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GOYA'S 'CAPRICHOS' AND 'THE DISASTERS OF WAR'

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# INTRODUCTION

..."Goya was a painter of everything; saints, girls, sick and tortured children, brigands and duchesses, priests and generals and actors, distinguished economists, ogres witches and angels, black he goats and hysterical mobs, madmen and sages; he achieved the most subtle grey, the jettiest black, the tenderest greens and the bloodiest reds, he passed from heaven to hell, from the palace to the street, to that shadowy zone in which the spirit is rarified like the air we breathe...." <sup>1</sup>

".... Goya has always been a great artist and often a terrifying one....." Charles Baudelaire.

Goya - The word itself triggers off images in the mind, fantastic haunting images. Goya is linked with darkness, suffering and war. Since Baudelaire he has fascinated artists, writers and scholars. His influence can be found everywhere from Delecroix to Jackson Pollock. Goya was not only 'before' his time but went 'beyond' all other artists in exploring the depths of the human mind.

His work alone speaks for itself, it is an accusation of Spanish Society, an exploration of the human predicament. Despite the time he lived and the relevance of his work to that time, his work has become universal, timeless, speaking for all man.



The Breakthrough to Modern Art.

Goya is the first artist of the 'New World'. His is often described as the First Modern Painter, with Goya we see the divide between the old world and the new world. There are strikingly different interpretations of Goya's work, yet each interpreter emphasises this point of Goya's Modernity.

Andre Malreux writes

"... This is what our contemporaries call painting a painting which discovers individual law, a law which many great painters had suspected but none had dared to proclaim the pre-eminence of the recourses peculiar to painting over those of representation. The right to draw and paint, not to achieve an illusion or to express a spectacle in the strongest possible way but so as to express painting itself.

He did not anticipate any one of the present day artists, he foreshadowed the whole of Modern Art because Modern Art takes its rise from this freedom..."<sup>2</sup>

Fred Licht writes in "Goya in Perspective"

"... The first fifteen years of the nineteenth Century witnessed the birth of Goya's most significant work. The Great Portrait of the Royal Family, The Two Reclining Majas, the Battle of Puerto Del Sol, its sequel The Third



of May and The Disasters of War series have all entered the repertory of Modern Art together with a handful of Masterpieces by David and Canova as the essential and philosophical Ancestors of Modern Art..."<sup>3</sup>

Licht adds:

"... Goya speaks much more clearly in the accents of the Modern epoch, whereas David's paintings need exist and historical reconstruction..."<sup>4</sup>

This, I believe, is one of the reasons we find him so fascinating, why he is so important and why painters of every age and style look up to Goya. His art is timeless, and intensely individual. He defies all categories yet influenced so many later movements in painting. Realism, Expressionism, Surrealism, Post Impressionism, one can find traces of all these movements in Goya's work, yet he preceded them by over a hundred years.

"... The Artist breaks with all reverence, with tradition and boldly ventures into the unknown. His paintings are an outcry, a scream of exasperation characteristic of Modern Man's expression of his feelings and opinions..."<sup>5</sup>

Goya's life is full of paradoxes and ambiguities. His time was one of crisis, personal suffering, social upheaval, war and



famine.

Yet it was not till after the age of forty-six that Goya begins to break with tradition and convention and explore into an unknown world.

He was born in Fuentetodos, Aragon in 1746, of modest country gentleman stock. He received his first important commission for Royal Tapestry Cartoons in 1775. In 1787 he became a court painter to Charles IV and in 1789 he was promoted to the prestigious title of Painter to the King. Goya had reached the peak of his profession, he had everything he could desire, fashionable, wealthy and breathtakingly successful he was able to pick and choose his commissions from the most exclusive names of the Aristocracy.

"...At forty Goya was a remarkable painter who had outshone his contemporaries, and had reached a prominent position in his country. At that time however he was not one of those artists whom painters of today pronounce with awe and who has carried the arts to the level of the greatest of human adventures..."<sup>6</sup>

In 1792 Goya suffered an illness that nearly killed him and left him stone deaf.

His illness in 1792 can be seen as the turning point of his



career. From 1792 his work changes dramatically. There is a decisive shift away from commissioned work into private statement when a new depth and consciousness marks his work. Nearly all Goya's work which today we consider important was painted after 1792.

Goya suffered crises throughout his life, most interpreters point towards this break, when there is a divide, an abrupt qualitative change in Goya's career.

Pierre Gassier and Juliet Wilson sketch out five phases of Goya's life.<sup>7</sup>

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 1746 -1792  | His first 46 years. Rich in production after 1774 and in success in 1784. Cut by illness which nearly killed him in 1792                                     |
| 1792 - 1808 | The years of the Sanlucar and Madrid Albums of drawings. 'The Caprichos' and some of his most brilliant drawings.  |
| 1808-1819   | The years of War and Reactionary Restoration, years of <u>The Disasters of War</u> engravings. Again cut by serious illness.                                 |
| 1819-1824   | The <u>Disparates</u> engravings and the staggering <u>Black Paintings</u> , Years of Liberal Revolution and its defeat ending in Goya's departure to exile. |
| 1824-1828   | The final years in France ending in death.   |



From 1792 onwards Goya's images change. His paintings grow darker and sombre. They are full of violence, rape, murder and insanity. Faces express their true nature. expressions of terror and fear. Goya turns to scenes such as strange processions and festivals, the crowd seems to fascinate him, as did all unpredictable forces. He never ceased to seek for the moments of liberation and truth. He looked for the reality of life in meetings in which everyone was face to face with fear, hope and hate. The clothes of the terror, the beggars or the carnival. The chausable and the pointed cap which the Inquisition forced upon its 'lost brothers'. The crowns madmen weave for themselves, all represent truths. It is a silent discordant world, a world that screams without a sound.

Goya was no longer painting the conventional reassuring pictures of life that Kings wanted to decorate their palaces. He may have been the first artist to set foot inside a lunatic asylum. He paints the Court of the Inquisition, a ship wreck, a hospital fire. Yet he does not remain aloof from these scenes, and this is one of the main characteristics of Goya. He paints the mad as though he himself were mad, as if he was running from the fire, or as if



he himself were on trial before the Inquisition. He was searching for the truth in the people, which was to be found in crowds, carnivals, processions and asylums, as it is today.



FOOTNOTES. INTRODUCTION.

1. Pierre Descargues 'Goya' p. 182
2. Andre Malreux 'Saturn An Essay on Goya' p. 161
3. Fred Licht 'Goya in Perspective' p. 15
4. " " " " " p. 18
- 5 Enreque L. Ferrari 'The 2nd. and 3rd. of May and The Executions  
(F.Licht Goya in Perspective Collected Essays.)
6. Pierre Deseargues 'Goya' p.62
7. Pierre Gassier / Juliet Wilson 'Goya, his life and work'.



## C H A P T E R I

### Goya's Etchings.

Of all Goya's work I am most attracted to his etchings. They can be beautiful, horrifying, comical and disturbing. They are intriguing and cannot be looked at with indifference. His own private world is best seen through his etchings.

As Enrique L. Ferrari writes:

"Goya truly discovered himself in his etchings, for what distinguishes his talent by sudden leaps and bounds and its unforeseen changes in direction..."<sup>1</sup>

His etchings reveal what was in his mind and the way he saw Man and Society. In them there is both hope and despair. This despair however is more pronounced and often deeply pessimistic. The, solitude, illness and suffering which dominate his life at many periods inspired many of his morbid etchings. They are a product of his crises as the writer Gomez Moratin first said. His etchings were made at times of personal crises as though acting on compulsion. The two sets of etchings that I am most interested in, in this thesis are 'The Caprichos' and 'The Disasters of War.' Goya made four great series of etchings in his lifetime.



The first is the Caprichos created in the 1790 s and published for only two days in 1799. They could be described as 'A Human Social Satire dominated by Reason'

The Disasters of War etchings were made during the War Years of 1808-12. They depict the events of that war and the famine years that followed.

Tauromaquia (Bullfights) were etched around 1819 and is quite different from the other series. It is more lighthearted, realistic and an impressionistic work depicting the events of the bullring.

The final set is called the Proverbs or Disparates which in Spanish means 'Absurdity'. It is the most incomprehensible set of etchings, left unfinished, dark and morbid but in many ways similar to the Caprichos.

One of the tragedies of Goya is that most of his most powerful work was never seen, or was otherwise misunderstood in his own lifetime. The 'Capricho' prints were published for only two days before being withdrawn. They were not republished till 1850.

The 'Disasters of War' etchings were never published in Goya's lifetime. They were first published in a censored version in 1863, over fifty years after the war they depicted. 'The Disparates' set of etchings were first published in 1864. Goya's paintings had



even longer to wait.

"...!The Third of May' and 'The Disasters of War' represent the culminating point of Goya's urge to call out to his and future generations the horrors inflicted upon Man by Man; the endless pointless suffering of war, famine, and mindless cruelty wrench a great cry from Goya. It is not so much his own deafness but the deafness of others. For no one heard the cry. 'The Third of May' was down-graded to a 'decorative' position in a macabre pageant and 'The Disasters of War' were not published in Goya's own lifetime. When he died he had no reason to believe that the works in which he had poured his most burning convictions, his most urgent testimony, would ever reach the eyes and heart of posterity. It is with this certainty of not being heard and with the threat of political persecution hanging over him that he prudently retired to his country house, Having learned the futility of creating images for the blind, he painted a series of pictures almost like Egyptian Tomb Art, painted in order not to be seen, 'The Black Paintings'".<sup>2</sup>



Part 2.

Los Caprichos

"Goya, a night mare full of the unknown

Of Fetuses on skewers, the Sabbath Roast

Of naked girls, and at her mirror a Crone,

Adjusting stockings, tempting demon hosts."

Charles Baudelaire.

'Les Fleurs de Mal'.

"...The Caprichos is a remarkable work for its technique as well as for the originality of its ideas. Imagine someone looking at the Caprichos with an interest and appreciation of art, but without any idea of the historical situations to which a number of plates allude, a straightforward individual who has never heard of Godoy, Charles IV or Maria Luisa. In spite of his ignorance the work will make a profound emotional impact on his mind. Partly because of its original style, technical mastery and supreme art, but also because of the atmosphere of fantasy in which Goya steeps his subjects..."<sup>3</sup>

I was such a person when I first looked upon Goya's prints, I found them fascinating and unforgettable and it is that original



impact that has prompted this thesis. I can find no equal to these prints of Goya's, no artist as intriguing or who has such a presence as Goya's Caprichos or as horrifying and as brutal as his Disasters of War.

Now I know about Godoy, Charles IV and Maria Luisa and Goya's contemporaries, the Spanish Inquisition, the Duchess of Alba, the years of war and famine, of social and political upheaval of Goya's life and time. Despite this knowledge, the impact of the first glance is still the strongest and therefore the basis of this thesis will be the prints as they are, and not so much their historical background or their original purpose to satirize and those to whom they are thought to refer.

The 'Caprichos' are a set of eighty etchings first published in 1799 and withdrawn after only two days of their publication, probably under threat of the Inquisition or various personages who they were believed to refer to. Goya later gave the complete set of etchings to the King in return for a pension for his son. Thus, cleverly, securing his own safety.

Ever since their publication attempts have been made to discover the true meaning of the compositions and the generally accepted view is that they were closely connected with particular people and institutions of the day. Their aim was to satirize. Goya himself



describes them-

"Censuring human errors and vices" and later states in a footnote of print No.43 that his sole purpose is "to banish harmful and vulgar beliefs and perpetrate in this work of caprices the solid testimony of truth..."

Enrique Lafuente Ferrari writes:

"...With his first great series 'the Caprichos' he surpassed the purely professional skill which he had hitherto attained in his artistic career. He was now in accord with the spirit of his time and became possessed by the desire to record his own anxieties, antipathies and experiences. However he did more than testify to historical events, he was to make his work a pitiless condemnation of the human condition. He was conscious of this aim when he first thought to call the 'caprices' "Universal Language".

The richness of his inner life combined with his acute observation of the outside world enable him to give shape to his subjective impressions and even his dreams. His work not only mirrored the social scene and the events of the time and societies' longings for a better world, but the very nature of Man himself. He shows us Man with all his failings and vices and reveals his subjection to the disturbing formless world of dreams. Goya's world is both a declaration of his own moral and social reactions to the



world around him and a daring exploration of the recesses of the human mind, with its visions and monsters..."<sup>4</sup>

#### THEME

The general theme of the prints as a whole is mankind. Man who takes leave of his senses and falls prey to his own animal passions.

Under this main theme there are a range of themes in the prints. Social injustice, abuses of religious power, prostitution, mistakes in child rearing, passion, illicit love, marriages of convenience, abduction, snobbery of caste, to name a few. Each theme is taken up one by one but without any rigid sequence. However one can detect two major parts to the series.

The first part seems to deal mainly with society and erotic motifs, Nos. 1 - 43. In which Goya's satire is full of violence and sarcasm.

The second part deals principally with witchcraft and sorcery Nos. 43 - 80. Ferrari describes this part as 'sorcery as demonic inspiration and primitive barbarous superstition opposed to all reason'.

"The Caprichos" in many ways resemble a poem, looking through the prints one notices a constant re-occurrence of certain themes



and figures and it is this that gives the prints their poetic quality. It is, however, neither necessary nor easy to look for a unifying thread running through the prints. They are like a pack of shuffled cards, themes switching with brutal suddenness, whilst others follow suit. consecutively be it lust, priests or witchcraft.

#### COMPOSITION AND SETTING.

"The Caprichos" have a strange uncanny air to them, a dreamlike sense of unreality, nowhere are we sure where we are. Occasionally a menacing cloud or a building is hinted at, shadows and dark shapes fade into darkness. Goya uses setting and light to disorientate us.

Fred Licht examines the compositional distinctions of the caprichos in his book, 'The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art.' He points out that although the themes of the 'Caprichos' remain traditional the prints indicate a new concept in composition, "...a new way of seeing and transmitting perceptions which Goya later expanded in the Disasters of War and the Black Paintings....."<sup>5</sup>

The 'Caprichos' satirize the vices of mankind, whereas Goya's predecessors present vice in order to admonish us to live virtuously, Goya describes vice because it is an everyday fact of existence. This is common throughout all Goya's works.



Licht goes on to say "...The sense of fright that nevertheless emanates from Goya's prints is not unleashed by fear of divine retribution but depends entirely on the uncanny, unreal yet not altogether unfamiliar setting of the scene. And it is here we touch upon one of the compositional distinctions of the Caprichos. Their deliberate ambiguity about the enviromens of the figures 'everywhere' and 'nowhere' are the settings...."<sup>6</sup>

One is struck by Goya's extraordinary use of light and darkness when looking through the Caprichos. They are a poem in Black and White. The prints resemble a darkened stage with the players spot-lit and dramatised by the lights. Yet there rarely seems to be a definite source to the light. The light is as ambiguous as the setting, and often cannot be described as light at all. Goya was ultimately to do away altogether with the traditional concepts of light and dark substituting graphic values of black, white and intermediate greys without reference to light or illumination. The ambiguity of setting and lighting are the main factors that contribute to the air of irrationality in the Caprichos. They are highly composed and carefully studied backgrounds which become structural devices which causes disorientation. 'A world gone awry, of figures that have lost their bearings.'



CAPTION.

Under each print Goya has written a caption which often seems to have no relevance to the print or else is either cynical, comical, cruel or disturbing. 'Eat that you dog'. A jeering crazy looking figure thrusts a huge syringe towards a terrified trapped figure. A picture of girls in flimsy nightdresses balancing chairs on their heads, surrounded by sniggering men is captioned 'They have already seats'. 'There is much to suck' is the caption to a print of two witches crouched over a basket of foetuses.

As Lefort says:

"Instead of frankly expressing his thoughts, Goya did just the opposite, he complicated what was already enigmatic by accompanying it with a paraphrase intended for further confusion to anyone who did not have the key to the riddle..."<sup>7</sup>

It is probable that these captions and phrases meant more to the people of Goya's time than they do to us today, when they often appear absurd and baffling.

Gwynn Williams writes:

"...The captions are essential to their power, far from clarifying the picture many of them serve to deepen ambiguity and sharpen paradox, they mobilize quotations from satirical



writings of the time. Open phrases of catch phrases or proverbial puns with double meanings, references to well known events and popular beliefs..."<sup>8</sup>

'She plucks him'

'To the Court Palatine'

'What a Golden Beak'

'Wait until you have been anointed:'.

'The dream of reason produces Monsters'.

'Hurry they are waking up'.

#### TECHNIQUE

The technique of etching had been introduced from Italy where it had been developed to a high degree by Tiepolo in his *Capricci Scherzi*. It was Tiepolo's work that gave Goya the necessary encouragement and led him to redeem graphic work in Spain where it lay dormant for nearly three centuries. Goya and later Picasso became the two unchallenged masters of the medium. Goya producing some of the richest work seen in the art of etching.

The 'Caprichos' are a brilliant technical achievement, Goya uses marvellous tones and textures, superb control of light and dark, black and white, pinpointing his subjects against sombre graduated backgrounds. He exploited aquatint to produce some



marvellous effects. Sometimes similar to the most delicately handled water colour washes and at other times they seem to have the relief of an impasto oil paint. His few engravings in pure aquatint are unsurpassed in this medium. Capricho No.32 is an especially good example. No.32 'She was so easily influenced' (ill. No.1) is an extraordinary beautiful print, it shows a girl in a dark chamber which is presumably a cell. She sits on some steps, the folds of her dress about her, barefoot and barearmed, her hair tied up and flowing down her back, her head gently bent forward, with eyes closed and her hands resting on her knees as if she is gently rocking herself. Other than the figure everything is vague. The background is merely suggested, a waterbowl, steps, a corner, a lighted lamp in the darkness. The background is the same mood as the figure. There are no hard lines. The girl is bathed in soft gentle light, her head down to the soles of her feet, gentle greys and patches of white which mark the folds of her dress.

It is an unusual print in the series, there is something moving about the plight of this girl, it is much more gentle and kinder to the subject than the prints in general. Walter Sickert, the English painter describes this print somewhat enviously as "...a meeting point of supreme passion, supreme skill and supreme luck the sort of conjecture that happens once a century..."<sup>9</sup>



### THE PRINTS

In the first half of the series many of the prints deal with women. Goya is almost obsessive in his representation of woman and rarely are they portrayed in an admirable way. Woman to Goya was the potential witch, the temptress of evil. Illicit love with all its passion, marriages of convenience, flirtation, adultery, prostitution, provide the major themes to this part of the 'Caprichos'. His women are enchanting, beautiful creatures, often wearing the same masked expressions, shapely legs, full bosoms, slim hips and delicate feet. Every young girl is shadowed by a hag, the evil procuresses, greedy watching over, giving 'good advice', with wrinkled distorted faces, pious rubbing hands, they represent evil itself..

Frances Klingender writes:

"...Those seductive girls and terrifying hags, those sinister plotters whispering together, are not creatures of flesh and blood, they are phantoms born in the artist's mind, to concentrate and intensify reality... " 10

Goya himself states:

"....The world is a masquerade, face, clothing voice are all put on. All wish to appear shat they are not, all deceive and no one recognises his fellows..."



CAPRICHIO No. 2 (ill. 2)

"They say 'yes' but give their hand to the first man who comes along"

The girl wears a mask and stands in the centre of some kind of platform. She wears a long dress which comes low over her rich bosom and beautiful white neck. Her head is held high as she holds her arm lightly out to a 'seedy' looking gentleman on her left.

What is this young girl doing amongst these strange people one thinks, how alluring and how charming she looks, with her dress gathered round her narrow waist, spreading down to her delicate pointed shoes. Standing very close behind her, wearing a hideous smile and strange hat is a strange frog-like creature. It has large protruding lips, large nostrils and a flattened curving nose, with evil amused eyes. This figure appears perverted.

Whether it is Man or female is not clear. Dressed in a strange robe with a pointed collar, you can almost hear it muttering nasty words of encouragement, urging the girl on to take her vile suitor. It is a base and cowardly-looking thing yet daring and clever.

Behind this creature is an old crone, with her head bent forward and her huge bony hands clasped together in the gesture of prayer. At first sight she appears innocent enough, a devout old grandmother,



but when one looks closer one notices the stubbornness of her face, and then her beady eyes which are peering from their corners almost looking behind her. It is this that gives her away, instead of being the pious old grandmother she changes into a cunning old hag. Her greedy eyes show she is praying for herself and the benefits she will reap from this arranged union.

The girl appears so innocent, gently holding out her arm and fluttering her eyelashes. Emerging from the darkness just above and behind her are two ghastly faces. The highest has an awful grinning leer, his eyes hidden in darkness, whilst the lower looks like a monster, his mouth wide open in a mocking peel of laughter. These faces appear more like spectres, they are not solid like the rest of the group, we only see their faces. Where are they standing? and what on?

Below the platform is the hustling crowd. A young man shouts and waves his stick, an old woman is bent in prayer. Some look forwards whilst others watch the figures on the platform.

Where is this strange group situated? Are they in a church? Is the bleary-eyed man leading her to the altar? We are not sure but we know something evil is taking place.

Theophile Gautier, an 18th. Century French writer describes Goya's Caprichos in an essay entitled 'Voyage en Espagne' in 1842.



A journey into Spain in those days was considered a hazardous expedition. Here he describes the same print.

Capricho No.2.

"...The plate represents an arranged marriage. A poor young girl is sacrificed to a feeble monstrous old man by her greedy parents. The bride is charming with her little velvet mask and her fringed skirt. For Goya is marvellous in rendering the grace of Andalucia and Castille. The parents have been made hideous by rapacity and poverty, they look like grotesque sharks or crocodiles. A child smiles through its tears like rain in the month of April, it is nothing but eyes claws and teeth, the young girl is so excited by her elegant attire that she is prevented from feeling the full extent of her unhappiness..."<sup>11</sup>

We may see the print in any way we choose but to me 'the child smiling through its tears' is the most ghastly face in the print, for I could never imagine it as a child.

Later in his essay Gautier describes the dreadful hags and procuresses which inhabit these prints lurking in the shadows near the Spanish beauties.

"... The overbearing mother is marvellously rendered by Goya who, like all Spanish painters, has a deep and acute feeling for the ignoble: it would be impossible to imagine



anything more grotesquely horrible, anything more viciously deformed, each of these witches embodies all the ugliness of the seven capital sins- the devil is attractive in comparison. Imagine wrinkles like ditches, eyes like embers that have been snuffed out with blood, noses fluted like an alchemist's retort, swollen with warts and growths, hippopotamus snouts, bristling with rough horse-hair, tigers' whiskers, mouths like moneyboxes contracted in horrible sneers - there is something in them that reminds one of the spider and the woodlouse, that provokes the same sense of disgust that one feels when one steps on a soft belly of a toad..."<sup>12</sup>

CAPRICHO No 19 (ill No.3)

'All will fall'

This print shows a strange and almost sinister scene. To us today it is curious and an intriguing scene. In Goya's day it probably referred to something specific, which people were able to recognise and therefore it would not have appeared quite so bizarre as it does to us today.

The print is predominantly made up of tones of greys and white. There are three main figures in the foreground, two bawdy looking girls and an old crone. These girls are holding a creature with



a head of a human and body of a plucked chicken. One girl holds its wings firmly and positions its body whilst the other is using a pair of pincers or some tool and is either castrating the poor creature or doing some malicious damage. Both girls smile in sadistic pleasure while the helpless creature gasps in pain. The old crone is on her knees, her hands clasped in prayer, looking piously and thankfully to the heavens.

Hovering around in the skies above are other bird creatures, dressed in hats and bonnets, one even has a sword buckled across his wings. Perched on a platform on a bare straggly tree is a she-bird, she has a pretty face and wears a bonnet, ringlets of hair flow down to her breasts. Flapping next to her, obviously courting her is a man-bird. Enrique Ferrari and Gwynn Williams both suggest that these two creatures are meant to be Goya and the Duchess of Alba. Other rivals are flying around the tree yet none of them notice the horrible scene below.

CAPRICHOS Nos. 20 and 21 continue the theme of the bird-creatures.

No.20 'They are going off plucked' (ill. No.6.) shows two girls driving out the bare plucked creatures which are vainly flapping their wings.

No 21. 'How they pluck her!' This time it is a she-bird, with two men with lion faces biting into her wings. A third lion faced



man stands over watching. One author suggests these men represent Church and State with Justice watching over.

They appear to us extraordinary, because our time has accepted fantasy, which we interpret through psycho-analysis and not according to the rules of beastery. We see these half chickens as half chickens. We do not immediately recognise them as symbols, as men who have been fleeced or plucked by prostitutes, which could have been their original meaning. They have changed to become something quite different.

There have been numerous attempts to explain or interpret these prints, yet often they are only guesses. When a person is drawn with a head of a donkey or cock, we in the twentieth century cannot tell what it is meant to be, although in Goya's time it might represent the church and state carried on the shoulders of the ordinary people. For us it has different meanings which we interpret individually.

For example Capricho No23. 'That Dust' (ill No.9) shows a figure dressed in white wearing a tall conical hat seated on a chair on a platform, his head is bowed. Below him there is a jeering crowd and opposite the figure a man reads a sentence from a pulpit. The figure in the conical hat is obviously on trial.

'That Dust' is the caption. How powerful and absurd it is,



and how fascinating the print becomes. It is like a 'surreal' sentence, it confuses and baffles us; it gives the scene something secret and mystical and makes us look closer and wonder what is happening. Gwynn Williams attempts to explain the print. In ways I feel it spoils the original mystery of the print, all the same it is interesting to discover its original meaning.

"... 'That Dust' refers to a victim of the Inquisition seated with a conical hat, his crime written across his chest. An official intones the sentence to a huddled mindless mob below.

The Caption 'That Dust', despite its intrinsic value recalls a celebrated public spectacle of 1784 when humiliation before imprisonment was inflicted upon some poor wretches convicted of selling corpse dust as a magic potion. The words are also the first lines of a popular proverb which completed ran

"From that dust comes this dirt" pillorying the Inquisition as the other face of brute superstition....."<sup>13</sup>



## CHAPTER I Footnotes.

1. Enrique L. Ferrari. Goya, His Complete Etchings, Aquatints and Lithographs. p.1
2. Fred Licht. 'Goya in Perspective' p. 19 - 20
3. Charles Baudelaire. Essay. 'Some Foreign Caricaturists'  
(F.Licht, Goya in Perspective p.32.)
4. Enrique L. Ferrari p.1.
5. Fred Licht. The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art.1979. p.93
6. Fred Licht 1979 p.94
7. Enrique L. Ferrari p,XI
8. Gwynn Williams 'Goya and the Impossible Revolution' p. 38
9. Walter Sickert. Quoted by Bernard Myers 'Goya' 1964
10. Frances Klingender 'Goya in the Democratic Tradition' p.99
11. Theophile Gautier. 'Voyage en Espagne' p. 27. (F.Licht  
Collected Essays, Goya in Perspective.)
12. Theophile Gautier. p 28
13. Gwynn Williams. p.40.



C H A P T E R 2

THE SLEEP OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS

Although there is no definite division the prints after No. 43 gradually change, and become more sinister, more dreamlike.

Creatures from the darkness emerge, demons and witches, bats and ghouls, phantoms of death and dreams take the scenes.

"...And in the second half of the series, the subject matter reinforces the effect of the powerful and dramatically sinister treatment. For here the theme of almost all the plates is basely supernatural. We are in the world of demons, witches and familiars, half horrible, half comic, but wholly disquieting in as much as it reveals the sort of thing that goes on in the squalid catacombs of the human mind.." <sup>1</sup>

It opens with No. 43. The Sleep of Reason produces Monsters (ill. No. 10.)

This is perhaps the most well known of Goya's prints. It was originally intended as a frontispiece to the Caprichos.

It shows the artist overcome with restless sleep sunk over his desk. Swarms of bats and owls flutter down upon him, until they are nearly on top of him, a mass of wings, their eyes shining out of the darkness. One clutches a pen and seems to be prodding him



with it. A sphinx-like cat lies at his feet, its head alert, its ears pricked, whiskers twitching, as if it is listening. Is it guarding him while he sleeps? More and more bats descend from the night.

After No.43 the witchcraft theme escalates. A great number show witches with foetuses or new born babes. Examples are:-

No.44 'They Spin'

No.45 'There is plenty to suck'.

No.47 'Homage to the Master'

No. 69 'She Blows'

Foetuses must have been used for some awful magic purpose and appear to be highly coveted by these hags.

No. 45 There is plenty to Suck (ill. No.11) shows two horrible old witches, with bony distorted faces crouching over a basket of limp babes. One holds a small box and is licking her fingers, whilst the other, her mouth gaping, points to the box as if to say she would like some too. Bats hover around them and a dreadful ghoul looks down over their shoulders.

Goya's own commentary of the print states

"... It seems Man is born into this world and lives only to have the marrow sucked out of him..."

There are many strange scenes and strange creatures in this



series. Monsters and witches wrestle in mid air, sweeping over the darkened landscape. Winged creatures ride astride each other letting out noises and screams so unbearable that figures on the ground clasp their hands to their heads in agony. Men wearing straight jackets with padlocks over their ears, limp and stupid, their eyes shut and their mouths open, are force fed by a menacing figure with ass ears, his face hidden. (One suspects that this is a satire on hereditary aristocracy). Demons clip each others claw nails in the early hours before dawn. A giant tree comes to life in a bogey man's robes and towers menacingly above a praying girl. A parrot rants from the pulpit to an audience of spell-bound monks.

So the prints continue. Sometimes nightmarish and disturbing, sometimes comical and amusing. Often completely incomprehensible to us today, yet they are always intriguing.

Goya chose to represent the witchcraft scenes with the traditional symbols of the Black Arts, thereby familiar and understandable to the people of his day. Witches, bats, owls, cats, foetuses, broomsticks are used over and over again.

Edith Helman, a well-known scholar and researcher of Goya has demonstrated beyond doubt that the witchcraft series in the Caprichos, not merely in conception and scope, but in minute detail of iconography and comment is drawn from one work of Moratin. This



mocking commentary on the inquisitions' Auto de Fe against witchcraft in Logrono 1610. (Moratin, was a contemporary writer of the time and a close friend of Goya's). The Logrono Auto de Fe of 1610 was one of the most celebrated of all witch hunts, in which the Inquisition deployed its full power and ritual. The account of the proceedings was so packed with picturesque and grotesque detail that it could virtually serve as a guide or handbook to the cult. To ilustrados it was a veritable tragic farce to which their people could sink in both the disease and the cure.

Two of the most frightening prints of the series in my opinion are: Nos. 58 'Swallow it Dog' and 59 'And Still they Wont Go' (ill No.13)

No. 58 'Swallow it Dog' Shows Men or Monks crowding around a cringing, terrified figure, whose face is contorted in fear, sunk to his knees, his hands clasped together in his plea for mercy. The mob close in, gloating, jeering, with foul breath and flashing eyes. An insane-looking man in a white cassock thrusts a huge syringe towards the Man on his knees - 'Swallow it Dog'.

It is terrifying because it is so real and within our own experience. It is no longer a bizarre macabre spectacle. It could be anywhere, for example : a knee-capping in Northern Ireland or El Salvador: a group of bullies at school. They are faces we all



recognise, faces of Cruelty, Fanaticism, Power and Terror. One is no longer looking at an etching. It transcends time and place, one is caught up in the scene, and in the sense of terror and despair. He is almost brutally sensitive to the demons of terror which are recognisable to us all.

Licht writes:

"...The true impact of the 'Caprichos' their truly chilling effect, derives not so much from the artist's sober, pragmatic observation of the anomalies of human existence by disconnecting these anomalies from the conventions with which we surround our own absurdities in order to make them socially acceptable. Goya transcribes our illogical behaviour by means of disruptive inconsequential visual forms....."<sup>2</sup>

No.59 'And Still They Wont Go.' (ill No. 17)

A wretched naked and bony figure struggles to hold up a large tombstone, he is nothing but skin and bones, struggling to hold up the huge slab which inevitably must fall and crush him and the writhing bodies underneath. A huddled figure watches as it slowly descends, praying as if her eyes will move stone. Other bodies are crouched on the ground, their arms hugging their knees. It is an image of terror and hopelessness. This desperate lonely figure cries out in agony and struggles on in vain.



Gautier writes:

"... The expression of despair on all the corpse-like faces in all the eyeless sockets who understand that their effort has been in vain, is tragic, it is the saddest symbol of the futility of endeavour, the most sombre poem, the most bitter derision ever expressed for the dead..."<sup>3</sup>

No. 71 "The Day is Breaking, Off we Go" (ill No.18).

This is one of my favorites from the witchcraft series. It is more light-hearted and comical than the prints in general.

It shows a group of ghouls or goblins discoursing in the night. The central ghoul shows marvellous expression and movement. Her bony rump seated on a bag of loot, foetuses dangle from a rope around her waist, her legs crossed, her arm points to the sky as if she were throwing out the stars that stud the grey background. She exclaims 'The Day is breaking, off we go'. I wonder how they go, these awkward ghouls. Do they shuffle down holes, their bones creaking? Surely these phantoms cannot fly.

In these prints Goya has removed Man's mask. A curtain is drawn back revealing Man's true nature. These monsters are not mere fantasy, they represent mankind.

"It is a recreation of Reality on a higher plane" writes Malreux "The new Reality resulting from the fusion of reason and



fantasy has the power of revelation, as it is a new entity from the union of contradictory elements. A union which is creative because it is the resolution of a conflict, Reason and fantasy were ceaselessly at war in Goya's mind. From his first sketch to his last pencil mark. Every one of his works was an offspring of struggle..."<sup>4</sup>

"...The elicited merit of Goya lies in his ability to create credible monstrosities. His monsters are viable harmoniously proportioned. No one has dared go further than he in the direction of grotesque reality. All the contortions, bestial faces, and diabolical grimaces are profoundly human....

....it is difficult to say precisely at what point reality and fantasy are knitted together and joined. The borderline between the two is so skillfully crossed that the subtlest analysis cannot trace it. The art behind it is so natural, yet so transcendental also..."<sup>5</sup>

It has been said Goya was dreaming. Rather he was excavating deep within the human mind, shaping images of a universal subconscious, and in this way we recognise his phantoms, and grasp his genius. They are part of our world today, part of our personalities and dreams. Goya gives shape to the darker elements within us. The darker side of Man.



CHAPTER 2 Footnotes.

1. Aldous Huxley 'The Complete Etchings of Goya' 1943
2. Fred Licht. 'Goya in Perspective' p.28
3. Theophile Gautier (F.Licht Collected Essay. Goya in Perspective. p. 28
4. F. Klingender 'Goya in the Democratic Tradition'.  
( Glendinning p.101)
5. Baudelaire on Goya'a Caprichos in 'Le Present' 1857  
(Glendinning p. 232)



CHAPTER 3

THE DISASTERS OF WAR'

I Am Goya

Voznesesky(1953)

I am Goya

Of the bare field, by the enemies beak gorged

Till the craters of my eyes gape

I am Grief.

I am the tongue,

Of War, the embers of cities

On the snows of the year 1941

I am hunger.

I am the gullet

Of a woman hanged whose body like a bell

Tolled over a black square

I am Goya.

O Grapes of Wrath!

I have hurried westward

The ashes of an uninvited guest

And hammered out stars into the unforgettable sky like nails

I am Goya.



'DISASTERS OF WAR.'

The Disaster of War etchings were made during the War of Independence of 1808 - 1814 and the famine that followed. The War was that in which the Spanish people rose up in revolt against Napoleon's invading troops. A rabble of peasants, armed only with sickles and pikes, stood against the largest and best disciplined army of the world.

Goya recorded this war and the suffering of his people in these etchings. Their basic message is clear:- The lunacy and brutality of war. They are a condemnation of the meaninglessness and stupidity of war, when men turn into savage beasts.

Gwynn Williams:-

..." It is a series of unparalleled power, perhaps the most remarkable and memorable treatment of war in art. Through Goya's mind we are admitted to the travail of the Spanish people in this their war of Independence, and the first of their modern civil wars. Through Goya's mind and spirit that travail of the Spaniards is made for us the 'travail of Mankind'...."<sup>1</sup>

"...These etchings stand almost without equal as a record of the pitiless inhumanity and more, the purposlessness of war, when all causes and creeds sink in the end into a morass of murder...."<sup>2</sup>



During the war Goya was living in his native town of Fuentetodos and probably witnessed many of the atrocities depicted in the series. As he exclaims 'This I saw' 'And This'. It is a series of despair 'Truth is Dead' says one caption and 'Nothing' Thats What it Says'.

In style 'The Disasters' are quite different from the Caprichos. There is none of the humour of the Caprichos, there is little fantasy. The demons have found their true shape - The horrific.

"...In the rising of the Spanish People reality had discarded its fantastic mask. The social struggle revealed itself naked and undisguised. That is why Goya no longer had to search for the strange shapes which had never existed in nature. The reality before him was stranger than the wildest fancy, above all it was more significant and compelling. Therefore realistic observation reigns supreme in the style of the Disasters but fantasy has not been discarded..."<sup>3</sup>

It is as though the stage has been abandoned, the lights smashed. In the 'Caprichos' the figures are always slightly detached and imposing, in many ways like actors.

'The Disasters' show the people in action, they show movement, there is none of the poise and harmony of 'The Caprichos'. It is brutal reality, the chaos of struggle and where it is calm



it is the calm of death.

"...When Goya draws scenes of war he feels the madness of action, its giddy and swooning movement, the natural boiling up of all human feeling toward crisis and excess and it is in this state of mind his eye becomes receptive to detail....

"... Psychological realism is not psychological analysis or speculation after the event, but the observation in the horror and heat of occurrence. Goya does not draw torture rape, murder, hangings, the sadism of guerilla warfare rhetorically, patriotically or with a desire to teach, but he is as savage as his realism or satire as the war itself. He is identified with it and eventually he was driven out of his mind by acts he could not forget.. The nightmares themselves are horrible in their animality.." <sup>4</sup>

The exquisite balance and harmony of the 'Caprichos' is replaced by movement and action in 'The Disasters of War'.

Their technical skill is superb, the massing of shapes and textures, the play of light and shade. Even the horrors are coldly beautiful. There is no extraneous detail, groups of people are pinpointed in the light centre. The groups stand out against the background which is nearly always abstract, indistinct ruins



and landscapes, smoking buildings, straggly bare trees, so muted that they only emphasise the figures.

We stand within yards of them as figures hurl themselves against each other, with sabres crashing down, bayonets driven into bodies, blood and death, women raped, corpses shovelled into pits, men hanged and spitted against tree trunks, dismembered and strangled. Scenes of war followed by scenes of famine. Whilst the scenes of War are full of movement, the famine prints are deadly still, the stillness of death. Each theme is picked up and repeated endlessly and it is this endless repetition which gives the prints their overwhelming power.

Some interpreters of Goya compare 'The Disasters of War' etchings with War Photography. Fred Licht compares a Goya death scene with a photograph of the American Civil War, 'Massacre at Gettysburg.' There are many similiar qualities, the same sense of anomynity, the same brutal and shocking treatment of the images. Licht writes:-

"....Goya in his Disasters and the modern news photographer convey observation. Their quality can be judged primarily by their intuitive ability to find the most highly charged view of things as they are. One enters on earlier images guided by the artist in the intricacies of his artiface.



Goya and news photographers do not allow us time to gradually enter their pictorial space but aggressively arrest our attention with the immediacy of the blow...."<sup>5</sup>

The difference I believe is that the 'Disasters' are infinitely more powerful than any photograph however shocking. A photograph is an image taken with a camera, in the Disasters there is Goya's feverish scratching, his personal involvement of the drawing and the feeling behind it. The Disasters are not photographic, rather they are documentary. He shows the actual in so far as it is significant. Where he alters an image it is for the purpose of enhancing the truth. The soldiers in the Disasters are nearly always static even in the wildest action scene, while the Spanish are full of vital movement. We also can see their faces, their expressions, their suffering. They are individuals, whilst the French rarely show any expression. Rather they are portrayed as a collective killing machine.

'The Disasters of War' can be divided into three parts dealing with separate themes. The last part differs in style to the first two parts and the first print of the series resembles the final sequence.

The first part numbers from 2 - 47 and consists of fighting guerilla scenes, shocking in their realism and were produced



during the actual period of the war.

The second part numbers from 48 - 64 and depicts the suffering of the famine following the war.

The Final sequence was concluded after the war and Goya has once again reintroduced fantasy. These prints have been called "Caprichos enfaticos" and are similiar to the Caprichos but treated in a broader manner, in the aspect of War.

The first print of 'the Disasters of War' is entitled. 'Sad Presentiments of What Must Come to Pass' (ill. No. 19) and is a fateful prophecy of what we are about to see.

A man surrounded by darkness sunk on his knees, his arms outstretched in a despairing imploring way. (A gesture often repeated throughout the prints) The gesture and look on the man's face resembles Christ on the Mount of Olives. It is as though he were asking God "Why?" Why must these things happen? It is a gesture of despair.

We are then plunged into the horrors of guerilla warfare, the lines are feverish, scratching "With or Without Reason" as soldiers thrust their bayonets into the men of the 'pueblo'. Bleeding wounded they stagger, we can see their faces, their agony whilst we only see the back of the French who are tightly grouped together.

Women play a prominent role in the fighting as we see in



No. 90 'They are like Wild Beasts'. A girl thrusts her pike into the belly of a soldier, with her other hand she clings to her child. Another girl lies dying on the ground and others wrestle with the French soldiers. All of the girls are fighting desperately against the soldiers using whatever weapons they have. Rocks, knives, pikes against the sabres, muskets and bayonets of the French.

No. 7. shows the 'Maid of Saragossa' entitled 'What Valor.' A solitary figure manning a cannon, her people lie dead around her.

Goya shows the courage and bravery of the people in this war, fighting against all odds for their homes, their families, their freedom and their country. There is something desperately heroic about them, but they are totally unidealized. It is plain killing.

There are scenes of rape, of men being dragged to the gallows 'The Way is Hard'. Firing squads, looting of the dead, corpses piled on corpses.

'One Cant Look' (ill No . 20)

We see only the pointed bayonets of the soldiers, the eye follows their thrust from grey to black huddled people. Men on their knees, hands covering their heads, the light falls on a young girl in the middle, her arms outstretched and head thrown back, a woman clutches on to her child. The shots ring out.



Even in the most violent ugly scenes, Goya's girls remain beautiful.

A bombstruck house. 'Ravages of War', Corpses are flung into pits; there are scenes of torture, people beat a dragged corpse, These scenes are repeated and repeated with the same brutal and cold realism. 'That's tough' says Goya as a man is hanged horribly. The captions are contradictory, ironic and savage but in fact are intensely logical.

Some of the most chilling and gruesome prints of the series

Nos 31 'This is too Much'

32 'Why'

33 'What more is there to do'

38 'This is Worse'

40 'Great deeds - against the dead'

As Goya says. This is too much.

The soldiers display their cruelty and take it out on their prisoners. Men are stripped and strapped to trees, then castrated, a sword carves into a man's groin, then they are dismembered, the parts of the bodies left strapped to the trees, the heads and arms stuck on to branches.

They are horrifying and sickening.



Then we have famine.

"....Men women and children lay dying on the streets, they cry out for a morsel of grass, a potatoe, a miserable bowl of soup however watery. It was a spectacle of despair and anguish to see countless human beings struggling in the agony of death on the open street in broad daylight, to hear the moans of women, the pitiful cries of the children beside their suffering fathers and brothers.

Twice daily the carts from the parishes came to remove the corpses. The ceaseless waiting, the groans of so many unfortunate people in their last agony. The few who dare venture on the streets were themselves racked with hunger and unsurmountable fear, which gave them a cadaverous appearance. The atmosphere was filled with poisonous exhalations and seemed to spread a vast shroud over the city...."<sup>6</sup>

Such is an account of the disaster quoted by Benite from Mesonero Ramanos 'Memoirs of a Septuagenarian'

There is hardly any need to describe these prints of famine and dying people. One only has to look. They are like an endless wail for the dying and the dead.

'Whats the use of Crying' says Goya to famine death. The poor die of starvation as the bourgeoisie look on, helpless in their big hats, mute observers as they were in massacres, saying to



each other 'Do They belong to another Race', (62)

'The worst is begging'; 'Whats the use of a single cup';

The Sound and the Sick'; 'Nobody could help them; 'The Deathbed;'

'Cartloads to the Cemetary'; men unload another corpse, this time a beautiful young girl.

There is little movement in these prints as there is little movement in dying and dead people. They are overwhelming in their suffering. Perhaps the print that stands out most in my mind and in many ways sums up the whole series is No. 68 'Nada Ella dira' 'Nothing thats what it says' (ill No. 24).

A half buried corpse scrawls a message from the grave. Through the darkness and flashes of light ghastly jeering faces crowd around him, his shaky hand writes one word 'Nada'. 'Nothing that's what it says.' This tortured emaciated corpse, rises from the dead to write one word 'Nothing'. It marks the furthest point of Goya's desperation. As though he has finally given up. What hope is there for Mankind, in the end we must all rot and decay, and there is nothing.

"...Goya's pictures of terror and madness of war owe their dramatic force not only to carnal realism but to the sense of the life - death struggle, to the sense of life corroded at the height of its contest by mortal decay, in many ways Goya seems



to be asking himself, 'Can human beings be shown meeting their death?.....' 7

The Disasters of War were directed at a particular war at a particular time. They are not merely a condemnation of war in general. They show the suffering and cruelty and violent death. And this is the central theme to the 'Disasters of War'. The moment of human death. In this way they have come to represent all wars and all human suffering. Overall it is a series of darkness and despair.

Malreux writes:-

".... With out question, he is the only painter whose message in a time of war was neither intrusive or mocking, and he is our greatest poet of blood...." 8

The series ends with a flicker of hope or does it ?

'Truth is dead' says one caption 'Will she rise again' is the next print. Figures surround the shining maiden, waiting in the darkness, hoping she will awaken, yet we are left unconvinced, and these two etchings are perhaps the weakest etchings in the entire series. He cannot delude himself.

Why did Goya create these etchings of war? if he knew they would never be published. Why condemn war if you know no one is listening.



It is because he could not ignore what drove him out of his mind, they are an act of compulsion of his own feelings and of Spain's brutal upheaval. He was an artist and therefore he turned to his art.

"...Goya's deafness was the smallest part of his tragedy, it is our deafness that brings his tragedy to its climax..."<sup>9</sup>



CHAPTER 3. Footnotes.

1. Gwynn Williams. Goya and the Impossible Revolution 1976 p.162
2. ibid . p.5.
3. F. Klingender Goya in the Democratic Tradition. p. 194
4. V.S. Pritchett The Spanish Temper (N Glendenning  
Goya and his Critics. p.179)
5. Fred Licht. The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art.
6. Berute from Mesonero Romanos 'Memoirs of a Septuagerian'  
(Klingender. Goya in the Democratic Tradition) p. 101
7. V.S. Pritchett. The Spanish Temper p. 179
8. Andre Malreux Saturn: An Essay on Goya p. 111
9. Fred Licht. The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art. p. 158



### C O N C L U S I O N

It is impossible to compare Goya's great cycles of etchings on abstract aesthetic grounds. Judged by their own standards each is supreme. Each series is very different to each other, yet they all have a similiar quality, the constant reoccurrence of themes, an air of irrationality and ambiguity which gives them a unity, as if they are parts of one poem or movements in one symphony, each with its own significance. They offer us a chance to see into Goya's most private world, to catch a glimpse of his thoughts obsessions and his most urgent convictions. They are an intensely private works and become private to the person working at them. There is no sense in trying to explain them because it is the air of mystery and strangeness which makes them what they are.

They are initially striking because of the novelty and unexpectedness of his subject matter, their power lies in the air of secrecy and mystery which surrounds them. The dark and sinister shapes, the drama in each print, the riddle of the caption. Goya's ability to intertwine fantasy and reality gives the prints their timeless quality of irrationality and obsession and an extraordinary sense of reality. This dual quality is interdependant and in a sense interchangeable.



"... Artist

In your timeless art

Wit must weep

And horror laugh...." Rafael Alberti. 'A la Pintura'

What are these horrors that invade the heart of Goya's work? He turns our world upside down. It is a dialogue with fate. His demons were his familiars, they have the power to cast a spell over people, his art consists of controlling their appearances and taming madness to make a language of it. It is Goya's language which is so be-witching. The magical game of masks in the 'Caprichos' and their frozen expressions. A silent discordant world that screams without sound. The gigantic explosion of rage in the 'Disasters of War' and a questioning of incomprehensible fate.

He offers a world that is sombre and fantastic, crude and gruesome, a world that borders on the satanic and the haunted.

Above all their power lies in their timelessness. Goya worked creatively to change human consciousness, he was searching for the truth. He forces his way behind the veil of appearance, he goes beyond the horrors he depicted and penetrates to the heart of what gives rise to them. He strikes at the heart of our 'being'. For despite the changes in time and society since Goya, our society and his are very similar. Man is still the same creature with the



same faults and prejudices. We are still witness to the sadistic perversions that accompany witch hunts perpetrated against those who think differently from the rest of society, who worship other Gods, who have different customs, or who are dedicated to revolutionary change in that society. The forms perversions take may be new, but no less ugly.

He was the first artist who, without conceding artistic integrity, portrayed social and political conditions of his time with such burning truth and accuracy. Never since Goya has there been an artist who has responded to the changes in a society in such a way.

Is it often given to an artist to embody his life long obsessions in the suffering of a people?

The power behind Goya's work and his ability to cast a spell over people has made his influence huge. To Romantic writers of the 19th. Century his work was a revelation and a unique challenge of the wild forces of the unconscious.

Delacroix, Daumier, Manet, Degas, all drew inspiration from Goya, The Impressionists, Realists, Post Impressionists, Surrealists and the Expressionists, Goya is part of all these movements.

When one looks at Goya as an innovator he becomes the source of many later artists inspirations.



Manet, particularly, was deeply influenced by Goya, so was Klee, Munch, Grosz and Kollwitz. Max Beckman's 'Horrors of War' and Otto Dix's 'War Etchings' are counterparts to Goya's 'Disasters of War'.

Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali's film, 'Un Chien Andalou' is directly related to Goya's Black Paintings. The sinister imagination of the 'Caprichos' and the 'Disasters' prints is set in motion. Dali also drew 'Goya Caprichos' and painted 'Homage to the Master'.

Recently Akira Kurosawa's film 'Kagemusha' has close similarities to the 'Disasters of War'.

James Ensor particularly has a strong affinity to Goya. One sees this in Ensor's 'Death pursuing Humanity' with its similar qualities to Goya's 'Burial of the Sardine'.

One can even draw comparison with Goya and the New Figurative Expressionists. For example Anselm Kiefer's colossal canvasses 'The World Ash' evoke the same feelings of devastation as in Goya's 'Disasters of War'.

Writers and poets also have responded to Goya's images, especially Federico Garcia Lorca, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Rafael Alberti and Aldous Huxley.

Goya was a forerunner of Kafka's nightmarish twilight visions of the inaccessible, and of Samuel Beckett's aesthetic description of Man's passion in which we wait for the end game.



There is no doubt that Goya's art has had a deep influence on the development of Western Art. He has achieved what every artist must envy, in creating images which speak for all generations, for all man, whatever his era.

His etchings are an accusation of his own times, which are a prologue to our present crisis. He was the implacable impassioned prophet of the age in which we live. His horrors are our horrors and the horrors in our society. They remain a unique challenge and an unforgettable force.



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1. Capricho No. 32 'She was easily influenced' .





2. Capricho No. 2 'They say 'yes' but give their hand to the first man who comes along.'





3. Capricho No.19 'All will fall'





4. Capricho No.19 'All will Fall' Detail.





5. Capricho No 20 'They are going off plucked'





6. Capricho No.6 'People who do not know themselves' Detail





7. Capricho No.35 'She plucks him'





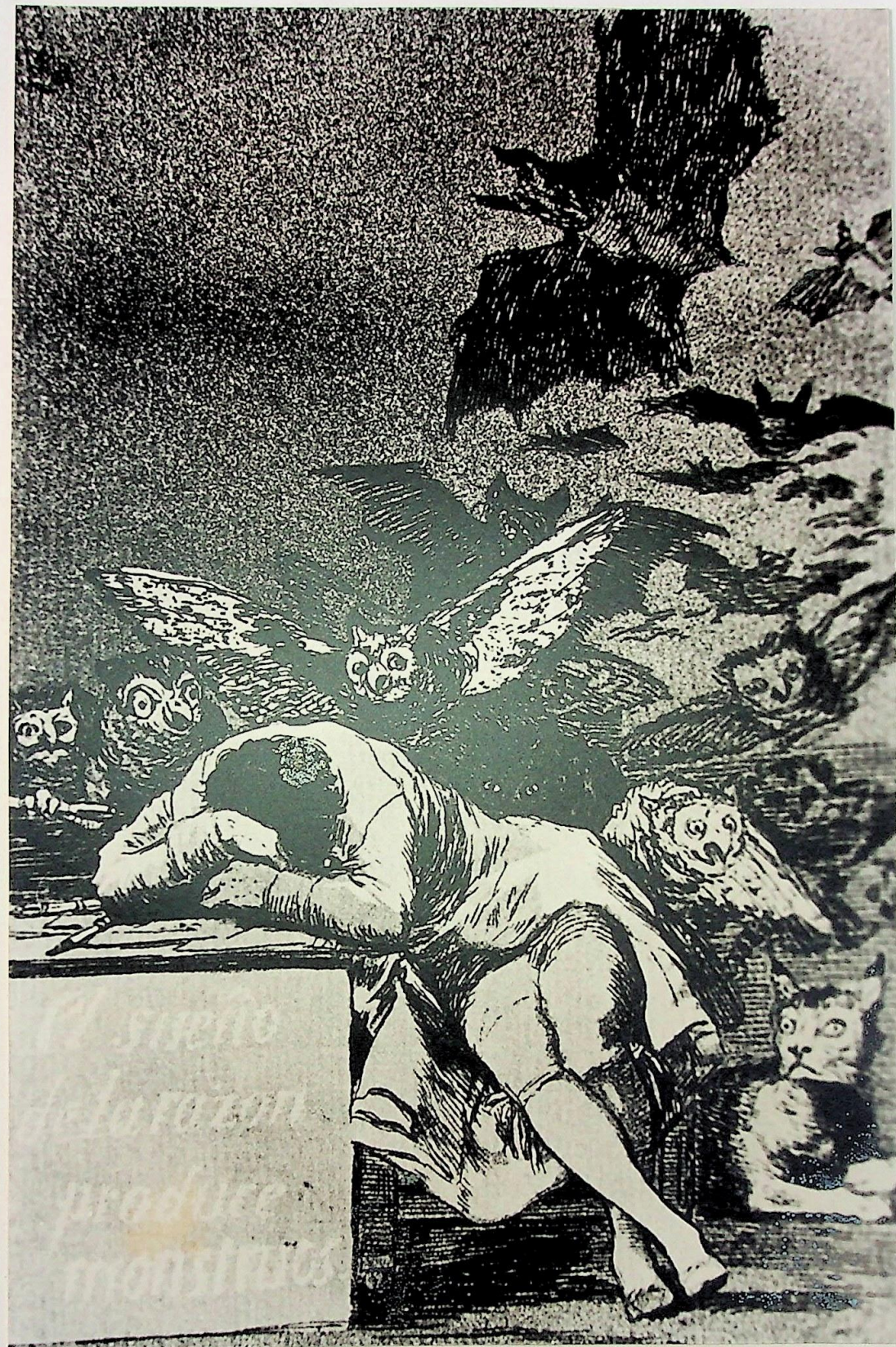
8. Capricho No. 35. 'She plucks him.' Detail.





9. Capricho No. 23 'That Dust'.





10. Capricho No. 43. 'The sleep of reason produces monsters'





11. Capricho No. 45. 'There is plenty to suck'





12. Capricho No.51 'They pare their own nails'.





13. Capricho No.58 'Swallow it dog'.





14. Capricho No. 65 'Where is Mama going' (Detail)





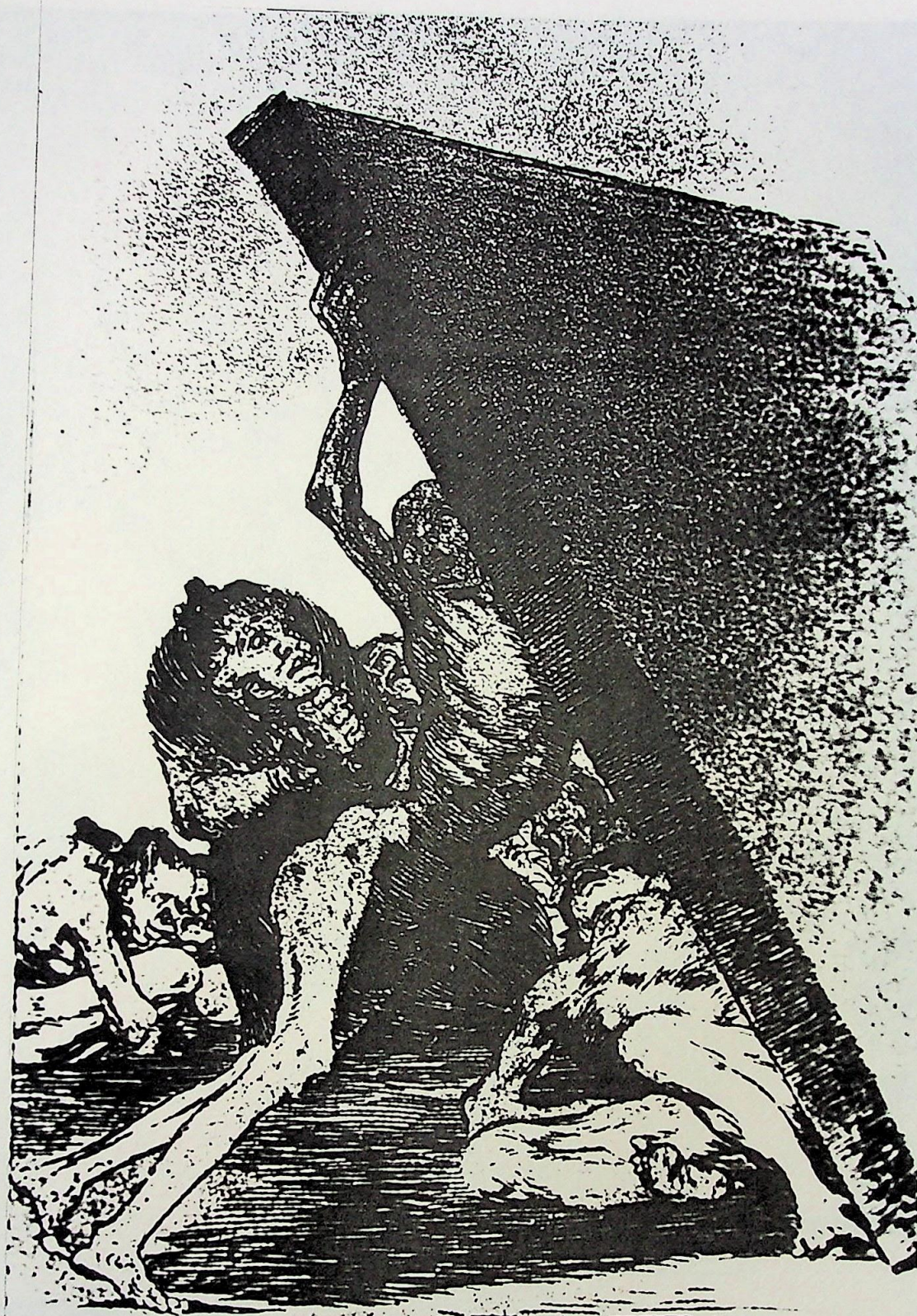
15. Capricho No. 69 'She blows'.





16. Capricho No. 69 'She blows'. Detail





17. Capricho No.59 'And still they wont go'





18. Capricho No. 71 'The day is breaking, off we go.'





19. Disasters of War No. 1 'Sad presentiments of what must come to pass'





20. Disasters of War No.26. 'One cannot look at this'





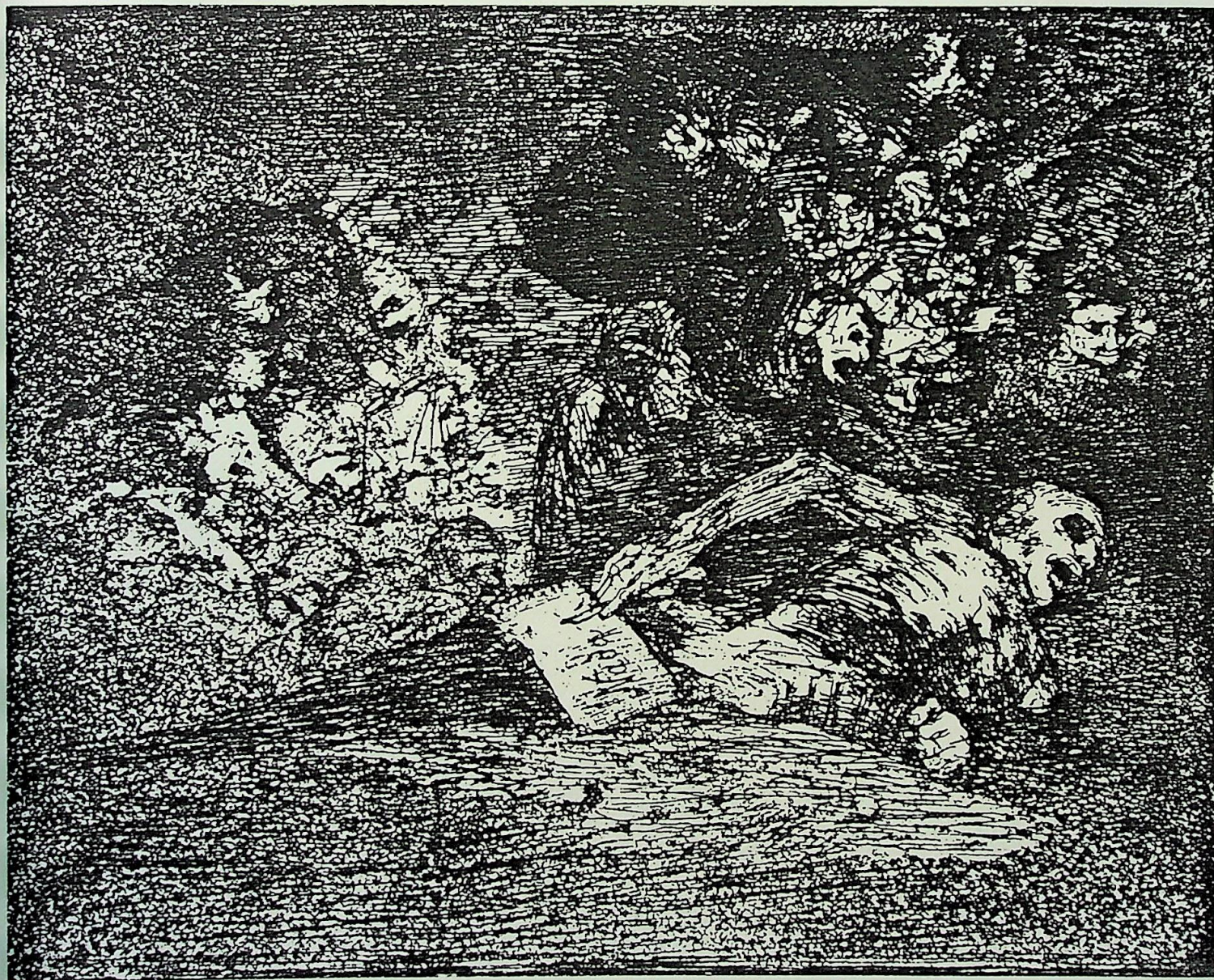
21. Disasters of War No. 38 'Great deed, against the dead.'





22. Disasters of War. No.53 'Cartloads for the cemetery.





23. Disasters of War No. 68 'Nothing it speaks for itself.'