WHY? (POR QUÉ?)

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: DISASTERS OF WAR (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, 1810-1815) (32/82)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1812 - 1815
DIMENSIONES	157 x 209 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Aguafuerte, aguatinta, lavis, punta seca y bruñidor
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	08 Dec 2010 / 07 Nov 2024
INVENTARIO	836 225

INSCRIPCIONES

49 (on the lower left-hand corner).

HISTORIA

See *Sad presentiments of what must come to pass (Tristes presentimientos de lo que ha de acontecer).*

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 are no surviving preparatory drawings for this print.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In the middle of a natural setting a man is being subjected to brutal torture. Two French soldiers are holding the legs of a Spanish man they have taken prisoner whose head has been tied to a tree with a rope. The rope is taught, squeezing tight around the neck of the prisoner. His eyes are closed, his mouth open. The figure seems to be screaming in pain, his hair standing on end from the unbearable physical suffering. One soldier pushes his foot into the prisoner's back to ensure that the rope is tight enough to asphyxiate him.

This image continues the theme represented in the previous print, no. 31, *That's tough! (Fuerte cosa es)*, in which a solider pulls on the feet of a hanged man to hasten his death or make sure that he is already dead. The two scenes are equally cruel, depicting torture meted out without pity.

The title of this print poses a question, Why?, asking what is the sense or reason behind such a level of suffering. The question is carried over into the next print, no. 33, *What more can be done? (Qué hai que hacer mas?)*. Goya reiterates his inability to understand the events he depicts, answering his own question in print no. 35 in which he admits that *One can't tell why (No se puede saber por qué)*.

Nature is complicit in this torture: the trunk of the tree, which has a burned, dry appearance, provides a support for this atrocious act of violence.

CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is stored in the National Chalcography (cat. 283).

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. Drawings, Etchings and Lithographs
Goya. Drawings London 1954
from June 12th to July 25th 1954
cat. 55

De grafiek van Goya
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam 1970
from November 13th 1970 to January 17th 1971
cat. 74

Francisco de Goya
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
cat. 32

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. 118

Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie e disastri della guerra
San Donato Milanese 2000
Opere grafiche della Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta
cat. 112

Goya. Opera grafica
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006
exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
p. 67

Goya et la modernité
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
cat.71

Goya: Order and disorder
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014
cat. 198

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Goya, grabador
BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de
cat. 134
1918
Blass S.A.

Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.
HARRIS, Tomás
cat. 152
1964
Bruno Cassirer

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
cat. 1047
1970
Office du livre

Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
cat. 236
1996
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 135
2013
Pinacoteca de París

Goya: Order & Disorder
ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie L. (comisarios)
p. 292
2014
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum

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

ENLACES EXTERNOS