# AGAINST THE GENERAL GOOD

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: DISASTERS OF WAR (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, 1810-1815) (71/82)




**DATOS GENERALES**

| | |
|---|---|
| CRONOLOGÍA | Ca. 1820 - 1823 |
| DIMENSIONES | 177 x 221 mm |
| TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE | Etching and burnisher |
| RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA | Undisputed work |
| FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN | 03 Jan 2011 / 02 Jun 2023 |
| INVENTARIO | 836 225 |

**HISTORIA**

See *Sad forebodings of what is to come*.

The title of the print was handwritten by Goya on the first and only series known to us at the time of its production, which the painter gave to his friend Agustín Ceán Bermúdez. Thus the title was subsequently engraved on the plate without any modification from Ceán Bermúdez's copy for the first edition of the *Disasters of War* published 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**

A scribe, possibly an ecclesiastical figure, with bat-like wings, ears, hands and feet with long nails that could symbolise greed, sits writing. His feet are resting on the top of a sphere, and in the background of the engraving a group of people can be seen with gestures that speak of their despair.

This is one of the most complex and hermetic of the *emphatic Caprices*, perhaps because of the harshness of its critical content. Various interpretations have been proposed for it, although for the most part specialists seem to agree that it is a scribe who applies himself to the drafting of laws that are "against the general good".

Nigel Glendinning emphasises the presence in this engraving of vampire wings on the scribe instead of ears, and believes that this figure may have been taken from the work *Gli animali parlanti* (1801) by Giambattista Casti (Viterbo or Acquapendente, 1724-Paris, 1803). In this text the vampire chief heads a group of greedy notaries, criminals and economists who, in time, will become the crown's advisor.

For her part, Jesusa Vega believes that this print represents the moment of crisis prior to Ferdinand VII's return to the throne, when the struggle between the servile and liberal factions took place.

It is possible that this print is related to the next one, no. 72, *The Results*. It repeats the allusion to the vampire who is sucking the chest of a lying figure, perhaps a corpse. It is probable, therefore, that the circumstance described in engraving no. 72 is the result of the measures taken in no. 71.

**CONSERVACIÓN**

The plate is in the National Chalcography (cat. 322).

**EXPOSICIONES**

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
*cat. 10*

**Francisco de Goya**
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
*cat. 71*

**Francisco de Goya: Maleri, Tegning, Grafikk**
Nasjonalgalleriet Oslo 1996
from 10th to April 14th 1996
*cat. 153*

**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. 161*

**Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie e disastri della guerra**
San Donato Milanese 2000
Opere grafiche della Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta
*cat. 151*

**Goya: Prophet der Moderne**
Alte Nationalgalerie Berlin 2005
from July 13th to October 3th 2005. Exhibitied also at the Kunsthistorischemuseum, Vienna, October 18th 2005 to January 8th 2006, consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués
*cat. 123*

**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. 115*

**Goya et la modernité**
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
*cat. 110*

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**


**Goya, grabador**
BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de
cat. 173
1918
Blass S.A.

**Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.**
HARRIS, Tomás
cat. 191
1964
Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
cat. 1116
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

**Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
cat. 290
1996

**El Libro de los Desastres de la Guerra**
BLAS BENITO, Javier and MATILLA, José Manuel
pp.139-141
2000

pp.186-191
107
1978

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 155
2013
Pinacoteca de París

Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

Museo del Prado

## Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum

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

### ENLACES EXTERNOS