

# NO SABEN EL CAMINO

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: DISASTERS OF WAR (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, 1810-1815) (70/82)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1820 - 1823

DIMENSIONES

177 x 201 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching, burin, drypoint and burnisher

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

02 Dec 2010 / 24 May 2023

INVENTARIO

836 225

## HISTORIA

See *Sad forebodings of what is to come*.

The title of the print was handwritten by Goya and was engraved without any modification to the plate in the first edition produced by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando in Madrid in 1863.

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

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

From the background of the engraving, tracing an undulating shape, a line of men from all social classes approaches the viewer: priests with tile hats, nobles, humbler characters, etc. They are all linked together by a rope that seems to bind them inextricably. The landscape is barren and their sorrowful faces look down at the ground. In the foreground we can see their guide, who turns out to be a blind man.

This image reminds us of the passage in the Gospel of Matthew (15:15) and Luke (6:39) in which the parable of the blind leading the blind is narrated. This theme had an interesting diffusion in the medieval world and in the Flemish Renaissance; one need only think of the engraving by Cornelius Massys (Antwerp, ca. 1510-1556/1557) in which a blind man tied by a rope leads the way for other blind people. The subject was also treated by Hieronymus Bosch (Bolduque, ca.1450-1516) and Pieter Brueghel the Elder (Breda, 1525-Brussels, 1569). In Spanish literature, the poet Gómez Manrique (Amusco, 1412-Toledo, 1490) had referred to the blind man who guides others, saying: "Los cuerdos fuyr devrían/ de do locos mandan más./ que quando los çiegos guían, !quay de los que van detrás".

During the 18th century, several writers wrote texts that can be related to engraving no. 70. Perhaps the most closely related to the print is that of Bartolomé José Gallardo Blanco (Campanario, Badajoz, 1776-Alcoy, 1852), a friend of Goya's, who wrote on page 19 of his *Burlesque Critical Dictionary* (1812): "The paths of virtue, if we are to follow them well, must be illuminated by the light of wisdom: understanding guides the will: with blindfolded eyes and a chain at our feet we cannot make a great journey on the road to perfection". On page 13 of the same book he says: "If we can walk in paths of flowers, let us not walk among thorns and thistles".

In short, it could be thought that this engraving refers to the situation of the country after the War of Independence and the coming to power of Ferdinand VII. Thus Spain, represented in the print in all its social classes, became a country in the hands of a monarch guided by the principles of the Ancien Régime, which were far removed from the ideas of the Enlightenment, from the light of reason. Goya probably drew on different literary and formal sources which he fused in this image with a clearly critical content.

Enrique Lafuente Ferrari doubts that the figures parading tied up in the print by the Aragonese painter could be the Spaniards returning from captivity in France who do not know which side to take in what is happening in the country or those who, punished by Ferdinand VII, are on their way to the African prisons.

Nigel Glendinning believes that Goya may have reflected in this print Canto XXVI of the text by Giambattista Casti (Viterbo or Acquapendente, 1724-Paris, 1803) *Gli animali parlanti* (1801), to which we must refer in order to explain some other prints from the *Emphatic Caprices*.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in the National Chalcography (cat. 321).

#### EXPOSICIONES

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

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 95

**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

**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. 160

July 16th 1989, Madrid curator  
Manuela B. Mena Marqués,  
scientific directors Alfonso E.  
Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A.  
Sayre  
cat. 157

**Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie  
e disastri della guerra**

San Donato Milanese 2000

Opere grafiche della Fondazione  
Antonio Mazzotta

cat. 150

**Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat. 109

Madrid 2017

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

**Goya, grabador**

BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de

cat. 172

1918

Blass S.A.

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

HARRIS, Tomás

cat. 190

1964

Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de  
Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

cat. 1114

1970

Office du livre

**A solution to the enigma of  
Goya's emphatic caprices nº  
65-80 of The Disasters of War**

Apollo

GLENDINNING, Nigel

pp.186-191

107

1978

**Goya y el espíritu de la  
Ilustración**

PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, Alfonso E. y SAYRE, Eleanor  
A. (directores) and MENA, Manuela B.

(comisaria)

pp.439-440, cat. 157

1988

Museo del Prado

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

cat. 288

1996

Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo

p. 154

2013

Pinacoteca de Paris

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 114-151

2016

Norton Simon Museum

CALVO RUATA, José Ignacio, BORRÁS GUALIS,  
Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ HERRANZ,

Amparo

p. 243

2017

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**ENLACES EXTERNOS**