# NOTHING. IT WILL SAY

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: DISASTERS OF WAR (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, 1810-1815) (69/82)

**DATOS GENERALES**

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|---|---|
| CRONOLOGÍA | Ca. 1820 - 1823 |
| DIMENSIONES | 155 x 201 mm |
| TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE | Aguafuerte, aguatinta bruñida, lavis, punta seca y buril |
| RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA | Undisputed work |
| FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN | 26 Dec 2010 / 05 Jun 2023 |
| INVENTARIO | 836 225 |

**HISTORIA**

See *Sad forebodings of what is to come.*

In the first state of the proof, burin touches can be seen reinforcing the bald spots on top of the corpse's head.

The title of the print was handwritten by Goya on the first and only series known to us at the time it was made, which the painter gave to his friend Agustín Ceán Bermúdez. Thus the title was subsequently engraved on the plate without any modification from Ceán Bermúdez's copy for the first edition of *The Disasters of War* published by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts

of San Fernando in Madrid in 1863.

In this case the title noted by Goya in Ceán's edition was Nada. It says... whereas the Madrid Royal Academy preferred to engrave the plate Nada. It will say.

A *preparatory drawing* is preserved in the Prado Museum.

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In the foreground, a corpse lies down on its back and sits up slightly to write the word *Nothing* on a piece of paper. In the background, in a dark setting, a group of figures with somewhat caricatured faces that resemble masks can be made out with some difficulty. On the left side of the print, Goya has engraved a female figure reading while resting her elbow on a table and holding a scale in her other hand, probably an allegory of Justice. The scales are clearly visible in the first state of the proof, although Goya gradually covers them with the grain of the aquatint.

Several interpretations have been made of this print, perhaps one of the most literary of the entire series of *The Disasters of War.* It is most likely that this image refers to the situation in Spain after the end of the War of Independence. In reality, this war was both painful and painful for the population and, at the same time, absolutely useless, since once it was over, Spain returned to the same point from which it had started, that is to say, the Old Regime was reinstated in the figure of Ferdinand VII.

Nigel Glendinning has proposed a relationship between this print and the last plate of the *Moral Theatre* illustrated by Otto van Veen (Leiden, 1556-Brussels, 1629), as he considers that both are a meditation on death and have in common the recurrence of the corpse and the scales of Justice. He also believes that the crown in the corpse's hand could be a veiled allusion to the monarchy.

Valeriano Bozal has established a parallel between *Nothing It will say* this with the engravings No. 66, *Strange Devotion*, No. 67, *This Is No Less*, and No. 68, *What Madness!* in which the painter openly criticises certain aspects of the Church. Thus print no. 69 could be a reference to the culmination of this great deception constructed by the Church, the denial of a future life in which the believer projects himself.

To a large extent it could be said that this work continues the Baroque pictorial tradition in which the theme of *Vanitas* was addressed, especially in connection with some paintings by Juan de Valdés Leal (Seville, 1622-Seville, 1690) such as *Finis Gloriae Mundi* (1672, Hospital de la Santa Caridad, Seville). Goya must have had occasion to see it during his stay in Seville around 1790, from where he went to Cadiz to spend a period in the company of his learned friend Sebastián Martínez y Pérez (1747-1800), where he remained until 1793. The Aragonese painter may have taken from this painting the idea of Justice, which in Valdés Leal's work is alluded to by the representation of a scale in the centre, as well as the decomposing corpse and the crown.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in the National Chalcography (cat. 320).

#### EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
*cat. 241*

**Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración**
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1988
from October 6th to December 18th 1988. Exhibited also at

**Francisco Goya. Sein leben im spiegel der graphik. Fuendetodos 1746-1828 Bordeaux. 1746-1996**
Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996
from November 21st 1996 to

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, January 18th to March 26th 1989; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York, May 9th to July 16th 1989, Madrid curator Manuela B. Mena Marqués, scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre
*cat. 156*

January 1997
*cat. 159*

**Ydioma universal: Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**
Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996
from September 19th to December 15th 1996
*cat. 227*

**Das Capriccio als Kunstprinzip**
Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1996
from December 8th 1996 to February 16th 1997, exhibited also in Zurich, Kunsthaus, from March 14th marzo 1997 to June 1st 1997 and in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum mi Palais Harrach, from June 29th 1997 to September 21st 1997.
*cat. 122*

**Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie e disastri della guerra**
San Donato Milanese 2000
Opere grafiche della Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta
*cat. 149*

**Goya en tiempos de guerra**
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2008
consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués, from April 14th to July 13th 2008
*cat. 114*

**Goya et la modernité**
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
*cat. 108*

Hamburg 2019
*cat. 105*

Madrid 2017

## BIBLIOGRAFÍA


**Goya, grabador**
BERUETE Y MONET, Aureliano de
cat. 171
1918
Blass S.A.

**Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.**
HARRIS, Tomás
cat. 189
1964
Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
cat. 1112
1970
Office du livre

**A solution to the enigma of Goya's emphatic caprices nº 65-80 of The Disasters of War**
Apollo
GLENDINNING, Nigel
pp.186-191
107
1978

**Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración**
PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, Alfonso E. y SAYRE, Eleanor A. (directores) and MENA, Manuela B. (comisaria)
pp.436-438, cat. 156
1988
Museo del Prado

**Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
cat. 287
1996
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

TACK, Ifee and PISOT, Sandra
p. 313
2019
Hirmer

CALVO RUATA, José Ignacio, BORRÁS GUALIS, Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ HERRANZ, Amparo
p. 246
2017
Gobierno de Aragón y Fundación Bancaria Ibercaja

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 154
2013
Pinacoteca de París

**Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp. 114-151
2016
Norton Simon Museum


## ENLACES EXTERNOS