AND IT CAN’T BE HELPED (Y NO HAI REMEDIO)

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: DISASTERS OF WAR (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, 1810-1815) (15/82)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1810 - 1815
DIMENSIONES	139x164 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Aguafuerte, buril, punta seca y bruñido
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	30 Nov 2010 / 07 Nov 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

22 (lower left-hand corner of plate).

HISTORIA

See *Sad presentiments of what must come to pass*.

In the first state proof of this etching drypoint is used in the figures in the foreground, in the soldiers taking aim in the background, and in the fallen figure just visible on the left-hand side. This same figure is emphasized with the burin and there is some retouching in the area in the upper-right hand corner, where the

etching had bitten too deeply.

The title was handwritten by Goya on the first and only print run that we know to have been made at the time, and which the painter gave to his friend Agustín Ceán Bermúdez. The title was engraved on to the copperplate at a later date, and no other modifications were made to the image for the first edition of the Disasters of War, which was printed by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, Madrid, in 1863.

There is a *preparatory drawing* in the Prado Museum.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In the centre of the composition, in the foreground, we see a blindfolded man tied to a post. This calm, highly dignified figure is waiting, with resignation, his face turned down toward the ground, to be executed by firing squad. Beside him lies the body of another man who has just been killed, the blindfold removed from his face. We can assume that this same blindfold has been reused to cover the face of the man who is now about to be executed in the foreground. Behind him we can see two more posts and two more men, shown in the exact moment in which they are being shot by a row of soldiers, their weapons held aloft.

In this one image, Goya brings together three different phases in the death of these prisoners: the preparation, the moment of the execution, and the resulting corpse. On the right-hand side of the image he has shown the barrels of the soldier's rifles but not the soldiers themselves. Both here and in the background, the executioners' faces remain hidden from view, making it impossible for us to identify them.

The artist has used short, tightly-packed horizontal lines to recreate the sky, the earth, and the posts to which the prisoners are tied. The light areas of the scene are mainly in the spotless clothes of the accused men, alluding to their innocence. In these areas Goya has left the surface almost entirely unworked, adding only some delicate lines to construct the sleeves, the lower part of the trousers, and the shoes. Lit up in this same way is the squad of soldiers in the background, making sure that we do not overlook what is happening in that part of the scene.

This etching is closely related to the previous one, no. 14, *The way is hard!* , in that these two prints constitute two variations on the same theme, capital punishment. However, in And it can't be helped instead of Spaniards putting Frenchmen to death we see the reverse, with French forces executing Spaniards. In this way Goya shows how the horror is equally present on both sides. The artist finds himself utterly unable to justify the events he depicts, both here and in the previous work. He creates an analogy between these two images, in a similar way to what he did with etchings no. 2, *With or without reason* and no. 3, *The same*.

The subject of capital punishment is reiterated in some of the later prints in this series, such as no. 26, *One cannot look at this*, no. 31, *That's tough!*, no. 32, *Why?*, no. 34,*On account of a knife*, no. 35, *One can't tell why*, no. 36, *Not in this case either* and no. 38, *Barbarians!*.

CONSERVACIÓN

The etching plate is conserved in the National Chalcography Museum (cat. 266)

This etching was made reusing half of the plate which Goya used for his Landscape with Cliff, Buildings and Trees

EXPOSICIONES

De grafiek van Goya
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam 1970
from November 13th 1970 to January 17th 1971

Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
cat. 82

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, scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre
cat. 86

Francisco de Goya: Maleri, Tegning, Grafikk
Nasjonalgalleriet Oslo 1996
from 10th to April 14th 1996
cat. 135

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 15

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. 103

Ydioma universal: Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996
from September 19th to December 15th 1996
cat. 200

Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie e disastri della guerra
San Donato Milanese 2000
Opere grafiche della Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta
cat. 95

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
p. 58

Goya en tiempos de guerra
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2008
consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués, from April 14th to July 13th 2008
cat. 94

Goya et la modernité
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
cat. 54

Goya: Order and disorder
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014
cat. 196

Zaragoza 2021

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BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de
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1918
Blass S.A.

Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.
HARRIS, Tomás
cat. 135
1964
Bruno Cassirer

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
cat. 1015
1970
Office du livre

Vicisitudes de algunas láminas grabadas por Francisco de Goya: Los desastres de la guerra, Los disparates, La tauromaquia
Goya
CARRETE PARRONDO, Juan
p. 287
145-150
1978-1979

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PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, Alfonso E. y SAYRE, Eleanor A. (directores) and MENA, Manuela B. (comisaria)
pp. 299-300, cat. 86
1988
Museo del Prado

Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
cat. 206
1996
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

El Libro de los Desastres de la Guerra
BLAS BENITO, Javier and MATILLA, José Manuel
II, pp. 35-37
2000
Museo del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 127
2013
Pinacoteca de París

Goya: Order & Disorder
ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie L. (comisarios)
p. 291
2014
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp. 114-151
2016
Norton Simon Museum

Goya. Traveler and artist of the Grand Tour (exp. cat.)
GALLEGO GARCÍA, Raquel (comisaria)
pp. 246-247
2021
Gobierno de Aragón

ENLACES EXTERNOS