

# EVEN HIS GRANDFATHER

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (39/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

214 x 150 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Aguatinta

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

13 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Asta su Abuelo.* (at the bottom)

39. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter.*

Only a pre-print proof is known with the handwritten title, *Hasta el treinta abuelo*. In the end, a shorter and more incisive title, was chosen for the final print.

Three preparatory drawings of this engraving have survived (1), (2) and (3).

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In the centre of the composition is a donkey in costume, looking at the viewer. On a lectern in front of him is a book with rows of donkeys, as if it were his family tree. Beneath the book is a coat of arms with a donkey in the field. In the background, between the book and the donkey, the silhouette of an owl can be seen.

In this engraving Goya used only aquatint without resorting to etching. This demonstrates his considerable skill in the use of this technique, with which he creates the outline of the animal, the background and the details that can be seen in the print.

The manuscripts on *The Caprices* agree that it is a donkey trying to demonstrate its noble origins. In this way Goya was criticising the widespread practice among the aristocracy during the 18th century of seeking the origins of their noble titles. This activity was, in many cases, the most important occupation they had, as they often had no work at all.

One of the sources of inspiration for this print could be the work by Primo F. Martínez de Ballesteros (Logroño, 1745-Saint Esprit, 1830) *Memoirs of the Insigne Asnal Academy* in which he openly mocked the Spanish Royal Academy and the people who were strongly attached to the past who were at the forefront of the country's culture at the time. It is also possible that Goya was also familiar with *The learned donkey. Original fable, a posthumous work by an anonymous poet* published in 1782 by Juan Pablo Forner (Mérida, 1756-Madrid, 1797) and one of José Cadalso's *Cartas Marruecas* (1789). In it the following was said: "Hereditary nobility is vanity, which I base on the fact that eight hundred years before my birth one died who was called as I am called, and was a man of profit, although I am useless for everything".

Ayala's manuscript notes in brackets that this image could be a clear reference to Manuel Godoy (Badajoz, 1767-Paris, 1851), possibly because the Extremaduran had his family tree drawn up in search of noble ancestors. In the end he obtained a debatable descent from Gothic kings and, through his marriage to María Teresa de Borbón, ended up being related to the royal family itself.

Both the donkey and the owl, present in this engraving, appear frequently in many of Goya's works and form part of his personal iconography. The donkey in the so-called "asnerías", i.e. the prints of donkeys from 38 to 42 in the series of *The Caprices*, refer to ignorance. The owl that alludes to foolishness could have been taken from the emblem *Fatuitas* by Andrea Alciato (Alzano, Milan, 1492 - Pavia, 1550) in which this concept is symbolised precisely by this animal.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is preserved in the National Chalcography (no. 210).

#### EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Gemälde Zeichnungen. Graphik. Tapisserien**  
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953  
from January 23th to April 12th  
1953  
cat. 228

**El arte de Goya**  
Museo de Arte Occidental de Tokio Tokyo 1971  
from 16th 1971 to January 23th  
1972. Exhibited also at the Kyoto  
Municipal Museum of Art,  
January 29th to March 15th 1972.  
cat. 72

**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,  
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,

**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. 127

**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. 45

**Goya. Opera grafica**

Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006

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

p.33

Hamburg 2019

cat. 80

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

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

HARRIS, Tomás

p.111, cat. 74

1964

Bruno Cassirer

**La hidalguía de Goya. Nuevos documentos y una hipótesis sobre Capricho 39**

Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar

BLANCO MOZO, José Luis

pp.37-60

59-60

1995

Ibercaja

**Francisco Goya. Los Caprichos**

POU, Anna

pp.16-17

2011

Ediciones de la Central

**Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 42-75

2016

Norton Simon Museum

**Francisco de Goya**

Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996

exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.

cat. 39, p.66

**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. 118

**Goya luces y sombras**

CaixaForum Barcelona 2012

consultant editors José Manuel Matilla and Manuela B. Marqués. From March 16th to June 24th 2012

cat. 31

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

p.180, cat. 526

1970

Office du livre

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

p.94, cat. 128

1996

Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

MATILLA, José Manuel and MENA, Manuela B.

pp. 154-155

2012

Fundación bancaria "la Caixa" y Museo Nacional del Prado

TACK, Ifee and PISOT, Sandra

p. 293

2019

Hirmer

scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre

cat. 46

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

Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996

from September 19th to December 15th 1996

cat. 136

**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. 39, p.155

**Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014

cat. 144

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

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp.211-216, cat. 124-128

1992

Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

**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.220-225

1999

Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,

Wilfredo

p. 206

2013

Pinacoteca de París

PALABRAS CLAVE

**CAPRICCIO NOBLEZA CRÍTICA**

ENLACES EXTERNOS