

# THE DISASTERS OF WAR

*Collection of eighty plates drawn and etched*

BY

FRANCISCO GOYA

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## Preface to the Original Edition

The name of Goya is well known to all lovers of the arts. It has traversed Spain and crossed her borders, accompanied by well-deserved fame. Despite the lack of fairness with which men of true merit are generally judged by their contemporaries, the generation now coming to an end, who knew him and consorted with him in his prime, the generation today at its halfway mark, who knew him in his last years, and the generation beginning its artistic career, who have seen his works and heard their fathers and teachers speak of him: all unanimously give him an honored place in the long and brilliant line of Spanish artists. And Goya does not owe his name and reputation to the fact that there was such a scarcity of noteworthy artists in Spain during the last third of the past century and the first third of the present one—no: Goya at any time and in any circumstances would have won the renown that his true originality, offspring of the singular independence of his character, could not fail to gain for him. Self-taught, he may be said to have founded a school single-handedly, with a mode of artistic vision which no one before him possessed, which perhaps no one after him will attain. It is not the purpose of this Academy to write a critique of the genius and the works of this extraordinary man, who has already been appraised with a degree of accuracy by his countrymen and by foreigners. By making available a hitherto unpublished collection of his esteemed etchings, we are merely fulfilling an honorable duty by helping to make still better known the characteristic works of such a distinguished master and such a worthy member of this artistic body. The collection which he entitled *Ravages* or *Disasters of War* is irrefutably one of the most noteworthy Goya produced in this medium. In it is to be found all the vigor of his fiery

imagination, heightened and stimulated by keen patriotic feeling, in those terrible moments when an unjust foreign invasion attempted to crush the pride and arrogance characteristic of the name of Castile. What wonder, then, if a Spaniard, an Aragonese, and a man of Goya's firm and independent character allowed himself to be drawn often toward exaggeration and caricature? In compensation for this, the work offers new themes, original characterizations, vigorous compositions, the sure touch of mastery in the chiaroscuro, decisiveness and even delicacy in the draftsmanship. So that nothing would be lacking in this singular collection, the legends added to each plate are one more facet of their author's genius; concise, incisive and piquant, they add character to the work, if it is possible to add to what the artist's needle has already supplied: a brief phrase, sometimes a single word, reveals in its very terseness the fleeting idea that his mind conceived at one instant and his hand depicted in little more than another. The Academy, having acquired the plates of this collection, which has been known to very few and of which only a small number of proofs have been printed, publishes it with the firm conviction that it will be favorably received by lovers of the Spanish arts.

Several biographies of the famous Goya have been written and published; his life and his features are already sufficiently well known. Therefore, the Academy believes it will be enough to preface this publication with a very brief notice on his life and works, for the information of those few who have read nothing on the subject before approaching the present work.

Francisco Goya y Lucientes was born at Fuentedetodos [Fuendetodos], in Aragon, on March 31 [30], 1746. There

are no detailed records of his youth; all that is known is that from the age of thirteen he applied himself to drawing at Saragossa under the direction of José Luzán and that, still very young, he went on to Rome, where he continued his studies. The first works that made known his genius in painting were the cartoons he executed for the tapestry workshop; their worth was attested by the approval of the esteemed gentleman Mengs, who was awestruck by the great ease with which Goya produced them. He decorated in fresco one of the cupolas of the Church Nuestra Señora del Pilar in Saragossa and the chapel of San Antonio de la Florida in Madrid. He painted portraits with great facility, the best being those portraits of friends which took no more than one sitting. The "Crucifixion" in the Church of San Francisco [el Grande in Madrid] and the "St. Joseph of Calasanz" in the Church of San Antonio Abad in Madrid, the three works he painted for the chapel of Monte Torrero in Saragossa, the "Betrayal of Christ" in the sacristy of the Cathedral of Toledo and the "Sts. Justa and Rufina" in the Cathedral of Seville give sufficient evidence of his artistic merit. And yet his favorite paintings were always those he kept at home; executing them in the free play of his genius and for his private use, he painted them with his palette knife instead of the brush. Even so, these paintings are admirably effective when viewed at the proper distance. He painted many canvases in which he depicted with notable verisimilitude the customs of the lower classes in Madrid and many other varied and fanciful themes. Among his works of this type that are outstanding and worth viewing are the paintings in the collection of His Grace the Duke of Osuna at his beautiful villa La Alameda

(Poplar Grove), which represent various popular scenes, with larger and more finished figures than Goya usually painted; the considerable number of portraits in the possession of the same Duke of Osuna and the Duke of Fernan-Núñez; and the collection of paintings in distemper which Goya executed on the walls of the house he occupied on the outskirts of Madrid on a height near the road to the hermitage of San Isidro (the house belongs today to Sr. Segundo Colmenares). The subjects of these paintings are very diverse: witches' sabbaths, brawls, genre scenes and some mythological subjects. The Academy possesses four companion pieces representing an auto da fé, a Holy Week procession, a village bullfight and a madhouse. It possesses another representing the masquerade of the burial of the sardine, with small figures as in the other four; two lifesize paintings, one of a woman lying down, fancifully costumed as a *maja*, the other reputed to be a portrait of the actress known as La Tirana; and a self-portrait of the artist. The two lifesize paintings of women will be engraved and will appear in the collection of engravings after Goya's best paintings to be published by the Academy.

In addition to the collection now being published, the artist produced three other sets of etchings which run to over two hundred plates. He spent the last years of his life drawing constantly.

He was elected to this Academy on May 7, 1780, became Director of Painting on September 13, 1795 and Honorary Director two years later. He was court painter to King Charles IV from April 1789 on, being named first among this group in October 1799. He died at Bordeaux at eighty-four [82] years of age on April 16, 1828.

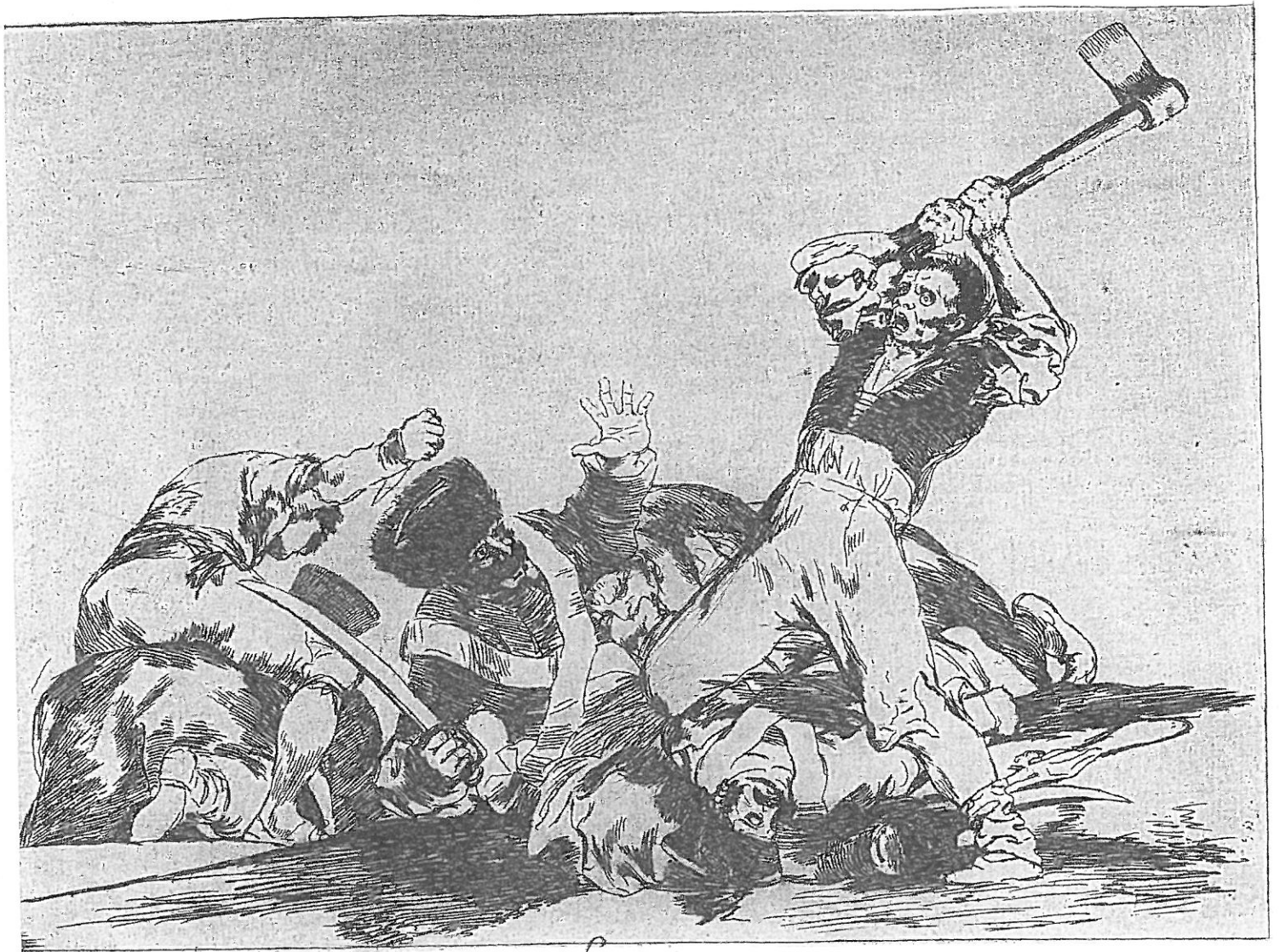


*Fristes presentimientos de lo que ha de acontecer.*

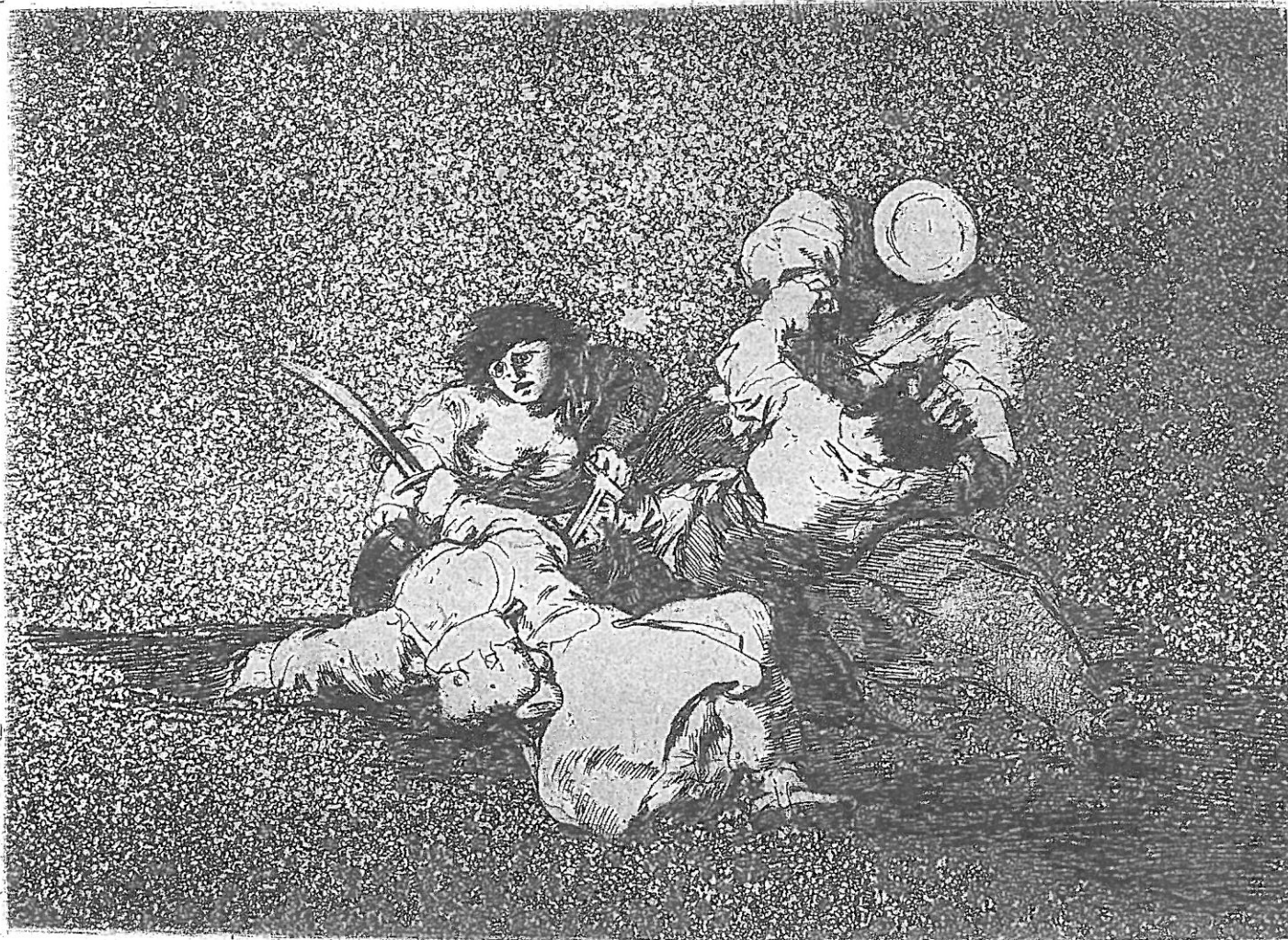
1 *Sad presentiments of what must come to pass*



*Con razon ó sin ella.*



*Lo mismo.*



*Las mugeres dan valor.*



*Y son fieras*



6



*Bien te se está.*



*Que valor!*



*Siempre sucede.*

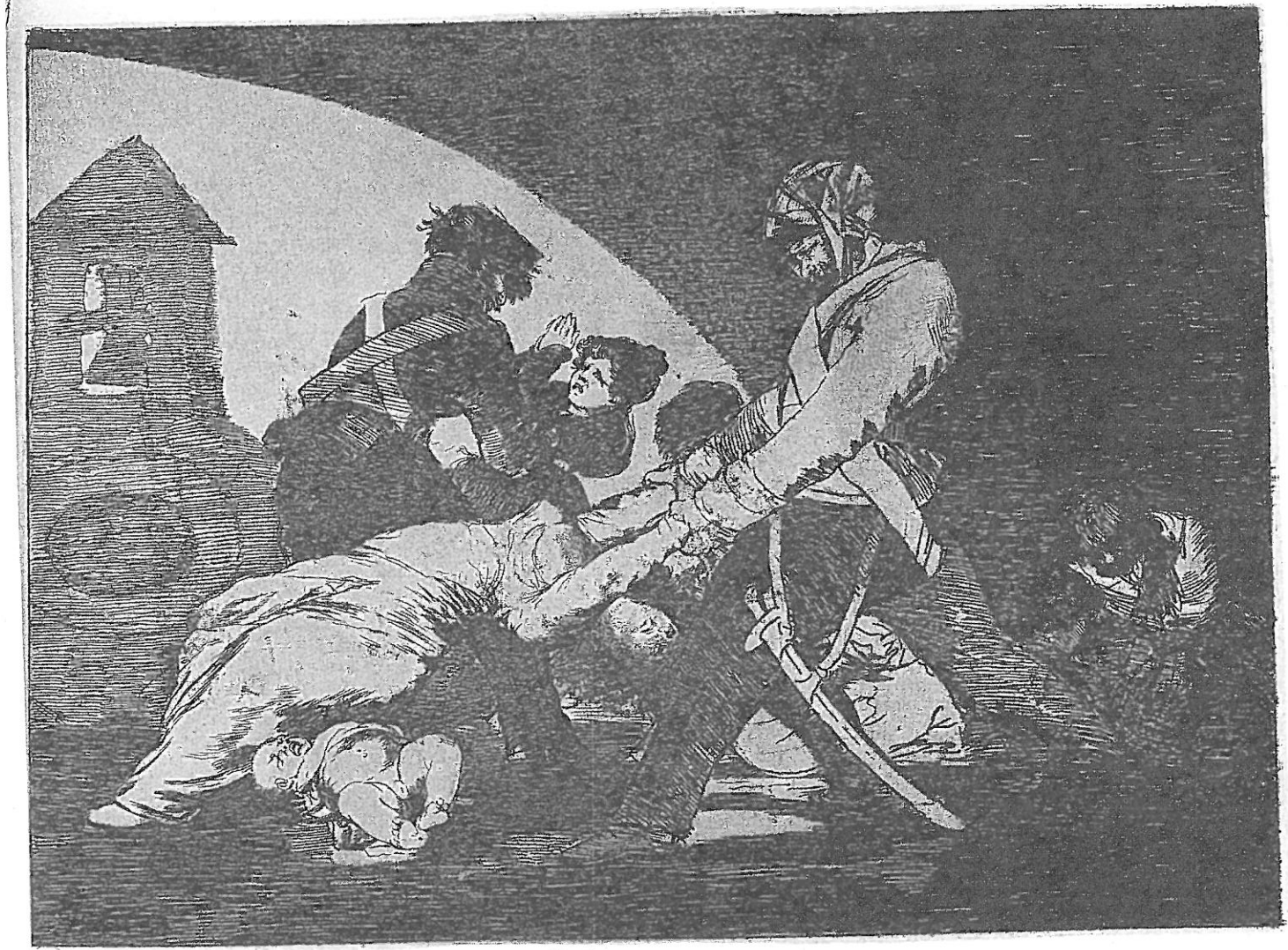
8 This always happens



*No quieren.*



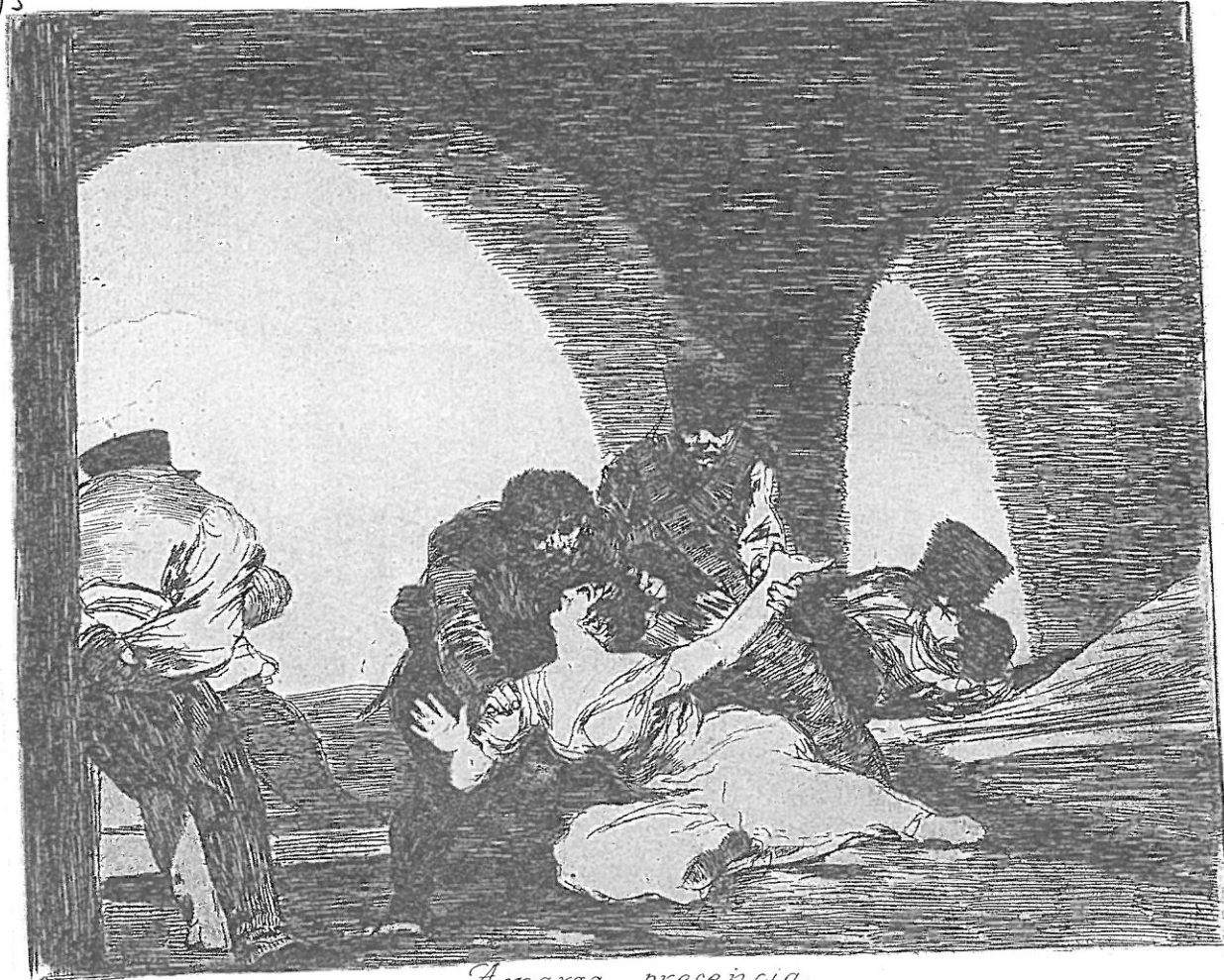
*Campoco*



*Ni por esas.*

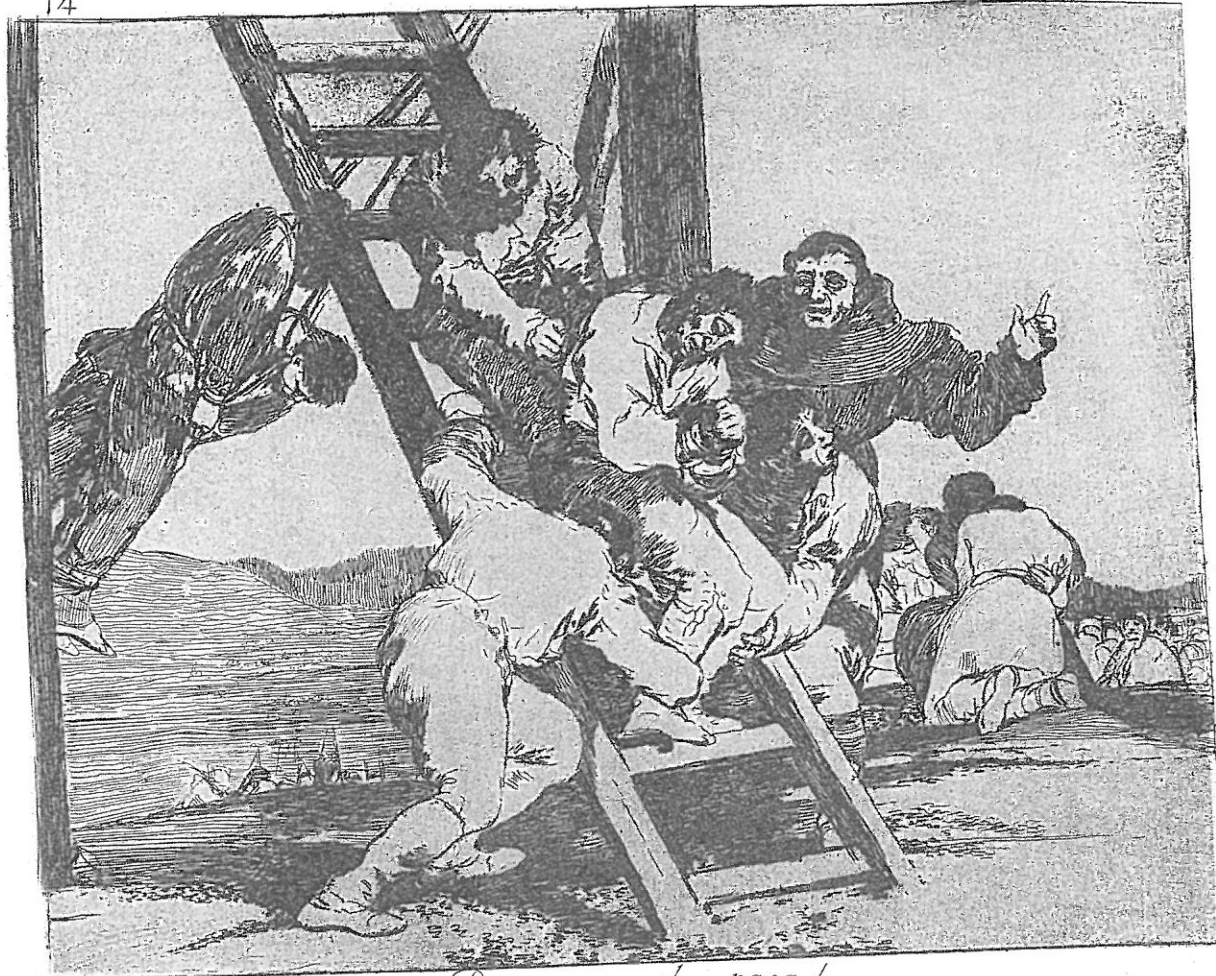


*Para eso habeis nacido.*

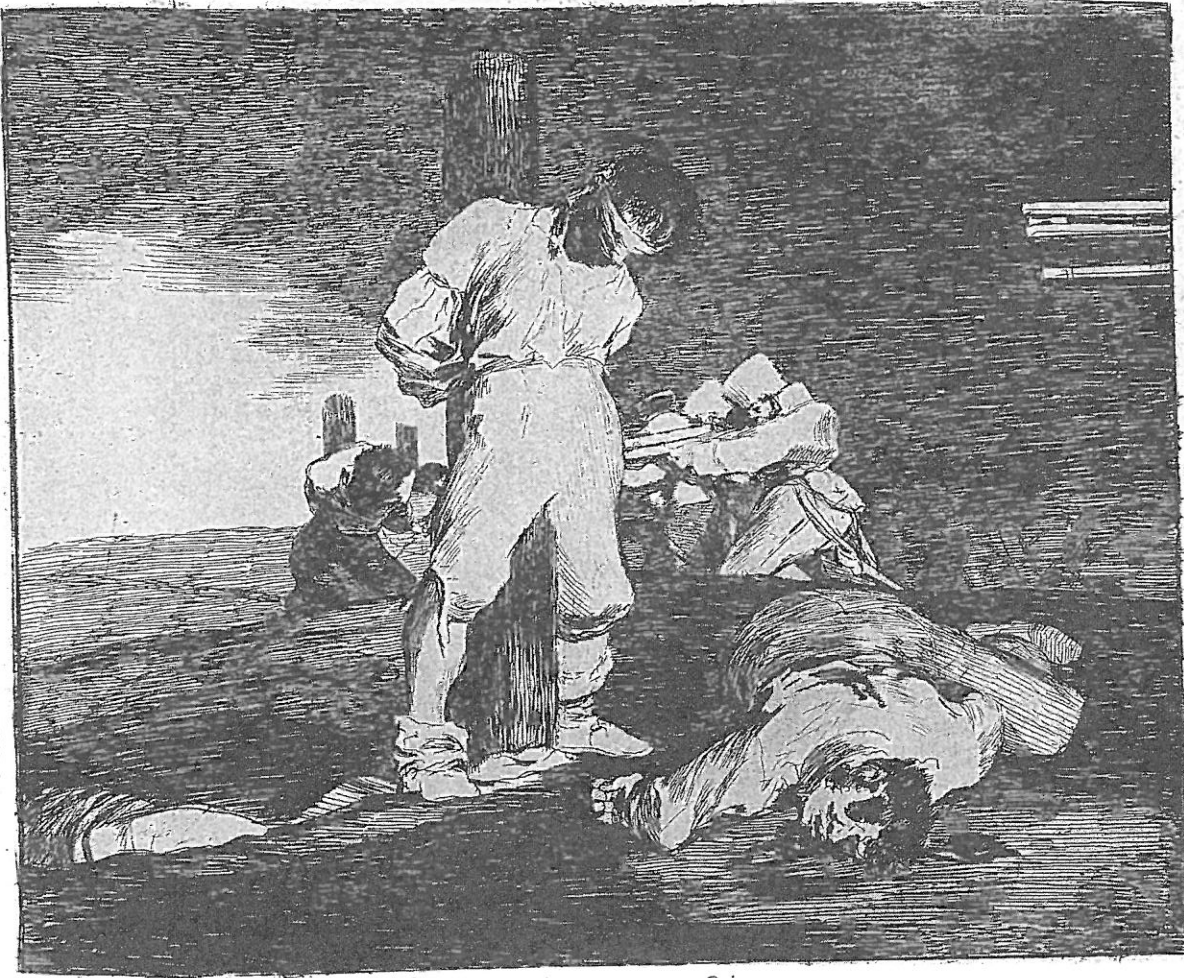


*Amarga presença.*



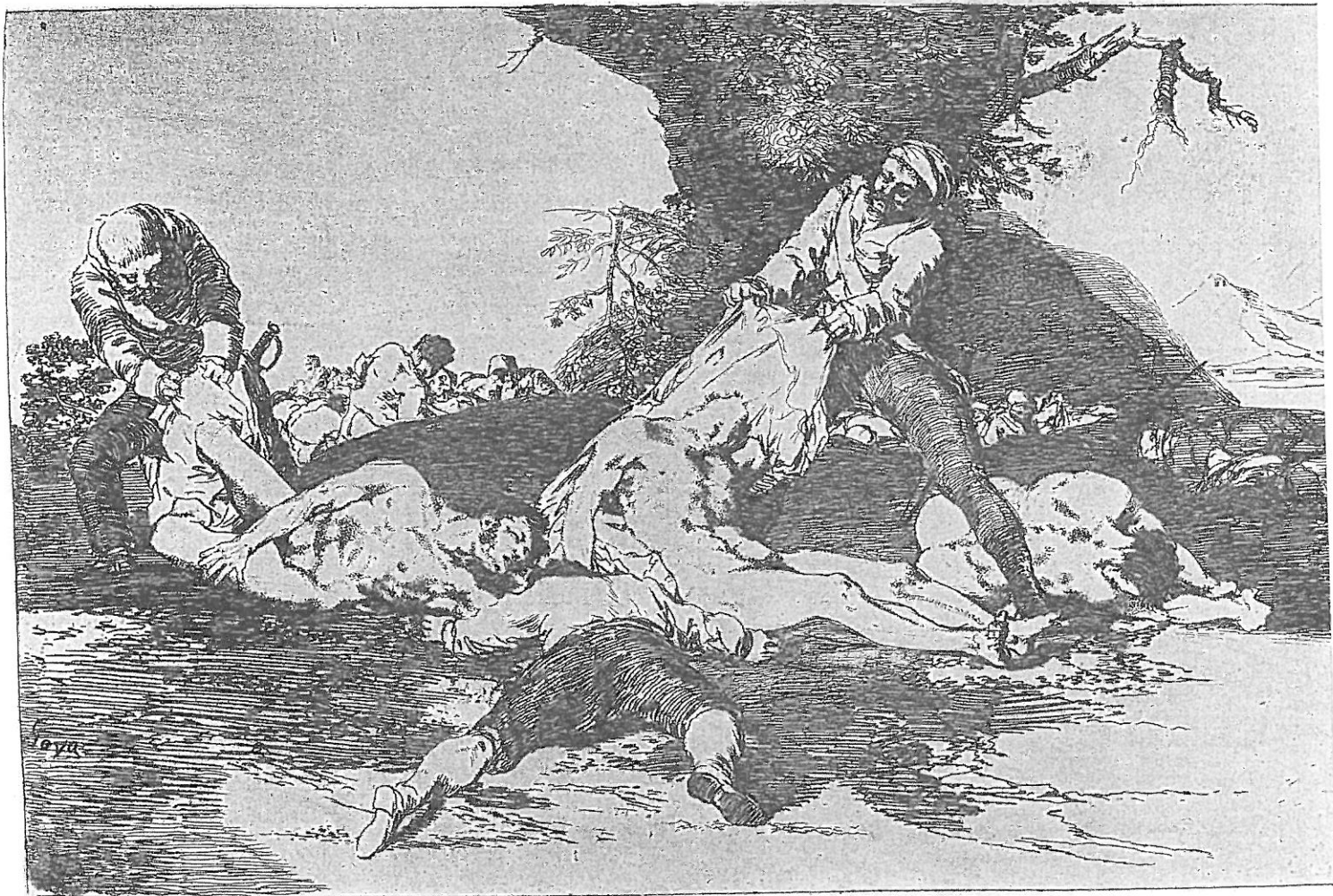


*Duro es el paso!*

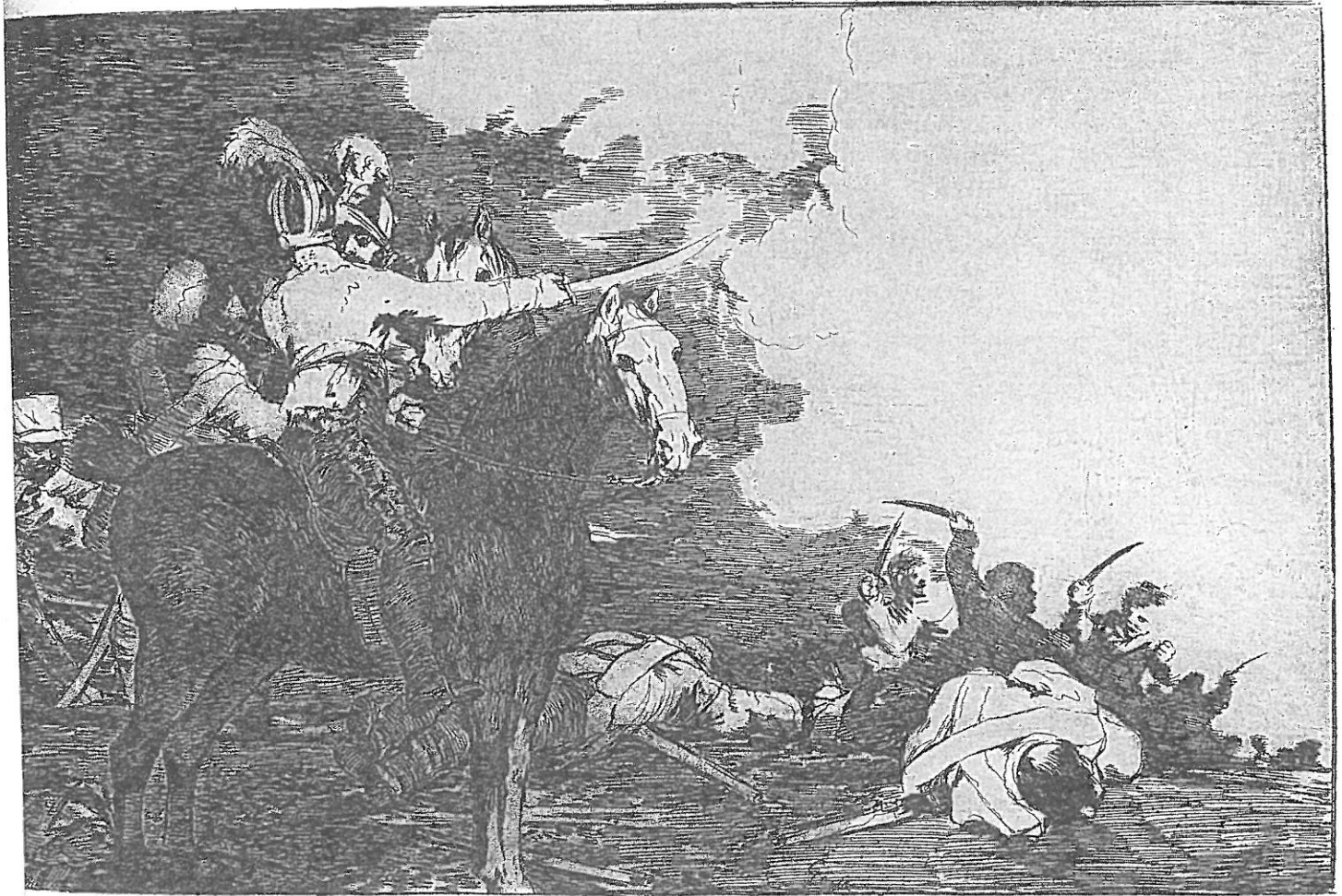


*Y no hai remedio.*

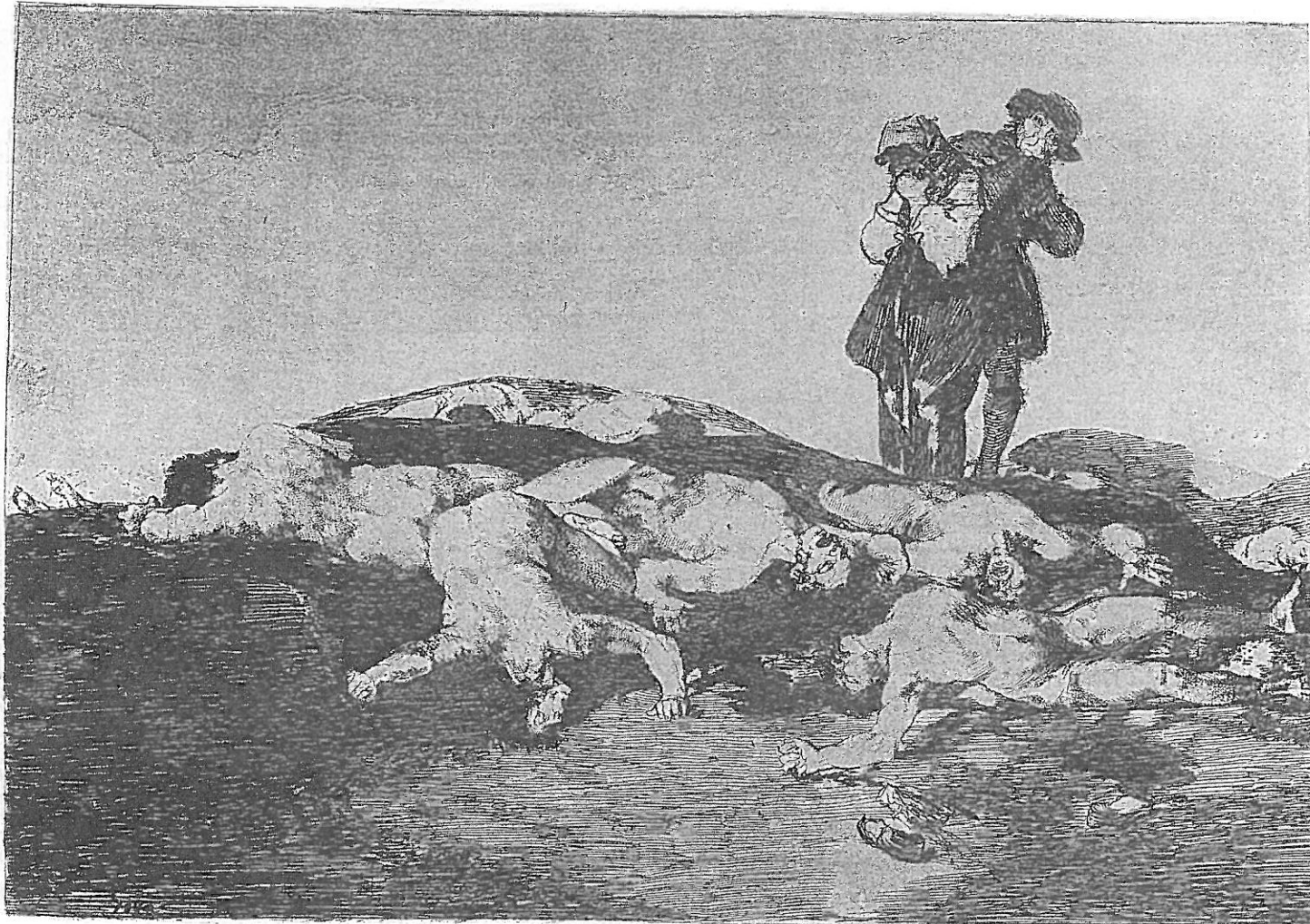
10



*Se aprovechan.*



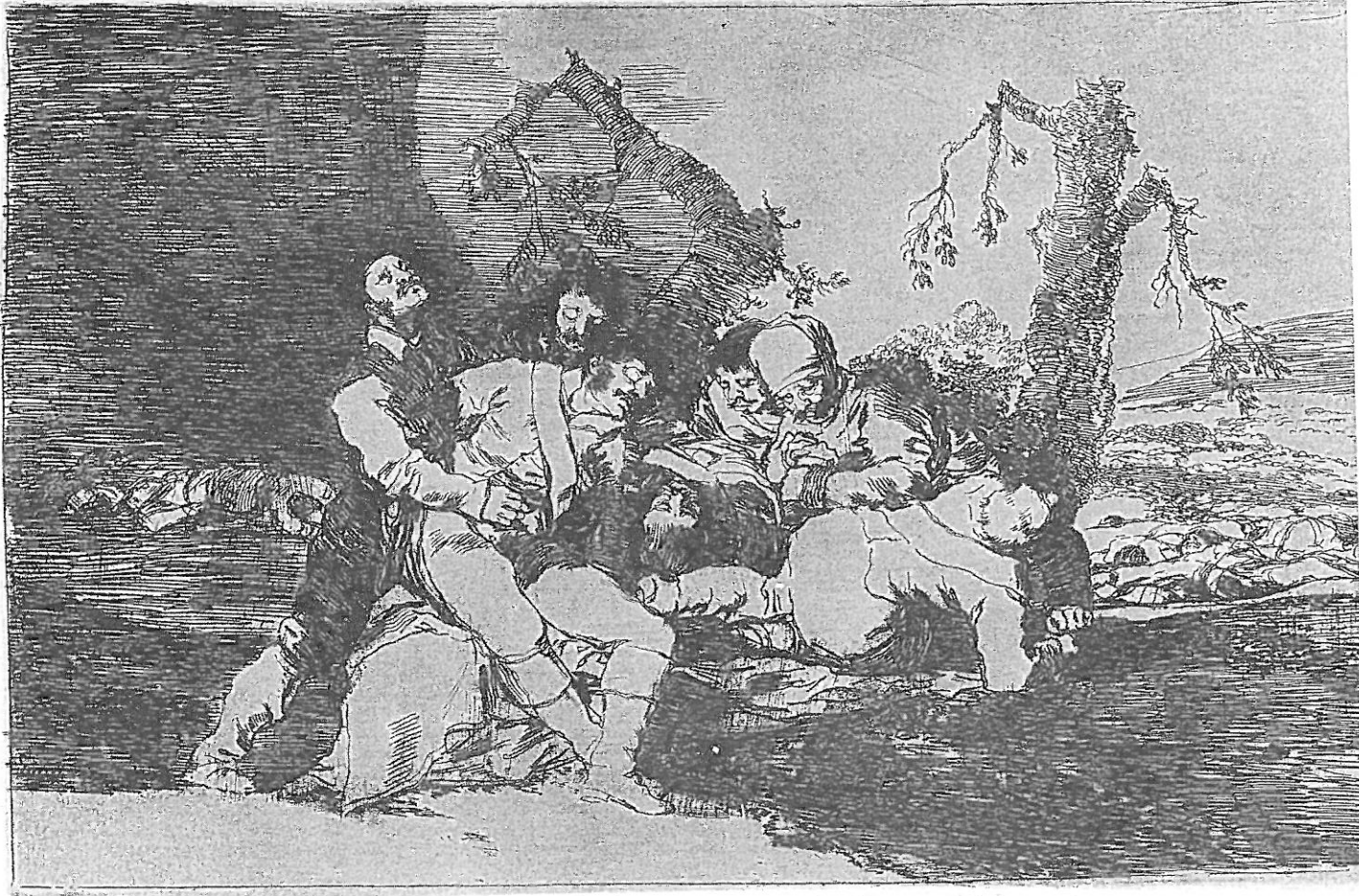
*No se convienen.*



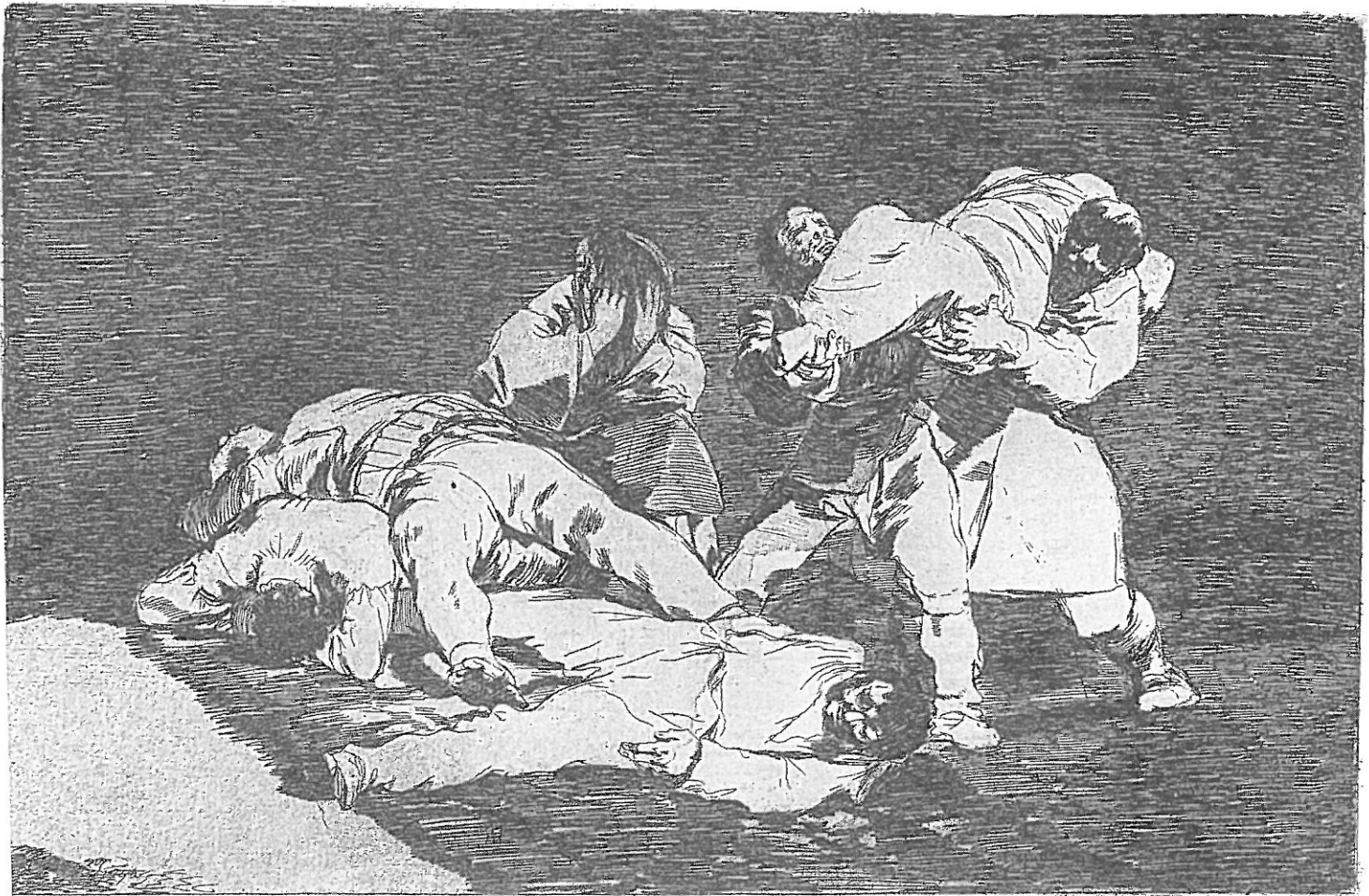
*Enterrar y callar.*



*Ya no hay tiempo.*



*Curarlos, y à otra.*



*Serà lo mismo*

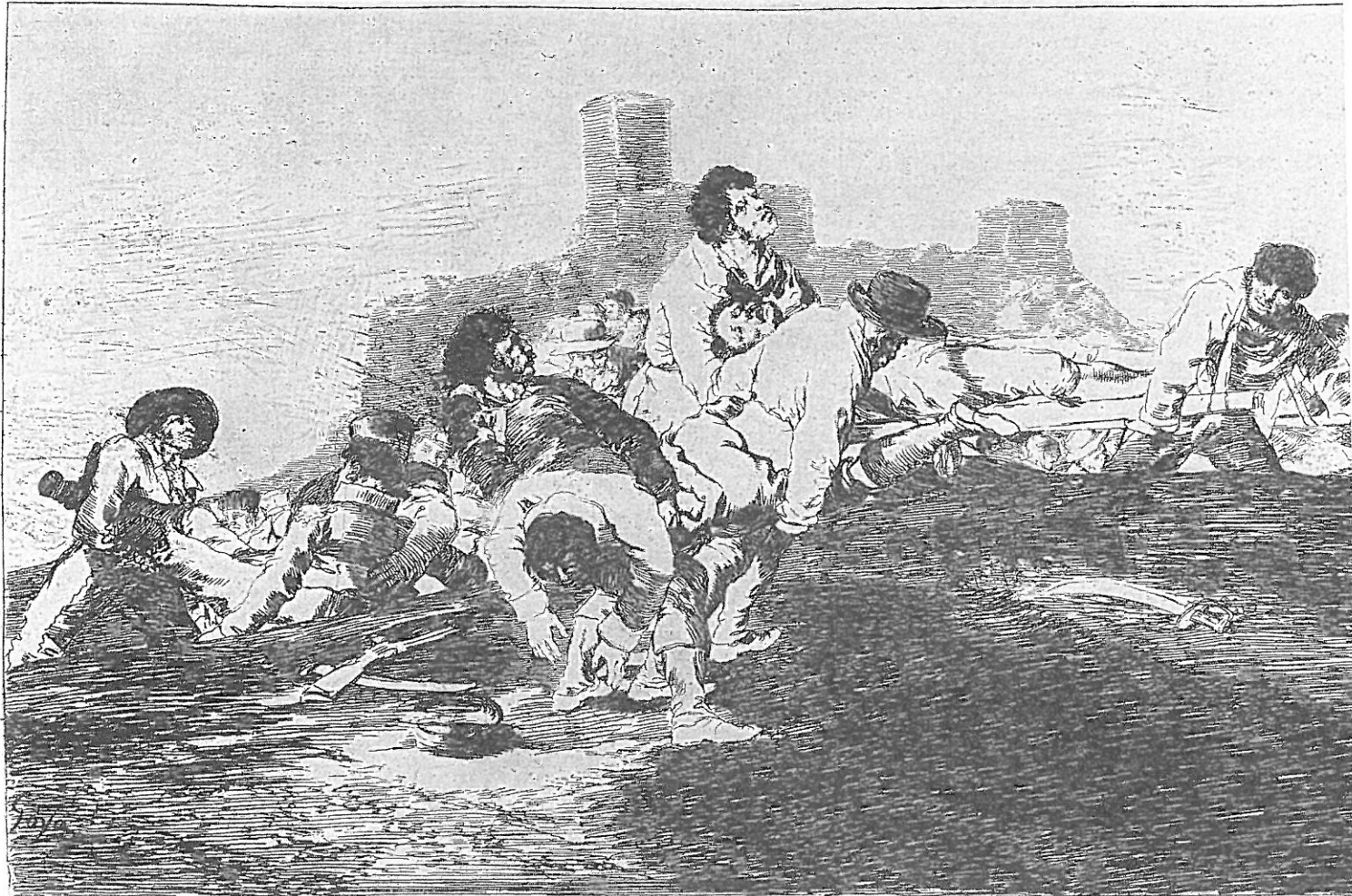




*Tanto y mas*



*Lo mismo en otras partes*



*Aun podrán servir*



*Tambien estos.*



*No se puede mirar.*



ya 1810

*Caridad.*



*Populacho.*



*Lo merecia.*





*Estragos de la guerra*

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