

# 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 Revolutionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 10

**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

**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

**Francisco de Goya**

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

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

San Donato Milanese 2000  
Opere grafiche della Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta  
cat. 111

**Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013  
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014  
cat. 110

**Francisco de Goya: Maleri, Tegning, Grafikk**

Nasjonalgalleriet Oslo 1996  
from 10th to April 14th 1996  
cat. 153

**Goya: Prophet der Moderne**

Alte Nationalgalerie Berlin 2005  
from July 13th to October 3th 2005. Exhibited also at the Kunsthistorischemuseum, Vienna, October 18th 2005 to January 8th 2006, consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués  
cat. 123

#### BIBLIOGRAFÍA

**Goya, grabador**

BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de  
cat. 173

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

HARRIS, Tomás

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

1918  
Blass S.A.

**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

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

cat. 191  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
cat. 290  
1996  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**

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

cat. 1116  
1970  
Office du livre

**El Libro de los Desastres de la  
Guerra**

BLAS BENITO, Javier and MATILLA, José  
Manuel  
pp.139-141  
2000  
Museo del Prado

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**