



STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (117)

TEXT: *El sueño de la razón*

AUTHOR: Antonio Buero Vallejo

EDITION: Annotated Spanish Edition (Stockcero)

PART 1: CONTEXT & CRITICAL ANALYSIS

(Based on the Introduction by Prof. Yosálida Rivero-Zaritzky)

1. TOTAL IMMERSION (Efectos de Inmersión):

- **Sensory Experience:** Buero uses a technique called "efectos de inmersión" to force the audience to experience Goya's deafness. When Goya is on stage, the sound is cut off or distorted; the audience hears only what he hears (silence or buzzing). This creates empathy and shared isolation.
- **The "Black Paintings":** The play integrates Goya's "Pinturas Negras" as projections or stage elements. They are not just decoration; they represent the externalization of his internal demons and the horrors of the political reality.

2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT (1823):

- **The Ominous Decade:** The action takes place during the restoration of absolute monarchy by King Ferdinand VII. It is a time of terror ("El Terror Blanco"), persecution of liberals, masons, and free-thinkers.
- **Goya as Symbol:** Goya represents the enlightened intellectual trapped in a barbaric, obscurantist society. His struggle is the struggle of Reason against the "monsters" of tyranny.

3. THE TITLE:

- Derived from Goya's etching *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos* (The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters). The play explores what happens when a nation's reason "sleeps" (allows tyranny) and when an individual's reason is threatened by fear and isolation.

PART 2: TOPICS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

- **Sensory Deprivation:** How does the use of silence/deafness affect the audience's understanding of Goya? Discuss the effectiveness of this theatrical device.
- **Art and Politics:** How does the play use Goya's art (*Caprichos*, *Disparates*) to comment on political repression? Is art shown as a weapon or a refuge?
- **The Antagonist:** Analyze the character of King Ferdinand VII (who never appears but is omnipresent) and his voice on stage (often represented by Calomarde). How is power depicted?

PART 3: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- **Buero Vallejo, Antonio.** *El sueño de la razón*. Stockcero, 2010.
- **Edwards, Gwynne.** *Dramatists in Perspective: Spanish Theatre in the Twentieth Century*. St. Martin's Press, 1985.
- **Rivero-Zaritzky, Yosálida.** *Introduction to El sueño de la razón*. Stockcero, 2010.



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PART 4: QUIZ BANK (Multiple Choice)

- 1. Which famous Spanish painter is the protagonist of the play?** A) Velázquez B) Picasso C) Francisco de Goya D) El Greco **Correct Answer: C**
- 2. What physical disability of the protagonist is simulated on stage?** A) Blindness B) Deafness C) Paralysis D) Muteness **Correct Answer: B**
- 3. The play is set during the reign of which Spanish monarch?** A) Philip II B) Charles V C) Ferdinand VII D) Alfonso XIII **Correct Answer: C**
- 4. What artistic works are projected or referenced throughout the play?** A) The Black Paintings (Pinturas Negras) B) Cubist masterpieces C) Renaissance portraits D) Surrealist landscapes **Correct Answer: A**
- 5. The phrase "El sueño de la razón produce monstruos" comes from:** A) A poem by Lorca B) An etching (grabado) by Goya C) A speech by the King D) The Constitution of 1812 **Correct Answer: B**

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