The Punishment of Prostitutes in Vienna (1782)

Abstract

This engraving shows Viennese women being punished for the crime of prostitution. The punishment consists of having their heads shaved and being marched off to sweep the streets. However surprising it may seem, these sorts of steps actually accorded with Joseph II's program of "enlightened absolutism," which emphasized the punishment of "unproductive" and "parasitical" behavior (of which Catholic monks, Jewish money-lenders, and petty traders were also found guilty) and its replacement with socially useful activity.

Source

Source: Copperplate engraving by Johann Löschenkohl, 1782.
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