in many ways, including, personifying Autumn and Spring as aristocratic figures, and Summer and Winter as peasants and labourers.²⁵ The most obvious hints at Dark Romanticism appear in *Summer* and *Winter*. *Summer* depicts a group of workers in leisure, following their successful harvest. Their crop, hay, is itself considered a *vanitas* symbol, associated with the ephemeral and fragility of human life.²⁶ The placement of the figures and bodies also hints at a Dark Romantic base subject: the drunk man is ridiculed by his companions and condemned by the viewer; the children play atop a precarious mount of hay, ready to fall; and the distant skyline bears the signs of a storm. Yet the peasants seem unaware that their labour and harvest will go to waste if they do not end their lethargy. Here, Goya's elevated social status and growing alienation from his subjects may be evident. Ribeiro identifies a noticeable detachment in his work,

²⁵ Tomlinson, 163.

²⁶ Battistini, 360.

Chapter Two

suggesting there is no sign of Goya, a working class son, in its composition.²⁷ The golden scene and joyous mirth of *Summer*, quickly transforms into a bleak snowscape plagued by poverty and deprivation.²⁸ The lethargic actions of the figures in *Summer* has a consequence, and sees them struggle to survive in *Winter*. As a pair, *Summer* and *Winter* may communicate the allegorical motif, the ‘ages of man’, which was heavily associated with the cycle of the seasons.²⁹ Matilde Battistini notes that the ‘ages of man’ motif in art is related to the death and rebirth of nature, as well as the inescapability of human fate.³⁰ Goya’s pastoral figures are at the mercy of time and death. This theme of transience is deeply moralising, and in turn, Dark Romantic.



In addition, during this period of Goya’s career, his work was not isolated to the tapestry designs. His growing esteem saw him highly sought after for portraits and various private commissions. In these commissions also, Goya dabbled with complexity and stretched the boundaries of conventional genre scenes, in ways that could be described as dark. One of these patrons were the Duke and Duchess of Osuna, who in addition to a portrait, also commissioned a genre series of paintings for their country residence, Alameda.³¹ One work in this series is *The Construction Scene* (1787), which depicts a surface subject of an injured workman being carried from a construction site on a make-shift stretcher. An invoice for the paintings describes

²⁷ Ribeiro, 42.

²⁸ Tomlinson, 165.

²⁹ Battistini, 94.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Tomlinson, 151.

the workman as having ‘disgraced’ himself, which far from suggesting serious injury, in fact is a euphemism for drunkenness.³² In Enlightened Spain, drunkenness was not a light-hearted or humorous matter.³³ It was associated with simplicity and lowliness of nature. Here again we see evidence of Goya’s growing distance and disdain from the peasantry, as well as his growing proclivity for social criticism. As already discussed, Goya was increasingly a member of Madrid’s upper echelons, and by associating drunkenness with peasantry, Goya was implicitly justifying their lowly position in society.³⁴ Thus, *The Construction Scene* possesses a subject matter that may on the surface be humorous, but at a base level, is moralising and condemning. Goya returns to this theme again in the tapestry designs.

Goya’s heightened social awareness and skill at imparting such awareness is well illustrated in his fifth series cartoon, *The Wounded Mason*. The cartoon depicts a workman, injured or dead, being carried away from an accident by two other figures.³⁵ Even on its own, this subject matter is far more grim and dark than was customary for tapestry designs. In a time when the ability for a man to work defined his wellbeing, as well as that of his family, the notion that a workman may be so badly injured or indeed dead, has far more sinister connotations than the simple title suggests. A smaller design of the finished cartoon, mirrors the composition in every way, but a change in facial expression and title alters the theme and subject immensely. Changed from *The Wounded Mason* to *The Drunken Mason*, the grave grimaces of the two figures carrying the third become mischievous grins. *The Drunken Mason* echoes the subject of *The Construction Scene*, again implying an association between drunkenness and low social status. The base subject of *The Construction Scene* and the *Mason* duo places the works within the Dark Romantic portion of the framework, because it is condemnatory and socially critical. While they are not the most intensely Dark Romantic of Goya’s works, they are early evidence of his darker later style.

Dark Romantic Technique

Technique is concerned with how—not what—is painted, and looks at such characteristics as medium, materials, and brushwork, as well as composition and colour. Technique is the most physical and tangible of the framework’s four categories, one does not need to be acquainted

³² Ibid., 153.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 154.

³⁵ Rosenthal, 22.

with the figures within an artwork, in order to speak of its technique. However, while the border between Romanticism and Dark Romanticism is thin in all categories of the framework, nowhere is it closer than in technique. It is difficult to differentiate between the techniques of Romanticism and Dark Romanticism, and an artwork would not qualify as being Dark Romantic on the basis of technique alone. Nonetheless, there are some technical markers that can be used to suggest a Dark Romantic approach in art. One is the ambiguity that many be achieved through brushwork, line of the figures, and/or composition. Linear brushwork, meaning smooth, hard lines and forms, leaves the viewer in no doubt of what they are seeing—the characters and the action of the artwork are clear. This approach also tends to distance the figures from the audience; linear brushwork, says Jed Perl, is a ‘cooler’, more reserved style of painting which may idealise forms, but detaches the figures from the viewer.³⁶ Conversely, painterly brushwork, meaning ‘loose’, blurred and, in extreme cases, frenetic lines and forms, has the effect of suggesting greater levels of movement in the figures, as well as naturalism and realism. ‘Painterliness’ also carries associations of feeling, passion and impulsiveness, which Perl describes as a ‘hot’ or emotional style of painting,³⁷ which may render the figures more approachable for the viewer, thus creating a more intimate relationship between them. In the extreme, painterly brushwork may render a form difficult to identify or comprehend, thus creating a greater sense of ambiguity and unknown in the artwork. Colour can have a similar effect. Harmonious and naturalistic palettes are comforting for the viewer because they reassert reality. When this assurance is tampered with by discordant and contrasting colour palettes, our trust and ease with the artwork is altered. This notion will be discussed further in Chapter Three, in the category of interaction.

Furthermore, Dark Romanticism often favours darker colour palettes—muddied hues of black, grey and brown. This darkness of tone and hue, as well as intense degrees of chiaroscuro—the contrast between light and dark—typically,



³⁶ Jed Perl, "Painterly," *Salmagundi* 92 (1991): 21.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

but not always, appear in Dark Romantic artworks. An artwork that may be considered Dark Romantic in its technique is Henry Fuseli's *Sin Pursued by Death* (1794-96). Multiple Dark Romantic techniques are evident in the work: high contrast of light and dark, ambiguous setting and composition, and painterly, unclear figures. Fuseli depicts the figure of Death enshrouded in darkness, making discerning his form very difficult. Without a clear image for Death, ambiguity heightens the viewer's unease and distrust. Dark Romanticism is typically inclined towards this ambiguity and its effect. For example, the setting of an artwork may be unclear and vague, achieved through a particular composition, brushstroke or tonal quality. The effect of such ambiguity and 'not-knowing,' increases levels of apprehension as neither the figures, nor the viewer, can be certain what dangers are lurking close by. Frenetic, painterly brushstrokes may also call into question the earthly nature of a figure, and distort the viewer's trust in what is genuine or true in an artwork. The technique of an artwork is the avenue through which the framework categories of subject, emotion and interaction are transmitted successfully to the viewer. Goya's painting technique embodied many of these Dark Romantic qualities, which Edith Helman states was characterised by vigour and boldness of brushwork, and bright, stark colouring.³⁸

A Shadowed Approach

Goya's technical approach to the tapestry cartoons as a whole diverged from that of his predecessors including Jacopo Amigoni and Jose del Castillo; and similarly, his approach to the seventh series specifically, differed from that of his own earlier cartoons. When Goya completed his first tapestry commission in 1775, there was a lowly status attached to tapestry artworks.³⁹ Tapestry compositions and subjects were largely restricted to what C. Matlack Price describes as pictorial chronicles of historical, biblical or mythological heroics.⁴⁰ Those which did engage with genre subjects, did so with grandiose pastoral idealism. For example, Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *Le Jeu de la Palette* (c.1760) is a genre scene, but it is highly aristocratic and classicised.⁴¹ Goya's did not continue these traditions, and his cartoons diverged from that

³⁸ Edith Helman, "Identity and Style in Goya," *The Burlington Magazine* 106, no. 730 (1964): 30.

³⁹ Tomlinson, 17.

⁴⁰ C. Matlack Price, "Tapestries and Their Place in Interior Decoration," *Arts & Decoration* 3, no. 3 (1912): 9.

⁴¹ Richard Rand, "Two Landscapes by Fragonard from Saint-Non's Collection," *The Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1057 (1991): 246.



of his contemporaries and predecessors, whom, as Tomlinson describes, met the decorative requisites of the tapestry art-form by filling their compositions with figures.⁴² While similarity may still be identified between the works of Goya and his contemporaries, there is undoubtedly a unique and original approach that pervades Goya's cartoons. This originality was in the form of human action and content. Narrative composition dominated Goya's approach, as opposed to the highly patterned and balanced compositions that preceded him. Tomlinson remarks that Goya's technical approach to composition saw figures disassociated from their backgrounds, only interacting with the surrounds if it served narrative purpose; the entire focus of the artwork was the human experience, with sometimes little regard for aesthetic unity.⁴³ No longer merely incidental to the accompanying landscape, Goya's figures command and act in conspiracy with it.⁴⁴ For example, the treatment of the same subject matter—a dance by the Manzanares River—by both Ramón Bayeu and Goya illustrates this innovation. Bayeu's *Dance Near the*



⁴² Tomlinson, 30.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 168.

Manzanares Canal (1784-85) has a composition that Tomlinson defines as ‘rambling’.⁴⁵ The work is overflowing with figures and action, yet there is little in terms of focus. The composition, style and palette are reminiscent of Jean-Antoine Watteau and Rococo frivolity. Goya’s treatment of the subject in his *Dance on the Banks of the Manzanares* (1776-77), though a smaller canvas, is unified in focus. All the figures’ attention is directed towards the four dancing figures in the centre. Goya has also not filled every inch of the canvas with action, he confidently leaves almost half the canvas with only the sky and clouds to colour it. Goya achieves greater humanity and emotional connection with the viewer than Bayeu, due to the fact that Goya’s narrative composition and painterly, in-motion technique, create a sense of participation. Moreover, Susie Hodge notes that Goya’s looser, painterly brushstroke created a sense of uninhibited spontaneity and liveliness, which invited the viewer to connect with the figures.⁴⁶ The viewer is not relegated to the position of voyeur, instead they are a part of the party, they need only step forward to join the dance.

Many techniques evident in Goya’s later work are evident also in the tapestry series. One such technique which features famously in Goya’s family portrait of the Spanish Monarchy, *The Family of Carlos IV* (1800-01), is the twisted and obscured face of the Prince of Asturia’s (unknown) future bride.⁴⁷ With no specific identity yet, the bride looks away from the front plane, and becomes anonymous. This was not the first time Goya flirted with this technique. Preparatory sketches of *The Wedding* emphasised a similar technique, turning the bride’s face away from the viewer, rendering her unidentifiable. Her groom, it implies, did not and would not know her identity. Theirs was not a relationship of intimacy nor love.

Goya’s techniques in the seventh series created a more stark and sober style, compared to his earlier series. Figures in the designs stand parallel to the picture plane, cramped by architectural, surroundings or silhouetted against an empty sky; verticals and horizontals govern the compositions, while bright colours are deadened by the admixture of grey.⁴⁸ More than any other series, the dark connotations of the seventh series foreshadow the technical command of colour, light and composition that Goya employed in his later works.

Stark Simplicity and Thematic Sobriety

⁴⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁶ Susie Hodge, *Art: Everything You Need to Know About the Greatest Artists and Their Works* (New York, U.S.A: Quercus Editions Ltd, 2014), 102.

⁴⁷ Viejo, 532-33.

⁴⁸ Tomlinson, 190.

The Seesaw of the seventh series illuminates a crossroads in Goya's technical approach. The subject of children in a playground condemns the central figures. The boy in ochre throws his arms upwards, engaging in the game, or perhaps admonishing another. Another child, dressed to



suggest he belonged to a lower social class, sobs at his exclusion from the seesaw. The boy at the top of the seesaw appears vulnerable and unsure as he looms over the others. Like *The Wedding*, *The Seesaw* may admonish those who seek to rise above their station.⁴⁹ However, it is not the subject alone that hints at Dark Romanticism. The technical qualities of the artwork display aspects of Goya's cartoons and later engravings. The clothing of the boys on the seesaw is brilliantly coloured: the bright yellow, red and blue appear stark and bold against the highly subdued background. Rosenthal suggests that these subdued tonalities and stark simplicity increasingly become a characteristic of Goya's later works, particularly his *Black Paintings*.⁵⁰ The background is devoid of any of the lush greenery that appeared in the earlier series. Instead, gloomy greys and dark blues muddy the sky, and no relief is found in the land, which is barren, devoid of detail and almost black in parts.⁵¹ In terms of brushwork, in keeping with Goya's narrative compositional approach, the boys are delineated in form, yet we can identify the loosening strokes and more painterly approach in the background and sky. Here the sense of ambiguity and foreboding—characteristic of Dark Romanticism—appears. The flurry of dark hues in the left corner appears to be encroaching on the children, readying itself to consume the scene with darkness. This muddied tonality of the seventh series had also appeared in Goya's *Summer* and *Winter* of the fifth series. *Summer* sees pastel and sun-drenched tones reflect the immediate experience of the figures.⁵² The darkening sky in the far-right corner alludes to the darkness to come. Such darkness is then delivered in *Winter*, with its bleak and unrelentingly grey scene of human suffering and hardship.

Francisco de Goya, canvas, 1791-1792,

⁴⁹ Ibid., 194.

⁵⁰ Rosenthal, 14.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Tomlinson, 165.



This tension in the palette and hue of many of the tapestry designs, speaks to a broader, and more significant comment on Goya's engagement with Dark Romanticism in his tapestry approach. It is true that a technical assessment of the tapestry cartoons, including the seventh series, does not lead to a definitive assurance of Dark Romanticism. Though there is indication of early seeds of Dark Romantic sentiment, the overall picture of the cartoons is one that is bathed in bold and bright colours, not one that proclaims darkness. However, I argue that the tapestry cartoons' seeming lack of Dark Romantic tonality, has the effect of achieving that which they appear to avoid. Perhaps the technical 'lightness' of the cartoons, renders their

Dark Romantic tendencies—in subject, emotion and interaction—even more disconcerting than if the technical qualities of the work were equally as dark and ambiguous. The darkness of the subjects is arguably heightened, or made more unsettling, singularly because of the fact that they are indeed so 'light' in their hue and tone. An air of frivolity and gaiety pervades so many of the canvases, yet it is an air that is false. The darkness of the tapestry cartoons is not explicit; instead it lurks, it is a darkness which pretends not to be so. Furthermore, Zucker describes Goya's use of light as highly original for his time, as he used it for psychological revelations, rather than simply as a descriptive tool.⁵³ Applied to the tapestry cartoons, this description stands true. The Dark Romantic tendencies of the cartoons are rendered 'darker' by the fact that they charade as 'light'.

John Berger also recognised this inverse use of light, even if not specifically in terms of Dark Romanticism. Berger suggests that in Goya's engravings—but no less prevalent in his cartoons—it is not darkness that reveals the horrors of war or the vices of humankind, it is lightness.⁵⁴ The viewer, and indeed the figures themselves cannot perceive the moralising tone, the mockery or condemnation, if they cannot perceive the vice to begin with. There must be light in order for the dark to be illuminated. Tomlinson agrees that Goya as an artist did not

⁵³ Paul Zucker, *Styles in Painting: A Comparative Study* (New York, U.S.A: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963), 320.

⁵⁴ John Berger, *Portraits: John Berger on Artists* (London, UK: Verso, 2015), 175.

simply serve as a mirror of reality, but rather he was a lamp by which reality was illuminated.⁵⁵ So perhaps the ‘lightness’ of the tapestry cartoons is not a downfall of their Dark Romantic credibility, but instead an attribute.

Additionally, another aspect of Goya’s technical divergence from tapestry tradition is the highly simplified and frequently compressed compositions, which echo the approach taken with *Los Caprichos*. As we have already seen, *The Seesaw* features a barren and formless environment, rendering our attention placed solely on the human figures and action. This focalizing device was developed by Goya in several of the seventh series cartoons. *The Little*



Giants and *Boys Climbing a Tree* each bare this simplified approach. Tomlinson describes *Boys Climbing a Tree* as having a regimented, columnar formation that is locked into the central position by the mountains and castle either side.⁵⁶ In comparison to the earlier cartoon from the second series (1776-1778), *Boys Picking Fruit*, in which the composition is sprawled and loose, *Boys Climbing a Tree* sees the trio compressed against the pictorial surface creating an intricate and linear silhouette.⁵⁷ Much of the same could be said for *The Little Giants*, in which the brightly clad boys form a pyramidal structure in the centre of the canvas. Again, the pale background, obscured by

atmospheric perspective gives the figures a silhouetted effect and directs our eyes as such. Goya’s simple compositions, focused on their content, could be attributed simply to demands of the tapestry genre. The simpler a cartoon was in its design, the easier it was to translate it to a tapestry—which by nature, reduced the intricacy and detailing of the original cartoon. However, perhaps Goya was simply becoming a better, more-skilled, tapestry designer. The simplified compositions may be a considered compositional device which Goya develops to a finer degree in his later works. Many of the *Los Caprichos* engravings echo compositional tendencies (including *What One Does to Another*) that were established in the seventh series, several possess virtually no background, passing all focus onto the figures themselves.

⁵⁵ Tomlinson, 210.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

The seventh series, and Goya's tapestry cartoons as a whole, possess far more depth and complexity than has previously been understood. In terms of subject and technique, the cartoons covertly—and sometimes explicitly—reveal qualities of Dark Romanticism. The very nature of Dark Romanticism is shadowed, complex and provocative. The true meaning of a Dark Romantic work may not be obvious. The two levels of subject—surface and base—present in many of the cartoons, is pivotal to Dark Romanticism. While the surface subject of many of the cartoons may be innocent and 'light', the base subject is where the darkness and grim realities reside. This darkness is obscured and hidden by the seeming lightness of the surface subject. Goya has used trickery on his viewers, and in many cases, has damned his figures in the process. This trickery and deception could be perhaps an even greater illumination of Goya's growing Dark Romantic proclivity than the subjects themselves. Conclusively, it is evident that the tapestry cartoons possess a more nuanced range of subject matter than is immediately apparent, and Goya's technical approach—particularly his original and proficient use of light—work in unison to reveal a much darker and complex nature. The tapestry cartoons can, and should, be considered precursors to the unashamed Dark Romanticism of Goya's later works. A notion that is confirmed in the analysis of emotion and interaction in Chapter Three.





CHAPTER THREE

Emotion and Interaction

The Dark Romantic tendencies of Goya's tapestry designs, are not limited to simply what is painted (subject), and how it was painted (technique). Dark Romanticism is equally as evident in a work's emotion and the interaction it has with viewers, both of which are less tangible elements. As such, an assessment of the emotional and interactive qualities of an artwork is prone to subjectivity, which the framework hopes to regulate. The consistent criterion and approach of the framework will offset the unavoidable subjective nature of opinion. Despite this, while more ephemeral and open to disputation, the emotional and interactive qualities of an artwork are perhaps more proficient at revealing its Dark Romantic nature, than subject and technique.

Dark Romantic Emotion

The framework category of emotion has two interwoven facets, which can be categorised using the following division: figure emotion and canvas emotion. Figure emotion is concerned with the emotions that are directly felt by the figures in the specific moment captured in the artwork. For example, a prey may feel fear; a widow, despair; and a peasant, hunger. There are an infinite number of figure emotions but naturally, not all emotions will be Dark Romantic. Emotions which engage with darkness, subversion and discontent—such as despair, fear and disgust—are more likely to qualify as Dark Romantic. However, more ambiguous emotions such as malevolent glee or sordid arousal may be considered Dark Romantic when combined with other categories of the framework. Figure emotion is more rudimentary and more easily grasped than canvas emotion, which is concerned with the overall tone and feeling of an artwork. Typically, these emotions are covert, only revealing themselves when the viewer deeply engages with the artwork. Often, it is only the viewer who is privy to the canvas emotion, excluding the figures. For example, two lovers may be relishing in a moment of secret, forbidden intimacy, individually exuding figure emotions of joy, arousal and happiness. Yet the canvas emotion may possess a tonality of caution, pity or even sadness, for the couple's elation is only ephemeral. Evidently, a canvas emotion may reveal a darker undertone to a seemingly happy figure emotion. Additionally, while the figure and canvas emotion of a single artwork can oppose one another; they can also be similar and harmonious, reflecting one another. A Dark Romantic artwork, which possesses this harmony of emotion—both figure and canvas—is Théodore Géricault's *Deluge* (1818-19). The figures themselves are in a state of panic, the desperation and fear in their bodies and expressions is clear. The canvas emotion

reflects that of the panicked figures, exuding a sense of desolation, pity and futility of hope. The viewer is left feeling as though there is no glimmer of optimism or salvation for the figures.

Emotion is concerned with the tone and feeling of an artwork, both figure and canvas. The emotion of an artwork is not however, synonymous with how that artwork makes the viewer feel. Herein lies the inextricable relationship between the categories of emotion and interaction. The emotional qualities of an artwork may—but not always—guide the interactive qualities. If a figure in an artwork is frightened, or the canvas emotion is one of fear, it is likely that that emotion will be imparted on the viewer. Conversely, the emotion of an artwork may also prompt a contrary response in the viewer. For example, an artwork depicting the death of a villain may evoke sensations of joy, triumph or even arousal in the viewer, despite possessing figure and canvas emotions of fear, rage or distress. This is a form of viewer interaction, informed by artwork emotion.

Raging Emotions

The emotional content of Goya's tapestry designs was complex. As Goya became more astute in his observation of human behaviour, he injected grim morals into real-life issues and genre scenes.¹ Symmons argues these grim observations on human behaviour, folly and emotion, were to become integral features of Goya's burgeoning talent and later widespread appeal.² Tapestry design traditionally required cheerfulness, but Goya sought to eschew this expectation, instead imbued his works with emotional complexity, shadow and subversion.³ Symmons suggests there is a connection between the growing cynicism in Goya's works, and the untimely death of his own children.⁴ Goya's marriage to Josefa Bayeu produced eight children, yet tragically only one son survived to maturity. Though we cannot be certain, we can surmise that grief and anger may have been released into Goya's creative output, and manifested in his art, in the form of darkness, social criticism and misanthropy.

The Dark Romantic emotional content of Goya's works, may be interpreted as a manifestation of this tainted world-view. Folke Nordström notes, the use of melancholy—a decidedly dark emotion—characterised much of Goya's later work, as well as his cartoons.⁵

¹ Symmons, 50 & 60.

² Ibid., 60-61.

³ Anthony J. Cascardi, "Goya: Secularization and Aesthetics of Belief," ed. Paul A. Kottman, *The Insistence of Art: Aesthetic Philosophy after Early Modernity* (. Fordham University Press, 2017). 228.

⁴ Symmons, 53.

⁵ Nordström, 21.



Though most intense in the seventh series, hints of emotional complexity, specifically, melancholy, are evident in Goya's earlier cartoons also. *Boys Inflating a Bladder*, from the second series (1776-1778), depicts two children inflating an animal's bladder: the foremost boy is engaged in blowing the bladder, his companion looks on in trepidation. His facial expression conveys a sense of nervousness, he is perhaps wary of the impending burst of the bladder. He also appears to look out of the frame towards something the viewer is not privy to.

Something may be about to emerge or occur that will shatter the seeming innocence of the scene. Additionally, another emotional interest in the artwork is the seated women behind the boys. The foremost woman is seated with her head resting in her hand, which Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl identify as a time-honoured pose associated with melancholy in Western art.⁶ Her iconographic pose undermines the transient contentment of the boys. Tomlinson cites the woman's emotional associations with melancholy, suggest that the serenity of the scene is perhaps short-lived. The bladder will burst, and the entertainment the action has provided will only be transient.⁷ Her melancholy casts shade on the emotions of the artwork. Tomlinson also suggests that this woman is the one of the first intimations of Goya's darkening artistic temperament⁸, and forebodes the social criticism and misanthropy of the later tapestry series, and indeed his broader career. Goya again engages with the emotion of melancholy in *The Rendezvous* from the fourth series (1779-80). The work depicts a lone woman, positioned the same way as the woman in *Boys Inflating a Bladder*—seated, head resting on her hand, engaged in mournful meditation.⁹ Nordström suggests that the emotional content of gloom, longing and melancholy is expressed not only through this iconographic position, but also through the sombre and subdued colours, barren setting, and the woman's

⁶ Raymond. Klibansky, Panofsky, Erwin., Saxl, Fritz, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion and Art* (New York, USA: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd, 1964), 286.

⁷ Tomlinson, 62.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Nordström, 12.

isolation, despite the presence of other figures.¹⁰ Melancholy is an assuredly Dark Romantic emotion. As such, *Boys Inflating a Bladder* and *the Rendezvous* could both be considered to sit within the Dark Romantic gradient.

Goya also completed several private commissions concurrently with the tapestry cartoons. These commissions also possess emotional complexity that hints at Dark Romanticism. *Assault on the Coach* (1790) was an oil painting commissioned by the Duke and Duchess of Osuna.¹¹ The subject of the painting depicts a chain of violent incidents, juxtaposed against lush and serene natural surrounds.¹² It is a scene of criminal activity and malicious intent, and as such, the work is rife with human emotion. One man, to the left of the canvas, is already dead, his blood seeping into the dirt. Beside him, two men scuffle on the ground, the man atop the other has raised a knife, positioned for a fatal strike. His malice is emotionally matched by the fear and grasping desperation of his victim beneath him. Aside the brawling pair, in the centre of the composition, two figures on their knees, plead for their lives from their rifle wielding attackers. The whole scene—figure and canvas combined—exudes emotions of fear, desperation and panic, as well as malice and sadistic pleasure, qualifying the work as Dark Romantic within the framework category of emotion.

Goya's approach to canvas emotion and tone also darkened in his later tapestry series. Frequently, the emotional content of a work as a whole subverted the tapestry genre tradition, by producing darker, yet concealed, emotional tones. *Boys Climbing a Tree* is an example of this subversive, darker tone. The work's thematic predecessor, *Boys Picking Fruit*, exudes emotions of fun, cheer and innocence, but also trepidation. Looking closely at the individual facial expressions, the boy reaching for the fruit wears a determined, bright-eyed, blissfully triumphant



¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Tomlinson, 151.

¹² Ibid., 152.



expression, but his companions, have expressions which suggest slight trepidation or anxiety over the fruit picker's next move. It is interesting that the central, fruit-picking figure, is the only figure to display positive emotions. The darker, more subversive emotions of nervousness and anxiety are relegated to the supporting figures. You would perhaps not notice these darker expressions if you did not observe the artwork closely. This may be evidence of Goya's early experiments with Dark Romantic features. Not yet bold enough to make the dissident emotions central to the

image, Goya introduces them subtly through the supporting figures. Comparatively, in *Boys Climbing a Tree*, Goya's confidence with Dark Romantic expression has grown. Instead of a joyous central figure, the facial expression of the highest boy reveals emotions of trepidation, worry, and as Tomlinson suggests, a knowing pessimism of the outcome of his pursuit.¹³ Additionally, the boy is yet to make the crucial final stretch to reach the reward. This boy is hesitant, he knows that the slim branch he clings to, will not support his weight. The deflated and grim emotions of worry and fear, illustrate Goya's growing flirtation with Dark Romantic characteristics. The canvas emotion only furthers this Dark Romantic connection; an emotional tone of pity and sadness pervades the canvas. The boys, situated in a largely barren landscape, are dressed in garments that are dirty, mismatched, ill-fitting and torn, suggesting poverty. The similarity of the subject and composition to the earlier cartoon—in which the pursuit of food is the focus—would suggest that the same pursuit is present in this cartoon. However, the stakes have changed. In *Boys Picking Fruit*, despite some subversive emotion, the overarching tone of the work is one of playfulness and gaiety. In *Boys Climbing a Tree* however, the poverty and barren land suggest that this pursuit is no game, but rather a necessary action fuelled



¹³ Ibid., 190.

by desperation or hunger. Furthermore, to add to the futility, there is no physical fruit in this artwork. There is no tangible reward that justifies the boy's labours.¹⁴ The canvas emotion, combined with that of the figures, shrouds the artwork in the grim reality of poverty and struggle, a far cry from the pastoral cheer that was expected of Goya's designs. These emotional qualities are Dark Romantic, and *Boys Climbing a Tree* would subsequently sit within the Dark Romantic portion of the gradient. Evidently, Goya was experimenting with darker emotional content, and by the time he commenced the seventh series in 1791, his confidence was high. Dark Romantic emotions with increasing prevalence in his designs. With this growth of emotional complexity, so too did the interaction and relationship with the viewer intensify.

Dark Romantic Interaction

Interaction is the engagement and connection between an artwork and its viewer. While Dark Romantic works feature greater levels of viewer interaction than Romantic artworks, many of the avenues of this interaction are shared by both Romanticism and Dark Romanticism. Goya's Dark Romantic approach to interaction is achieved primarily through three avenues; firstly, the artwork's eliciting of emotional and physical responses; secondly, viewer complicity; and lastly, satire. The first mode of interaction, emotional and physical responses bares the most commonality with Romanticism, and encompasses those aspects of an artwork that provoke a particular action or feeling in the viewer. If, for example, a compositional placement, facial expression or brushwork technique prompts in the viewer an unnerving, grimy feeling; a sensation of one's stomach turning; or physically incites them to look or step away from an artwork, then we can say that the artwork is interacting with the viewer.

Interaction does not need to have negative connotations, some artworks will draw a viewer inwards, inviting them to look deeper and rewarding them with sensations of warmth, joy and notions of beauty. Colour may also have an interactive effect on the viewer. Otto G. Ocvirk explains that colour may be used to create a specific mood, symbolise an idea, and express and evoke emotions.¹⁵ A naturalistic palette garners trust and assurance from the viewer as it reflects reality, evoking emotions of subtlety, calmness and repose.¹⁶ Conversely, when colour choices are unexpected or discordant, the relationship of trust between the viewer and the artwork is undermined. The second of the interactive avenues, is viewer complicity.

¹⁴ Ibid., 63 & 190.

¹⁵ Ocvirk, 203.

¹⁶ Ibid., 204.



Within the framework, viewer complicity is understood as the involvement or participation of the viewer in the action occurring on the canvas. It is the extent to which the viewer is deemed a part of the canvas. This can be achieved in several ways. One way is through the composition of an artwork. Figures may be compressed against the front plane of the artwork, the foreground may be open and uninterrupted by forms, the action may be projected outwards towards the viewer, or, repoussoir objects and figures may direct the gaze of the viewer in a very explicit manner. Johannes Vermeer, painter of the Dutch Golden Age, provides an antonymic example of viewer complicity. A characteristic of many of

Vermeer's works is that an object, usually furniture, is placed in the foreground of the artwork, physically separating or barring the viewer from 'entering' the scene. The viewer is not invited to be a part of the action, they must simply observe and take up a voyeuristic role. Using this example, it is easier to comprehend the converse, in which no such barrier exists and viewers are drawn into an artwork, using repoussoir figures and trompe l'oeil techniques which involve them in the action occurring. Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* (1601) is an example of this kind of interaction, as the hands of Christ and his companions appear to reach outwards to the viewer. Another avenue through which viewer complicity is elicited is through the gazes of the figures. Gaze is not something that is unique to Dark Romanticism, indeed they also feature in not only Romantic, but Renaissance and Baroque works also. This does not however, preclude them from being instrumental in the Dark Romantic aesthetic. Works of Dark Romanticism may feature pathological gazes in which a figure stares out of the canvas and meets the gaze of the viewer. A Dark Romantic example of this could be Henry Fuseli's *Mad Kate* (1806-07). Kate's crazed eyes stare directly out of the front plane and in doing so, command the immediate attention of the viewer. This eye contact forces the viewer to connect with Kate, perhaps against their will or desire. The result is unsettling, with the viewer seeking to break the disconcerting eye-contact. Furthermore, Grave also suggests that the eye itself is one of the most sovereign

organs of an individual, be it that of the viewer or an artwork figure.¹⁷ Grave understands the very act of seeing or viewing something, as rendering the beholder complicit in the what they see, putting them at risk of being caught up in the action of an artwork.¹⁸ The gaze may effectively force the viewer to interact with the artwork.

Finally, the third avenue of interaction is satire or satirical content. Discussed in Chapter Two, the framework considers satirical messages different from moralistic messages because satire is often directed at the viewer, rather than at the figures in the artwork. Satirical content has a predilection to hold up a mirror and reflect back onto the viewer, prompting specific introspective thought and self-analysis. Thus, satire acts as a mode of interaction. Satire may be employed both overtly and subtly, providing a veil through which an artist can provide commentary on human follies: particular individuals and events, societal practices and cultural norms. For example, an artwork depicting three women of differing ages may be imparting a satirical message on the ages of man, or human mortality. By consequence, this satirical message may prompt the viewer to consider their own mortality. Interaction is fundamentally a culmination of the other three framework categories—emotion, subject and technique—and is the paramount category to be satisfied in order for an artwork to be deemed Dark Romantic.

The Paramount Category

Interaction is the most integral of the four framework categories as it is this site of greatest meaning and connection to the viewer. The interactive qualities of an artwork, and indeed its interactive success, is dependent on the remaining categories—subject, technique and emotion. In other words, interaction is a culmination of the framework, it provides the final verdict. The Dark Romantic nature of an artwork rests not necessarily on how the canvas looks, but rather how the canvas imparts meaning on the viewer. This is the crux of Dark Romanticism. It is easy to paint with dark hues and tones, an emotionally charged scene of rape or murder, but the credibility lies in the artwork's ability to connect with the viewer and have an effect upon them. Goya employs each of the three avenues of interaction, but his method of employing them is inextricably linked to artwork's subject, emotional and technical qualities.

¹⁷ Grave, 34.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Unavoidable Responses

Eliciting specific emotional and physical responses from the viewer, can be achieved in numerous ways. Facial expressions and figure positioning is one example. As viewers, we innately try to connect and identify with the human figures in an artwork, thus when we find them in a state we do not expect or recognise, it can be unnerving. Similarly, the subject itself can interact with the viewer. A scene of murder or rape can lead us to grimace, or one of separated lovers may lead us to commiserate with the couple. Realism or lack thereof also has a similar effect, something that is unnatural in palette or form will perplex us, and perhaps unnerve us. These are emotions that are projected by the artist, and then felt, in varying degrees by the viewer. As such, they should be considered hallmarks of the artwork's interactive qualities. Higher levels of interaction may reveal the artwork as having Dark



Romantic tendencies. *The Mannequin* of the seventh series features this kind of interaction. The work depicts a seeming moment of play, that would have been traditional to Spanish provincial carnival celebrations. A doll or mannequin would be tossed in the air and caught again on a blanket.¹⁹ At first glance, the work may appear innocent in its playful nature, with the women well dressed, and a lush, favourable environment as the surrounds. However, the illusion begins to fracture; Rosenthal describes the mannequin's head as grotesquely twisted backwards, with dislocated limbs dangling limply, producing a bizarre image.²⁰ The mannequin's face is a lifeless gray, only enlivened by clownish red cheeks and coal black eyes, which are in themselves, unnatural.²¹ There is something sinister in the expressions of the women, particularly the female directly between the mannequin's legs. She is in a position of great power, whether the mannequin is caught by the blanket or falls to the ground is directly

¹⁹ Tomlinson, 207.

²⁰ Rosenthal, 21.

²¹ Tomlinson, 207.

within her control. Her fixed eyes and devilish grin suggest a malice that one would not expect in a scene which claims to be of a carnival game. Tomlinson surmises that Goya actively subverted the playful teasing that tradition dictated for this subject, and instead rendered the artwork a scene of dehumanising treatment, and satirical comment.²² Clark also identifies the dark complexity of the work, citing that while such a theme would have been charming and gay in



Jean-Honoré Fragonard's hands, Goya's production is subversive and provocative.²³ Ribeiro and Tomlinson both suggest that the work is an allegory on women's manipulation and power over men.²⁴ Indeed, the limpness of the mannequin and the conniving smile of the central woman is disconcerting. *The Mannequin* thus exemplifies the mode of eliciting negative and dark emotional and physical responses. *The Mannequin* would sit on the Dark Romantic gradient, based on its interactive qualities.



The Mannequin was not the first time Goya had elicited these dark responses from the viewer. *The Blind Guitarist* of the third series (1778-1779) equally possesses this mode of dark interaction. The work depicts a blind guitar player entertaining a small crowd by what appears to be a market. Symmons provides an excellent summation of the work's interactive attributes in describing the blind man's head as being titled backwards, and as a result forming a conflation of distorted and grotesque features.²⁵ Similar to the

distorted neck and body seen in *The Mannequin*, *The Blind Guitarist* also elicits these recoiling

²² Ibid., 209.

²³ Clark, 70.

²⁴ Ribeiro, 146.

²⁵ Symmons, 55.

responses. The eye sockets have been painted with gaping harshness and the surrounding listeners do little to ease this discomfort. There is an air of mockery in their gazes, leaving the viewer unsure whether to fear the blind man or pity him, or perhaps a combination of both. Whichever emotion or physical reaction is drawn from the viewer, it nonetheless signifies the interactive qualities the artwork possesses. Furthermore, Symmons also cites this work as a pivotal moment in Goya's divergence from his contemporaries and marks the first expression of Goya's lifetime fascination with the infirm and social outcasts, subjects which are Dark Romantic.²⁶

Viewer Complicity

Viewer complicity is the degree of involvement or participation the viewer has with the canvas; it is the extent to which the viewer is an active player in the fictive moment depicted. While there are exceptions, higher levels of viewer complicity and indeed, culpability, correlate with higher levels of Dark Romanticism. Goya frequently invites viewer complicity in his cartoons, through the use of figure 'gaze'. As Grave suggests, the 'gaze' ultimately works in both directions, the viewer's gaze renders them a part of the events they are witnessing, but the figure's gaze will capture that of the viewer and bring them into the scene, making them complicit. Grave also proposes that works of Dark Romanticism may feature "pathological gazes" in their figures, meaning gazes that stare brazenly out of the front plane and demands the intense eye-contact of the viewer.²⁷ This use of the gaze is immediately apparent in Goya's cartoons, not only in the seventh series, but also in the fifth series duo, *Spring* and *Autumn*.

Spring indulges in deception in its interaction with the viewer. The scene depicts traditional iconography of Flora and floral imagery, typically associated with the season of Spring. Three women share in a peaceful, pastoral idyll; their serenity is reflected in the calm pastel tones of their fertile environment. However, they are not alone. A man, standing behind the central grouping, holds a rabbit aloft, as if preparing to disturb the peace of the women by surprising them. The interactive interest in the work is the fact that the women are seemingly unaware of the man's presence, who only reveals the rabbit to the viewer, and presses his finger to his lips, imploring our silence and asking that we keep his secret.²⁸ His gaze and eye contact with the viewer, encourages connection with him, and collusion in his game. Similarly, in *Autumn*, a silent gaze once again commands attention. This time the gaze belongs to the peasant

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Grave, 34.

²⁸ Tomlinson, 159.



woman carrying the harvest on her head. The richly dressed trio in front of her ignore her presence, instead content to use and discard the fruits of her and the background peasant's labour. In the gaze of the woman, there is a tone of sadness and resignation, and our connection with her gaze evokes feelings of commiseration; her position in life has condemned her to be exploited and ignored by those above her. Indeed, Battistini notes that within traditional iconography the very season of autumn was associated with a melancholic temperament, and winter's impending death and darkness.²⁹ This iconographic tradition deepens the gravity of the woman's Dark Romantic gaze.

In addition to the gaze, Goya also uses composition to encourage greater levels of viewer complicity. As discussed, *Boys Climbing a Tree* sees the trio of boys condensed and compressed against the front plane of the artwork. The effect positions the viewer in close proximity to the action. We stand at equal height to the boys and as such, we are very much complicit in what is occurring. We need only make a small step forward to help bolster the boy upwards, however our complicity can quickly turn to culpability, with the realisation that the

²⁹ Battistini, 39.

branch the boy reaches for is not strong enough to support his weight.³⁰ The boy will fall, with his efforts going unrewarded. Due to the tight composition and the subsequent interaction, the viewer, perhaps unwillingly, plays an inevitable role in the coming disaster.

The Satirical Touch

Goya frequently hid satirical meaning in his designs by using a first interpretation—or surface subject—to mask a deeper meaning or comment.³¹ Satirical messages and content use the subject and figures to articulate a comment that is often directed at the viewer, or the society the viewer belongs to. Satire reflects back onto the viewer and prompts specific introspective thought and emotional responses, thus interacting. While supporting this distinction, one must also recognise that the relationship between moralistic and satiric content is extremely fluid and linked. The moralising content of an artwork, which may condemn the actions of its figures, may also intensify to simultaneously impart a satiric message, which may condemn the state of society, or the viewer specifically. Goya frequently uses this dual level of social comment, characterised by what Hodge calls, sardonic observations of humanity that satirised human flaws, delivered in a bold and savage style.³²

The Little Giants of the seventh series may be understood as an allegory of social inequality.³³ Wendy Bird notes that Goya was proficient in using allegorical satire to subversively ridicule social hierarchies in Spanish society.³⁴ The mounted motif—in which one figure sits atop another—has long been established as emblematic of tyranny sustained by suppression, says Tomlinson.³⁵ Analysis of the cartoons supports this statement. A vibrantly coloured and well-dressed boy sits leisurely atop his poorly dressed companion, presumably of the peasant class. This could prompt reflection on the Spanish social system and the inequality of wealth. Given the historical context, it is also interesting that the cartoon bares similarity to images of The Three Estates or The Ancient Regime, popularised by the French Revolution. Tomlinson argues that it is not unfeasible that Goya may have been exposed to such prints and imagery.³⁶ Whether he intended for his cartoon to be charged with such strong political comment however, is unclear. Tomlinson also identifies the two boys to the left, descending

³⁰ Tomlinson, 190.

³¹ Wendy Bird, "Goya and the Menippus Satire: New Light on the Strolling Players, Yard with Madmen and Later Works," *Artibus et Historiae* 30, no. 60 (2009): 248.

³² Hodge, 102.

³³ Tomlinson, 189.

³⁴ Bird, 245.

³⁵ Tomlinson, 191.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

the hill, as an inverse mirror of the centre duo—here, poor sits atop the wealthy.³⁷ Such an inclusion would suggest the transience of power and wealth. The central boy points downwards with his right hand, indicating his path, and simultaneously beckons the peasant boy upwards on his left. This message communicating the passage of time and transience of worldly position is similar to what is evoked by the *Summer* and *Winter* duo. These satirical comments place the cartoon thematically in-line with other cartoons of the seventh series, which have shown to condemn unbridled ambition and reaching for status not intended for one. The same is seen also in *The Stilt-walkers*, which in addition to Ribeiro's connotations of female authority and foolishness in the face of it, Tomlinson also suggests arrogance of the stilt-walkers who have defied nature, and are standing higher than was intended.³⁸ They are dressed ostentatiously with elaborate hair nets and stockings, yet only a few children appear to truly find cheer from their presence, the remainder of the crowd is shrouded in disapproving shadow. Tomlinson also suggests that the cartoon satirises the Spanish proverb that translates as, 'he who runs on stilts, falls on his first steps'.³⁹ Satire such as this interacts heavily with the viewer as it calls upon them to reflect upon their own lives and action, ultimately to distance themselves from the behaviour of the figures.

As a mode of interaction, satire prompts viewers to reflect on their own society and their place within it. *The Village Procession*—a commission of the Duke and Duchess of Osuna—can be interpreted as a condemnation of religious processions and fanaticism in Enlightened Spain. Tomlinson argues that at the time of creation processions of religious fervour, such as this one, were scorned by enlightened reformers and much of elite society, because they were manifestations of what could be deemed superstition.⁴⁰ Away from metropolitan cities, these religious societal practices were



³⁷ Ibid., 192.

³⁸ Ibid., 199. & Ribeiro, 146.

³⁹ Tomlinson, 199.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 156.

still very prominent, and were frequently used to justify the elite's notions of self-importance and intellectual superiority. Tomlinson describes Goya's treatment of the figures as unsympathetic; the mayor is dressed in a coat that is thirty years out of date, a fat and indulged priest joins the procession, and the piper's facial expression reveals disdain towards his ignorant companions.⁴¹ Intended for the eyes of the elite, the work mocks its subject, but also encourages introspective thought. Contemporary Spaniards would likely have been prompted to evaluate their own country and people, and indeed, also evaluate themselves to reconfirm that they were above and separate from these ignorant rural figures.

Conclusion

Chapter Two's discussions of subject and technique illuminated that the tapestry cartoons as whole, particularly the seventh series, have far more gravity and complexity than has previously been understood; and indeed, the cartoons could be considered early examples of Goya's Dark Romantic inclinations. Goya's use of emotion and interaction further substantiate this idea. The tapestry cartoons display a definitive progression towards great emotional complexity, if not greater darkness. The earlier series possess more of the Rococo gaiety customary to tapestry convention, subsequently it is more difficult to identify Dark Romanticism within them. We can perhaps account for this conventionality with the fact that these were some of Goya's very first Royal commissions, in which he was eager to satisfy the demands of his patrons and establish himself as an artist. As Goya grows in his confidence, and indeed in his public appeal, we begin to see the emotional subversion that culminates in the seventh series. As Goya engaged with increasingly dark subject matter, so too did he engage with dark emotions. His figures were subjected to feelings of fear, despair and desperation, but also to sordid arousal and malice. Similarly, the canvas emotions—the tone and feeling of the work as a whole—featured more subversion, shadow and darkness. No longer were Goya's tapestry designs light and frivolous in their emotions.

Interaction is the most important of the four framework categories, as its qualities are a culmination of subject, emotion and technique, and ultimately are the final judge of an artwork's Dark Romantic nature. In the seventh series, Goya employs all three modes of interaction—emotional and physical responses, viewer complicity and satire—subsequently creating a series that interacts with the viewer on multiple levels. Not only are the cartoons

⁴¹ Ibid.

precursors to even greater Dark Romanticism in Goya's later career, they are also Dark Romantic in their own right as they satisfy the criteria of the framework.

The tapestry cartoons are much less generally known than Goya's works in other mediums and periods, and are afforded much less attention by scholars.⁴² Eberlein suggests that this is due to the striking memorability of later paintings and etchings overshadowing the lustre of his early works.⁴³ However, the tapestry cartoons should not be discounted as pretty imaginings of a young, underdeveloped, court painter. Instead they possess a gravitas all of their own, indeed, the seventh series particularly, should be considered truly 'Goyaesque' in its treatment of everyday Spanish life. The tapestry cartoons are light and dark, serene and chaotic, chaste and depraved, and above all else, they reveal aspects of Goya's growing, yet assured, Dark Romantic penchant.

⁴² Eberlein, 359.

⁴³ Ibid.



CONCLUSION

After the Cartoons

Conclusion

Having analysed and discussed the prevalence of Dark Romanticism within Goya's tapestry cartoons, it is clear that his artistic character possessed Dark Romantic tendencies from the very outset of his career, contrary to the opinion of such scholars as Wyndham Lewis and Gassier.¹ This concluding chapter will interrogate whether Goya was always a dark artist, and the extent to which his darkness intensified over his career. I will also discuss how the Dark Romantic framework may be used to answer these questions. An appraisal of the connections and parallels between the tapestry cartoons and Goya's later artworks, will establish that the cartoons are forbearers of Goya's Dark Romantic expression in his later career. The Dark Romantic framework has proven to be effective in identifying and determining the extent to which an artwork may be considered Dark Romantic in relation to individual elements. In this conclusion, I will demonstrate that the framework can, when combined, enable effective appraisal of Goya's works—and arguably those of others—as a form of Romanticism and Dark Romanticism. To illustrate this effectiveness, as well as Goya's enduring darkness, I will apply the framework to several of his later works which are intensely Dark Romantic: *The Madhouse* (c.1812), *Brigand Murdering a Woman* (1808-11), and Plate 58 of *Los Caprichos* (1799), *Swallow it, Dog*. I will evaluate the extent to which the research aims have been achieved, and reconsider the significance of the present research within broader scholarship.

The Cartoons and Later Darkness

While Goya was definitively dark in his later career, he should also be considered dark in his earlier career. There are numerous connections and parallels between the tapestry cartoons and Goya's later productions. Clearly, the dark themes and techniques of Goya's later works, find their origins in his earlier tapestry cartoons, indicating that Goya was always dark. The vast vocabulary of imagery that was established in the tapestries appears over and over again in Goya's darker, nineteenth-century canvases. Prominent aspects of Goya's Dark Romantic approach—from each framework category—were introduced in the cartoon series, and later intensified in his decidedly dark etchings and oil works.

Goya developed recurring types of figures in his seven cartoon series, and a sophisticated repertoire of subject matter.² Many of these subjects returned in the art of his later career, particularly in *Los Caprichos* and *Los Disparates* (1815-24). When they reappear,

¹Wyndham Lewis.; Gassier, 20.

² Tomlinson, 7.



however, they display a more critical and darker treatment.³ One example is the carnival imagery of *The Mannequin*, in which a dislocated figure of a male mannequin is tossed into the air by maliciously gleeful, female companions. This exact subject is repeated 25 years later, in Plate One, *Feminine Folly*, of Goya's *Los Disparates* prints. However, in the latter version the Dark Romantic nature of the subject has been aggravated. The two male-puppet figures are even more disjointed and inhuman in appearance than the original mannequin, and are now accompanied in the blanket by a seemingly deceased donkey.⁴ Once again, the facial expressions of the women—gleeful, calculating and unsettling—question the innocence of the game. Yet in the print, compared to the cartoon, there is a much more palpable malice to their actions and expressions, rendering the print far more Dark Romantic than the cartoon. As a series, *Los Disparates* is sometimes

referred to by the name of *Proverbios*, meaning the Proverbs, and scholars such as Rosenthal propose that each plate of the series was intended to represent a specific social critique.⁵ This duality of subject matter was also demonstrated in the cartoons. *The Mannequin* itself can be interpreted not simply as an image of pastoral amusement, but as a social comment and admonition of female power over men. While the exact meaning of *Feminine Folly* is unclear, we can assume that a similar didactic meaning is present. Tomlinson argues that this skill for blending the real and the symbolic—or, the surface and base



³ Cascardi, 227-28.

⁴ Rosenthal, 21.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

Conclusion

subjects—is derived from Goya’s experience producing the cartoons. The cartoons enabled Goya to perfect his ability to evoke both reality and metaphor in a single image.⁶ Rosenthal agrees that this satirical and didactic duality of meaning, which was so characteristic of Goya’s later works, is present in works as early as *The Mannequin*.

By no means is this example isolated. The bride in *The Wedding*, the astute woman who married for material gain, may be considered a precursor to the bride in Plate 2 of *Los Caprichos*, who is also marrying an unattractive, but wealthy man.⁷ Clearly, Goya’s later works did not suddenly introduce dark subject matter, but rather his works drew on a vast catalogue of subjects and imagery which had been established in the tapestry cartoons.

Points of connection also exist between the emotions of Goya’s early and late works, also suggesting a continuum of Dark Romanticism. The parallels of emotion are two-fold: the type and range of emotions Goya engaged with, and the approach or mode he took to engage with them. Traditionally, tapestry designs were dominated by light-hearted emotions of love, gaiety, and elation, often evoking an emotional placidity of pastoral cheer and contentment. However, we have discussed in Chapter Three that Goya sought to eschew this tradition. The seventh series introduced a more nuanced approach to emotional content. Goya flirted increasingly with darker emotions, such as despair, loss, exclusion, malice and desperation. What were flirtations with dark emotion in the cartoons, intensified in the later works, particularly *Los Caprichos*, *The Disasters of War* and *The Black Paintings*. For example, *The Rendezvous* and *Boys Inflating a Bladder*, introduced the emotions of melancholy and grief. The same melancholic emotions are evident in several of the *Los Caprichos* prints, such as Plate 9, *Tantalus*, and Plate 10, *Love and Death*. Both prints depict scenes of death and loss of a loved one, and subsequently violently exude emotions of trauma and desperation. This is but one example from the tapestries in which burgeoning dark emotions may be identified, which later intensify with terrifying conviction in *Los Caprichos*, *Disasters of War* and *Los Disparates*.



⁶ Tomlinson, 64.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 201.

The technique of Goya's tapestry designs also echoes the sombre Dark Romanticism of his later years. Dark Romanticism favours palettes that are dominated by subdued and muddied hues of brown, black and grey, as well as intense juxtapositions of light and dark. While the commissions for the tapestry cartoons demanded bright, colourful compositions—which Goya employed to a degree—his seventh series featured a dark tonality that foreshadowed the Dark Romanticism of the *Black Paintings*. Similarly, *The Little Giants*, *The Seesaw* and *Boys Climbing a Tree*, all display this increasingly sober palette. *The Seesaw*, though featuring touches of red, blue and yellow, is dominated by various shades of grey and brown. Rosenthal describes the surrounds of the image as progressing from a gloomy and muddy gray, to an almost dirty black in the far-right corner.⁸ This sober approach to palette is seen again, to greater effect, in many of Goya's later works, including *The Cannibals* (c.1815) and *The Repentant Peter* (1824-25). Both works display a palette that is intensely dark and dominating.

In addition to palette, Goya's early approach to composition also echoed the Dark Romanticism that was to come. As discussed in Chapter Two, Goya diverged from tradition by engaging with simplified and compressed compositions that were driven by narrative, rather than canvas pattern or balance. *The Little Giants* exemplifies this human driven approach. The landscape is not a narrative feature of the work, the barren simplicity of the background forces the focus onto the human action at its centre. Goya preference for intense human examination in his works, with frequent locational ambiguity, intensified in his later career. Many of *Los Caprichos* and *The Black Paintings* including, *Two Old Men Eating Soup* and Plate 4 of *The Disasters of War*, *The Women show Courage*, feature this style of compositional focus, favouring Dark Romanticism.

Finally, the interactive qualities debuted in the tapestry cartoons intensify his later works. The seventh series saw Goya introduce subtle moralistic imagery and satirical comment. He engaged with social commentary on issues including poverty, inequality, marriages of convenience, female chastity, and social ambition. Many of the social issues Goya contended with were prevalent within Spanish



⁸ Rosenthal, 14.

Conclusion

society in the eighteenth-century. Tomlinson suggests that these themes introduced by the cartoons—as well as the moral and satirical comment that accompanied them—anticipated the themes of *Los Caprichos*.⁹ *The Little Giants* has striking interactive similarity to Plate 42 of *Los Caprichos*, *You who are unable*. Both works feature one figure sitting atop the back of the other. Chapter Three discussed the satirical comment made by *The Little Giants*—a comment on tyranny over the poor, and the transience and fragile state of wealth and power. Again, Goya uses the mounted motif in *You who are unable*, however a donkey represents the decadent and idle nobility, a representation that is repeated throughout the series.¹⁰ This progression from portraying the nobility as a well-dressed boy, to a grotesque ass-character, illustrates Goya's growing confidence and boldness with social criticism, a hallmark of Dark Romantic interaction.

The viewer complicity and culpability, in several of Goya cartoons also carried forward into his later career. One example is the use of the gaze. Several of Goya's tapestry works employed a deep and knowing gaze from a figure who looked out onto the viewer, including *Summer*, *Autumn*, and *Blind Man's Bluff*. This interactive gaze was repeated by Goya, only it was intensified by Dark Romanticism. Several of Goya's later 'gazes' were jarring, unsettling and inescapable glares, the most famous being the gaze of Saturn in *Saturn Devouring his Son*. Saturn's deranged eyes demand the viewer meet his gaze, and in doing so, they are pierced by the horror of the image. The gaze works in the same way as the early cartoons, demanding attention and implicating the viewer in the action, but here, Dark Romanticism has rendered the gaze demonic, crazed and frightening.

A similar intensification of an interactive device also occurs in the eliciting of emotional and physical responses. Artworks of the tapestry series such as *The Mannequin* used a distorted body of the male mannequin to elicit a response of disconcertion and unpleasant perplexity. *Disasters of War* intensified this quality, using dismembered bodies, screaming facial expressions and acts of depravity to elicit responses of horror, repulsion, pity and in some cases, physical nausea, from the viewers.

Goya reused and repeated countless subjects, techniques, and emotional and interaction devices that he introduced in the tapestry cartoons. It is clear that while he did experience an intensification or aggravation of Dark Romanticism, Goya was always working within dark themes and techniques, even in his earliest works, the tapestry cartoons.

⁹ Tomlinson, 190.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 192.

Applying the Framework

Chapters Two and Three applied the framework to the tapestry cartoons, however, they analysed each framework category—subject, technique, emotion, interaction—separately. The framework categories, when combined, appraise an artwork as a whole, and determine the intensity of Dark Romanticism. This section will demonstrate the appraisal of an artwork using all four categories of the framework, as well as how the framework may determine the Dark Romantic intensity of that artwork. Goya's *Black Paintings* (1820-23), are often considered the highest point of Goya's artistic darkness. However, Manuela B. Mena Marqués, principal Goya curator at the Museo del Prado, suggested that due to suspected early restorations, the transfer from wall to canvas, and general degeneration, the *Black Paintings* should not be considered the most faithful examples of Goya's artistic hand. The works have been too compromised to be considered purely and authentically his. Instead, I will apply the framework to three of Goya's later works which may be considered Dark Romantic: *Brigand Murdering a Woman* (1808-11), *The Madhouse* (c.1812) and, Plate 58 of *Los Caprichos*, *Swallow it, Dog* (1799). The results of these analyses will then be used to place each artwork on the Dark Romantic gradient, determining its intensity.

On first interpretation, it is easy to understand *Brigand Murdering a Woman* as intensely Dark Romantic. Application of the framework confirms this. Part of a larger series that focused on the subject matter of bandits, outlaws and criminals, this particular work depicts a scene of impending, barbarous death.¹¹ It is a confronting subject of murder, assault, and sexual violence, as well as perverted eroticism. A naked woman struggles beneath a man, whose arm is raised and poised to plunge a dagger into her throat. This figure arrangement—an attacker



¹¹ Goya: *Images of Women* (Washington, U.S.A: National Gallery of Art, 2002), 234.

Conclusion

astride his struggling victim, blade raised for the fatal strike—is reproduced exactly from *Assault on the Coach* (1790), only in the later work the effect is much more horrifying. It is clear that a subject such as murder and rape is one that immediately qualifies as Dark Romantic, according to the framework. The emotional content is equally as dark; the woman exudes emotions of desperation, distress, panic and terror, while her attacker conveys malice and blood-thirst. The canvas emotion sympathises with the woman; sentiments of anguish, pity and terror dominate. Both the figure and canvas emotion would be considered Dark Romantic by the framework. Goya's technique enhances the Dark Romantic subject and emotion. Fluid, painterly brushwork has been used for both the surrounds and the figures, creating an ambiguous location and producing a frenetic and active scene. The loose brushstrokes suggest movement, which is apt for a scene of physical struggle. The palette is very dark, with sharp contrasts between the light and shadow.¹² The light that streams through the upper left corner of the frame provides the sole illumination of the horror and darkness at the heart of the image. Thus, a dark palette and ambiguity of form and location fits the criteria of Dark Romantic technique. Finally, it is almost impossible not to interact with this work, as it violently pulls emotional and physical responses from the viewer. The intense chiaroscuro directs our attention immediately to the figures. A sense of shock, horror, and pity may be evoked from the viewer. The viewer may also feel helpless; the woman is screaming out, yet we cannot help her, and there is no indication that she will receive salvation. This kind of interaction—evoking negative emotional responses—is considered intensely Dark Romantic, based on the framework. Evidently, employing the Dark Romantic framework, highlights the intense darkness of the work, and illuminates how it qualifies as Dark Romantic in all four categories. *Brigand Murdering a Woman* exemplifies—in quite a simple composition—some of the very worst of Goya's Dark Romantic expression.

¹² Ibid.

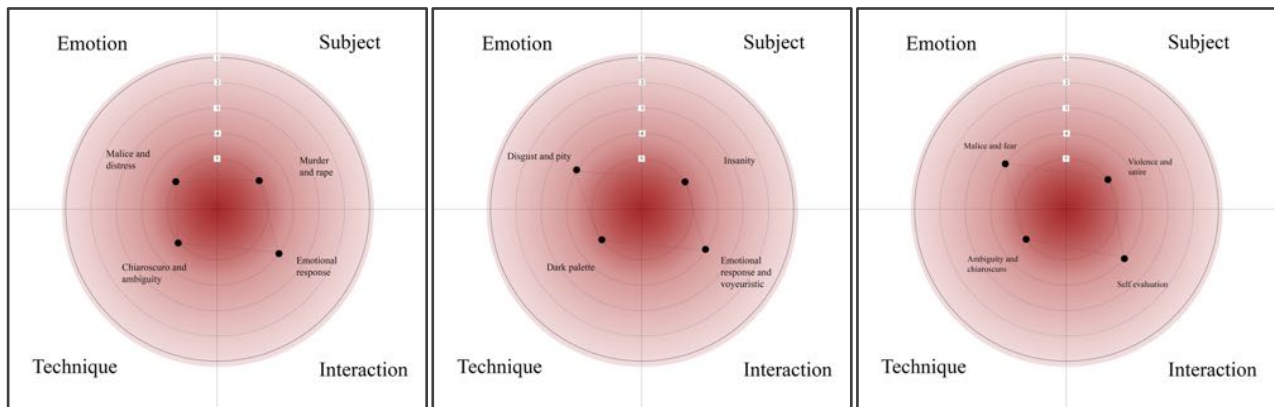
Murder, assault and violence are certainly prominent themes of Dark Romanticism, but according to the framework, Dark Romantic subjects may also engage with depictions of insanity, the supernatural and satanic. *The Madhouse* exemplifies this aspect of Dark Romanticism, also engaged with by Goya.



The work depicts a composition of over twenty figures, presumably of various degrees of mental instability, imprisoned in a derelict room, living in squalor. Naked and semi-clothed bodies sprawl across the frame, some wearing hoods or bizarre, horned headdresses, and engaging in a variety of ‘uncivilised’ activities. The work depicts insanity and madness, a subject matter which sits well within the Dark Romantic portion of the gradient. The nature of the subject makes it challenging to discern the emotion of the figures. Many are so consumed by their madness, that it is difficult to determine whether they are feeling fear or glee, or perhaps a combination of both. The canvas emotion however, is more obvious. There is both a condemnatory and a conciliatory tone at work. On one hand the canvas evokes notions of depravity, disgust, Satanism, and unnatural beings, yet on the other hand, there is also a feeling of pity and hopelessness. The figures are victims who have been forsaken by God and society. Using the framework, both aspects of the canvas emotion can be understood as Dark Romantic. The palette of the work is highly shadowed, with very little variety in hue or tone, producing a muddy and ‘dirty’ image. There is an encroaching darkness to the right of the frame, and much of the brushwork is loose and painterly. Additionally, very few of the faces are discernible, as if their insanity has robbed them of their right to identity. These techniques—dark palette, loose brushstroke and ambiguity—place the work firmly within Dark Romanticism. As a result of these factors, the extent of the work’s interaction with the viewer is high. The canvas emotion informs much of the viewer’s experience of the work, evoking an emotional reaction of both disgust and pity. While they may be in need of help, the viewer seeks to separate themselves from the figures and their depravity. The viewer takes on a voyeuristic role in the canvas.

Conclusion

Clearly, in all four categories of the framework, *The Madhouse* reveals itself as truly Dark Romantic, despite not being an obvious scene of murder or assault.



Goya's etchings should not be excluded from analysis. His print works are equally as lauded as his oil creations, and were less governed by the restraints of patron and commission. Goya's print series were created of his own volition, and without a specific patron to please, Goya did not need to restrain his Darker Romantic proclivities. As such, *Los Caprichos*, *The Disasters of War* and *The Proverbs*, accurately attest to the growing Dark Romanticism within Goya. The print medium was also far less laborious and far more rapid oil painting, allowing Goya to act quickly. He could capture in a matter of strokes, the precise emotions and artistic visions experienced at any given moment. One of Goya most famed print collections, *Los Caprichos*, a series of 80 scathing prints was published in 1799. The explicit meaning of the series as a whole has been much debated; several prints allude to specific individuals and events, making very poignant social and political comment, yet others remain elusive with their bizarre characters and compositions.¹³ *Los Caprichos* may cast satirical comment over Spanish society, and Schniewind describes them as uncompromising in their will to reveal man in all his aspects and folly.¹⁴ Plate 58 of the series, *Swallow it, Dog*, depicts an unnerving scene of a monk threatening a cringing penitent with an oversized syringe.¹⁵ A collection of bizarre and unexplained figures descend upon the man and his despair: a malicious and inhuman horned creature, a malevolent laughing woman, and several hooded and arcane figures. The penitent's

¹³ Carl O. Schniewind, "Los Caprichos," *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago (1907-1951)* 42, no. 6 (1948): 82.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁵ Nigel Glendinning, "The Monk and the Soldier in Plate 58 of Goya's Caprichos," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24, no. 1/2 (1961): 116.

clasped hands and face scream for mercy, but both he and the viewer know that his prayers will not be answered. The surface subject of violence and impending violation, immediately propels this work into the sphere of Dark Romanticism. We can also identify an owl at the very top of the frame, which Glendinning determines to be an iconographical reference to overt evil or lack of reason, which Goya repeatedly returns to throughout the *Caprichos* series.¹⁶ Scholars have generally accepted an interpretation of the print's base subject to be an attack on religious persecution and corruption, and Glendinning further argues that Goya sought to suggest that the punisher is no



better than the punished.¹⁷ Technically, there are extremely high levels of ambiguity in the print. The location of the action is unclear, as are the identities, and indeed species, of many of the figures. The effect of such ambiguity breeds a sense of apprehension and unknown, impending danger. Chiaroscuro is aggressively at work in this image, the central scene is dimly illuminated, but there is, as Glendinning describes, a triangle of descending darkness and shadow that dominates the upper regions of the frame, creating stark contrast between the figures of the immediate action, and the unexplained, shadowed figures of the darkness.¹⁸ All these techniques are considered Dark Romantic by the framework. The work is highly emotionally charged; the figure emotions are palpable, exuding fear, despair and panic from the penitent, and vindictive glee, malevolence and cruelty from his attackers. In this work, the figure and canvas emotion reflect one another, the canvas emotion and tone exude malice, unease and distress, mirroring that of the figures. Specific emotional responses are also being elicited from the viewer, including feelings of pity, sympathy, despair and unease. The technical quality of ambiguity generates feelings of apprehension and confusion in the viewer. There is nothing in this composition that the viewer can find relatability or solace in. Ultimately, Dark Romanticism pervades every aspect of this work, and satisfies every category

¹⁶ Ibid., 120.

¹⁷ Ibid., 116-20.

¹⁸ Ibid., 120.

Conclusion

of the framework. From the way Goya's hand touched the canvas to the eventual affect it has on the viewer, the work celebrates Dark Romanticism and consolidates Goya's position as a Dark Romantic artist.

Findings

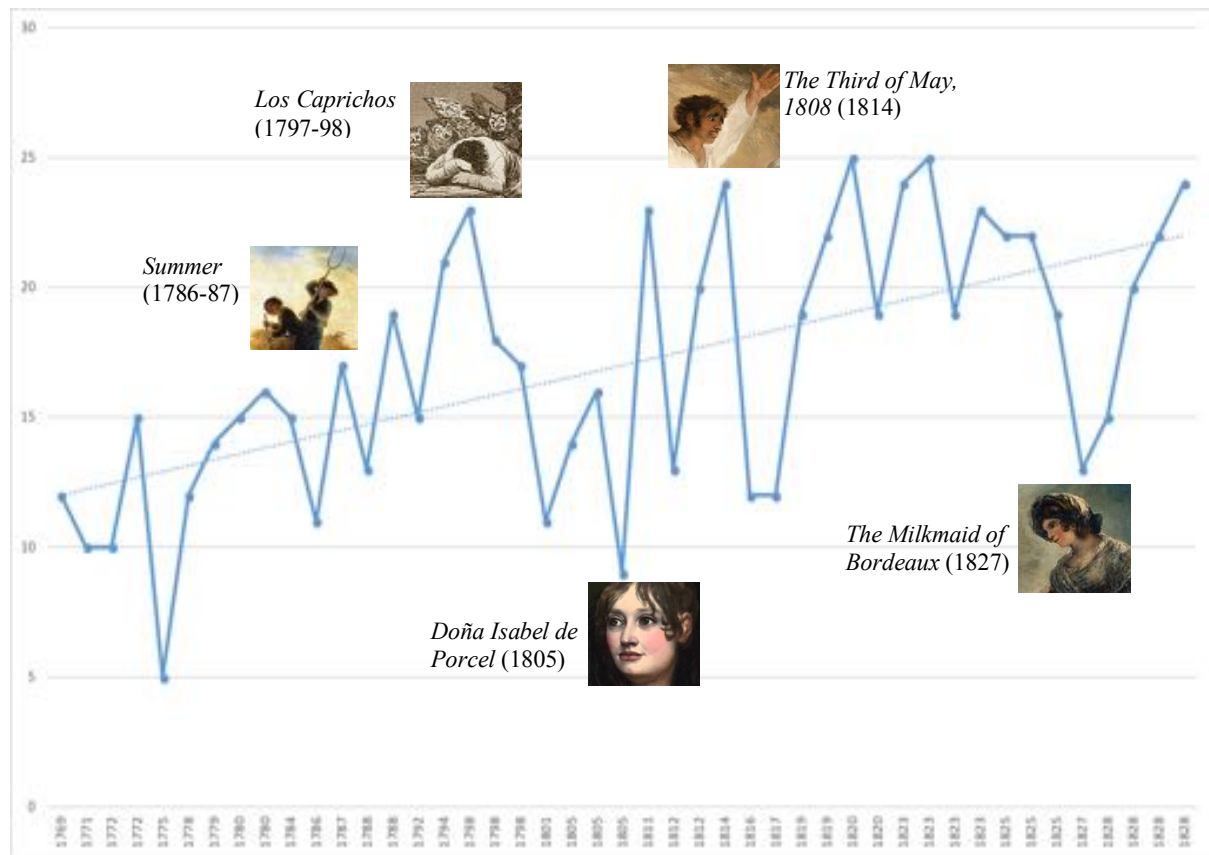
This section has shown that the framework can be used to effectively measure the Dark Romantic intensity of an artwork as a whole. The framework data may then be plotted to reveal trends and variances, in this case, in Goya's career. Though with some variance and outliers, the assessment of the Dark Romantic intensity reveals that Goya did steadily, across the duration of his career, grow in his Dark Romantic confidence. The Dark Romantic scores are higher at the conclusion of his career than they were at the outset. However, the value of the scores is almost never wholly absent, indicating that while he did indeed get darker, he was also dark from the very outset of his career.

Year	Artwork Title	Subject	Emotion	Technique	Interaction	Score
1769	Apparition of the Virgin of the Pillar	3	2	5	1	12
1771	The Sacrifice to Vesta	3	2	3	1	10
1772	Dream of St. Joseph	1	2	3	2	10
1772	The Rape of Europa	4	3	4	2	15
1775	The Cane Fisherman (1st T.C.S)	1	1	1	1	5
1778	Boys Inflating a Bladder (2nd T.C.S)	2	4	2	2	12
1779	The Blind Guitarist (3rd T.C.S)	3	3	2	3	14
1780	The Crucified Christ	4	4	3	2	15
1780	The Rendezvous (4th T.C.S)	3	4	3	3	16
1784	The Family of Infante Don Luis	2	2	3	4	15
1786	The Marquesa de Pontejos	1	2	2	3	11
1787	Summer (5th T.C.S)	3	3	3	4	17
1788	Blind Man's Bluff (6th T.C.S)	3	2	2	3	13
1788	Saint Francis Borgia at the Deathbed of an Impenitent	5	4	4	3	19
1792	The Wedding (7th T.C.S)	3	2	2	4	15
1794	Yard with Lunatics	5	4	4	4	21
1798	Los Caprichos Series	5	4	4	5	23
1798	The Witches Flight	5	3	4	3	18
1798	The Witches Sabbath	5	3	3	3	17
1801	The Family of Charles IV	1	1	3	3	11
1805	The Maja	2	2	2	4	14
1805	The Nude Maja	3	3	2	4	16
1805	Doña Isabel de Porcel	1	2	4	1	9
1811	Brigand Murdering a Woman	5	5	5	4	23
1812	The Colossus	3	2	4	2	13
1812	Majas on the Balcony	4	3	3	5	20
1814	The Third of May 1808	5	5	4	5	24
1816	La Tauromaquia Series	3	2	3	2	12
1817	The Forge	2	2	4	2	12
1819	Christ on the Mount of Olives	3	3	5	4	19
1819	The Madhouse	5	4	5	4	22
1820	The Disasters of War Series	5	5	5	5	25
1820	Self-Portrait with Dr Arrieta	2	3	4	5	19
1823	Los Disparates Series	4	5	5	5	24
1823	Saturn Devouring his Son	5	5	5	5	25
1823	Men Reading	3	3	5	4	19
1823	A Pilgrimage to San Isidro	4	4	5	5	23
1825	Monk Talking to Old Woman	3	4	5	5	22
1825	Boy Staring at an Apparition	5	4	5	4	22
1825	Children Reading a Book	2	4	5	4	19
1827	The Milkmaid of Bordeaux	1	2	4	3	13
1828	José Pío de Molina	1	2	4	4	15
1828	Phantom Dancing with Castanets	3	4	5	4	20
1828	A Lunatic Behind Bars	5	4	5	4	22
1828	I am Still Learning	4	5	5	5	24

The Dark Romantic Scores

Conclusion

The Dark Romantic scores may then be plotted to reveal trends in Goya's progression of Dark Romantic intensity.



While I argue that Goya was innately dark, this does not preclude the suggestion that Goya intensified in his darkness after specific life events or crises. Referring to the graph scores, spikes of Dark Romantic intensity appear following several of Goya's pivotal life moments. For example, *Yard with Lunatics* displays a spike in Dark Romantic intensity, following Goya's loss of hearing and increasing sensory isolation 1792. A steady increase in the trend line speaks to Goya's steady intensification of Dark Romanticism, but again, artworks such as the *Disasters of War* series, completed following Goya's experience of the Peninsular Conflict (1808-14), evidence dramatic peaks in Dark Romantic intensity. I refute however, that these life traumas should be solely credited for Goya's dark intensification, or debut into Dark Romanticism. I do not adhere to the 'crisis-narrative' of Goya's life and work. His Dark Romantic proclivities, while perhaps intensifying, certainly existed long before his traumas or crises. My discussion of the tapestry cartoons has asserted this.

Framework Evaluation

Having analysed three examples of Goya's Dark Romantic expression, it is evident that the framework can be effectively used when assessing Dark Romantic artworks. The framework has also proven effective in assessing those artworks of less obvious Dark Romantic intensity. The tapestry cartoons are not overt in their Dark Romantic qualities, they do possess however, hints of Dark Romanticism and foreshadow Goya's later career. Many of the Dark Romantic techniques and themes that Goya engaged with in later artworks—including dark palettes, ambiguity, dark subjects, and subversive social critique—can trace their origins to the cartoons. Using the framework, we are able to identify and measure within the cartoons, Goya's early flirtations with the Dark Romantic aesthetic. The Dark Romantic framework is also not limited to a single grade or intensity of Dark Romantic expression, and can successfully interrogate a varied scale of Dark Romanticism. Fundamentally, the Dark Romantic framework has proven itself as a valid and effective means through which Dark Romanticism can be identified, discussed and interrogated within artworks.

The Research Aims

This chapter has affirmed that the Dark Romantic intensity of Goya's artworks did steadily increase across his career, but likewise, this Dark Romantic intensity was never wholly absent. Goya was always a dark artist. The tapestry cartoons exemplify the fact that Dark Romantic hints were present from Goya's earliest creative output. This chapter has also confirmed the effectiveness, and validity of the Dark Romantic framework as an analytical tool.

The research aims, established in the introduction, sought to interrogate the seventh series (1791-92) of the tapestry cartoons, as an expression of Dark Romantic aesthetics, and the degree to which this informs our understanding of Goya as an innately 'dark' artist. The four ensuing research aims were to:

- examine the philosophical, cultural and historical importance of the 'Dark' Romantic movement, how it may be understood within the broader context of Romanticism, and explain recurring aesthetic trends within its artistic expression;
- establish a framework and criteria that may be used to identify and assess Dark Romanticism within visual art;
- appraise the seventh cartoon series (1791-92) as an example of Goya's early works, and to measure them against the proposed framework; and, finally, to

Conclusion

- determine the degree to which Dark Romanticism was therefore evident even in Goya's early works, and whether we might conclude definitively that he was a Dark Romantic artist.

It is evident that I have been able to achieve all four of the research aims. Chapter One provided in-depth review of literature pertaining to both Romanticism and Dark Romanticism. It was elucidated that the core nature of both artistic movements and aesthetics, rested in the mind and inner state of the artist themselves, rather than simply their artistic output. However, attempting to assess an artist's state of mind at any particular moment is not possible. Subsequently, the identification and analysis of Dark Romanticism in art needed to rest on the tangible aspects of its aesthetic expression. Thus, the Dark Romantic framework came to fruition. The framework, as I have formulated it, assesses the Dark Romantic intensity of four specific components of every artwork, while simultaneously assessing the intensity of Dark Romanticism in the artwork as a whole piece. I have shown and discussed the use and effectiveness of the framework for assessing artworks possessing varying degrees of Dark Romantic qualities.

Chapters Two and Three, devoted to a deep visual analysis of the seventh series of tapestry cartoons, significantly addressed the third and fourth research aims. Using the Dark Romantic framework as the primary analytical tool, findings suggest that the tapestry cartoons contain a far darker—and indeed Dark Romantic—nature, than has been understood previously. The dual levels of subject matter, surface and base, reveal not only that Goya was experimenting with subjects of greater complexity, darkness and sinisterness, but also that he was engaging in the highly Dark Romantic attribute of covert deception and trickery, and elevated engagement with the viewer.

This growing complexity and darkness was reflected directly in the emotional qualities of the tapestry cartoons. Though not consistently emotionally dark, there is unquestionably a growing emotional subversion. As Goya engaged with works of more complex subject matter, so too were emotions of despair, fear and worry introduced. It is evident that the barrage of emotional darkness, so common to many of Goya's later works, was steadily brewing on the tapestry surface.

The technical qualities of the cartoons, while not overtly Dark Romantic themselves, again flirt this notion of trickery and falsehood. The darkness of the tapestry cartoons is not overt and loud in its presence, instead it is shadowed and lurking, festering under the guise and

protection of ‘light’. Berger suggested that lightness must be present in order to illuminate darkness, a philosophy exemplified by the technical qualities of Goya’s tapestry cartoons.¹⁹

Established as the paramount quadrant of the framework categories, Dark Romantic interactive qualities are rife within the tapestry cartoons. Ambushing the viewer through means of satire, elicited responses and viewer complicity, the tapestry cartoons reveal a Dark Romantic quality that not only foreshadows Goya’s later career, but also firmly plants the tapestries within the Dark Romantic sphere themselves. Ultimately, the tapestry cartoons are both light and dark, serene and chaotic, chaste and depraved, and above all else, they reveal aspects of Goya’s growing, yet assured, Dark Romantic penchant.

Significance

In conclusion, this research, has sought to answer the question of Goya’s innate ‘darkness.’ Was Goya always dark? It has been frequently presupposed that Goya’s engagement with Dark Romanticism was eventual, occurring only in a specific time period, or after a specific crisis. I have found this not to be true, and refute the implication that Goya only became dark, rather than being innately dark. The framework has established that the tapestry cartoons—examples of some of Goya’s earliest commissions—possess a Dark Romantic proclivity of their own, as well as debuting and foreshadowing many of the Dark Romantic characteristics that Goya returns to in his later career. Goya should be considered dark for a myriad of reasons: he sought to critic his own society, depicted subjects and emotions that were dark, horrifying and condemnatory, allowed grim tonalities to enter his palettes, and ambiguity to enter his forms. Goya was always dark, from his earliest works to his very last, he imbued his canvases with a sense of shadow. This consistent darkness was not however, consistent in its intensity, as evidenced by the graph. It is obvious that the *Black Paintings* and *Los Caprichos*, for example, are far more intense in their engagement with Dark Romanticism than the tapestry cartoons. Subsequently, I concede that, yes, Goya’s artworks did grow darker, Dark Romanticism’s shadow grew in confidence and dominance, but that does not mean to say that he was at any stage, ‘light’. Dark Romanticism did become more aggressive his later works—evidenced by the rapidly darkening palettes and increasingly ominous subject and emotional content—but it was never wholly absent from his earlier career; it was simply more reserved in its presentation. The tapestry cartoons are not estranged from Goya’s later works. The graph reveals that far from being a strictly linear progression of darkening, Goya’s art experiences bursts of Dark

¹⁹ Berger, *Portraits: John Berger on Artists*, 175.

Conclusion

Romantic intensity, seen for example in the 1798 witchcraft series for the Duke and Duchess of Osuna and the *Disasters of War* print series. Conversely, Goya also experienced periods of subdued Dark Romantic intensity, particularly when completing his court portraiture demands. Despite this anfractuous path of Dark Romanticism's intensification in Goya's career—experiencing both highs and lows—the darkness we see in *The Caprichos*, the *Black Paintings* and *The Third of May 1808*, is, at its core, the very same darkness that we witness in *The Wedding*, *Boys Climbing a Tree* and *Summer*.

Returning to the “Dark Romanticism” exhibition launched in 2012, the curators commented that it was their intention for the exhibition to “stimulate interest in the sombre aspects of Romanticism and to expand understanding of the movement”.²⁰ I hope that this research has expanded understanding of the Dark Romantic movement, and made contribution to scholarship. Throughout this research, I have considered the question of whether Goya was innately dark or whether he only became dark in his later career. Using the Dark Romantic framework to analyse the tapestry cartoons reveals a clear answer. Goya's Dark Romantic intensity grew and developed across his lifetime, but he was also always dark, even in his earliest works. Goya was a truly Dark Romantic artist.

²⁰ "Dark Romanticism. From Goya to Max Ernst," 1.

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