

# 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, aguatina, 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 soldier 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 Paris 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**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 114-151

2016

Norton Simon Museum

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**