

# WHAT IS THE USE OF A CUP? (DE QUÉ SIRVE UNA TAZA?)

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: DISASTERS OF WAR (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, 1810-1815) (59/82)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1812 - 1815

DIMENSIONES

157 x 207 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Agua fuerte, aguatinada bruñida y lavis

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

20 Dec 2010 / 02 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

3 (on the lower left-hand corner of the plate).

## HISTORIA

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

The second artist's proof shows that the aquatint extends right up to the edges of the page.

The title was handwritten on the print by Goya in the first and only series that is known to have been printed at the time the works were created, which the artist gave to his friend

Agustín Ceán Bermúdez. Therefore, the title was etched into the plate at a later date and left unchanged as of the first edition of the *Disasters of War* printed by the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid in 1863, after the printing of the series in the possession of Ceán Bermúdez.

There is a surviving *preparatory drawing* for this print which is housed in the Prado Museum in Madrid.

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In the middle of a desolate landscape a woman helps others who are suffering from the terrible famine that affected Spain during the Spanish War of Independence, in particular between 1811 and 1812. One of the starving women in the centre of the composition lies prone on the ground with her eyes closed, exhausted, with the body of a child in her lap. Behind her, an older woman dressed entirely in black watches with a pained expression as the first figure helps the others.

Goya employs aquatint to render the sky and ground, achieving a granular effect in both areas to the point that it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. Aquatint is also used to depict the women in the centre of the composition in great detail, while some areas on the body of the woman who is lying down and the one holding the cup in her hand have been left blank. There are no other elements to distract the eye from the figures being helped or spatial and temporal references: this gives the scene a markedly abstract, universal air.

The title of the print expresses the futility of the gesture, despite the good will of the person carrying out the act of helping the starving: the famine was extreme, and the available resources were scarce and insufficient.

This print, in which Goya continues to explore the theme of famine experienced during the Spanish War of Independence started in print no. 48, *A cruel shame! (Cruel lástima)*, can be linked to no. 52, *They do not arrive in time (No llegan á tiempo)*, which also depicts a merciful act in which women have a central role.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is stored in the National Chalcography (cat. 310).

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Goya and his times**

The Royal Academy of Arts London 1963

cat. 66

cat. 249

##### **Francisco de Goya**

Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996

exhibition celebrated from  
September 22nd to November  
17th.

cat. 59

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

Nasjonalgalleriet Oslo 1996

from 10th to April 14th 1996

cat. 147

##### **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. 143

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

Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996

from September 19th to  
December 15th 1996

cat. 220

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

San Donato Milanese 2000

Opere grafiche della Fondazione  
Antonio Mazzotta

cat. 139

##### **Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat. 98

2022

## BIBLIOGRAFÍA

### **Goya, grabador**

BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de  
cat. 161  
1918  
Blass S.A.

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

HARRIS, Tomás  
cat. 179  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

### **Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
cat. 1092  
1970  
Office du livre

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
cat. 272  
1996  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 149  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

### **Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**

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

TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN  
MEDINA, Víctor

p. 79  
2022

Museo de Bellas Artes de Badajoz y Diputación  
de Badajoz

## ENLACES EXTERNOS