

# YOU WHO CANNOT

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (42/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

218 x 152 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching and burnished aquatint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

15 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Tu que no puedes.* (at the bottom)

42. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter.*

Only one known proof before the handwriting is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris with the manuscript title, *Como suben los borricos.*

A preparatory drawing of this engraving is in the Prado Museum.

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In the middle of the field, two peasants carry two donkeys on their shoulders, looking happy, while the farmers' faces reflect the dejection and weariness of such a heavy burden.

The aquatint forms a gradient in the sky that goes from the darkest at the top to the lightest at the bottom. Goya has also used the burnisher to create the effect of light on a low horizon.

This image is explained with great clarity in the manuscript in the National Library, which reads: "The poor and useful classes of society are those who carry the donkeys to bed, or bear the full weight of the contributions of the state". This interpretation ties in with the *Report of the Economic Society of Madrid to the Royal and Supreme Council of Castile on the agrarian law* that Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (Gijón, 1744–Puerto de Vega, Navia, 1811) published in 1795 in which he comments on the circumstances in which Spanish peasants found themselves: "Has it not been enough to aggravate their condition by imposing on them the taxes and services that the clergy, the nobility and other less respectable classes were dispensed with? (...) The heaviest and most costly pensions are daily being levied on the farmer as a result of the exemptions granted to other crafts and occupations. The quintas, the bagages, the lodgings, the collection of taxes and stamped paper, and all the council charges burden the unhappy farmer, while the individuals of other classes and professions are exempted from them with a generous hand. Cattle-breeding, carting, and the breeding of mares and colts have obtained them, as if these daughters or servants of agriculture were more worthy of favour than their mother and mistress. The employees of the royal hacienda, the capos de ronda, the guards, the tobacco, card and gunpowder tobacconists, the salt industry employees, and an incredibly large number of other jobs are granted an exemption not granted to the farm labourer".

In this print, the artist captures a vision of the world in which everything seems to work the other way round; it is no longer the men who ride on the backs of the donkeys, but the donkeys who carry them on their backs. Anna Pou points out that this vision has its origins in Aesop's fable of *The Donkey and the Miller*, which was widely disseminated in Europe throughout the 16th century.

It is also likely that the Aragonese painter had seen pre-revolutionary French prints in which the image of an animal on a person's shoulders was used to censure the enormous weight that people were forced to carry. These images were also valid for our country where, as we have seen, there was a significant increase in taxes to finance the wars and to pay for the privileges of the upper classes and the clergy.

Another hypothetical visual source from which Goya could have drawn inspiration is the coloured engraving by André Basset entitled *A faut esperere q'eu se jeu la finira bentot* (private collection).

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is preserved in the National Chalcography (no. 213).

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **De grafiek van Goya**

Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam  
1970

from November 13th 1970 to  
January 17th 1971

cat. 35

##### **Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolutionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 56

##### **Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración**

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1988

from October 6th to December  
18th 1988. Exhibited also at  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,

**Goya. La década de Los Caprichos**

Madrid 1992

organized by Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando sponsored by Fundación Central Hispano, Madrid, consultant editor Nigel Glendinnig. From October 26th 1992 to January 10th 1993

cat. 140

**Francisco Goya. Sein leben im spiegel der graphik. Fuendetodos 1746-1828 Bordeaux. 1746-1996**

Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996

from November 21st 1996 to January 1997

cat. 48

**Goya e la tradizione italiana**

Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di Traversetolo (Parma) 2006

consultant editors Fred Licht and Simona Tosini Pizzetti.

From September 9th to December 3th 2006

cat. 42, p.156

**Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014

cat. 155

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

**Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.**

HARRIS, Tomás

p.114, cat. 77

1964

Bruno Cassirer

**Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

p.96, cat. 131

1996

Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

**Francisco de Goya**

Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996

exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.

cat. 42, p.69

**Das Capriccio als Kunstprinzip**

Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1996

from December 8th 1996 to February 16th 1997, exhibited also in Zurich, Kunsthaus, from March 14th marzo 1997 to June 1st 1997 and in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum mi Palais Harrach, from June 29th 1997 to September 21st 1997.

cat. G. 36

**Goya. Opera grafica**

Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006

exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007

p.34

**Goya: Order and disorder**

Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014

cat. 233

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

p.181, cat. 534

1970

Office du livre

**El libro de los caprichos: dos siglos de interpretaciones (1799-1999). Catálogo de los dibujos, pruebas de estado, láminas de cobre y estampas de la primera edición**

BLAS BENITO, Javier, MATILLA RODRÍGUEZ, José Manuel y MEDRANO, José Miguel

pp.234-237

1999

January 18th to March 26th 1989; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York, May 9th to July 16th 1989, Madrid curator Manuela B. Mena Marqués, scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre

cat. 49

**Ydioma universal: Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**

Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996

from September 19th to December 15th 1996

cat. 137

**Goya artista de su tiempo y Goya artista único**

The National Museum of Western Art Tokyo 1999

from December 1st to July 3th 1999

cat. 120

**Goya e Italia**

Museo de Zaragoza Zaragoza 2008

organized by the Fundación Goya en Aragóna, consultant editor Joan Sureda Pons. From June 1st to September 15th 2008

cat. 42

**Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp.233-236, cat. 139-141

1992

Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

**Francisco Goya. Los Caprichos**

POU, Anna

pp.48-50

2011

Ediciones de la Central

Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 220  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

**Goya: Order & Disorder**  
ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie  
L. (comisarios)  
pp. 336-337  
2014  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**  
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet  
pp. 42-75  
2016  
Norton Simon Museum

PALABRAS CLAVE

**CAPRICCIO IMPUESTOS CLERO CRÍTICA**

ENLACES EXTERNOS