

I saw it: The Invented Reality of Goya's *Disasters of War*

Curated by students in the Exhibition Seminar, Department of Art
Under the direction of Associate Professor Susan Strauber

13 August–12 September 2004

Faulconer Gallery
Bucksbaum Center for the Arts
Grinnell College

Exhibition seminar participants Spring 2004:

Annaliese Beaman '05	Alfredo Rivera '06
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Department of Art, Grinnell College

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Professor Jenny Anger

1 April–21 April 2002

Faulconer Gallery

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Preface

In 1985, Grinnell College received a sixth edition of Francisco de Goya's *Disasters of War*, printed in 1930, through a generous donation by Helena Percas de Ponseti, Professor Emerita of Spanish and her husband, Dr. Ignacio V. Ponseti. These prints are the subject of this year's art exhibition seminar, in which students are offered a unique opportunity to curate an exhibition in the Faulconer Gallery and write an accompanying exhibition catalogue. Over the course of the spring semester, we have come a long way in our understanding of Goya's *Disasters of War*. We began by simply looking. After familiarizing ourselves with the works, we were able to begin a process of intensive research and discussion on Goya and his times, with particular attention to the *Disasters of War* prints.

The idea of witnessing was one that recurred in both the readings and our class discussions. This concept is rich in meaning and implication, and, as such, we decided on it as a theme to frame our exhibition. Bringing the exhibition to fruition was a lengthy, rigorous process that demanded the cooperation, focus, and dedication of everyone involved. Now, our efforts having finally taken shape, we present you our catalogue.

—Annaliese Beaman & Roxanne Young

Acknowledgments

On the first day of class, Professor Susan Strauber informed us that it was our obligation to create an exhibition worthy not only of Faulconer Gallery and Grinnell College, but of Francisco Goya y Lucientes himself. Although this news was rather daunting, she assured us that we would not be alone in this endeavor. Fortunately, she was right. We are extremely grateful to those people who have allowed us this unique opportunity and who have supported us along the way.

We thank Helena Percas de Ponseti, Professor Emerita of Spanish, and Dr. Ignacio V. Ponseti who generously donated the *Disasters of War* print series used in this exhibition. Without their kindness, there would be no exhibition; we are greatly indebted to them. Throughout the semester, we have been inspired by their passion for Goya and particularly for this series. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Susan Strauber, Associate Professor of Art, for offering us her endless encouragement and support. She provided the class with structure and focus, yet still allowed us space to explore the series on our own. Most importantly, she instilled in us a sense of excitement for the exhibition as well as for Goya's art.

We owe much to the Faulconer Gallery staff who shared their wisdom and expertise with us and helped to make our vision of the exhibition a reality. We thank Lesley Wright, Director of the Gallery, Kay Wilson Jenkins, Curator of the Collection, and Milton Severe, Director of Exhibition Design, for giving us a tour of the gallery as well as for listening to our numerous ideas for the exhibition and offering their suggestions. Lesley Wright worked with student Tala Orngard to coordinate the exhibition reception. Additionally, she and Dann Hayes, Director of Media Relations, aided students Audrey Coffield and Tala Orngard with the creation of publicity and exhibition announcements. Students Nathaniel Jones and Madeline VanHaften-Schick worked with Lesley Wright and Karla Niehus, Curator of Education, in order to create the wall labels used in the exhibit. Karla Niehus also worked with students

Alfredo Rivera, Katherine Skarzynski, and Kimberly Theodore in order to devise programming and education events. Milton Severe gently but firmly guided us as we worked on a model for the layout of the gallery space. Working with students Annaliese Beaman and Megan Drechsel, he used his eye for detail in order to perfect the ideas of the class. Without his help, we would have ended up with an exhibition full of awkward spaces or too tight corners. We are especially appreciative of the expertise and patience of Dan Strong, Associate Director and Curator of the Collection, who photographed all of the Goya prints for the catalog.

We also extend our thanks to Jim Powers, Associate Director of Communication and Events, for helping students Nicole Bungert, Katherine Rochester, and Roxanne Young create a powerful design for the catalogue. Our class is not particularly computer savvy; thus, we are grateful to Jared Price, Curricular Technology Specialist, for working with students Alfredo Rivera and Roxanne Young in order to produce a website for the exhibit. We thank Claire Hassett-Moisan, Writing Lab Assistant, for the endless editing and revising that she contributed to the catalogue essays.

We thank William Patch, Professor of History, for expanding upon our knowledge of Spanish history during Goya's time. We also thank Matthew Kluber, Assistant Professor of Art, for enhancing our appreciation of the series through his demonstration of the printmaking techniques that Goya himself most likely used. He made this complicated process come to life, and left us with a deeper admiration of the great technical skill required to make such prints.

In closing, we are enormously appreciative of the time and energy that these wonderful people have devoted to this project. They have helped to make this a truly amazing experience for us, and for that, we are grateful.

—Katherine Skarzynski

Introduction

What does it mean to witness? Does it mean seeing? Offering testimony? Participating? All of these questions inform Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes's *Disasters of War* print series, which offers a vision of the visceral realities of the Peninsular War (1808-14) between France and Spain. Formally titled *Fatales consecuencias de la sangrienta Guerra en Espana con Buonaparte. Y otros caprichos enfáticos* (*Fatal consequences of the bloody war in Spain with Bonaparte. And other emphatic caprices*), the print series reveals Goya's "waxing awareness of the tenuous distinction between patriotic fervor and mindless brutality, between heroism and fanaticism," and thus serves as a commentary on the political climate of Spain during and after the Peninsular War (Tomlinson, *Graphic* 34).

Despite titles of prints like *I saw it through* which the artist seems to claim his role as viewer and documenter, it remains unclear whether Goya actually witnessed the events he depicts or used his artistic skills to invent them. The degree to which Goya's invented realities document specific incidents that actually happened, or not, is immaterial, for there is no doubt that events like those Goya depicts occurred; what matters, rather, is how Goya forces the viewer into the position of witness.

As a series of eighty prints, the *Disasters of War* compel the viewer to repeatedly confront the unbearable, to become a sustained witness to the unthinkable, and, in some small measure, to experience the war itself. The prints thus remain relevant today. As viewers of the prints, we are often placed in the position of onlookers and become, implicitly, members of the crowd or spectators, and so the *Disasters of War* continues to resonate (Wolf 43). What makes Goya's imagery so alternately disturbing and poignant, then, is his understanding of "the complex psychological and sociological implications of being in the position of witness," and thus his ability to integrate the viewer into the action, whether or not the viewer was physically present to witness the events depicted (Wolf 37).

In order to appreciate the impact of these prints, it is important to situate them historically, both within the context of Goya's life and within the political climate of early nineteenth-century Spain. In "Goya: *Disasters* in Context," Tala Orngard investigates Goya's career as an artist, with a focus on the historical and political context of the *Disasters of War*. Her essay recognizes the print series as a continuation of previous themes in Goya's art and contextualizes it conceptually among his other works, in particular the late "Black Paintings" and one other series of prints, *Los Caprichos*.

In their essay, "The Medium for the Message: Printmaking and the *Disasters of War*," Roxanne Young and Annaliese Beaman present a detailed description of Goya's

printmaking process. They show why understanding Goya's formal media is important to viewing the *Disasters of War*. Goya was an innovator in the use of aquatint and, more generally, a stylistic innovator in printmaking.

Katherine Rochester, in "Moral Action/Guilty Conscience: The role of the witness in Goya's *Disasters of War*," establishes how the word "witness" connotes both a human context and a moral aspect, something beyond just "seeing." She contextualizes what witnessing meant for Goya and examines the ways in which witnessing is thematized within the series. Not only did Goya invent new ways of viewing war, he also offered trenchant political commentary by subverting religious icons, as Nathaniel Jones maintains in his essay "Secularizing the Holy: Christian Iconography in Goya's *Disasters of War*," analyzing Goya's use of religious iconography.

Just as religious imagery is a component of the print series, so is the depiction of famine. In her essay, "The Forgotten Prints: Images of Famine," Nicole Bungert scrutinizes a portion of the print series that is less well known, less reproduced, and less discussed.

Alfredo Rivera's essay on the emphatic *caprichos*, "*Que locura!*: The Fantastical and the Absurd in the *Caprichos Enfáticos*," is a close examination of the most strange and difficult section of the *Disasters*, the last sixteen prints. This essay relates the emphatic *caprichos* to the *Disasters* series as a whole and explores the notion that the entire series can be seen as "caprice" (fantasy and invention).

Kimberly Theodore assesses modern images of atrocity in photojournalism in her essay, "Disasters Revisited: Modern Images of Atrocity and Photojournalism" and addresses the questions "Why are modern viewers inclined to compare the *Disasters of War* to war photography?" and "What does it mean to view in a media-saturated environment?" Far from claiming that Goya's work functions as literal, factual documentary, Theodore agrees with Susan Sontag's assertion that "Goya's images are a synthesis. They claim: things *like* this happened. In contrast, a single photograph or filmstrip claims to represent exactly what was before the camera's lens" (Sontag 47).

Finally, Madeline VanHaften-Schick considers the meaning of "truth" by locating the series in a current theoretical framework in her essay, "Reviving the Reality of Goya's *Disasters of War*." Her essay suggests that the events Goya depicted in the *Disasters of War* are "real," although the scenes themselves may have been a product of Goya's imagination.

—Audrey Coffield & Megan Drechsel

Timeline

<i>Goya • The Region</i>	
1746	• Francisco de Goya y Lucientes born, March 30
1758	• Becomes an apprentice for four years in the art studio of José Luzán y Martínez
1759	• Fernando VI of Spain dies; Carlos III takes the throne
1770–71	• Travels to Italy
1774	• Summoned to Madrid to design tapestries for Carlos III
1780	• Elected to Royal Academy of San Fernando in Madrid
1785	• Named Assistant Director of Painting at the Royal Academy
1786	• Appointed Painter to the King
1788	• Death of Carlos III; Carlos IV takes the throne, María Luisa de Parma becomes queen
1789	• Goya promoted to Court Painter by Carlos IV
1792	• Goya falls ill with a disease that leaves him deaf
1793	• Paints eleven small uncommissioned cabinet paintings during his convalescence
1795	• Named Director of Painting at the Royal Academy
1797	• Begins work on print series entitled <i>Los Caprichos</i>
1799	• Publishes his <i>Caprichos</i> ; Appointed First Court Painter
1800	• France and Spain sign treaty of alliance in which Spain agrees to aid France in all its wars
1801	• Godoy signs peace agreement with France;
1802	• Spain declares war on Portugal at the behest of France
1804	• War of Oranges between Spain and Portugal
1805	• Napoleon hands the Spanish colony of Trinidad over to the British without consulting with Spain
1805	• Napoleon declares himself Emperor of France
1805	• French and Spanish defeated at Trafalgar
1807	• French troops pass through Spain on the way to attack Portugal; Portugal's monarchs have already fled

- 1808**
- Visits Saragossa after the first siege to see the ruins of the city
 - More French troops enter Spain; it becomes clear that their aim is to capture Spain, not Portugal
 - Carlos IV abdicates in favor of Fernando VII to save Godoy, who is accused of sympathizing with the French
 - The French hold the Spanish Royal family in Bayonne, and force Fernando to return the crown to Carlos, who then abdicates again, this time to Napoleon
 - May 2: The Peninsular War, or War of Independence, begins; Citizens of Madrid revolt
 - May 3: French troops execute those involved in the Madrid uprising
 - Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, is made King of Spain (José I)
- 1810**
- Begins etching the prints known as the *Disasters of War*
- 1812**
- Constitution of Cadiz, created by the Spanish leaders of the resistance, adopted; Inquisition abolished, power of monarchy limited
 - Duke of Wellington defeats French forces (R)
- 1813**
- José I flees Spain; Napoleon releases Fernando VII
- 1814**
- Paints *May 2, 1808* and *May 3, 1808*
 - Fernando swears to uphold the Constitution of 1812, then revokes it and reinstates the Inquisition
 - Napoleon abdicates
- 1815**
- Begins *La Tauromaquia* etchings
- 1816**
- Begins etching his print series *Los Disparates*; *La Tauromaquia* published
- 1819**
- Buys country house, Quinta del Sordo
 - Falls gravely ill
- 1820**
- Begins to etch the *Caprichos ensáticos* of the *Disasters of War*
 - Executes the *Black Paintings* on the walls of the Quinta del Sordo
 - Completes work on *Los Disparates*
 - Revolution of 1820: mutiny led by General Riego leads to the overthrow of Fernando's government; Fernando swears allegiance once again to the Constitution of 1812
- 1823**
- Louis XVIII sends troops to Spain to restore Fernando VII to absolute power; Fernando VII immediately initiates a reign of terror, imprisoning and executing Liberals (and suspected Liberals)
- 1824**
- Fernando VII grants Goya six months leave for health reasons; Goya travels to France with the intention of becoming an expatriate and settles in Bordeaux
- 1825**
- Diagnosed with a tumor in one of his legs
- 1828**
- Goya dies in Bordeaux, April sixteen
- 1863**
- Disasters of War* plates purchased by the Royal Academy of San Fernando and subsequently published in book form

—Megan Drechsel



Figure 1: *Francisco Goya y Lucientes, Pintor* (*Francisco Goya y Lucientes, Painter*) (*Los Caprichos*, Plate 1) (National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., Rosenwald Collection). Image © Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Goya: Disasters in Context

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (Fig. 1) was born in the small village of Fuendetodos, just south of Saragossa on March 30, 1746. His father, José Francisco de Paula Goya, was a master gilder and his mother, Gracia Lucientes, came from a *Hidalgo* family, the lowest rank of nobility. Soon after his birth, the family moved to Saragossa where, at the age of fourteen, Goya was apprenticed to the painter Don José Luzan y Martínez. From him, Goya learned the basics of drawing, engraving and painting but was twice denied entrance to the Spanish Royal Academy of San Fernando in Madrid. After a period spent traveling and refining his work, Goya was asked to submit fresco plans to the Royal Academy; the Academy accepted the plans and Goya completed them in 1772.

By 1778 Goya had begun to establish himself as an artist in Madrid. Through court painter Anton Raphael Mengs he was allowed access to the Royal Palace, where he had the opportunity to study the work of influential artists such as Diego Velázquez and Giambattista Tiepolo. During this time, he supported his wife and children by creating designs of daily life in Spain for the Madrid tapestry factory and by painting portraits of an ever-widening selection of wealthy patrons from the Court and intelligentsia. Through dedication, hard work, and the help of a few friends, Goya was elected to the Royal Academy of San Fernando in 1780. Shortly thereafter, he was named Painter to King Carlos III. In 1789, Carlos IV appointed Goya to the prestigious position of Court Painter. Highly admired, Goya was the most sought after Spanish artist of his time.

While he enjoyed these professional successes, Goya suffered from poor health. He fell gravely ill in 1792, complaining of buzzing, roaring, and ringing in his head, trouble with his balance, and constant nausea (Hughes 127). This illness left the artist completely deaf for the rest of his life; from then on, he could only communicate to others through writing, sign language, lip reading, and, of course, his art. Deafness thus removed Goya from typical social intercourse and placed him in the role of detached observer, of "witness," a role that informs the profound expression of pain, agony, and injustice found in two of his major print series. It is from this position as witness and in reaction to political and social events in Spain that Goya undertook *Los Caprichos* in 1797 and *Los Desastres* in 1810.

When King Carlos III left his throne to the Prince and Princess of Asturias, Carlos IV and María Luisa de Parma, in 1788, he ushered in an era of political instability. Carlos IV knew little of international politics and spent most of his time hunting. This lack of political acumen and interest, combined with the influence of María Luisa, led Carlos IV to appoint Emmanuel Godoy (who was reputedly engaged

in an affair with María Luisa) Prime Minister in 1792. Godoy was disliked and distrusted by the upper nobility, the clergy and the Spanish people. The nobility regarded him as "a scheming upstart whose road to power ran between María Luisa's sheets," while the clergy detested him not only for his immorality but also "for his desire to curb their wealth and power" (Hughes 239). These internal political machinations coalesced with the broader political instability of the time—France declared war on Spain in 1793 and just two years later Godoy both signed a peace agreement with France and declared war against Great Britain—and formed a *tableau vivant* of vice, corruption, scandal and upheaval that inspired Goya's *Caprichos*. Heavily satirical and often allegorical, Goya's *Caprichos* attacked both the church and the aristocracy for their vices—demonic greed and graft. As art historian Janis Tomlinson writes, "More than a series, *Los Caprichos* offers a kaleidoscopic view of evil, encompassing prostitutes, clergy, imagined witches and goblins. Never before had any artist presented such a complex group of images, which effortlessly slip from the mundane to the supernatural" (*Goya* 123). A decade or so later, Goya would incorporate similar themes and creatures in his print series the *Disasters of War*, devoting sixteen of the eighty prints to the *caprichos enfáticos*.

1808 was a critical year in Spanish politics; the crown passed several times as Carlos IV abdicated to his son Fernando VII in order to save his Prime Minister, Godoy, who was accused of being a French sympathizer. After Carlos IV received the crown back from Fernando, who was forced to return it by the circumstances of the French holding the Spanish royal family captive, Carlos abdicated once more, this time to Napoleon who placed his own brother, José (Joseph Bonaparte), on the throne. When the French invaded Spain, the Spanish people revolted. Thus began the Peninsular War, which stretched on for six years, until 1814. These were six years of chaos and savagery; as France and Spain (aided by ordinary Spaniards turned *guerrilla* fighters) fought for control of the countryside, women were raped, children were murdered, and men were brutally tortured. For nearly a year (1811-12), famine devastated Madrid, taking nearly 20,000 lives—indeed, dead bodies were a common sight along the road. Once again witness to the upheaval of his country, Goya began in 1810 to construct a visual testimony of the war horrors surrounding him. With unhesitating hand and confrontational gaze, Goya sought to convey the harsh realities of war and starvation, to depict the atrocities committed by both French and Spanish, for he realized, perhaps better than many of his compatriots, that very little separated the two camps. As art historian Lorenz Eitner points out, "The treatment of war as misery rather than glory, and its presentation from the victim's point of view is rare in

art before Goya" (Eitner 67). With the *Disasters*, then, Goya took his status as observer to social realities to a new political and ethical level: he bore witness.

The political situation in Spain continued to seesaw back and forth after the end of the Peninsular War when Fernando VII was once again placed on the throne. Fernando VII soon reinstated the institutions of the old monarchy. "The years that followed brought total disillusionment to those who had fought against the French. The Constitution of 1812 was abolished, the Jesuits were recalled, the clergy readmitted to power. The civil administration sank into chaos; despotic ministers ruled without check" (Eitner 69). In 1814, Fernando VII also reinstated the Spanish Inquisition, under which, had it been published and publicly available, Goya's *Disasters* could have been severely prosecuted. In fact, they were not published until thirty-five years after Goya's death in 1828, escaping the wrath of the Inquisition but also failing in their anonymity to provide a public voice to the devastation, fear, deceit and despair Goya had seen. "And so it came about that the greatest anti-war manifesto in the history of art, this vast and laborious act of public contrition for the barbarity of its author's own species, remained unknown and had no effect whatsoever on European consciousness for two generations after it was published" (Hughes 304). When the *Disasters* were prepared for printing in 1863, the publisher, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando, changed Goya's title for the series, *Fatales consecuencias de la sangrieta Guerra en Espana con Buonaparte. Y otros caprichos*

enfáticos (*Fatal consequences of the bloody war in Spain with Bonaparte. And other emphatic caprices*) to the now familiar *Desastres de la Guerra* (*Disasters of War*). Eighty prints were bound together in albums and sold to the public.

Although Goya did not live to see the publication of the *Disasters*, the themes of despair and desperation about the human condition from the series continued to inform his late work. When he took his leave of Fernando's court in 1819, Goya purchased a two-story home outside of Madrid, ironically called Quinta del Sordo (House of the Deaf Man), for its previous and likewise deaf owner. Late in his life, Goya again became very ill; during his recovery, he began painting the walls in this house with the murals that would become known as the "Black Paintings." Subjects included the Witches' Sabbath, Saturn Eating One of His Children, Judith Slaying Holofernes, and Dog Buried in Sand. As the subjects suggest, the murals depict gruesome events. Themes apparent in Goya's earlier works, from the tapestry cartoons to the visions of war, recur in a terrifying manner. These murals can perhaps be seen as Goya's final phase of witnessing, for himself and to himself. Whether etching eighty plates or painting the walls of his home, Goya shows that he did not, and could not, exorcize war, chaos and human barbarity from his artistic vision.

—Tala Orngard

The Medium for the Message: Printmaking and the *Disasters of War*

Understanding the process by which an etching is made is invaluable in appreciating Francisco Goya's supreme mastery of this difficult medium. The processes Goya used to prepare the plates for the *Disasters of War* print series are broadly categorized as intaglio, a general term for the type of printmaking in which the lines carved into a metal plate are the same lines that later hold and print ink, as opposed to relief processes, such as woodcut, in which the parts of the plate that hold ink are those parts left untouched. Viewing the *Disasters* leaves no doubt that the methods Goya used were complicated and required a number of tools to render the varied effects in his prints. In fact, Goya combined several specific methods of etching and aquatint to achieve the rich lineal and tonal qualities we see in his prints. Some of these methods were old ones that had been mastered by many artists before Goya's lifetime, while others marked innovations in printmaking that were being pioneered at the turn of the nineteenth century while Goya was creating the *Disasters of War*.

In order to etch a copper plate, the artist must first coat the plate with a thin layer of acid-resistant ground. The artist scratches lines into this ground, exposing the copper underneath. The plate is then placed into an acid solution, which "bites" the unprotected copper – the lines that the artist has exposed – into grooves deep enough to hold ink. Etched lines are very clean because the acid removes exactly those parts of the plate where the ground has been scratched away. "Etching" is also the word most generally used to describe intaglio prints, even when other processes are used to create the image. Goya's prints are referred to as "etchings," although he did much more to his plates than etch them.

While the acid solution does most of the work in the etching process, engraving requires that the artist physically carve into the copper plate. Engraving is among the oldest of intaglio processes and was used widely in the fourteenth-century (Tomlinson, *Graphic 4*). In this process, the artist carves lines into the copper using one of two traditional engraving tools, a dry point needle or a burin, each of which produces a unique line quality. The lines created with a burin have tapered ends; dry point lines are blunt (Harris 23). In drypoint, instead of removing the copper from the plate completely, the artist effectively pushes the copper to build up a ridge (a "burr") alongside the carved line. Along with the incised line, this burr ends up holding ink, resulting in a blurred printing that is easily distinguishable from a clean, precise etched line. Sometimes burrs are removed from engraved plates in order to preserve line precision, but many artists leave the burrs in place to add tonal variety to an image.

Aquatint emerged as a printmaking process during Goya's lifetime. To create an aquatinted surface on a plate, the artist first applies fine particles of acid-resistant resin

to the plate. This is usually done in one of two ways: with a resin powder which is allowed to settle on the plate and then melted onto it; or with an alcohol solution which evaporates from the plate, leaving a layer of resin spread evenly (or deliberately unevenly, as in some of Goya's prints) over those areas of the plate where the solution was brushed or sprayed (24). After applying this layer of resin to the plate, the artist places it into an acid solution, which bites the plate in the areas unprotected by resin. In other words, an even coat of resin allows the acid to chemically etch the plate evenly in the aquatinted area, which then prints as a field of value or tone. Aquatint was an innovation in printmaking because it had previously been possible to create only linear patterns on prints; fields of value could be created only through hatched lines, a buildup of fine lines that create the illusion of a smooth tone. Aquatint added the element of tone to prints, an element that adds to the extraordinary quality of the *Disasters of War*.

Another process that was new during Goya's lifetime was lavis, a grainless method of producing tone on a plate using acid as directly as possible. In this process, the artist first "stops out" with an acid-resistant varnish the parts of the plate he or she intends to print as white (the parts which must remain untouched by acid). Then the artist either places the plate in an acid bath or brushes/sprays acid directly onto the plate. The acid does not affect the protected ("stopped out") areas of the plate. Lavis has an unobtrusive, delicate effect, very similar to an ink wash on paper (Tomlinson, *Goya* 192). Goya usually used lavis to add pale, even tones to entire plates (Harris 25). After toning a plate with aquatint or lavis, the artist can choose to erase¹ parts of the plate tone by burnishing. The burnisher is a blunt, rounded tool that the artist rubs against the plate to flatten out textured areas. With a burnisher, the rough areas created to hold and print an even amount of ink can be smoothed out so that they hold less ink. This is how Goya created highlights in his aquatinted plates (26).

After etching the plate completely, the artist or a commissioned printmaker² inks the plate for printing. Ink is spread onto the entire plate and then wiped off slowly with tarlatan, a stiffly starched muslin gauze. Using slight pressure, the printmaker forces ink into the etched plate's grooves. Because a thin film of ink remains on the entire plate even after proper wiping, a plate tone — usually an even, light gray color — tones the entire plate. After inking, the plate is ready to print. The printmaker places a damp sheet of paper over the plate and runs both paper and plate through a relatively high-pressure press. The pressure results in a plate mark on the finished print, which appears as an outline of the plate and slightly embosses the paper. This embossing effect is an obvious difference between an original print and a reproduction.

It is common to print a fairly large number of prints, a practice known as editioning. Multiple copies of single prints or, as in Goya's case, multiple copies of a series of prints, are made to be sold or distributed to different collectors, galleries, and museums. Large print editions can damage copper plates, especially plates with raised burrs from engraving processes. Sometimes these copper plates can be coated with a layer of steel alloy that makes them stronger and more resilient to multiple printings for large editions. This is called "steel-facing." The *Disasters of War* plates were steel-faced after a large edition was printed in 1863. This steel-facing helped make it possible to publish later, smaller, editions of the *Disasters of War* without further damaging these valuable plates.

The process of creating a print involves many intermediary stages in which the artist "drafts" versions of the final print, called working proofs. The artist then consults these proofs to decide which changes to make to the plate. Often, printers will actually draw on these proofs to visualize possible changes. Because they function mainly as tools to aid the artist in achieving a final impression, working proofs often are discarded or lost. Collectors, especially modern ones, value these proofs largely because of their limited number and direct connection to the artist's working method and thought. There are 485 working proofs from the *Disasters of War* (Harris). One might speculate that so many proofs from this series exist because Goya worked on it for over a decade and because he never published a finished edition in his lifetime. The proofs would have been his main reference as he worked on the series. The last copy that Goya produced was a set of eighty-five working proofs that he gave his friend Ceán Bermúdez, who he hoped would correct the captions penciled in the lower margins. The original copper plates (from which the Bermúdez proofs were pulled), along with some preliminary drawings and other proofs, remained in Goya's family until between 1854 and 1862 when they were sold to various collectors throughout Europe. In 1862, the Academy of San Fernando purchased the original plates. The plates reached the Academy largely in good condition; however, some of the plates (numbers 13, 14, 15, and 30) which Goya had etched during the war were of inferior quality and needed minor repairs. The Academy applied aquatint and burnished these damaged plates. Around the same time, Ceán Bermúdez's daughter presented the set of working proofs with captions to master printer Valentín Carderera, who engraved the corrected captions. These finalized plates were the source of all subsequent editions of the *Disasters of War*, including the one presented here (Harris 140).

Each print is unique in some way; each print impression has individual qualities based on the skills or preferences of the printer. The copper plates from which prints are pulled are just as unique as paintings and, like paintings, can only be in one place at any given time. Prints are just as capable of conveying aesthetics and ideas as less accessible artistic media and, in the pre-photographic era, prints had the advantage of being able to reach large audiences. Before the invention of photography, the only

way to see a painting or sculpture was first hand. Printmaking, by contrast, was a way for an image to reach many people who lacked the resources to travel or to own paintings and sculptures.

Printmaking played a vital role in Goya's artistic career. He began his study of the medium as part of his academic training at a time when it was conventional for aspiring artists to etch copies of famous paintings as a form of practice. Goya also owned a few prints, including some by the great seventeenth and eighteenth-century etchers Rembrandt van Rijn and Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Many of his acquaintances were art collectors with substantial print collections. From his knowledge of prominent printmakers and of printmaking processes, Goya began to make prints on his own. Goya etched over three hundred plates in his career. One of Goya's earliest original prints, *The Garroted Man*, illustrating an execution method sometimes used by the Inquisition, stands in stark contrast to the commissioned paintings Goya was producing at the time. This print set a tone of direct social critique that he would develop further in several series of prints, including the *Caprichos*, *Disparates*, and *Tauromaquia*. The *Disasters of War*, along with these other series, was an uncommissioned work that reflects Goya's personal response to troubles plaguing Spanish society at the time.

Goya's stated purpose in creating the *Disasters of War* was to address the effects the Napoleonic War had in Spain, a war that most directly affected the common people. We can speculate as to the many possible reasons Goya intended to print these images rather than to paint them. For one, the print medium was particularly suitable to Goya's strong anti-war message because of its unique directness. Etchings can retain the direct sketchy qualities of drawings while also achieving a crisp and clean effect that remains even after a plate is reworked many times. Etching allowed Goya to perfect the expressive economy of line that became his signature.

The period convention regarding a print series such as the *Disasters of War* was to display it as bound in an album that a viewer could peruse by turning the pages. There is, then, an important distinction to be made between the way Goya intended the series to be seen, an essentially private experience, and the way we see the prints today in a modern museum or gallery space. That is, the presentation of the series holds implications for how we encounter and view the images. Looking at the prints in bound form invites a kind of sustained, private examination that may not always be possible in a gallery. This is something a modern audience should keep in mind while viewing and responding to the *Disasters of War*.

—Annaliese Beaman & Roxanne Young

¹ Note: erasing with a burnisher is an arduous task, much more difficult than erasing a pencil mark. In fact, it is very difficult to remove an entire etched tone; traces of it are likely to remain on the plate.

² Note: some craftspeople, "master printmakers," make their living by printing other artists' plates and can become well known for their printmaking expertise.

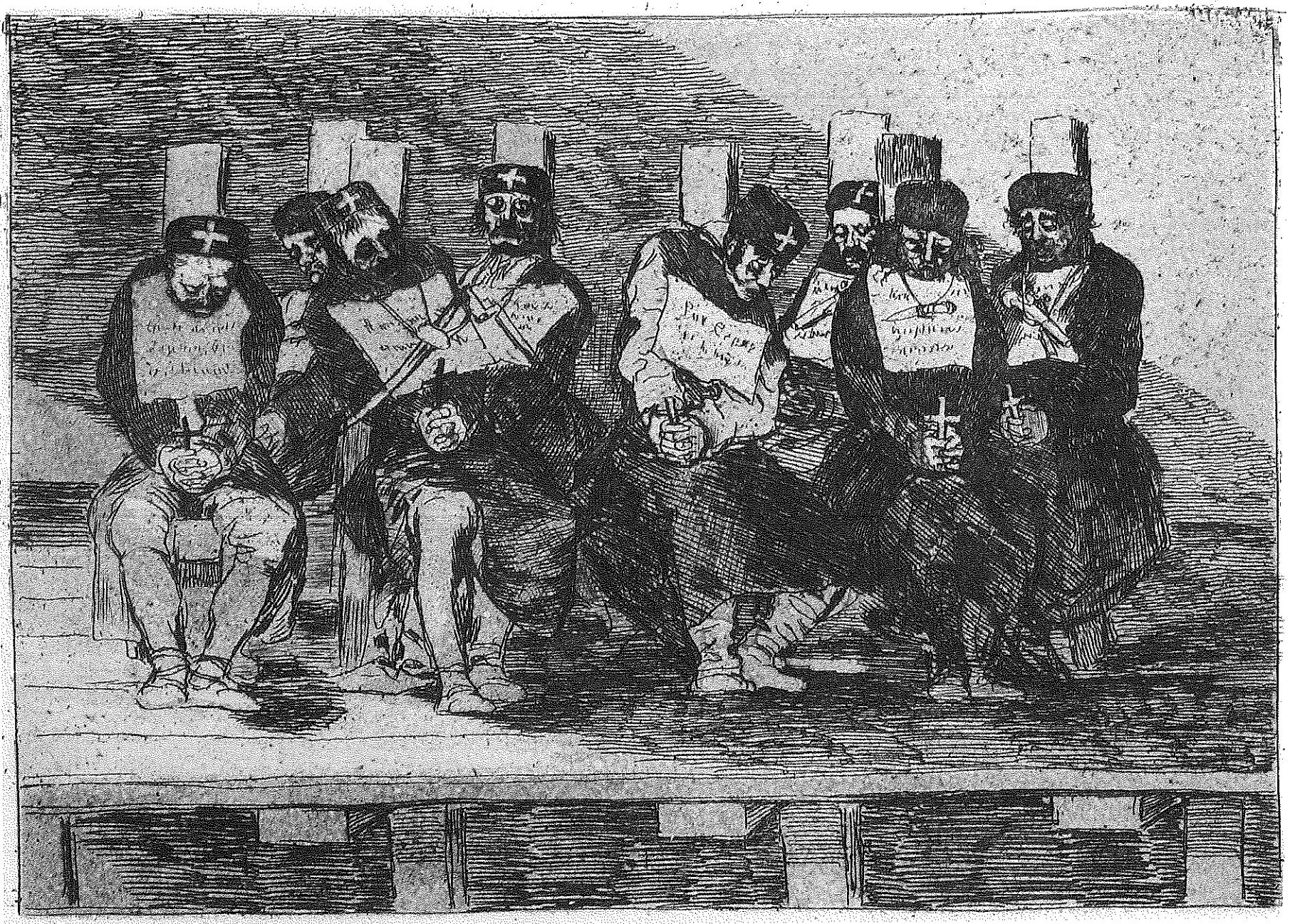


Figure 2: #35 *No se puede saber por qué* (*One can't tell why*), Etching, burnished lavis, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm

Moral Action/Guilty Conscience: The role of the witness in Goya's *Disasters of War*

To witness is not the same as to look. To witness an event implies assumptions about the event itself—that perhaps it was a crime, perhaps it was wrong, and perhaps, in the name of justice, one must testify against this wrong. There is, therefore, a moral implication associated with the role of witnessing. The witness must watch carefully, speak truthfully, and act responsibly, in his or her good intention to do the right thing. Yet there can be a shade of resignation and voyeurism attached to witnessing, which connotes none of the righteousness of its moral aspect. That witness is silent, detached, cowardly, and worse, even treacherous in his refusal to intervene. Throughout the eighty complex, disturbing, and often gruesome prints that comprise Goya's *Disasters of War*, the theme of witnessing in both these manifestations is ever present. The prints themselves depict angry masses, complacent crowds, individuals in anguish, and perpetrators of horrific violence. The diversity of imagery within the prints necessarily renders a discussion of the role of witnessing therein to be two-fold, and raises two crucial questions: Firstly, what was Goya's conception of witnessing and the witness? And secondly, how is this concept thematized within the prints themselves?

The simple claim, *I saw it*, which appears as the caption on Plate 44 of the series (Fig. 3), is remarkable for its function as the most direct claim to the act of eye-witnessing throughout the *Disasters of War*. The print shows a multitude of panicked people, at the forefront of which lunges a woman, baby slung over her left shoulder, right hand horribly grasping her young child's arm, in an attempt to pull it to safety. The child steps towards the mother for protection from the unidentified menace that approaches from outside of the frame. To the woman's left, two terrified men scramble into the brush, the eyes of one fixed constantly on what only he, and the rest of the unfortunate people in the scene, can see. Because the captions are from Goya's hand, one might be tempted to conclude that they are also in his voice, which in turn becomes ours. Alternately, in the case of some prints, the captions may be read to represent the voice of the people depicted in the print itself. Goya scholar Reva Wolf addresses precisely this alternative reading when she points out the likely fact that, "He [the man whose face is in full view] just as much as Goya, might be the speaker of *I saw it*, yet whatever he sees is left to the viewer's imagination" (40). Indeed, it is quite likely that the caption in Plate 44 does, as Wolf suggests, represent the voice of the man in the print, especially when one considers the slim historical possibility of Goya having been an eye-witness to most of the atrocities he depicts.

Sources are unanimous in their assertion that Goya, still comfortably in his position as First Court Painter, was not in the midst of any actual violence, certainly, at least, on no regular or intended occasion. In fact, one of the only records of his ever



Figure 3: #44 *Yo lo vi (I saw it)*, Etching, drypoint, 160 x 235 mm

having attended an event for the express purpose of rendering it artistically was from 1808, when General José de Palafox invited him to Saragossa to memorialize Spain's bitter stand against Napoleon's forces. Accordingly, one of the only prints that may be confidently linked to an historical event is Plate 7, entitled *What courage!* The plate depicts a woman in a billowing white dress with her back to us, who has mounted a pile of dead bodies in order to fire a cannon at the enemy. The woman at the cannon can be plausibly linked to what was a favorite (albeit questionable in veracity) wartime story of courage: Augustina of Aragon, a woman of Saragossa, is said to have climbed a pile of dead Saragossans, which included the body of her lover, and succeeded in single-handedly firing a cannon at Napoleon's forces (Hughes 288). But, once again, as Goya expert Robert Hughes points out, Plate 7 shows "a scene that he could not have witnessed while he was there, since he went in the lull between the first and second phases of the siege" (288). Another print posited to reference a documented event is Plate 37, titled *This is worse* (Fig. 4). In this example, it is said that the man gruesomely impaled upon the tree is something that occurred in Goya's brother's parish, where Goya had earlier painted an altarpiece (Wilson-Bareau 51). Once again, this story is by no mean factual or reliably documented; therefore, while it is likely that Goya based at

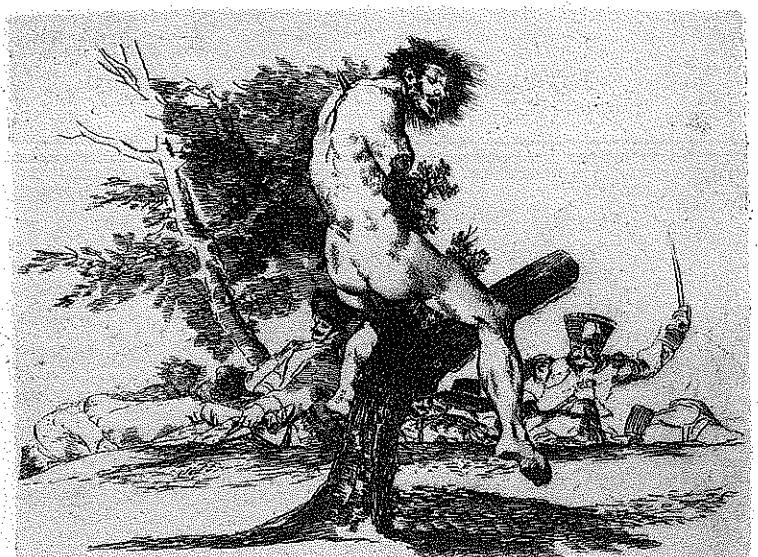


Figure 4: #37 *Esto es peor (This is worse)*, Etching, lavis, drypoint, 157 x 208 mm

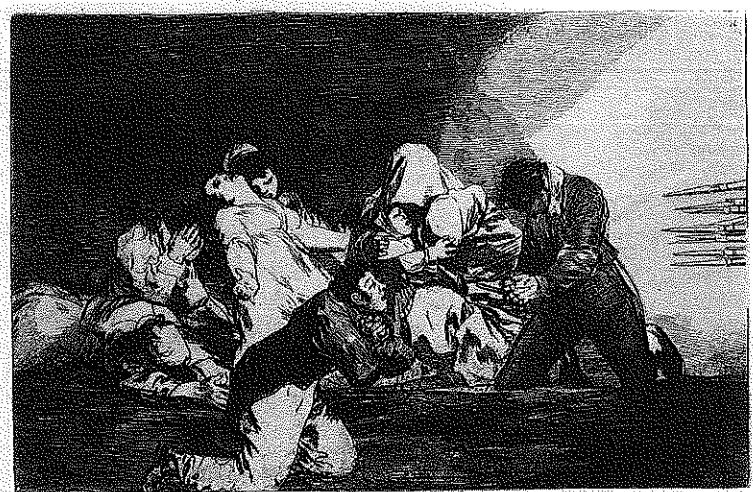


Figure 5: #26 *No se puede mirar (One can't look)*, Etching, lavis, drypoint, 145 x 210 mm

least some of his prints on actual historical events, and some in his vicinity, it is clear that he did not actually see them, and thus, in the conventional sense of the word, did not *witness* them. It is now, with the rejection of the conventional definition of witnessing (actually and physically seeing some extraordinary event, either good or bad, as it happens), that the identification of Goya as a witness to the events he depicts must be re-considered. Here, Wolf's observation that "the focus is the perception of the horror rather than the horror itself" and accordingly that "[i]t was the *idea* of having been there that mattered" (40), seems extraordinarily apt. As Wolf points out in her discussion of *I saw it*, the viewer must imagine from what the people in the print are fleeing. Why not, then, take this argument of a conceptualized and mutable, rather than a concrete and un-negotiable, reality to its logical next step: if the viewer can imagine what happened, Goya may well have done the same. Goya's invented reality, then, would be ever more potent as it would have sprung, as it must have, from Goya's own mind. Thus, Goya was a witness insofar as he was subjected to, and perceptive of, the currents of violence and misery that characterized Spain at the time of the Peninsular War; not only is Goya's invented reality real because the images in the *Disasters* constitute Goya's personal and therefore valid reactions to the war, but also because, as Susan Sontag says, the point is that the images say, "things *like* this happened" (47). In short, one need not observe the actual events of a war in order to be a witness to its devastating "*fatal consequences*."

Witnessing plays as crucial a role within the prints themselves as it did for Goya in their conception and creation. Here, the definition of witness takes on a more traditional meaning: many people in the prints are indeed witnesses to what they see before them. In the case of the characters within the prints, the subtlety lies in the differentiation between the dualities of looking versus not looking, and the passing of moral judgments versus the inertia and potential savagery of the crowd.

Plate 26 of the series, titled *One can't look* (Fig. 5), shows a dark cave in which nine people kneel huddled in abject fear, pleading with wrung hands for their lives, before eight needle-nosed bayonets that close in on them from the right edge of the print. Faces are turned away, buried in hands, shrouded in hoods, or contorted with squinted eyes. In fact, only one person, the man in the foreground, who faces the bayonets head-on, has opened his eyes to stare at their steely blades. Should the caption be taken to mean that, physically, one cannot look at people begging for mercy before their slaughter? Or is it an admonishment to the viewer, letting us know that we should not witness a scene such as this, that it is horrible beyond our capacity to comprehend it?

This moral dimension of witnessing is best illustrated by scenes in the *Disasters* that are more private, where the one cannot find anonymity and collective purpose in the chaos of a crowd. Plate 46, titled *This is bad* (Fig. 6), shows a collapsed monk being impaled by a sword. The soldier responsible for his death has an earnest, focused look on his face—as if the monk's rib cage were harder to penetrate than he had expected. The two soldiers behind the monk smile proudly and openly stare out

at the viewer—a smile and a pose one would expect from a fisherman after an unusually successful catch. It is the look of satisfaction. In this instance, the caption seems very clearly to be in Goya's voice. While the monk must certainly agree that his murder is "bad," he seems in no state to relate as much to the viewer. Rather the judgment comes from an outside party, a witness who is not featured in the print itself. Because the witness is removed, and is not a part of any crowd, the pressure for passing a moral judgment is heightened. Thus, *This is bad*, and there are no two ways about it.

Conversely, crowds depicted in the *Disasters* circumvent any such moral commitment, and can be divided into two groups: crowds engaged in violence and crowds as witnesses. Plate 29, *He deserved it* (Fig. 7), epitomizes the savage violence and immorality of which Goya knew they were capable. The print depicts anonymous peasants engaged in the brutal beating of a bound, life-less form. The stick is raised, askew, and the rope creates a tense line that shoots out of the frame suggesting great force at the other end—great determination. This print is confusing, sketchy, shadowy, and momentous—it depicts the crowd at its worst.

Plates 34 and 77 are good examples of the alternate state of the crowd, as removed witnesses to events which they either refuse to morally evaluate or toward which they are apathetic. Plate 34, titled *On account of a knife*, features a garroted member of the clergy in the center of the print, his stiff tongue indicating that the screw driven into the back of his neck has done its job. Behind this central figure, and much lower than the level of the platform, is a rather indiscernible crowd of people. They are watching him, but that is all we know. They are not active, they are not violent, in short, they are inconsequential in their shadowy mass, except for their potential to transform into a terrifying force (as seen in Plate 29, *He deserved it*). Similarly, in Plate 77, titled *May the cord break*, Goya depicts the crowd as unengaged witness. Many in the throng stare up at the teetering clergyman with open mouths and exaggeratedly goggly eyes. They seem neither morally vindicated nor guilty of conscience—only surprised. The crowd once again is rendered as utterly incapable of delivering a moral judgment—it is not its domain. The crowd for Goya is at once the removed spectator and the guilty accomplice—but always, still, a witness to the atrocity of the unfolding events. However, the witness as either a perpetrator of violent and immoral crimes, or as a passive observer to atrocities, is not always pictorially present in the *Disasters*.

Many of the prints in the *Disasters* do not have internal witnesses. These are the prints in which everyone is blindly involved in the action and drama of the scene. The clearest examples of prints that do not feature interior witnesses are the rape scenes. The series of prints 9, 10, and 11, titled *They don't like it, Nor do [these] either, Neither do these* (Fig. 8), delivers a sickening and violent portrayal of soldiers raping Spanish women. Every person in these prints is involved in the action; ruthlessly tugged this way and that, encircled by thick, uniformed arms, contorted into positions as unnatural as the acts being committed, the women seem hardly able to breathe, let



Figure 6: #46 *Esto es malo* (*This is bad*), Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm

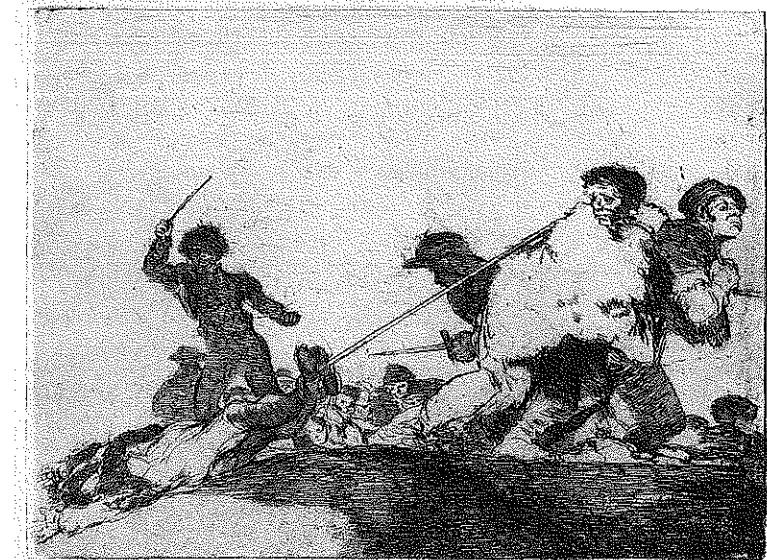


Figure 7: #29 *Lo merecia* (*He deserved it*), Etching, drypoint, 175 x 215 mm

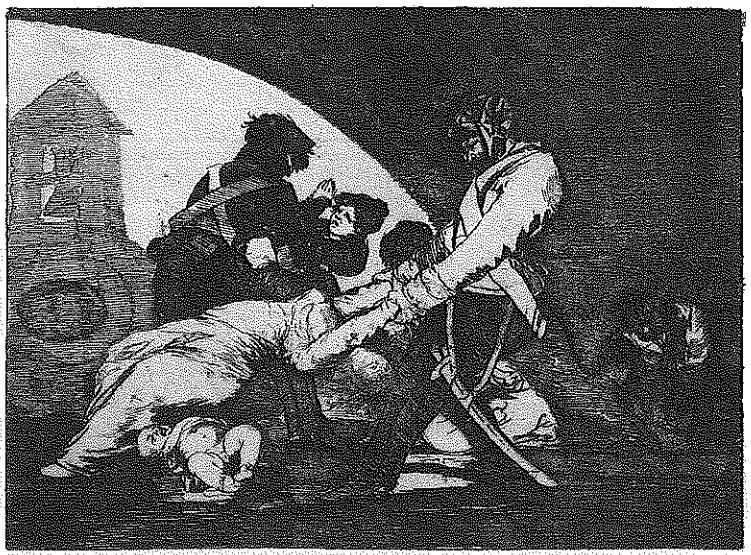


Figure 8: #11 *Ni por esas (Neither do these)*, Etching, lavis, drypoint,
160 x 210 mm

alone stand back and “witness” the action. Nor do the soldiers, who are all actively and completely involved. The witnesses to these scenes are therefore identifiable only as Goya, who memorialized them in the first place, and the current viewer of the prints, who sees these scenes enacted ad infinitum depending on how long he or she chooses to look.

The questionable morality of the crowds in the *Disasters* is not confined to the characters rendered in the prints themselves. Goya, it seems, has thought of everything. In a brilliant play on levels, Goya often composes the print such that the viewer finds himself or herself implicated in the scene at hand. Plate 35, titled *One can't tell why* (Fig. 2), is the most pronounced example of this technique. The scene depicts a raised platform on which languish eight clergymen, each garroted to his own wooden post. By composing the print in such a way that the viewer visually enters from the level of three feet below the platform, Goya instantly turns the viewer into a part of the crowd that we can only imagine is amassed around the stage. Clearly this technique, which identifies the viewer with the crowd, beyond its obvious visual appeal, bears with it many complex moral insinuations for the casual observer. We find ourselves wondering why we are watching, whose side we are on, and ultimately wondering if sides even matter or could ever justify the gruesome execution taking place before us.

The witness in the *Disasters of War* is not a simple concept, but we may read it in the following way: Firstly, as Goya, witness to his own invented reality, capable of and willing to point to the immorality of the gross transgression of human life he depicts in the *Disasters*. Secondly, as the role of the crowd which can be interpreted as the ultimate and frustrating witness: one who witnesses this invented reality, and has no opinion, except in moments of unbounded and nightmarish passion, as seen in *He deserved it*. But there is yet a third component: what kind of a witness, we must ask ourselves, will we be as viewers? Wolf hints at this question when she says, “Goya explored most compellingly the gnawing question, for which no adequate answer can be found, of what it means to witness extremes of cruelty, destruction and suffering” (37). But, unlike Wolf suggests, Goya himself *did* find an answer: for him, to witness was to realize the necessity to create—he created the technically stunning, profoundly disturbing, and innovative *Disasters of War*. The only inadequacy here is perhaps our dilemma as modern viewers: what we will *do* with these images? How will we approach them? How will we assimilate them? Ultimately, how will we witness them?

—Katherine Rochester



Figure 9: #1 *Tristes presentimientos de lo que ha de acontecer* (Sad forebodings of what is going to happen), Etching, burin, drypoint, 175 x 220 mm

Secularizing the Holy: Christian Iconography in Goya's *Disasters of War*

In his *Disasters of War* print series, Francisco de Goya y Lucientes primarily and overwhelmingly depicts the contemporary and secular subject of human suffering caused by Napoleon's invasion and occupation of Spain in the early nineteenth century. Yet Goya also concerns himself with the sacred, by making frequent reference to traditional Christian iconography and Biblical narratives, and by directly critiquing the abuses of the Catholic Church. Over a third of the eighty prints in the series refer to common Christian narratives and pictorial traditions. As Robert Hughes states in his monograph on Goya, any Spaniard would have recognized Goya's allusion to the figure of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane in the first plate of the series (Fig. 9); indeed, the representation of Christ's temptation would have been an appropriate decoration for any church or cathedral (275).

In 1792 Goya composed a letter to the Academy of San Fernando in which he condemned using academic formulae as precepts for teaching art, advocating instead studying and painting directly from nature (Hughes 126). Why then, in what is often considered his most realistic effort, does Goya so frequently turn to formulae of the Christian iconographical tradition? Admittedly, in his 1792 letter, Goya addresses the subject of art education rather than the content or style of the art, and he depicts these Christian subjects in an independent style unconstrained by academic convention, but he nevertheless refers to this existing tradition much more frequently than might be ordinarily expected from a self-proclaimed devotee of nature.

That Goya uses the *Disasters* as a form of social commentary is evident; he often critiques the injustices committed by those in power, not the least the church. Goya's desire to criticize the Church was strongly influenced by the political situation in Spain during his lifetime. Throughout the reigns of Carlos III and Carlos IV power was divided between liberals desiring reform, particularly in education, agriculture, and distribution of land, and conservative monarchists, who could rely on the influence of the church for support. Ministers with varying interests in reform worked for both kings, but no significant changes to the social structure were made, and no violent conflicts occurred, until Carlos IV named Emmanuel Godoy Prime Minister. A minor nobleman, Godoy was disliked by conservatives for both his unprecedented, quick rise to power and his moderate liberalism: "Both the Church and the aristocracy resented his ambition – encouraged by the economic theories of *ilustrados* like [Gaspar Melchor de] Jovellanos – to prime the stagnant economy of Spain by forcing them to sell off at least some of their enormous and idle land holdings" (Hughes 232). The Church, which had no desire to lose any of its long-standing power in Spain, felt particularly threatened by Godoy, and banded together

with the Crown Prince Fernando against him. Their plotting culminated in an uprising in 1808 in which a mob stormed Godoy's palace, forcing Carlos IV to abdicate in favor of his son Fernando. Napoleon entered Spain soon after and placed his brother Joseph on the throne as José (Tomlinson, *Goya* 179).

While the general outline is clear, it is difficult to situate Goya within this social and political arena with any precision and clarity. F. D. Klingender, in his Marxist interpretation of Goya, makes the excellent point that "there is a close correlation between the wider social experience which Goya shared with his contemporaries and his own attitude to that experience on the one hand, and the formal characteristics of his style on the other . . ." (xiii). However, Klingender probably goes too far in portraying Goya as an artist *engagé*, documenting the Peninsular War and its aftermath as a great expression of social liberalism (151). Nigel Glendinning similarly argues for a liberal Goya, on the basis that many of Goya's liberal patrons were also his friends and that his relationships with them strongly colored his views on the excesses of the Church and aristocracy (lxiv-lxxvi), although, as Janice Tomlinson points out, Goya's execution of commissioned portraits does not necessarily intimate that he had personal or political relationships with the sitters (7). Goya's exact political affiliations are somewhat obscure; during the French occupation Goya completed several portraits for French sitters, and he received a medal from the French (Hughes 308), but he did not openly declare allegiance to Napoleon, and he retained his status as Court Painter (Wilson-Bureau 45).

Such political ambiguity marks Goya's professional activity throughout his career. His artworks, however, most especially his print series, clearly indicate liberal and especially anti-clerical tendencies. His earliest print series, the *Caprichos*, published in 1799, is filled with satire and criticisms of the existing social structure. Plate 13, *They're Hot*, which depicts gluttonous, monstrous monks about to dine, speaks volumes about Goya's views on the Church's material greed and consumption.

This thematic continued to inform many of the eighty prints in the later *Disasters of War*. In Plate 43, *This too*, Goya depicts a crowd in flight, including two monks whose habits have ridden up their legs to reveal pants, an item of clothing belonging distinctly to the laity. In the panic of their escape, these monks have let their hidden secularity show through; their robes do no more than cloak their true selves. The next plate in the series, *I saw it* (Fig. 3), contains an even more biting critique of the Church. In the center foreground a mother carries an infant over her shoulder and grasps another young child by the hand, while to the left a priest must use both his hands to hold his moneybag. The welfare of his congregation is

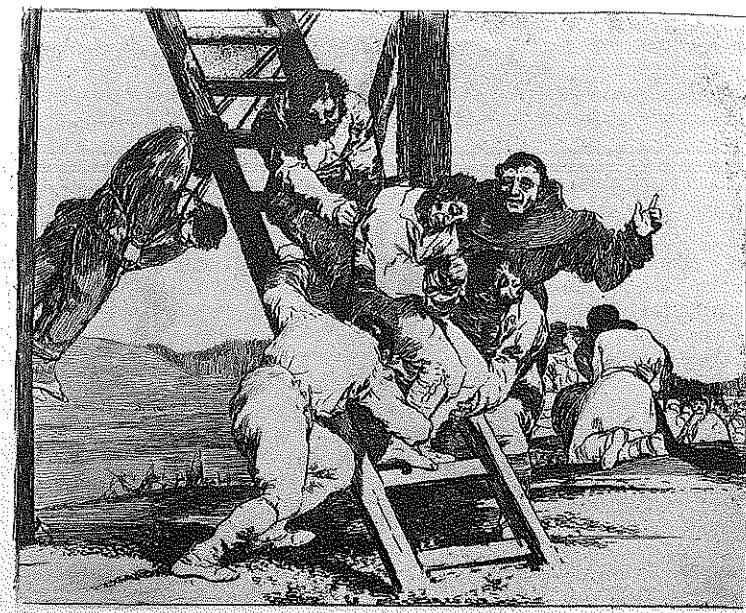


Figure 10: #14 *Duro es el paso! (It's a hard step!)*, Etching, burnished lavis, drypoint, 155 x 165 mm

obviously less important to this priest than his own comfort, for he is clearly one of the first of those fleeing. In Plate 47, the viewer sees a church being sacked, and although he or she might be sympathetic toward the priest whose church is being robbed, it is impossible not to notice the opulence and abundance of the stolen items. Goya is ultimately a humanist, however, and he thus sympathetically depicts the murder of a priest in Plate 46 with the caption *This is bad* (Fig. 6).

The last sixteen prints of the series, known as the emphatic caprices, also condemn the clergy, depicting them praying to animals, or even as animals themselves. In Plate 77 a bishop walks across a fraying tightrope while a crowd looks on expectantly. The caption, *May the cord break*, pithily conveys the anti-clerical message of the print. Alfredo Rivera discusses the emphatic caprices in detail, so it will suffice to say here that these images are allegorical and satirical in nature, and are most likely a response to the oppressive regime of Fernando, who was restored to power after the French evacuated Spain in 1814 (Wilson-Bareau 57).

In the *Disasters of War*, then, Goya often imparts his opinions on prevalent and pressing social issues regarding the Church. But, the *Disasters* function as more than social commentary. They also reveal a dialogue of reference and contrast with earlier religious works of art, particularly with the religious prints of Rembrandt van Rijn.

Goya establishes this conscious dialogue with an existing artistic tradition for his own purposes. What makes Goya's depictions unique is how he takes familiar religious imagery and subverts it; he secularizes the holy and sanctifies the secular, and even overturns it in order to criticize the clergy. These manipulations are evident in the introductory print of the series, *Sad Forebodings of what is going to happen* (Fig. 9). Against a darkly etched background, a Spaniard is depicted kneeling, with his arms outstretched and his eyes cast upwards. It is a familiar image, that of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, "kneeling to beseech God the Father to let the cup of sacrifice pass from his lips and spare him the torments of crucifixion" (Hughes 273). However, the figure here is clearly not Biblical; he is recognizable by his physiognomy and dress as a Spanish contemporary. Unlike Christ, however, this Spaniard has no guarantee of salvation after his pain.

Similarly, the scene in Plate 14, *It's a hard step!* (Fig. 10), is reminiscent of the crucifixion (Rose-de-Viejo 60), and the figural grouping of Plate 50, *Unhappy mother!* (Fig. 14), alludes to the descent from the cross (Hughes 298; cf. 207). Both scenes have been secularized, stripped of their original transcendental meanings, by transfer to the contemporary, and only in their formal rhetoric remain evocative of the original Christological events: "The association of contemporary events with religious history was deeply embedded in Spanish rhetoric of the time; Goya used this rhetoric only to expose it for what it was" (Wolf 47). Goya's interweaving of the transcendental and the real enriches the range of meanings the prints invoke. In some sense, Goya brings the religious narratives down to a much more human level, and sometimes perhaps even raises humanity closer to divinity. On another level, he also establishes a reference point for his own art. While as a rule Goya rejects academic formulae in favor of nature, here he not only consciously invokes the rhetoric of the Christian pictorial tradition and Biblical narratives in order to claim a place for his work among more traditional, sanctioned art, but also makes trenchant commentary on the Church. The result is a highly original and effective work of art; the viewer is able to comprehend both the Christian allusion and the extremely contemporary, pressing impact of the scene of human suffering.

Goya also secularizes images of martyrs throughout the print series. Plates 15, 31, 32 (Fig. 27), 33 (Fig. 28), 36, 37 (Fig. 4), 38, and 39 recall typical scenes of Christians suffering for their faith. As Goldfarb asserts, the central figure in Plate 39, *An heroic feat! With dead men!* (Fig. 29), is reminiscent of a nude St. Sebastian or St. Bartholomew bound to a tree and executed, although here the figure has been castrated and hung from a tree with two other dead men whose bodies have been mercilessly mutilated (*Piranesi-Goya*, 29). Unlike the Christian martyrs, however, these Spaniards do not seem to have died for any reason. Ostensibly they may have given themselves in defense of their country, but Goya's treatment of the subjects denies any noble purpose of self-sacrifice. The castration of these men drives home the point that they have not given themselves willingly to torture and death – they have not sacrificed their manhood, but have had it violently taken from them. These

men are not figures of heroic resistance, but victims of torture and mutilation – the viewer is presented only with the apparently senseless effects of war, and, with all gloss of nobility pulled away, is forced to consider the full barbarity of humanity.

Plates 34 and 35, *On account of a knife* and *One can't tell why* (Fig. 2), conversely, do not make reference to martyrs of Christianity but, rather, display one of the instruments of execution originally employed by the Catholic Inquisition. Both prints depict men the French have garroted, by securing them to chairs with screws driven into the bases of their necks until their spinal cords were severed. Goya had treated the subject before in his early etching *Garroted Man* of about 1779, but in the early print the man was executed by the Spanish rather than being a victim of the French. In the *Disasters*, it is significant that the French army, a secular power, has adopted this method of execution from the Holy Office of the Inquisition. However, Goya makes sure the message here is clear: whether the Spanish or the French carry out these executions, whether the Holy Office or the army, the after-effects are the same. As Reva Wolf writes: "Goya also seems to have understood a profound implication of this fill-in-the-blank iconography: power is inevitably accompanied by abuse; governments change, but human nature remains steadfast" (47).

In addition to appropriating the iconography of martyrs and heretics in the *Disasters of War*, Goya also subverts the rite of the blessing (45). Plates 14, 71 (Fig. 23), 76, 77, and 79 all feature the benediction in some way or another. In Plate 14, *It's a hard step!* (Fig. 10), a monk blesses a man who is about to be hanged, and in Plate 79, *Truth has died*, a bishop blesses Truth, who has just died and is about to be buried. Goya has subverted the apparently benign administration of the last rites and made it sinister by reversing the hand with which the clergyman gives the sign of the benediction. Normally the clergyman gives the blessing with the first two fingers of his right hand extended, a fact with which Goya would certainly have been familiar, and which is evidenced by a man in the crowd in Plate 76, *The carnivorous vulture* (Fig. 19), but in Plates 14 and 79 the clergymen raise only one finger of their left hand. The left, or sinister hand, carries the connotation of evil and malignance, and the event depicted thus becomes one in which the blessing is suspect and perhaps malevolent – are the clergymen preparing the victims' souls or approving their deaths?

That many of the *Disasters of War* prints invoke not only general Christian iconography but also religious works by particular artists further enriches Goya's placement of his art within an established and respected tradition. By referring back to Jusepe de Ribera and Rembrandt van Rijn in particular, Goya claims a place for himself alongside those artists and associates himself and his art with the accepted practices of "old masters." Jusepe de Ribera was a seventeenth-century Spanish painter whose martyred saints seem, according to Wolf, to be a source of inspiration for Goya's secular martyrs; she asserts that the sublimity and horror of Ribera can be viewed as a point of departure for Goya's art (47). The figures in Goya's *An heroic feat! With dead men!* (Fig. 29) are a potent example. The horrific display of nude bodies suspended from the tree trunks strongly resembles Ribera's etched nude St.

Figure 11: Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Raising of Lazarus*, small plate, 1642, etching (National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., Rosenwald Collection). Image © Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

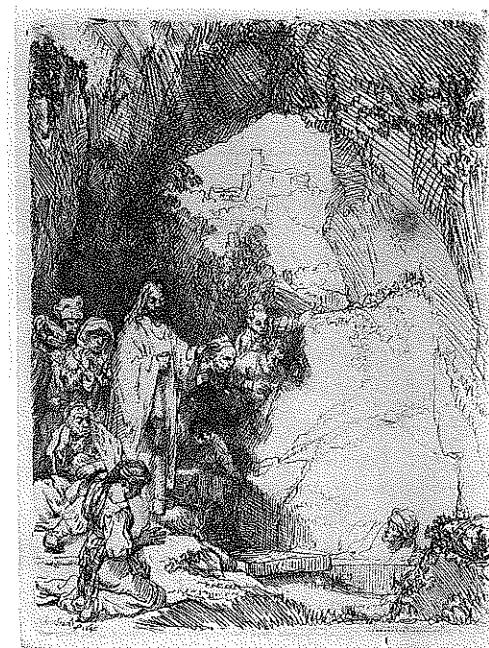


Figure 12: Rembrandt van Rijn, *Decent from the Cross by Torchlight*, 1654, etching and drypoint (National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., Rosenwald Collection). Image © Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

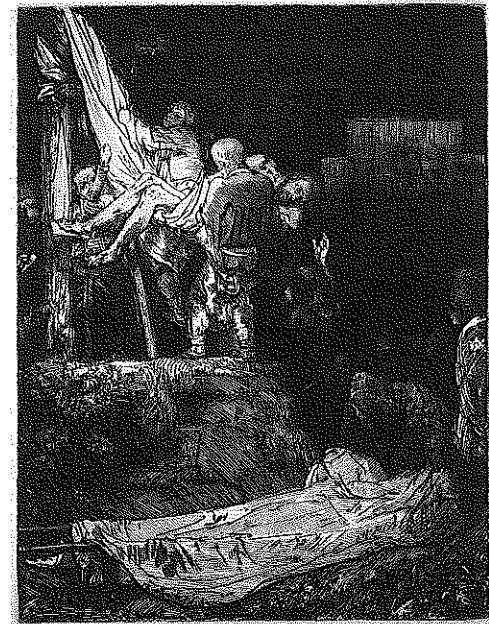




Figure 13: #69 *Nada. Ella dirá (Nothing. The event will tell.)*, Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis, drypoint, 155 x 200 mm

Bartholomew, who was hanged from a tree and flayed alive.

While there were very few Rembrandt paintings in Spain in the early nineteenth century, an 1812 inventory of Goya's house indicates that he owned ten Rembrandt prints (Tomlinson, *Goya*, 205), and he may have been familiar with many more through his friends' collections. Many figural and compositional similarities can be seen between Goya's *Disasters* and Rembrandt's prints; the kneeling figure in Plate 1 of the *Disasters* (Fig. 9) not only recalls the iconic format of Christ kneeling in the Garden, but also bears a particular resemblance to the kneeling St. Stephen in Rembrandt's *The*

Stoning of St. Stephen. The scene in Plate 26, *One can't look* (Fig. 5), is reminiscent of Rembrandt's *Raising of Lazarus* (Fig. 11) – both prints are built around groupings of figures in caves (Rose de Viejo 60). Plate 69, *Nothing* (Fig. 13) also bears some striking visual resemblances to *The Raising of Lazarus*: "Howling witches and demons in the murky background of Goya's *Nada* appear related to the distorted countenances of witnesses in Rembrandt's small *The Raising of Lazarus* (Rose de Viejo 62). Likewise, the figure being carried in *Unhappy mother!* (Fig. 14), reminiscent of Christ being carried down from the cross, could very well have been inspired by Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross* (Fig. 12), for the drape of the lifeless legs as the body is carried is remarkably similar. Generally speaking, Goya seems to have been heavily influenced not only by Rembrandt's "figural poses" but also by Rembrandt's etching technique, including "resonances of light and shade" (Rose de Viejo 40).

Goya often presents the actions taking place in the *Disasters of War* as though the viewer were a member of a crowd witnessing the event (Plates 34, 77). In other prints, the viewer is not as obviously implicated as an onlooker, but the contrast of a contemporary Spanish war subject with familiar Christian rhetoric nevertheless forces him or her to look at the image in a highly focused, attentive way. Any contemporary Spaniard, or indeed anyone schooled in Christian imagery, looking at the *Disasters of War*, can immediately recognize poses he or she has seen countless times in Christian art. However, the scenes Goya depicts in the *Disasters of War* are very different from traditional religious art; the viewer is moved by the vividly realistic depictions of suffering. The presence of Christian artistic rhetoric in these contemporary and secular print scenes pulls the viewer forcefully into the conscious role of viewing, in essence, to be a witness. The familiar Christian imagery serves as a point of entry to viewing, placing the observer in an unexpected position, in which he or she must rethink these familiar images in a contemporary setting, and must carefully observe Goya's irrefutable commentary on war, which states, "I saw it."

—Nathaniel Jones



Figure 14: #50 *Madre infeliz!* (*Unhappy mother!*), Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm

The Forgotten Prints: Images of Famine

One can't walk down the street without even the most hardened heart softening at the sound and sight of some who complain that they haven't had breakfast, although it is six in the afternoon; or of others who already have death painted on their faces; of others who faint from need; and others who have expired for the same reason; there one sees a group of children, abandoned by their parents, crying for bread; here, a widow blackened and disfigured; and over there a maiden, assuring that she is begging in order not to compromise her chastity (qtd Tomlinson Goya 196).

This description, published in the newspaper *Diario de Madrid* on August 27, 1812, becomes a visual reality in the middle section of the *Disasters of War*. Commonly referred to as the famine scenes, this section comprises seventeen consecutive prints depicting the famine that ravaged Madrid from September 1811 through August 1812, killing 20,000 people (Klingender 116, Sayre 128). The famine was caused primarily by Spanish *guerrilla* bands that terrorized supply routes, making it impossible for average people to afford food. The occupying French forces were unable to manage the food shortage or bring the roads under control. Even the well-funded Charity Establishment, founded by the French, could not handle the large number of starving citizens (Hughes 297).

The mastery of composition and range of human suffering in these prints link them visually and thematically to the rest of the *Disasters*, and in some ways stylistically to the earlier war scenes and the later *caprichos enfáticos*. (See Alfredo Rivera's essay on the *caprichos enfáticos*). This linkage is especially true of the social class distinctions and criticisms introduced in the famine scenes that are later central to the *caprichos enfáticos*. Despite their importance both as works of great emotional power and as an integral part of the series, the famine prints have been given less academic attention than the prints that surround them. But the fact that they are rarely reproduced or discussed does not mean that they do not demonstrate many of the same dynamics between creative invention, historical reality, and the roles of reporter, onlooker, and witness that the rest of the prints do.

The famine section begins with Plate 48, *Cruel tale of woe!*, and ends with Plate 64, *Cartloads to the cemetery* (Fig. 15). Within and between these, images of the dead and dying occupy every print; skeletal human frames make it clear that the cause of these deaths is hunger. The figures in these prints beg for money, are carried away for burial, gather around small portions of food, and perish together in the streets. In a few of the prints, dead bodies are lined up or piled in heaps. Though the background



Figure 15: #64 *Carretadas al cementerio* (*Cartloads to the cemetery*), Etching, aquatint, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm

structures do not clearly denote the city of Madrid—or any town, for that matter—the images of corpses piled in the streets and the emaciated frames of starving citizens more than likely represent the famine that Goya experienced in Madrid in 1811-12 (Hughes 273, Sayre 127). However, Goya probably used the sketches he made from life to construct more idealized compositions. Plate 56, *To the cemetery* (Fig. 16), and Plate 64, *Cartloads to the cemetery* (Fig. 15), for example, recall the structural idiom of scenes of the burial of Christ and even the *pietà militare*, “the dead hero being borne off to burial by his Greek or Roman comrades” (Hughes 299). Likewise, as Juliet Wilson-Bareau suggests, “the famine scenes, with their dark aquatint backgrounds or framing arches and pillars, evoke Rembrandt’s *Peter and John with the lame beggar*” (51). (See Nathaniel Jones’s essay on Christian iconography).

In this way, the famine scenes in particular emphasize the intricacy of Goya’s role as witness/reporter on the one hand and artist on the other. It is the interplay between what is seen and what is created that allows viewers to perceive these prints as



Figure 16: #56 *Al cementerio* (*To the cemetery*), Etching, lavis, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm



Figure 17: #55 *Lo peor es pedir* (*The worst is to beg*), Etching, lavis, 155 x 205 mm

“realistic” yet so dismal that the viewer may find it “unbelievable” that such things happen. They produce a sense of reality and immediacy for the viewer regardless of whether Goya saw these specific people in these particular positions and these precise groupings. It is this sense of reality within invention throughout Goya’s artistic career that leads Robert Hughes to claim that Goya “never [...] told a pictorial lie” (Hughes 19). As Wolf writes about printmaker Charles Benazech’s image of the storming of the Bastille, “It was the *idea* of having been there that mattered” (40). Likewise, with Goya, it is the *sense* of reporting the reality of the famine that matters and is integral to the visual impact of his prints. Indeed the specifics of what Goya “witnessed” and the circumstances of the famine are not as important as the fundamentally human experiences of victims “resign[ed] to death by starvation” (Sayre 128) that the prints show. That reality of human suffering clearly emerges in composition as well as in detailed facial expressions. Particularly emotional is Plate 50, *Unhappy mother!* (Fig. 14). In it, a dead or dying woman is carried away by three men as her small child, isolated from the group of figures by empty dark space that contrasts with the child’s white dress, follows behind with tiny fists held to her or his tear-filled eyes. Thus, it is the human emotions and experiences that Goya captures that are real and that surface as the primary impact of the famine prints.

Beyond their importance to the ideas of realism and reporting, the famine scenes serve as a transition between the broadly, and largely undifferentiated, classed victims of the war scenes of the *Disasters of War* and the highly specified classes shown at the end of the series in the *caprichos enfáticos*. While several of the famine scenes show well-dressed, well-fed and relatively lively members of the upper class (Plates 51, 53, 54, 55, and 61), Plates 55 and 61 portray conflicting class positions. In Plate 55, *The worst is to beg* (Fig. 17), a plump young woman passes a group of gaunt men dressed in rags on her way to meet a French soldier in uniform. This scene draws attention to the issue of who, exactly, is starving in Madrid. It is not the occupying French forces, nor is it those who have—possibly through some undesirable means—obtained enough money to keep from starving. There is also a moral question in this scene of a young Spanish woman going to meet a French soldier. As art historian Janis Tomlinson suggests in her book *Goya*, “The caption implies a corollary: is it, in fact, worse to beg, or to sell oneself for survival”? (Goya 197) Plate 61, *Perhaps they are of another breed* (Fig. 18), also draws attention to the contrast between the rich and the poor. In this print, a bony man wearing a simple sort of sheath sits upon a pile of dead bodies, holding out his hand for charity. Two men in overcoats and large, fine hats, followed by equally well-dressed women, pass by, one of them gesturing to the dead as if he is the one uttering the words in the title, “Perhaps they are of another breed.” Alternately, the caption could be Goya’s own commentary on those in overcoats and finery who use their class positions to distance themselves from or justify their fellow humans’ suffering. With this simple scene, Goya manages to convey the intense differences between the wealthy and those who cannot afford to eat.

It is interesting to note, though, that Goya himself was not starving during the famine. An inventory of his house in 1812 “includes, among other things,” a couch with matching stools, forty-six chairs, “twelve mattresses, beds, armoires, a desk, and even a telescope. Diamond and gold jewelry [...] was also listed” (Tomlinson, *Goya* 205). As Tomlinson notes, “All this implies that the family was immune to the hardships of war and the 1811-12 famine of Madrid” (*Goya* 205). Goya’s class position has implications for the intricacy of his role as witness and creator; that is, the immunity class offered him allowed him a distance which was like a glass shield through which he could observe and create.

That Goya positions the images of the Madrid famine centrally in his artistic narrative is clear from the thematic and stylistic link these images form between the war scenes and the *caprichos enfáticos*. The famine prints occupy the space between realistic depictions of atrocity that were nonetheless created artistically—the war scenes—and absurd depictions of particular conditions and events in Spanish history—the *caprichos enfáticos*. They exist in the artistic narrative, then, in the transition between creation of realistic scenes of horror and creation of fantastical representations of suffering and oppression.

—Nicole Bungert



Figure 18: #61 *Si son de otro linaje (Perhaps they are of another breed)*, Etching, lavis, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm



Figure 19: #76 *El buitre carnívoro* (*The carnivorous vulture*), Etching, drypoint (?), 175 x 220 mm

Que locura!: The Fantastical and the Absurd in the *Caprichos Enfáticos*

A pathetic beast stands center stage amid the masses, awaiting its inevitable execution while staring dumbfounded at the viewer. *The carnivorous vulture*, Plate 76 (Fig. 19), captures the complexity and ambiguity of the last sixteen prints of Francisco Goya's *Disasters of War*, known as the *caprichos enfáticos*. A closer reading of *The carnivorous vulture* shows a division among the masses – where the lower class seems to be somewhat absorbed by the spectacle, the upper class huddles away towards the right; this division suggests that overcoming the ferocity of the beast is no assurance of peace, humanity, and progress.

The last sixteen prints of the *Disasters of War* (Plates 65 to 80) depict a post-war society where truth seems to be lost. Introduced in the original binding of the series as “other emphatic *caprichos*”, these sixteen prints are believed to have been engraved between 1814 and 1820 (Sayre cix). Like the previous series of prints produced at the turn of the nineteenth century, the *Caprichos*, the *caprichos enfáticos* use allegory and personification to make a commentary on society, but do so in a more cynical, biting manner. *The carnivorous vulture*, whose beast-like creature is often interpreted to represent the Napoleonic Empire, comments on the bastardization of Spanish society by the monarchy, the clergy, and the upper class returning to their old, hierarchical rule (Hughes 302). Goya conveys his frustrations with a society where the horrors of war and atrocity still exist, just in a subtler and arguably more disturbing manner than during the war. Though laden with symbols, the *caprichos enfáticos* have the most overt political message of the *Disasters of War*, one that extends beyond a contemporary critique to a general humanistic one.

Goya scholar Enrique Lafuente Ferrari mentions that, although Goya's intent may easily be read as pessimistic, Goya was “an optimist in his belief in Progress through Reason” (Ferrari xviii). Whether Goya still expresses the belief of progress through reason during the war and its aftermath is debatable, but reason is a concept explored in all of Goya's major print series. Easily juxtaposed to caprice or folly, reason provides a means to explore the absurd. The *caprichos enfáticos* is a place where reason, as delineated in Goya's direct, biting references to socio-political realities, meets chaos, as seen through fantastical and absurd imagery. Or rather, the *caprichos enfáticos* is a place where reality, as represented in both specific occurrences and in Goya's general humanistic message, meets imagination, as often presented through allegory. Goya uses allegory to represent a state of being where reality or reason seems to become farcical. Goya uses fantastical imagery – from the animalistic personifications of the church and the monarchy to a clergyman balancing on a frayed rope in Plate 77, *May the cord break* – to make his prints transcend specific political

references in order to question whether humans have the capacity for reason.

The introductory print of the *caprichos enfáticos* (Plate 65) contains a self-reflexive title, *What is this hubbub?* (Fig. 20). An official sits to the left on a sack, signing an unknown document. He glances leisurely at the figures to his left, who clasp their ears and barely keep their ground. Dogs barking at the center crowd seem to contribute to this commotion – or as bodily gestures would suggest, utter chaos. Though the dogs and the official seem to be the cause of this commotion, their actions are peripheral. They dominate the chaos because they are both the cause of it and placed outside of it. This order within chaos is very much like the carnival, an event that Goya scholars Victor Stoichita and Anna Maria Coderch define as celebrating “the period when the universe drifts as a result of order collapsing” (15). Carnival is often represented in the *caprichos enfáticos* through the masses, whose subjective presence among whatever spectacle occurs is accompanied by a “pathological violence” – a more general, humanistic disorder interpretable through the temporary disorder (spectacle) taking place (84).

The spectacle enrapturing the masses is often displayed in the *caprichos enfáticos* by Goya's use of mockery and allegory, as especially seen in prints depicting religious devotion. Plates 66 and 67 serve as astute examples of how the *caprichos enfáticos* participate in the carnivalesque. In Plate 67, titled *This is not less so*, a common religious relic in the foreground, often believed to be the “Virgin de la Soledad,” is objectified as merely a burden carried on the back of common Spaniards (Sanchez & Sayre 343). In reducing the Virgin to a burden, Goya makes a negative spectacle, a mockery of the icon, and evacuates it of religious meaning by weighing it down in the secular. Likewise, in Plate 66, *Strange devotion!*, Goya creates an entrancing public spectacle of a dead figure atop a donkey – an animal that Goya often used to depict folly – to suggest that in the same way humans debase the religious and make it ordinary, they elevate the ordinary to the realm of the religious. Through these allegories, Goya shows how, in the carnivalesque world that is his, reason is useless.

In Plate 70, *They do not know the way* (Fig. 21), the spectacle itself becomes an entranced crowd, where clergy and common-folk are indistinguishable. The print depicts a line of men who submissively follow each other as they walk and stumble around a hill. Tied together by a rope, the participants seem not to question the pointlessness of this activity. A subtle form of chaos is suggested in this image, as participants confusedly engage in a self-destructive, aimless action. Oblivious to their actual condition, the participants press themselves blindly into an eschatological demise.



Figure 20: #65 *Qué alboroto es este? (What is this hubbub?)*, Etching, burnished aquatint and/or lavis, 175 x 220 mm



Figure 21: #70 *No saben el camino (They do not know the way)*, Etching, drypoint, 175 x 220 mm

They do not know the way shows the manner in which the entrancement of a crowd or audience becomes commonplace. This is seen also in Plate 76 (Fig. 19), where the lower classes have facial expressions that suggest a myriad of emotions as the upper class flee. What matters here is not the temporal devotion and actions of the lower class but the allegorical beast masking the long-term realities of the war – the upper class fleeing. Plate 68, *What madness!* (Fig. 22), focuses directly on a gluttonous monk who is surrounded by masks, implying deception, and a stockpile of religious items that, in bulk, lose their spiritual value. The monk's actions, or madness, far overshadow those of the obedient masses, who remain barely noticeable in the background. This print mocks reason, for what matters – the gluttonous representations of oppressive forces rather than the feeble majority – seems nonsensical.

In Plates 71 and 73, Goya uses allegory to directly contrast references of reason. The seated figure of *Against the common good*, Plate 71 (Fig. 23), crouches over a blank book, an obvious sign of reason, while writing unidentifiable text. The figure holds a finger out to the masses crouched in thatched huts in the background, perhaps asking them for patience, perhaps as an allusion to clerical blessing (Eickel 90). What is most significant is that this figure is not human, but rather an old man transformed through batwings and morphed into a grotesque, winged creature. Like similar surreal creatures in the *Caprichos*, he represents chaos creating a logical product. The crowd, including the man with his hands in the air on the far right, is secondary to the spectacle.

Plate 73, *Feline pantomime* (Fig. 24), depicts a cat resting on top of books – identifiable as books through the horizontal marks and by the fact that the top book protrudes forward from the one below it – resembling a stair case. An obedient, likely religious figure kneels in prayer towards the cat resting atop these symbols of reason. An owl violently flies towards the cat, perhaps advising the cat. The entire audience in the background as well as the obedient man is oblivious to the owl, and oblivious to the fact that the cat is sitting on top of reason. Much like Plate 72, *The consequences*, man is subjected to beast, and power seems to be in the hands of these grotesque allegorical creatures.

What exactly the creatures of the *caprichos enfáticos* represent may always remain a mystery. Goya left few notes regarding his use of allegory, and the indirect references of his allegory make the *caprichos enfáticos*, like Goya's print series *The Disparates*, both perplexing and intriguing. The animal figures are most likely readable as representations of socially oppressive forces such as the church, the monarchy, and the upper class. As Reva Wolf suggested, "Goya equated all symbols of power... specific identification is irrelevant" (45). It is still helpful, though, to apply some concrete meaning to these symbols.

In a 1978 article, Nigel Glendinning suggested that Goya's use of animal symbolism in the *caprichos enfáticos* was directly influenced by the writing of Italian satirist Giambatti Casti. In Plate 74, *This is the worst of it!*, Glendinning observed

that the text which the fox figure is writing translates as “Miserable humanity, you are to blame for this.” This text is nearly identical to a phrase in Casti’s *The Talking Animals*, which was likely available to Goya at the time (Glendinning 187).

Completed at the turn of the century, *The Talking Animals* uses animal symbolism similar to that in Goya’s *caprichos enfáticos* in order to criticize the crown, among other powers, for its suppression of the majority.

Applying metaphors used in *The Talking Animal* to the *caprichos enfáticos*, Glendinning suggests that the owl in Plate 73 would represent priests while the cat would represent “court circles” or the monarchy (Glendinning 189). The deceitful looking she-wolf in Plate 74, likewise, would represent a cruel minister who has gained much say in the decisions of the monarchy (Glendinning 188). These two prints convey, along with the rest of the *caprichos enfáticos*, the deceitfulness of the monarchy and the church. The lack of reason represented throughout the *Disasters of War* extends beyond the actual depiction of war. While the *caprichos enfáticos* show that war is fought to the advantage of a few, as Tomlinson suggests, the *caprichos enfáticos* also reveal systemic problems in the societal structure of post-war Spain (Goya 201).

The *caprichos enfáticos* are Goya’s penultimate questioning of human nature, second only to his “Black Paintings” of the 1820s. The *caprichos enfáticos* extend beyond a depiction and criticism of the Napoleonic War in Spain; allegory and fantastical imagery inextricably link them to Goya’s other art works in the early nineteenth century. The perplexing images of the *caprichos enfáticos*, for example, are closely related to the images of his concurrent print series *La Tauromaquia*. In Plate 21 of *La Tauromaquia*, titled *Dreadful events in the front rows of the ring at Madrid and death of the mayor of Torrejon*, a bull rams straight into the audience, producing an image of man being overcome by beast. As often depicted in the *caprichos enfáticos*, the unbelievable portrayal of beast dominating man creates a dialect of reason and chaos, invention and reality. Regarding the *caprichos enfáticos* as an integral part of Goya’s creative lineage validates Gwyn William’s brazen claim that the *Disasters of War* could be seen as a “second installment” of the *Caprichos*, a continuation of a debate between reason and chaos (59).

Plate 78 is a confusing print, depicting a horse defending itself against a pack of wolves as dogs stare idly at the commotion. This is a print whose specificities, like the rest of the *caprichos enfáticos*, seem impossible to decipher. Sayre suggested that the dogs were those employed by Madrid to protect animals from preying wolves (Eickel 93). Yet these dogs stand with absolutely no concern for what they are observing. It seems the wolves hold the same connotation as they did in Plate 74, and, according to Glendinning, could represent religion directly influencing the monarchical rule (188). The dogs are purposely complacent, perhaps suggesting an apathy among the people of the monarchy’s decree to let the church take over. Whatever the horse represents, be it Spain’s nationhood, the lower class, or humanity, it is left to fend for itself. And given the sheer number of wolves, the horse looks rather hopeless.

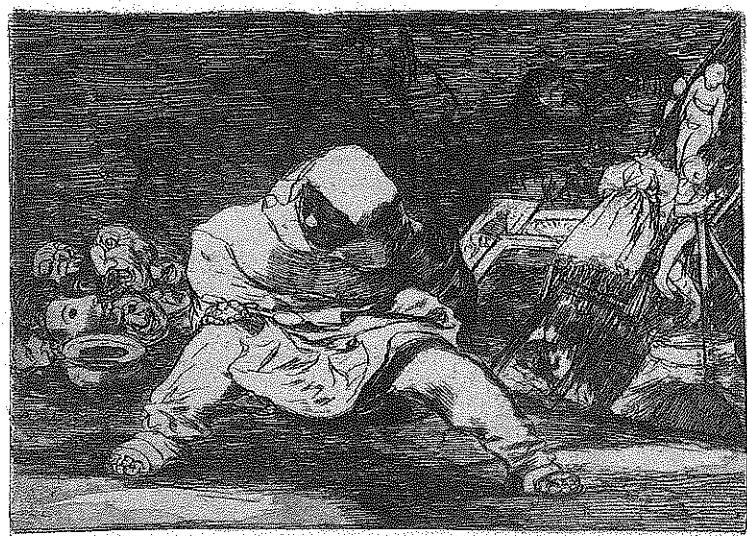


Figure 22: #68 *Que locura!* (*What madness!*), Etching, lavis, 160 x 220 mm

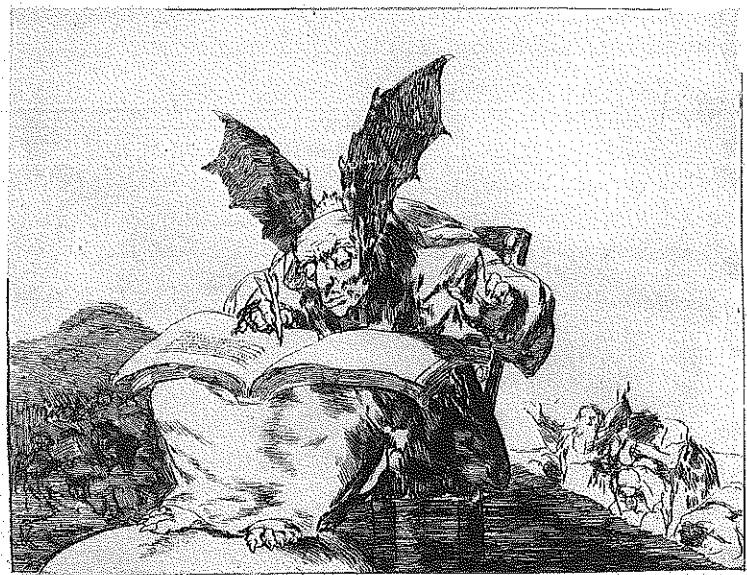


Figure 23: #71 *Contra el bien general* (*Against the common good*), Etching, 175 x 220 mm

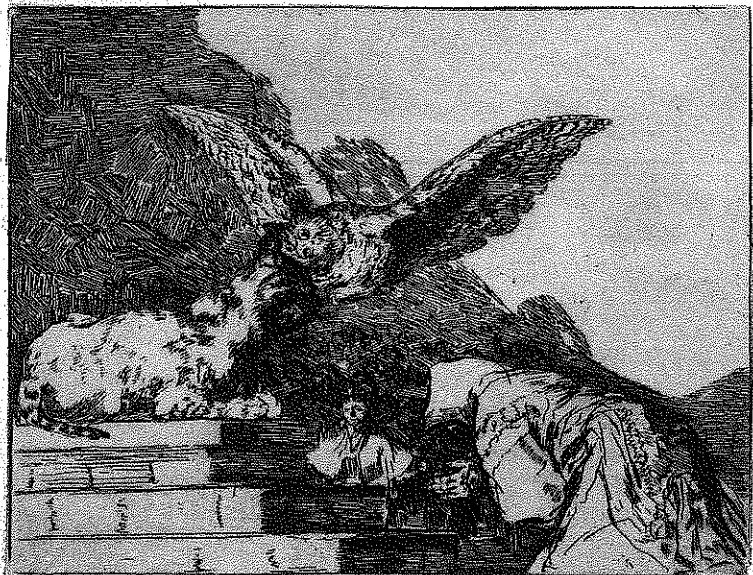


Figure 24: #73 *Gatesca pantomima (Feline pantomime)*, Etching, 175 x 220 mm

The chaos and calamity of the series are suddenly silenced in Plate 79, *Truth has died*. Here enters a new character, Truth, gloriously emitting light. She lays limp with a face of agony, as a caped clergyman towers above her giving a hand gesture mimicking that of the creature in Plate 74. Another figure, that of Justice, grasps her seemingly discarded scale in disbelief. This print suggests the demise of these two obvious signs of reason, as they are overcome by chaos.

Truth has died is followed by the final plate (Plate 80) in the series, titled *Will she live again?* (Fig. 30). Plate 80 brings into question the revivability of Truth and, further, humankind's capacity for reason. Truth lies bare-breasted, emitting light in a circular manner onto a mostly unidentifiable audience. Above and slightly to the right of Truth is a cat-like creature holding a book above its head. The dichotomy of chaos and reason, creature and book, continues to persist, and suddenly we are left to wonder whether reason has been crushed. This official closure to the series suggests an apathetic response to humankind's ability to grasp reason, allowing both an ambiguous optimistic/pessimistic reading of Goya's believed closing to the *Disasters of War*.

Goya's moral perspective in the *Disasters* may be highlighted by Plate 69 (Fig. 13), a piece that seems to function outside of its placement in the series. The title of Plate 69, *Nothing. The event will tell*, like the title of Plate 80, *Will she live again?*, suggests ambiguity on Goya's part. However, *Nothing. The event will tell* is not Goya's title, but the title the Royal Academy of San Fernando gave the print when it published the first edition in 1863. The proof of Plate 69 that Goya himself sent his friend Ceán Bermúdez indicates that Goya's original title was *Nada. Ello lo dice*, translatable as "Nothing. That is what it says" (Wilson Barea 57; Sanchez & Sayre 349). Goya's original title furthers the sense of despair already visible in the image of Plate 69. The skeletal figure's agonized torture amidst unidentifiable chaos yells of absurdity. The figure to the left behind holding the scales of Justice proves feeble, for how are we to even know it is actually Justice holding these scales, especially given the theme of mockery explored throughout the *caprichos enfáticos*? The masses hidden by dark scratches of ink appear to shout through contorted mouths, but the implication is that they shout for nothing. Plate 69, *Nothing*, seems to be humanity's last scream in the *caprichos enfáticos*, Goya's recognition and statement that humans lack the capacity of reason, and therefore are ultimately subjected to folly amid chaos. A resounding statement from a deaf man.

—Alfredo Rivera



Figure 25: #28 *Populacho (Rabble)*, Etching, lavis, drypoint, 175 x 215 mm

Disasters Revisited: Modern Images of Atrocity and Photojournalism

Francisco Goya's print series the *Disasters of War* is revered as the "beginning and unrivaled climax of modern graphics" (Licht 128). The *Disasters'* unflinching depictions of war have often led the series to be compared to modern war photography. Fred Licht wrote that "like a news photographer, Goya seeks to bear witness to the fundamental nature of man's eternal warfare against himself...to bring to the attention of the fatuous and the forgetful the fact that the world is divided into two races: the complacent and the wretched" (130-32). Licht's sentiments are echoed by Robert Hughes who writes that Goya's prints

...are incomparably the more dramatic and varied in their narrative, more piercing in their documentary power, more savagely beautiful, and, in every way, more humanly moving: nothing to rival them has been done since, and they are the true ancestors of all great visual war reporting" (Hughes 265).

The prints are a testament to themselves in that after nearly two hundred years they remain relevant. In the modern era critics and viewers continue to eagerly apply analogies of war photography to Goya's print series. But this inclination to compare the *Disasters* to war photography often overshadows exactly what the association implies and, subsequently, how such an association can affect the modern viewer, especially in an image-saturated environment. This current practice of situating Goya and his *Disasters of War* as a kind of "documentary realism" or photojournalism, however, tends to obscure the art historical tradition within which Goya was working. Comments that place Goya's *Disasters of War* as an ancestor to modern war photography invoke an unspoken cultural framework that guides the reception and perception of images. There must be recognition that prints in the *Disasters of War*, while supporting war photography characterizations and the cultural framework such a characterization entails, also supercede such characterizations. These characterizations are the result of modern attempts to understand and place Goya's unique print series within the realm of art history.

Historically, Goya is not the first artist to address war in a print series. Over one hundred years ago, art historian Charles Yriate compared Goya's *Disasters of War* (1810-20) to Jacques Callot's *Miseries of War* (*Les Misères et les malheurs de la guerre*) (1632-33) (Cuno 9). Indeed Callot's prints are often compared to Goya's for their choice of themes as well as medium. Callot's *Miseries of War* is comprised of twenty-four prints separated into two series: the *Small Miseries of War* (c. 1632), which consists of six prints discussed as preliminary sketches to the larger, second series, the eighteen prints of the *Large*

Miseries of War (1633) (Fig. 26). The *Miseries of War* is a meticulous, wide-angled perspective of a war that was a product of increasing political and economic pressure experienced in the duchy of Lorraine as a result of the prolonged conflicts of the Thirty Years' War (Goldfarb, "Callot" 15). Familiar with the military subject, Callot painstakingly details the life of the soldier, in all aspects, be it "receiving their first pay to their deaths in war or justice for their transgressions and misdeeds, ending their lives; or else becoming aged and impoverished, conquered by infirmities and misery" (Goldfarb, "Callot" 16). Callot's stylistic treatment of the subject includes birds-eye views of large crowds and public executions, with almost startling right-in-the-midst-of-day brightness, all framed within lavish, ornamental borders.

Although there have been many interpretations of Callot's intentions and his intended use of these prints, it has been a standard critical response that the *Miseries of War* provided Callot a means to display his technical abilities: "The subjects also provided a suitable format for the depictions of large crowds, animated figures, genre details, and displays of technical bravura, all of which were important characteristics of his art" (Goldfarb, "Callot" 18). However, even though Callot may deal with similar subject matter, his series is a distant second to Goya's *Disasters of War* in terms of its influence and relevance.

Placing a *Disasters of War* print and a Callot *Miseries of War* print side-by-side clearly demonstrates the differences between the two series. Callot's *Miseries* are smaller in scale, often meticulously detailed, and incorporate some of the stylistic – most notably the decorative - preferences of his period. These differences cause some art historians to give little consideration to the comparisons, or pairing, of Goya and Callot's prints series. Janis Tomlinson writes, "[a]lthough often compared with Callot's *Misères de la Guerre*, Goya's etchings share little other than a theme with Callot's objective view of wartime horrors" (Goya 191). Nonetheless, it is unwise to disregard the artistic tradition from which Goya was working when he began his print series. Such an analysis divides Goya from his predecessors and places him in an elevated position for which there seem to be no criteria. Without understanding what and who came before him, how can one understand what makes his prints so remarkable? Licht writes, "It might be argued that the violence and intransigent brutality of Goya's subject matter are what give his work its peculiar modernity and inescapable directness... [O]ne need only revert to Callot's magnificent *Troubles of War* (*Misères et malheurs de la guerre*) to see that subject matter itself is not sufficient to explain the extraordinary power of Goya's prints" (135).

What then can explain the extraordinary power of Goya's *Disasters of War*? Licht

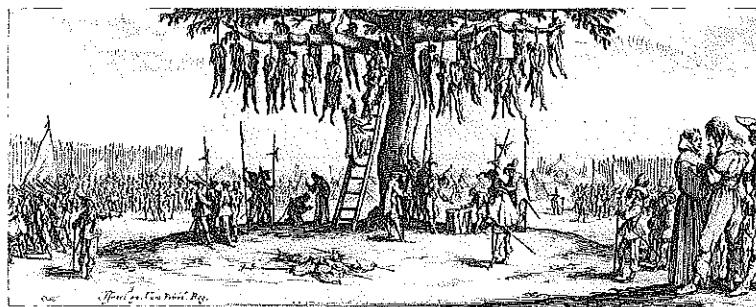


Figure 26: Jacques Callot, *The Hanging*, *The Large Miseries of War*, 1633, Plate 11, etching (Grinnell College Art Collection).



Figure 27: #32 *Por qué? (Why?)*, Etching, lavis, 157 x 209 mm

rightly points out the “modernity and inescapable directness” that are a part of the *Disasters of War*. Working in an entirely new tradition, Goya effectively establishes a new visual rhetoric. What emerges in his prints long before it is developed with photography is a “modern sensibility.” Robert Hughes characterizes Goya’s modernism as,

...not a matter of inventiveness. It has to do with a questioning, irreverent attitude to life; with a persistent skepticism that sees through the official structures of society and does not pay reflective homage to authority, whether that of church, monarch, or aristocrat; that tends, above all, to take little for granted, and to seek a continuously realistic attitude to its themes and subjects: to be, as Lenin would remark many years later in a very different social context, “as radical as reality itself” (Hughes 10-11).

The *Disasters* engage the viewer in an “entirely new pictorial idiom” in which the viewer is recruited to make his or her own decisions about the scene, without any allowance of “recourse to logic” (Licht 136-37). At no point does Goya let the viewer forget that what one is viewing is war. Goya’s war does not appear noble or heroic. It is full of killing, famine, and rape. His prints make visible what is often beyond capturing with words. The captions below the prints – the ancestors of modern political cartoons – do not ask for a reply (Hughes 290). His words may inform a print and contain biting sarcasm, but they nonetheless become supplemental quotations to the horror and atrocity that are on display. Goya may ask questions, *Why?* (Plate 32) (Fig. 27), and make statements, *This is bad* (Plate 46) (Fig. 6), but what is *remembered* is the horrific, tragic, or sardonic image. Goya removes what one might call the “clutter of Callot” – architecture, fancy borders, delicate or intricate details, to reveal an image that claims the eye. Viewers cannot lose themselves in scenic surroundings; instead, they are forced to look at what is before them – mutilated bodies, executions, indifference. They are, in the words of Licht, “to be exclusively preoccupied with the unbearable inhumanity of what is happening before our eyes” (139).

“Fashioned as an assault on the sensibilities of the viewer,” Goya’s account of the cruelties of war taunts viewers with its seemingly unending stream of atrocities (Sontag 45). The immediacy of a *Disasters* print, with its ability to forcefully seize our attention, undeniably unites Goya’s *Disasters of War* to war photography. Such an analogy then arguably places the *Disasters* in a schema where a modern cultural framework for reception is already in place. This framework manifested itself as early as the initial published printing of the series. Although the *Disasters of War* was made by Goya before the invention of photography, its prints were not published until 1863 - *after* the invention of the camera. The Royal Academy of San Fernando chose to print the series rather darkly so that it would appear stylistically like the photographs that were popular at that time, and, perhaps, appear more attractive or

gruesome to potential buyers (Tomlinson, *Graphic* 26). As modern viewers already long familiar with modern war photography, that we are inclined to see the *Disasters of War* like war photographs is not surprising.

It is important to recall that the first wars captured in photographs were the Crimean War (1854-56) and the American Civil War (1860-64). Rudimentary technology of the time prevented photographers from taking what would today be considered a quick snapshot. Taking photographs in those wars required complete stillness; most photos were sat for or posed, or were of landscapes or dead soldiers. Some of the most famous photographs of the Civil War era were taken by photographers working for Mathew Brady, who brought the reality and the horror of war into homes with a single image. “*Dead Soldier in a Trench, Petersburg*” is a photograph that features a dead soldier lying with his face to the camera, gun across his body, splayed out in a narrow, dirt trench (Sontag 63). For all of the gory reality of the Crimean and Civil War photographs, a great debate has long raged about the authenticity of a number of them, especially when it was revealed that some of the Brady photographs were staged (Sontag 54). However, it is not this author’s intention to engage in a debate on whether or not the staging of a photograph makes it any less noteworthy, but rather to stress the significance of taking war out of the distant fields and lands through images and bringing it into the homes of those who previously had never known anything like it. It is a quintessential modern experience to be a spectator of calamities and atrocities taking place elsewhere (Sontag 18).

It was not until the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and the invention of newer, lightweight cameras that “in action” shots could be taken. The most famous of Spanish Civil War photographers was Robert Capa, whose *Death of a Republican Soldier* (1936) captured a soldier falling to his death as he was struck by a bullet, arms flailing, knees bent at a ninety degree angle as if he were merely about to sit in an invisible chair, not soon to be buried in his grave. Capa’s photograph strikes a particular chord because the viewer is a witness to death. Being a witness to death turns a viewer into something else, a corroborator. Nowhere is such corroboration more apparent than during the Vietnam War and Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan’s execution of a Vietcong suspect in the streets of Saigon. Eddie Adams’s photograph captures the moment the bullet has been fired; the prisoner grimacing, dead, not yet fallen to the ground. General Loan, who had led the prisoner out to the street where journalists had gathered, “would not have carried out the summary execution there had they not been available to witness it” (Sontag 59). In other words, photojournalism influenced this execution and “the shooting” of a photograph gained new meaning. At the instant an atrocity is committed, in part because witnesses are present, a photograph and/or photography summarily carries with it responsibility – “As for the viewer” writes Sontag, “one can gaze at these faces for a long time and not come to the end of the mystery, and the indecency, of such co-spectatorship” (60).

What does it then mean to view horrific images, to be a witness to atrocity? Goya’s *Disasters of War* inflame and bring the viewer to this very same dilemma. They



Figure 28: #33 *Qué hai que hacer mas?* (*What more can be done?*), Etching, lavis, drypoint, 155 x 205 mm

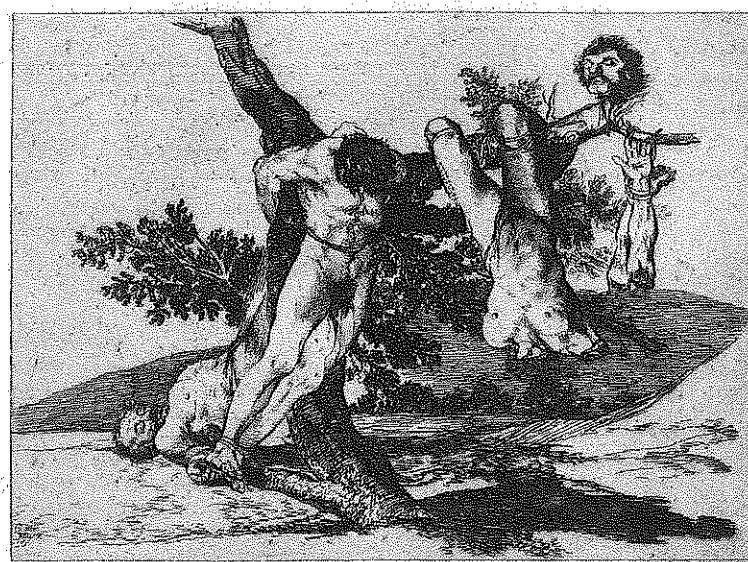


Figure 29: #39 *Grande hazaña! Con muertos!* (*An heroic feat! With dead men!*), Etching, lavis, drypoint, 156 x 208 mm

don't like it (Plate 9) shows a woman struggling against a man who is trying to rape her; *Barbarians!* (Plate 38) shows a man tied, face-first, to a tree, about to be executed at close range. *What is the use of a cup?* (Plate 59) depicts weak, starving men and women huddling around a single cup, no relief, no chance of survival in sight. These prints uncompromisingly present an act of atrocity being committed, and it is the viewer, the beholder of the image, who ultimately experiences the outcome; whether it is grief, horror, disgust, or fascination. As with photography, "even more than in painting, it is not so much by the [artist's] eye but in that of the beholder that the experience is decisively shaped..." (Kozloff 289).

In the modern era, war is chiefly produced, shaped and understood through images. The American opinion of war in Vietnam was shaped largely because of the non-stop, day-after-day contact through television cameras and newspaper photographs. Viewers in that time experienced images of dirty, haggard soldiers in the midst of combat, young men being rushed out of battle with lost limbs and injuries that would soon prove fatal. Today's students of history remember the Vietnam war through the famous images taken, such as the Eddie Adams's photo and the "signature Vietnam War horror-photograph" taken by Huynh Cong Ut of a young girl, crying and screaming in pain, running naked away from her home after it was accidentally bombed and she was doused with napalm (Sontag 57).

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, non-stop news coverage filled newspapers and airwaves for days with images of the attacks and the aftermath. Americans who had watched the World Trade Centers fall on the morning of September 11 were able to "re-live" that experience time and time again. For those who were not in Manhattan on that day to witness the events themselves, images were the only relatable way by which to connect themselves with their fellow Americans who had suffered through the horror and tragedy. The question might be asked, "As they viewed the images of the towers falling for the first time, and then the tenth, and then the twentieth, what were their reactions the twenty-fifth time they viewed that image? Was it the same as the first?"

One of the most recorded and reprinted images from that day captured three New York City firefighters raising the American flag in the rubble of the towers. Ironically, this image evokes another iconic war image, *Raising the Flag at Iwo Jima*, from World War II, February 1945. As photographers rushed to capture the history-making events of September 11, it seems, at least in this one instance, that history visually repeated itself. While some may suggest that these two images are, at the very least, meant to commemorate heroic actions and heighten patriotism, they are nonetheless the images that define these particular events. In her book *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag effectively addresses the significance of images as the medium through which many create memories and remember, especially in an image-filled era:

Nonstop imagery (television, streaming video, movies) is our surround, but when it comes to remembering, the photograph has a deeper bite. Memory freeze-frames; its basic unit is the single image. In an era of information overload, the photograph provides a quick way of apprehending something and a compact form for memorizing it. The photograph is like a quotation, or a maxim or proverb. Each of us mentally stocks hundreds of photographs, subject to instant recall (22).

Sontag makes a valuable point. Images become the memories for events that have taken place. However, what does it mean when images of atrocity recall images of atrocity? When images, not significantly patriotic or otherwise, bring to mind another image of horror? In April of 2004, in the midst of the American fought Iraqi war, four American contractors were murdered and car bombed by insurgents and then mutilated by an angry mob of Iraqi citizens in Fallujah. The mob took the burned bodies of two of the men and, after the crowd had finished decimating the bodies, strung them up from a nearby bridge. The horrific images that were a result of this day instantly bring to mind Goya's *Disasters of War* Plate 28, *Rabble* (Fig. 25); Plate 33, *What more can be done?* (Fig. 28); and Plate 39 *An heroic feat! With dead men!* (Fig. 29). *Rabble* depicts a man on his stomach, stripped from the waist with his feet tied together, being mercilessly beaten by a woman and a man with sticks as a crowd watches in the background. *What more can be done?* shows a man, his eyes closed, possibly dead, being held upside down and legs stretched open to be castrated. *An heroic feat! With dead men!* is an illustration of three men dead, tied to a tree, castrated, dismembered, with one of the unfortunate men having his head stuck onto a tree limb like a pike and his hands and arms tied next to it. The atrocities that Goya depicts in the *Disasters of War* could very well be the narrative of the atrocities photographed in Fallujah. Two hundred years after the creation of the *Disasters of War* and one hundred and fifty years after their publication, images in the *Disasters* tragically recur in modern photographs.

The contemporary analogy between Goya's *Disasters of War* and modern war photographs generates endless avenues for reflection and interpretation. In questioning what it means to view images of atrocity, specifically in an era that is saturated with images, there is no one, all-encompassing answer. In a time when, unfortunately, images of atrocity are so prevalent and the ability to capture such images has never been easier, it is hoped that the *Disasters of War*, with its breadth and scope of vision, will continue to provoke and inspire viewers to take the time to contemplate the stirring scenes that Goya presents and not simply to dismiss them as more images in a long line of images.

—Kimberly Theodore

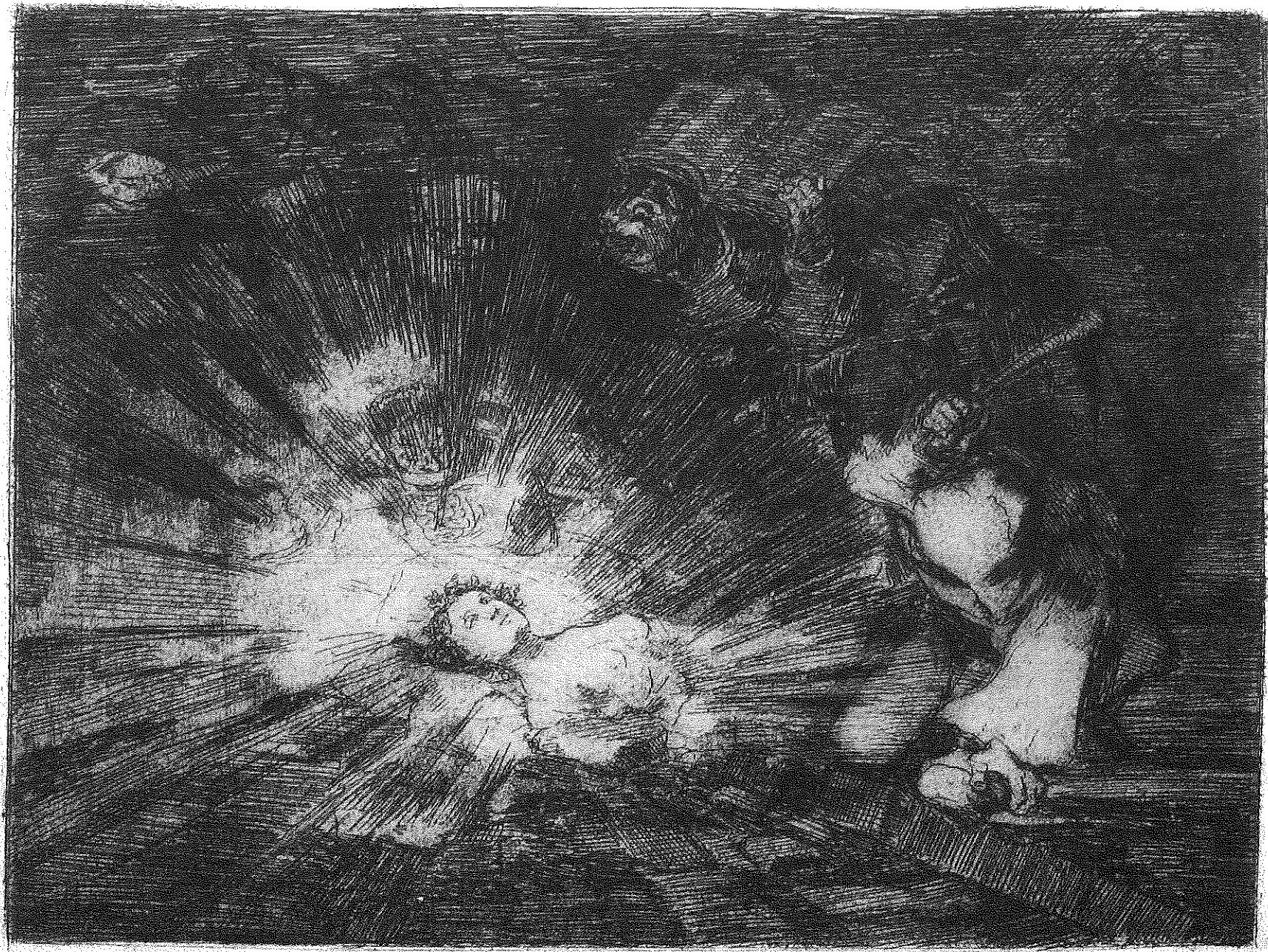


Figure 30: #80 *Si resucitará? (Will she live again?)*, Etching, 175 x 220 mm

Reviving the Reality of Goya's *Disasters of War*

Representations of scenes, whether literary or pictorial, spark the imagination. Audiences consume and appropriate images to make them their own. The pleasure of viewing a still image is to animate it by providing narrative or context within one's mind. Aside from being pleasurable, however, the process of contextualization is a highly effective method of transmitting meaning and provoking a reaction. Once the image takes siege of the captive viewer's imagination so does the message. This is certainly the purpose of Goya's *Disasters of War*. However, Goya's endeavor was uniquely radical for his time and this complicates our reading of the series. For decades, scholars have debated whether the images in the series should be examined as representations of witnessed events, or if they may be considered imaginary scenes created to convey a specific message. Does knowing that the events depicted were witnessed, as opposed to imagined, change how we read them? Does it change their effect?

The posthumous title of the series, *The Disasters of War*, was assigned by Spain's Royal Academy of San Fernando in 1863, thirty-five years after Goya's death. This title informs our reading by implying, through its curt directness, that the images contained within the series are fact — that they represent what war looks like. However, the title that Goya gave to the set of working proofs that he left to his friend Ceán Bermúdez in 1824, *Fatal consequences of the bloody war in Spain with Bonaparte and other emphatic caprices in eighty-five prints. Invented, drawn and engraved by the original painter, Don Francisco de Goya y Lucientes*, presents the viewer with a different set of information. First, the addendum "and other emphatic caprices" suggests that every print may be considered an example of 'emphatic caprice,' not just the final sixteen images. As defined by the Royal Academy of San Fernando in the eighteenth-century, 'capricho' refers to "that which is done by the power of invention rather than observance of the rules of art" (Rosand 3). Elaborating on this definition, Janis Tomlinson, a leading Goya scholar, explains that we should understand Goya's use of the word 'emphatic' through the lens of the rhetorical definition of 'emphasis,' which means "to make a point or give a warning by insinuation rather than by direct statement" (Goya 199). The use of "emphatic *caprichos*" in the title thus reinforces the idea that Goya took certain liberties in creating his images. The second line of the title further supports this claim with insertion of the word 'invented,' which leaves the viewer to infer that Goya did indeed use his interpretive faculties in creating the *Disasters*.

Goya also may have sardonically commented on his inventiveness within the series, not just in the title. One example is the hyperbolically punctuated caption below Plate 39, *An heroic feat! With dead men!* (Fig. 29). Perhaps one of the best-known images of atrocity within the series, the image depicts a tree callously

decorated with three dead men's body parts. While scenes like this may have existed, Tomlinson suggests that the image should be understood as a critique of the neo-classical cult of the destroyed figure (Goya 193). Goya's caption, therefore, may be a reflection on his own work rather than that of the perpetrators of the crime; that is, the arrangement of bodies is of Goya's own design, making the *heroic feat* his as well.

However, considering that the *Disasters of War* print series is prized as one of the greatest testaments to the terrifying reality of war, as well as an influential predecessor to photojournalism, it is troubling that events and people depicted in the series may have been imagined. How, one might ask, can "invented" images truthfully represent a specific reality? In asking this question it is important to keep two points in mind. First, by informing his viewer that the prints are the product of his imagination, Goya sends the message that they are not representations of actual occurrences. In making this statement, Goya levels with his viewer and honestly presents the series as a collection of imagined images. Unlike so many modern photographs that we assume are authentic only to learn later that they have been staged, these images make no such claim of reportage. Second, informed by the definition of "emphatic," we may conclude that Goya did not employ invention whimsically, but rather in order to send his viewer a clear and powerful communication grounded in truth and honesty. The meaning and sentiment conveyed by the *Disasters* are real, even if the scenes are not.

Because the viewer is not led to believe that the images offer ostensibly objective illustrations of real events, the series is able to present itself as an honest and sincere meditation on the terrifying potential that resides in all humans. In blurring the line between the real events of the Napoleonic War and the scenes that comprise the *Disasters of War*, Goya constructs a unique reality that is complimentary yet distinct from the historical reality of the war.

Although the series constructs a vivid representation of the Napoleonic War in Spain, the individual images are universal. This gives the viewer a great deal of freedom, for he or she is not obligated to assume a specific place or identity within each frame but rather can make associations that bring the images to life in ways that are related to personal experience. Significantly, it is the viewer's awareness of the fact that the images are creative fabrications that allows the *Disasters* to develop their own reality in the viewer's imagination.

Because the images are not tied to specific occurrences, they do not need the approval of historical referents. They become self-sufficient artifacts, developing into a different type of evidence in their own right. As Susan Sontag notes, standards for what passes as historical evidence decline with time; "many staged photographs turn

into historical evidence, albeit an impure kind – like most historical evidence” (57). The *Disasters* are especially well positioned to assume the role of evidence considering the fact that they are among the only visual “records” of that war. However, this independence from subject also allows the series to impart a critique on the terror of war in general. They speak to the will and suffering that war demands and provokes and in this process become part of a grand critique on the inhumane actions of humans involved in war.

Perhaps this generality speaks even more directly to the modern viewer. The events before the viewer are not isolated in the past or in another country; rather, the pain that the viewer witnesses is situated in a timeless continuum of suffering in which there is room for each viewer to locate an event or face with which he or she can identify and sympathize. The series says: this has happened before; it will happen again; this just is one example; it could happen to you.

As modern viewers we may be especially well prepared to accept unique and a-referential images as realities. As Jean Baudrillard argues, the contemporary conception of the image is no longer that of a mirror reflecting a real scene but is instead “its own pure simulacrum,” the creation “of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (11, 2). These hyperreal images are, according to Baudrillard, just as real as reality. Baudrillard’s framework is an appealing one from which to approach Goya’s *Disasters*. Indeed, Goya appears to have anticipated Baudrillard’s conception of simulacrum a century and a half before the postmodern theorist himself. The danger with Baudrillard’s thought, however, is that this new reality of the image remains distinct and unrelated to the reality of the world. Guy Debord, who argues that images have in fact replaced reality, believes this is the case. In what he has termed the “society of the spectacle,” viewers are pacified by images, finding satisfaction in their voyeurism; reality unfolds as “an object of mere contemplation” (¶2). To understand how these models of thought might apply to our example, imagine a viewer who is repulsed by the savage acts depicted in Goya’s frames but is unable to translate this emotion to similar events taking place elsewhere in the world.

Considering that Goya’s intent was to produce an effect, to awaken viewers to the atrocities of war that people *live* with, Baudrillard and Debord’s modes of thinking

quickly reveal themselves as defeatist. If the viewer allows the *Disasters* to remain a series of imaginary scenes with imaginary consequences that exist only in his or her mind, then the point has been missed. The efficacy of the *Disasters* lies in the prints’ ability to inform the viewer’s real-life conceptions of war. The viewer’s job is to reanimate Goya’s imagined vision of war, turning it into his or her own reality. The challenge before the modern viewer then is twofold: First, to embrace a willingness to be seduced by images, and to accept images as realities; this is how the *Disasters* implant themselves in our imaginations and become real in our minds. And second, to recognize this capability as a vulnerability, and make sure that our reactions and responses are not also imagined realities but lived realities. If we accept that it was Goya’s intent to turn lived realities into imagined realities, then it is our job to reverse this system; to turn his imagined realities back into lived realities.

Susan Sontag, wary of the apathy modern viewers express towards images of war, holds hope that they may be revived. She implores her readers:

Let the atrocious images haunt us. Even if they are only tokens, and cannot possibly encompass most of the reality to which they refer, they still perform a vital function. The images say: This is what human beings are capable of doing – may volunteer to do, enthusiastically, self-righteously. Don’t forget (115).

The final image of the series, *Will she live again?* (Plate 80) (Fig. 30), depicts a woman lying on the ground, emitting a halo-like glow. Perhaps one of the most difficult images of the series, the figure is often understood as a representation of Truth or the Constitution of Spain. The caption makes the task of characterizing the *Disasters* as either pessimistic or optimistic futile, and therefore bears implications for the entire series. However, might we be able to answer Goya’s question if we treat the allegorical figure as a symbol of the *Disasters of War* print series itself? If so, only the individual viewer will know if the reality of the *Disasters* has been revived.

—Madeline VanHaften-Schick

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—Katherine Skarzynski

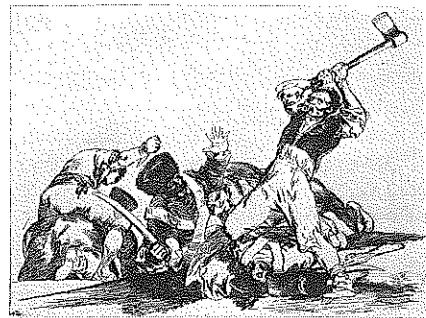
Checklist

The prints are in the order in which they appeared in the sixth edition printed in the Calcografía nacional for the Royal Academy of San Fernando in 1930. Grinnell College's set is numbered thirty-eight of one hundred copies. Each print uses dark, umber ink on laid Arches paper with a monogram of interlaced initials. Originally the prints were bound with a red cloth cover (Harris 1983, 175-176).

Translations of titles vary from one art historical text to another; the following translations are from the Tomás Harris catalogue raisonné, *Goya: Engravings and Lithographs*, 1983. The original copperplates had spelling errors that the Academy corrected when it began printing the series, and contained accents marks rarely used in modern Spanish. For this catalogue, the Spanish titles have the correct spelling, and accents conform to modern usage. All measurements are in millimeters and height proceeds width.



#1 *Tristes presentimientos de lo que ha de acontecer* (*Sad forebodings of what is going to happen*)
Etching, burin, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



#3 *Lo mismo* (*The same*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
160 x 220 mm



#5 *Y son fieras* (*And they are like wild beasts*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint
155 x 210 mm



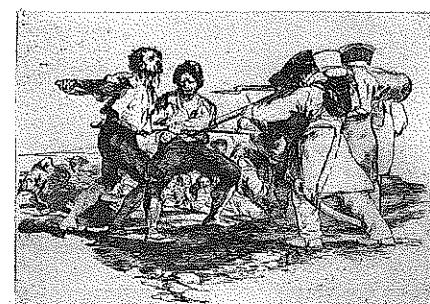
#8 *Siempre sucede* (*It always happens*)
Etching, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



#6 *Bien te se está* (*It serves you right*)
Etching, lavis
140 x 210 mm



#9 *No quieren* (*They don't like it*)
Etching, aquatint, drypoint
156 x 209 mm



#2 *Con razon ó sin ella* (*Rightly or wrongly*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



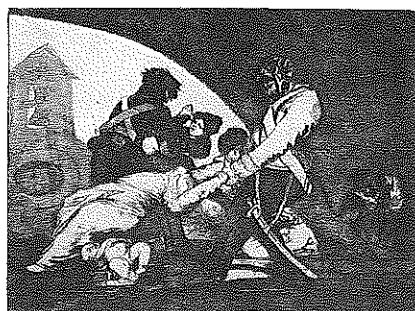
#4 *Las mugeres dan valor* (*The women give courage*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis, drypoint,
155 x 205 mm



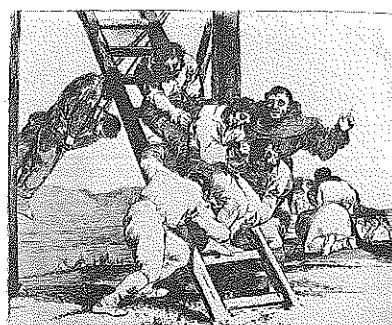
#7 *Que valor!* (*What courage!*)
Etching, aquatint, drypoint
158 x 209 mm



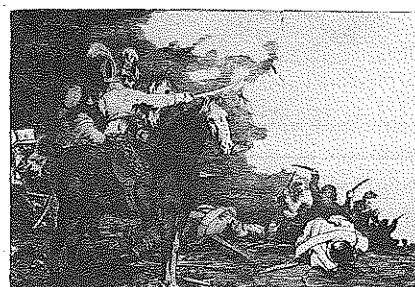
#10 *Tampoco* (*Nor do [these] either*)
Etching
150 x 215 mm



#11 *Ni por esas* (*Neither do these*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
160 x 210 mm



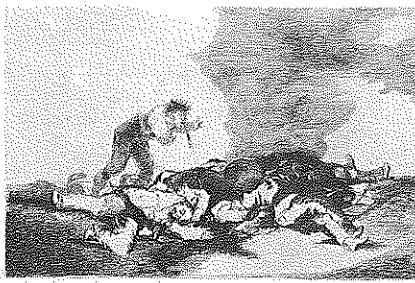
#14 *Duro es el paso!* (*It's a hard step!*)
Etching, burnished lavis, drypoint
155 x 165 mm



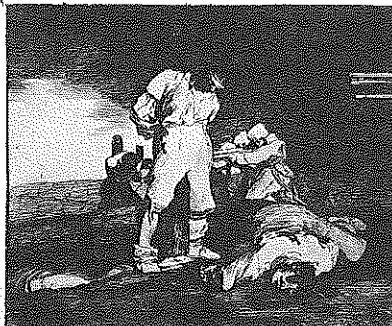
#17 *No se convienen* (*They do not agree*)
Etching, drypoint
145 x 215 mm



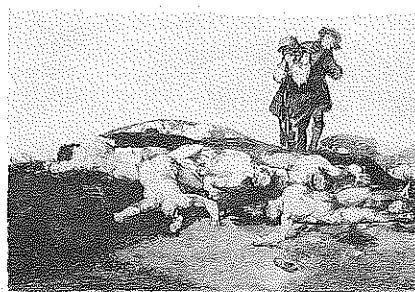
#20 *Curarlos, y á otra*
(*Get them well, and on to the next*)
Etching, lavis
160 x 235 mm



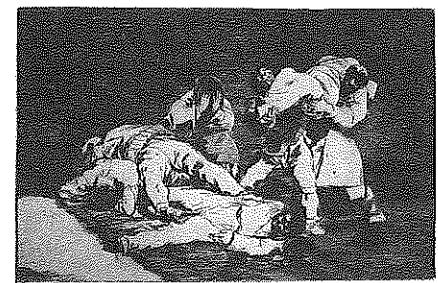
#12 *Para eso habeis nacido*
(*This is what you were born for*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
160 x 235 mm



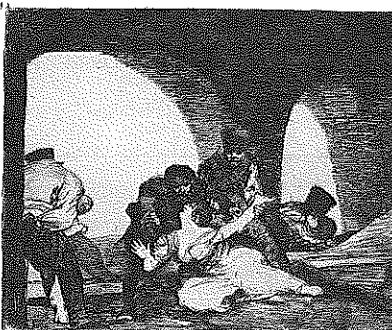
#15 *Y no hai remedio* (*There's no help for it*)
Etching, drypoint
145 x 165 mm



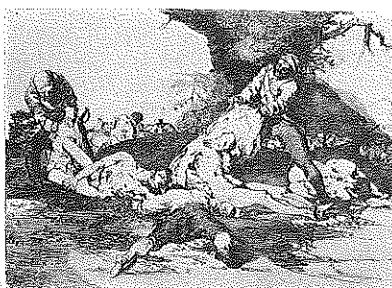
#18 *Enterrar y callar* (*Bury them and keep quiet*)
Etching, burnished lavis, drypoint
160 x 235 mm



#21 *Será lo mismo* (*It will be the same*)
Etching, burnished lavis
145 x 220 mm



#13 *Amarga presencia* (*Bitter to be present*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
145 x 170 mm



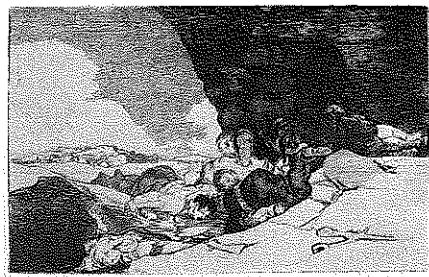
#16 *Se aprovechan* (*They make use of them*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
160 x 235 mm



#19 *Ya no hay tiempo* (*There isn't time now*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
165 x 235 mm



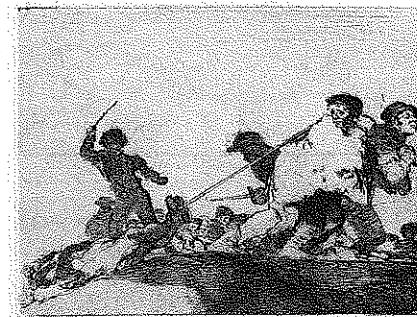
#22 *Tanto y mas* (*Even worse*)
Etching, lavis
160 x 250 mm



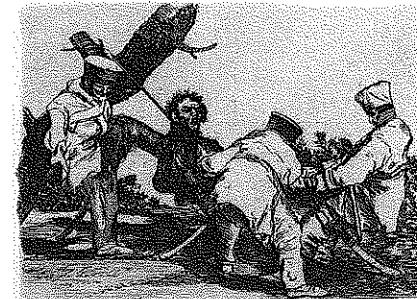
#23 *Lo mismo en otras partes* (*The same elsewhere*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
160 x 240 mm



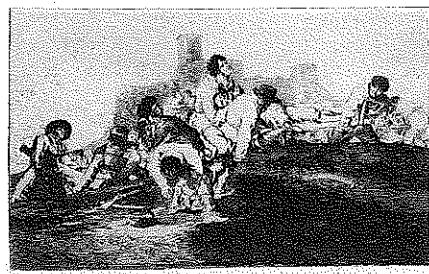
#26 *No se puede mirar* (*One can't look*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
145 x 210 mm



#29 *Lo merecía* (*He deserved it*)
Etching, drypoint
175 x 215 mm



#32 *Por qué?* (*Why?*)
Etching, lavis
157 x 209 mm



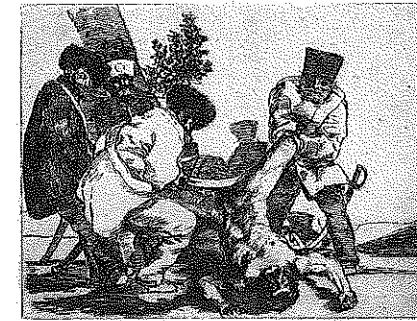
#24 *Aun podrán servir* (*They can still be of use*)
Etching
160 x 255 mm



#27 *Caridad* (*Charity*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
160 x 235 mm



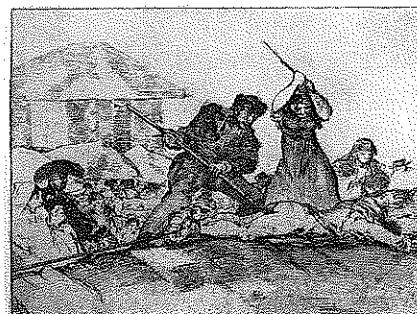
#30 *Estragos de la guerra* (*Ravages of war*)
Etching, drypoint
140 x 170 mm



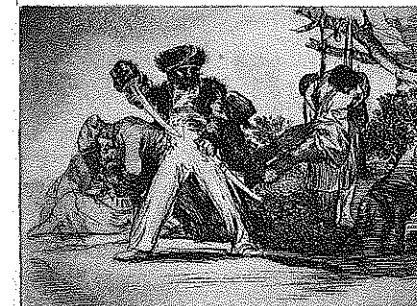
#33 *Qué hai que hacer mas?*
(*What more can be done?*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



#25 *Tambien estos* (*These too*)
Etching, drypoint
165 x 235 mm



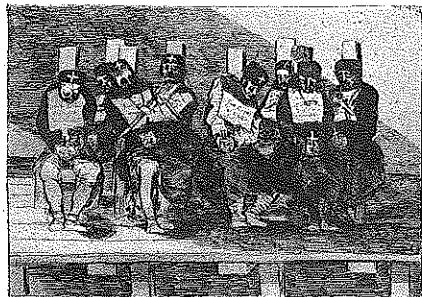
#28 *Populacho* (*Rabble*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
175 x 215 mm



#31 *Fuerte cosa es!* (*That's tough!*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



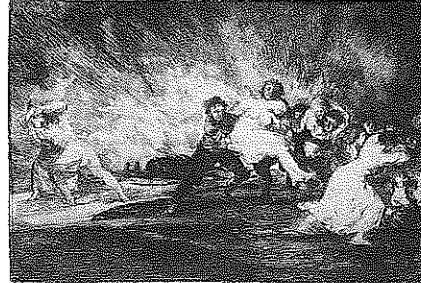
#34 *Por una navaja* (*On account of a knife*)
Etching, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



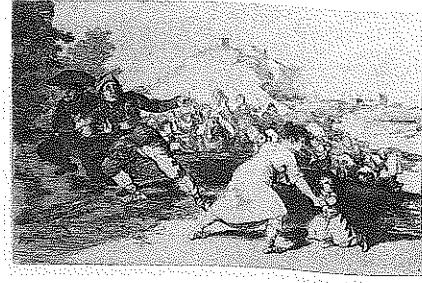
#35 *No se puede saber por qué* (One can't tell why)
Etching, burnished lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



#38 *Bárbaros! (Barbarians!)*
Etching, barnished aquatint
155 x 205 mm



#41 *Escapan entre las llamas*
(They escape through the flames)
Etching
162 x 236 mm



#44 *Yo lo vi (I saw it)*
Etching, drypoint
160 x 235 mm



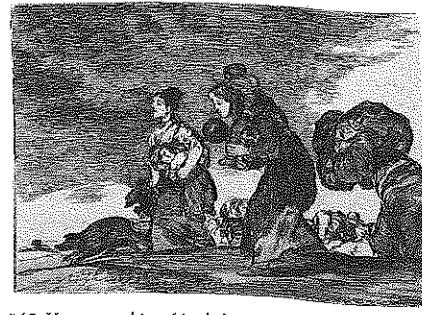
#36 *Tampoco (Not [in this case] either)*
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



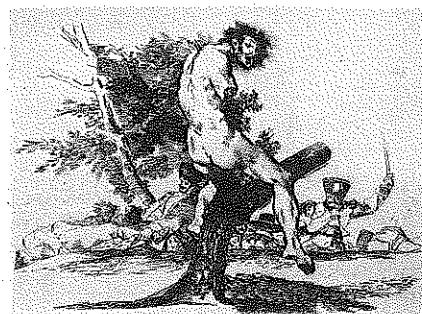
#39 *Grande hazaña! Con muertos!*
(An heroic feat! With dead men!)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
156 x 208



#42 *Todo va revuelto (Everything is topsy-turvy)*
Etching
175 x 220 mm



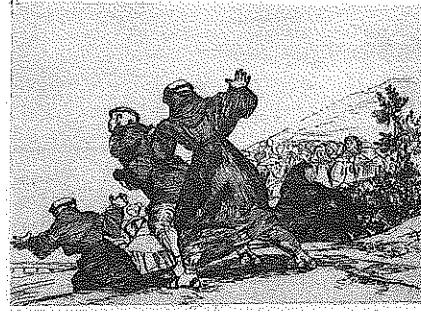
#45 *Y esto tambien (And this too)*
Etching, aquatint or lavis, drypoint
165 x 220 mm



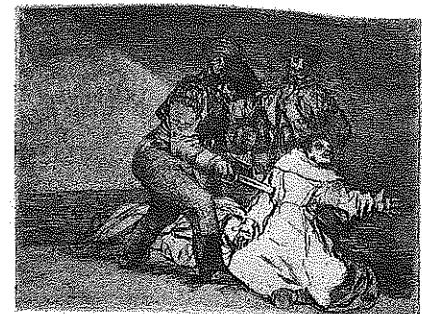
#37 *Esto es peor (This is worse)*
Etching, lavis, drypoint
157 x 208 mm



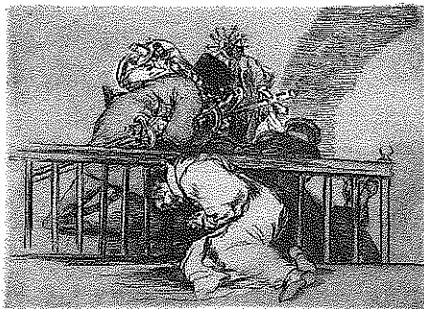
#40 *Algun partido saca (He gets something out of it)*
Etching, drypoint
175 x 215 mm



#43 *Tambien esto (This too)*
Etching, burnished aquatint
155 x 205 mm



#46 *Esto es malo (This is bad)*
Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



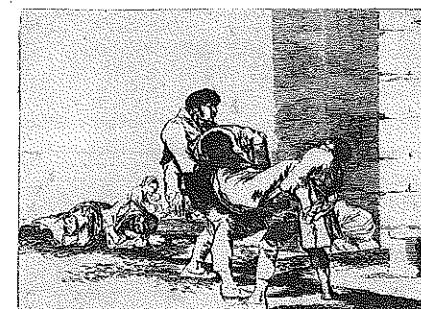
#47 *Astí sucedió* (*This is how it happened*)
Etching, burnished lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



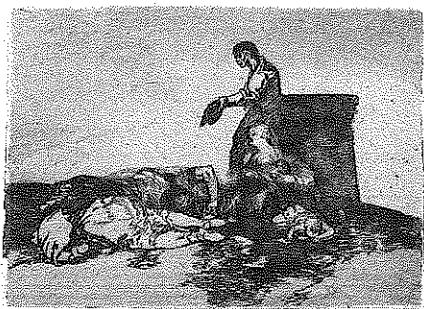
#50 *Madre infeliz!* (*Unhappy mother!*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



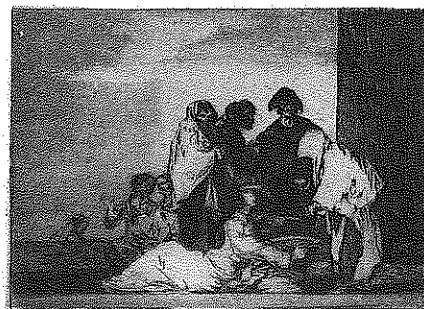
#53 *Espiró sin remedio*
(*There was nothing to be done and he died*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis
155 x 205 mm



#56 *Al cementerio* (*To the cemetery*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



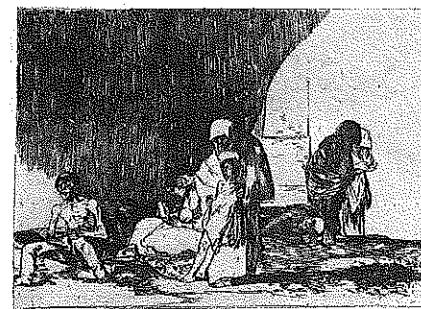
#48 *Cruel lástima!* (*Cruel tale of woe!*)
Etching, burnished lavis
155 x 205 mm



#51 *Gracias á la almorta* (*Thanks to the millet*)
Etching, burnished aquatint
155 x 205 mm



#54 *Clamores en vano* (*Appeals are in vain*)
Etching, lavis
155 x 205 mm



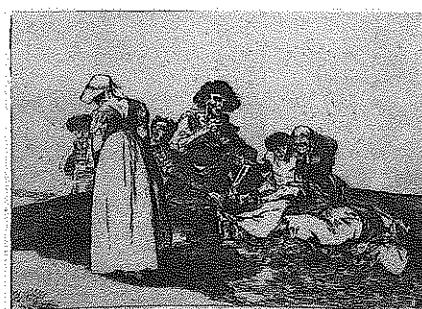
#57 *Sanos y enfermos* (*The healthy and the sick*)
Etching, burnished aquatint
155 x 205 mm



#49 *Caridad de una muger* (*A woman's charity*)
Etching, lavis
155 x 205 mm



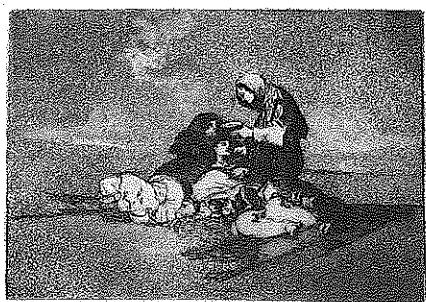
#52 *No llegan á tiempo* (*They do not arrive in time*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



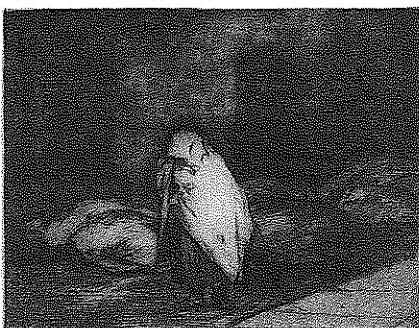
#55 *Lo peor es pedir* (*The worst is to beg*)
Etching, lavis
155 x 205 mm



#58 *No hay que dar voces* (*It's no use crying out*)
Etching, burnished aquatint
155 x 205 mm



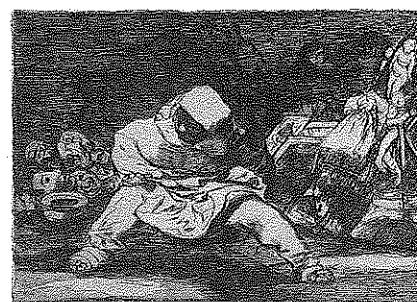
#59 *De qué sirve una taza?*
(*What is the use of a cup?*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis
155 x 205 mm



#62 *Las camas de la muerte* (*The beds of death*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
175 x 200 mm



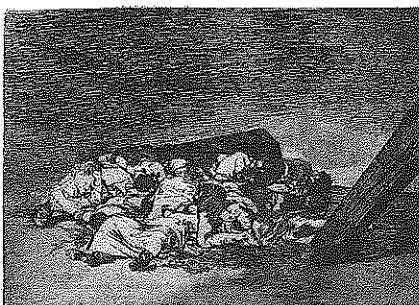
#65 *Qué alboroto es este?* (*What is this hubbub?*)
Etching, burnished aquatint and/or lavis
175 x 220 mm



#68 *Que locura!* (*What madness!*)
Etching, lavis
160 x 220 mm



#60 *No hay quien los socorra*
(*There is no one to help them*)
Etching, burnished aquatint
150 x 205 mm



#63 *Muertos recogidos* (*Harvest of the dead*)
Etching
155 x 205 mm



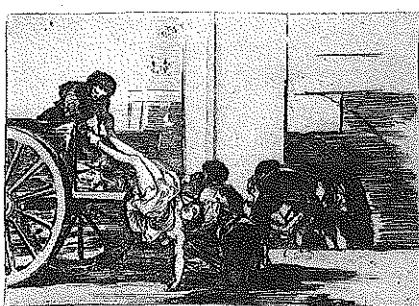
#66 *Extraña devoción!* (*Strange Devotion!*)
Etching, burnished aquatint or lavis
175 x 220 mm



#69 *Nada. Ella dirá* (*Nothing. The event will tell.*)*
Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis, drypoint
155 x 200 mm



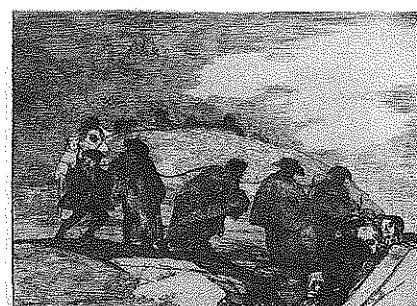
#61 *Si son de otro linaje*
(*Perhaps they are of another breed*)
Etching, lavis, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



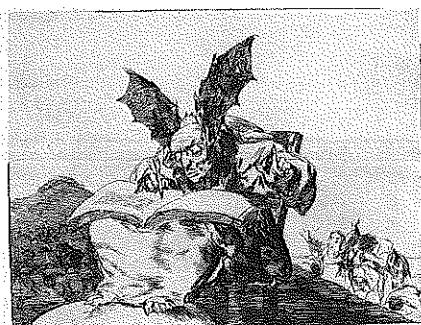
#64 *Carretadas al cementerio*
(*Cartloads to the cemetery*)
Etching, aquatint, drypoint
155 x 205 mm



#67 *Esta no lo es menos* (*This is not less so*)
Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



#70 *No saben el camino*
(*They do not know the way*)
Etching, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



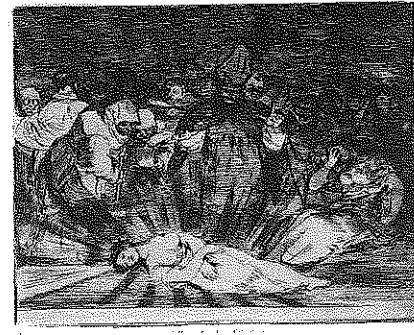
#71 *Contra el bien general*
(*Against the common good*)
Etching
175 x 220 mm



#74 *Esto es lo peor!* (*This is the worst of it!*)
Etching
180 x 220 mm



#77 *Que se rompe la cuerda* (*May the cord break*)
Etching, burnished aquatint or lavis, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



#79 *Murió la Verdad* (*Truth has died*)
Etching
175 x 220 mm



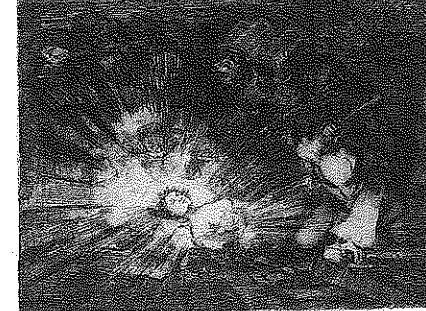
#72 *Las resultas* (*The consequences*)
Etching
175 x 220 mm



#75 *Farándula de charlatanes* (*Charlatans' show*)
Etching, aquatint or lavis, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



#78 *Se defiende bien* (*He defends himself well*)
Etching, drypoint
175 x 220 mm



#80 *Si resucitará?* (*Will she live again?*)
Etching
175 x 220 mm



#73 *Gatesca pantomima* (*Feline pantomime*)
Etching
175 x 220 mm



#76 *El buitre carnívoro* (*The carnivorous vulture*)
Etching, drypoint (?)
175 x 220 mm

*According to Wilson-Bareau (57), the title of this print was changed by the mid-nineteenth-century Academicians from “*Nada. Ello lo dice.* (*Nothing. That is what it says.*)” to “*Nada. Ello dirá.* (*Nothing. The event will tell.*)”

—Audrey Coffield