



## **Medals, Monuments, and Money: Nationalist Art in Spain and Mexico**

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Pulling a nation up by its bootstraps while keeping it under your boot is a dicey affair. Imagine yourself at the head of a country in the aftermath of years of internecine civil war—Mexico after the Revolution, Spain after the Civil War. Your people are shattered. Scarcely a family has escaped bereavement. Your infrastructure lies in ruin, swept away like a sand castle.

You want roadways and factories; you want universal literacy. You want, above all, an iron grip on the spoils of war. You need more than import controls and export diversification for that. You need more than detention centers and paramilitary police. For simultaneous uplift and repression, you need political consensus. You need propaganda: stationery, flags and statues, murals, and postage stamps. You need metro stations and housing projects emblazoned with the logo of your brand of national salvation. You need an Art Department.

In this unit, my students and I will examine and interrogate works of nationalist architecture and visual art from Spain and Mexico. We will examine works large and small, public and intimate. The artifacts selected may not be commonly studied in an art-historical context, but they have more to tell us about life in Spain and Mexico than many works from these countries commonly held up for praise in the English-speaking world.

The Franco era in Spain produced some of Spain's most widely read and studied literature, but the social, economic, and political conditions of Spain during that epoch receives disproportionately scant attention. We will study two artifacts of Spain's Franco regime in the decades following the Spanish Civil War. The first will be the *Valle de los Caídos* (Valley of the Fallen) war memorial outside Madrid, begun in the immediate aftermath of the war (built 1940-1959). The second will be the Franco Peace Medal issued to Francoist veterans of the Spanish Civil War and to their surviving families in 1964 during Spain's year-long celebration of twenty-five years of peace—peace, such as it was.

We will then turn our attention to Mexico. As of 2012, there are 33.7 million Hispanics of Mexican descent in the United States; Mexican-Americans represent 64% of the Hispanic population.<sup>1</sup> Yet Mexican history receives little attention in our classrooms, especially the story of Mexico's transformation under seventy-one years of single party rule under the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI). We will explore architect Mario Pani's tragically situated *Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco* (the Nonoalco-Tlatelolco Housing Complex) at the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* in Mexico City, a doomed utopian city-within-a-city built in 1964. We will also examine the political uses of Mexico's indigenous past in the contemporary one-hundred-peso note featuring the portrait and verse of the poet-king Nezahualcōyotl.

These works of art and architecture are important because they are present in the lives of millions of citizens of Spain and Mexico. They provide a window on the Mexico and Spain of living memory, on political and social forces very much alive in these countries today. We can't understand contemporary Spain without knowing about Generalissimo Francisco Franco. We can't understand today's Mexico without knowing about the PRI.

We will explore the ways public art is and has been used to communicate and propagate national identities and agendas. We will draw connections between examples of nationalist art and the practices and perspectives of the cultures in which they were created. Students will synthesize what they have learned about different nations, cultures, and cultural figures to use text and images to create their own interpretations of nationalist art. In the end, we will have expanded our understanding of twentieth-century history within and beyond Spain and Mexico. We will use the target language as a medium for learning and expression, learning Spanish while learning *in* Spanish. Finally, we will heighten our independence and agency as citizens through an understanding and awareness of the techniques that commercial and political interests use to influence our behavior and to manufacture consensus by saturating the environment with visual messages.

## Background

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I teach grades nine through twelve in the Academy of International Studies, a magnet program housed at Independence High School in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Academy of International Studies was originally established with a grant from the Asia Society and a mandate to extend the advantages of a rigorous global education to students from largely minority, high-poverty urban and rural settings. There are approximately 400 students in the program: 70% white, 13% black, 7% Latino, 4% Asian, and the remainder mixed race or not reporting. The school as a whole, including the magnet program, has approximately 2000 students: roughly 40% black, 34% white, 18% Latino, 5% Asian, and 3% mixed race. Roughly 55% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. The host school has an unusually high rate of violent incidents, but it outperforms the state average on leading academic indicators. <sup>2</sup>

## Rationale

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Why study art history in a Spanish class? That's what students and administrators want to know. Spanish is one thing, art history bad enough—but art history in Spanish? Spanish is increasingly construed as a vocational skills class. Spanish is touted as an adjunct skill to add value to other vocational programs—something that allows a landscaper to be the boss of a team, something that allows a nurse's assistant to get a 12% percent shift differential above her regular pay. Why study art and design history within the confines of Spanish? Is it not enough to be able to give and understand orders in Spanish? <sup>3</sup> Analytical skills are critical for all types of high-level work. Faculties of visual observation and analysis are especially important. Effective presentation of technical data in a graph requires advanced visual analytical skills. <sup>4</sup>

Moreover, media literacy—another name for the ability to use images, interpret images, and place images in

context—is a relatively new emphasis in our comprehensive curriculum. While media literacy is usually construed in terms of electronic media, the truth is that almost every manufactured or artificially prepared surface that students see is designed or decorated in a way intended to influence their attitudes or behavior. They absorb, as we do, symbols and images telling them what to buy and how the things they buy establish social status. They are conditioned to obey these messages as unconsciously as we adults follow the yellow lines telling us not to drive into opposing traffic on the way to work. These symbols are created by professionals, professionals who have honed the tools of their craft in the tool shed of the fine arts and design. If students need to know one thing about images, it's this: art is all around us, and it's asking for your money. Art is everywhere, and it wants your brain.

Because the intended message in nationalist art is direct and unambiguous, a study of nationalist art and architecture is a good introduction for students with little media-literacy background. The artifacts chosen for study here have been selected for maximum relevance, both to their historical setting and to the present day. Out of a wartime population just shy of 24 million, over 1,020,000 men fought in Franco's armed forces; medals went home to every family, even when the men did not. <sup>5</sup> The question, "What side did your family fight on in the war?" (in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939) is still a common topic of conversation for young Spaniards today. <sup>6</sup> The *Valle de los Caídos* is one of the most visited monuments in Europe; every Spaniard recognizes its profile as readily as Americans recognize the Statue of Liberty. Every Mexican knows the hundred-peso banknote and the Plaza of the Three Cultures with the adjacent Nonoalco-Tlatelolco housing project. These artifacts are as iconically Mexican as the Liberty Bell is American. The artifacts studied in this unit are not museum pieces; they are windows onto the living national political cultures and national identities of Spain and Mexico. As they explore the political uses of these artifacts in shaping public attitudes in Spain and Mexico, students should also become increasingly conscious of the influence images in their own environment hold over them. (See the section "Resources" below for links to images of these artifacts.)

## The "Art Dictatorial State"

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He may have killed hundreds of thousands, but apparently the generalissimo had a "softer side." Generalissimo Francisco Franco, leader of the victorious right-wing faction, was the undisputed ruler of Spain from the close of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 until his death in 1975. In the nine years from 1936 to 1945, he presided over the executions of between 150,000 and 400,000 Spaniards. <sup>7</sup> A 2011 article in the *Telegraph* describing the "softer side" of this mass executioner reveals that he was an accomplished amateur painter in his less sanguinary hours. He enjoyed painting hunting and maritime scenes. He loved to paint nature, and he seemed to identify with beasts and birds of prey. One critic compared his tastes and thematic choices to those of another twentieth-century artist, Adolf Hitler. They were not alone. Benito Mussolini was a novelist and translator of poetry who cast himself as a patron of the arts. Mao Tse Tung fancied himself a poet and master calligrapher. Joseph Stalin was a published poet and something of an art collector with a penchant for male nudes. <sup>8</sup>

The shared artistic leanings of dictators are no coincidence. Graphic-design writer Steven Heller characterizes the Nazi propaganda machine, with its intricate lexicon of logos and symbols, as a vast "sociopolitical art project." The Spanish brand of Fascism, known as Falangism, employed a rich visual vocabulary of icons culled from Spain's triumphant Catholic medieval past, just as Italian Fascism used imagery of Rome's imperial

heyday. Franco's regime can be seen as a local variation of what Heller calls the "art dictatorial state."<sup>9</sup> The authoritarian regimes of the twentieth century harnessed the power of art and image to infiltrate the consciousness of their constituencies and create conformist consensus. The twentieth century marks a new era of political power, driven by regimes that mastered the techniques of branding and mass marketing decades before Madison Avenue caught on.<sup>10</sup> Public symbols and pageantry have been crucial means of projecting power for centuries. The new media and technologies created by the industrial age, from high-speed printing to reinforced concrete, allowed regimes to fully saturate the visual environment as a means of enforcing social control.

## **Franco's Spain**

In 1936, General Francisco Franco led a military uprising against the elected government of the Second Spanish Republic. Since the end of monarchy in 1931, the Republic had allowed Marxist and Anarchist movements to come to political prominence. The Republic challenged traditional Spanish values. It allowed divorce and promoted women's equality. Many people turned against the Republic when women received the right to vote.<sup>11</sup> The Republic further enraged Catholics when it restricted public displays of religion and threatened to close all Catholic schools. The Republic confiscated Church property and banned the Society of Jesus.<sup>12</sup> A coalition of conservative elements with the support of the Church aimed to restore the old order and reorganize Spain along the lines of Benito Mussolini's Fascist Italy. The conservative Nationalists hoped for a speedy coup. The war lasted three years. The level of political violence against noncombatants was comparable to that in other civil wars in Europe during that century.<sup>13</sup> It was a bloodbath.

The peace may have been worse than the war. Even before the war, General Franco and his forces—a mix of Spanish Foreign Legion troops and Moroccan mercenaries—had established a reputation for massacre, rape, and torture in the suppression of labor strikes on behalf of the Second Republic. The end of the fighting in 1939 brought Franco's program of *limpieza*, "cleaning", the eradication of all opposition. Executions of imprisoned Communists continued at least into the 1960s.<sup>14</sup>

Franco supported Hitler and sent Spanish troops to fight for Germany against the Soviet Union in World War II. By 1945, Spain was a leper state: internationally isolated, economically ruined, and caught in a frenzy of state terror.

### *El Valle de los Caídos (The Valley of the Fallen), 1940-1959*

El Valle de los Caídos is breathtaking if you don't know enough about art and history to know that it's horrible. It is imposing. On the approach to the monument to Spain's civil war dead, you see it for miles on the way from nearby Madrid. A stone cross stands five hundred feet tall on top of a mountain. Four titanic stone sculptures at its base represent the four Evangelists.

In front of the mountain, a massive semicircular entryway evokes the *Heiligenberg Thingstätte* Nazi amphitheater (1935) in its shape.<sup>15</sup> The neoclassical colonnade, begun in 1940, invokes those of Albert Speer. The colonnade invites the visitor inside the hollowed-out mountain to a vast domed basilica. The nave of the church is decorated with tapestries featuring scenes from the book of Revelation. The dome is covered in a glittering neo-Byzantine mosaic that refers back to Franco's ancestral Andalucía, once part of the Byzantine Empire. Franco's simple tomb is there in the floor—a stone slab, little more—along with tens of thousands of war dead interred in the walls. The steroidal, overblown scale of the structure suggests a place where giants or monsters would go to attend mass.

The construction took nearly two decades. Many political prisoners worked on the project in exchange for reduced sentences. When Franco dedicated the memorial site in 1959, he declared it a symbol of reconciliation and a memorial for all the war dead, Nationalist and Republican. <sup>16</sup> Franco was still executing Republican prisoners in 1963, making the Valley of the Fallen perhaps the first war memorial ever dedicated to soldiers who were still in the process of being killed. <sup>17</sup>

### *Spain in 1964*

Spain in the Franco era is seldom studied at the high-school or even at the undergraduate level. The Spanish Civil War is considered a much more picturesque and enticing era. The truth is that the Franco era is the backdrop for much of the twentieth-century Spanish literature that intermediate and advanced students will read, from the work of Miguel Delibes to that of Ana María Matute. The era also created the conditions that gave way to contemporary Spain. It is simply impossible to understand present-day Spanish society without some knowledge of Franco.

This particular era, the 1960s, is especially illustrative. Studying this era will challenge many of students' received ideas about twentieth-century history since World War II. We are taught in school that the Allies fought a good war and hanged the bad Nazis at Nuremberg. We didn't hang them all, though – not the ones in Madrid. During the war Franco sent tens of thousands of soldiers to fight in Hitler's *División Azul*, the Blue Division, a Spanish army within the *Wehrmacht*. Spanish officers who fought for Hitler, some up to the very end of the war, filled key roles in Franco's administration. <sup>18</sup> In the 1960s, Western democracies welcomed Spain back into the fold of civilized nations because they needed Spain's air bases to extend their strategic reach against the Russians. Members of the regime they shook hands with still wore Nazi regalia on their uniforms. <sup>19</sup> It's an opportunity not to be missed for an object lesson in *realpolitik*, a lesson still timely today when rhetoric about "rogue states" or "regime change" is thrown about in the news media.

Political repression continued in 1960s Spain, despite the thaw in Spain's post-Second World War political isolation. During a miner's strike in Asturias on July 19, 1963, police beat and tortured striking miners. Police castrated one coal miner and shaved the heads of the wives of the miners on strike. <sup>20</sup> The following year Francisco Franco celebrated twenty-five years of peace in Spain, such as it was.

Spain by 1964 was still denied entry into the Common Market, ancestor of the European Union. <sup>21</sup> Still, Spain's per capita GDP increased by 70% from 1960 to 1964 and nearly tripled between 1960 and 1970. <sup>22</sup> From 1950 to 1975, Japan was the only country on earth to experience greater economic development than Spain. <sup>23</sup> Its dictator was ailing; he had recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. <sup>24</sup> The regime wrestled with liberalization, albeit on an extremely limited scale, in order to answer external and internal critics. <sup>25</sup>

The truth is that Spain's economy grew because the whole world's economy was growing. Spain's economic miracle could have happened much sooner had Franco's regime not stood in the way. Economic development staggered ahead despite the corruption of Spain's crony capitalism and the ineptitude of its government economists. The prosperous Spaniards of the 1970s – the first Spaniards in history not to know widespread hunger – arrived at their happy state almost entirely by accident. <sup>26</sup>

Whether because of or in spite of govern, with the rising economy on its side, the regime mounted a massive campaign to demonstrate to Spaniards how much better off they were than they had been under Republican rule. Franco plastered the country with bright, cheery posters proclaiming "PAZ" (peace) with hippie-inspired

graphics, complete with white doves. Similarly styled infographics detailed Spain's economic and social advances under Franco since 1935: increases in iron ingots cast, reductions in infant mortality. <sup>27</sup>

### *Twenty-five Years of Peace, 1939-1964: The Franco Peace Medal*

A quarter century of Spanish peace and progress called for a medal. Domestically, Franco underscored the point that Spain enjoyed peace and progress while the Western democracies were engaged in a savage series of wars in Asia. Posters were an indispensable tool of the "art dictatorial state." They were cheap and powerful mass media. Goebbels loved them. <sup>28</sup> Posters are effective persuaders, but they are impersonal and impermanent by nature. In addition to being relatively indestructible, Franco's medal reached out personally to aging veterans, the hardest core of Franco's core constituency. A medal, too, creates a bond not only with the honoree, but with the honoree's children and grandchildren.

The Medal for Twenty-five Years of Peace, 1939-1964, was issued to Nationalist veterans of the war or to their surviving families. I do not know the number issued, but given the vast peak numbers of the Nationalist forces during the Civil War, huge numbers must have been given out. The medal hangs from a white, yellow, red, and black ribbon, the colors of the old monarchy. The medal itself is a red Maltese cross topped by a Spanish M26 helmet. The cross bears a white medallion in the center. The medallion reads:

1. Z
2. 964

("Peace/1939-1964"). Around the medallion is inscribed, "*EN LA GUERRA TU SANGRE/EN LA PAZ TU TRABAJO*" ("In war your blood/In peace your labor"). On the reverse of the medal the Maltese cross is blue. The inscription in the medallion on the back reads, "*HONOR Y GLORIA A CAÍDOS Y HÉROES*" ("honor and glory to the fallen and to heroes").

### *En la guerra tu sangre: The Power and Politics of Grammar*

In Italy, Mussolini's Fascist government pursued political aims through linguistic means. It emphasized the populist, anti-capitalist, and egalitarian roots of the movement by legally abolishing the formal mode of address—*lei* and *loro*—in favor of the informal *tu* and its plural *voi*. <sup>29</sup> Similarly, even though Franco's Fascist-oriented supporters in Spain represented conservative elements, including wealthy landowners, they promoted their populist appeal by using exclusively *tú* instead of *usted* and addressing people by their nicknames.

*Tú* is the familiar form of address. Familiar in this sense does not mean simply people known to us; *familiar* refers to family. When Franco says on the medal "IN WAR YOUR BLOOD/IN PEACE YOUR LABOR," he uses the familiar *tú* form of address. He implies a close personal relationship between himself and the veteran; he speaks like a father, a brother, a friend. Grammar communicates power. Here, Franco uses an informal register to establish authority, the influence that comes from a close personal connection.

### *Franco's Spain and the "Art Dictatorial State"*

In terms of the "art dictatorial state," Heller considers Franco a "mere...imitator with [his] own national dialect." <sup>30</sup> For Heller, Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, and Mao are the true originators of modern totalitarian branding. I'm not so sure. Franco ruled until he died a natural death. His party survived the transition to democracy and is now the ruling party in Spain. Like Mexico's *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, the Marxist-



leaning party that ruled Mexico for seventy-one years, Franco created a brand of authoritarianism that cultivated lasting brand loyalty in its own local market.

### *Mexico and the Partido Revolucionario Institucional*

The Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) was a gruesome debacle with multivalent hostilities between shifting factions. Factional strife continued for some time after the end of overt hostilities. The *Partido Nacional Revolucionario* (PNR) consolidated power in 1929. Ostensibly Marxist and a member of the Fifth Socialist International, the party, which changed its name to the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party), maintained power continuously until 1982. The *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, commonly known as PRI, is at this writing the current ruling party in Mexico.

Unlike the other "art dictatorial states," Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party never tied its brand to the image of a single charismatic persona the way Hitler's Germany, Mao's China, and Franco's Spain did. Nonetheless, modern Mexican national consciousness would be almost unimaginable without Mexico's uniquely Mesoamerican brand of Socialist Realist aesthetics. The post-revolution Mexican aesthetic, simultaneously evoking East Berlin and the glorious ruins of Mexico's indigenous empires, pervades public space and public life from the office buildings where people work to the money in their wallets.

### *Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco*

Mexico, like Spain, underwent a period of dramatic growth from the 1940s to the economic crash of 1976. In advance of the 1968 Olympics—the first Olympics awarded to a developing nation—the PRI undertook a massive building program to showcase Mexican progress for the world.

The *Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco* was a city within a city—a nearly self-sufficient settlement bordering the Plaza del Meztizaje, site of the last battle between the Aztec empire and the coalition of neighboring states and tribes led by the Spanish in 1521. The historic site contains the ruins of the old Texcoco Templo Mayor complex and a sixteenth-century Spanish church built of stone expropriated from the Aztec temple. The plaza would become the Plaza of the Three Cultures, representing three stages of Mexico's development: Aztec Mexico, Spanish Mexico, and gleaming modern post-Revolutionary Mexico in the shape of an innovative housing and office complex.

Architect Mario Pani's high-rise units evoke depersonalizing Soviet housing blocks as much as they do the clean lines of the Bauhaus-influenced International Style. Indeed, some draw a connection between the International Style itself and the totalitarian aspirations of regimes that promote it.<sup>31</sup> The Mexican-born, European-trained Pani was a committed humanist in design principles, though. He was deeply concerned about creating livable urban space, with adequate provision for pedestrians. The height of housing towers was used to free up land on the ground for green space and open recreational space. Pani was also a conservationist, making provision for water recycling.<sup>32</sup>

The problem was the location. The last battle for the Aztec empire was a *naval* battle; the whole area was once a vast lake. Mario Pani's plans built skyscrapers on a base of lake bed silt—silt that shakes like gelatin when rocked by the fault lines that crisscross underneath it. The 1985 earthquake collapsed some buildings at great loss of life and rendered many others unlivable. Despite renovations, the area is manifestly unsafe for habitation. Mexico's city of the future is now a slum filled largely with squatters.

### *Text, Image and Landscape*

Students should be able to appreciate the interplay between a text, a visual icon, and the geographic setting of both in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas. The plaque in front reads:

EL 13 DE AGOSTO DE 1521 HEROICAMENTE DEFENDIDO POR CUAUHEMOC CAYO TLATELOLCO EN PODER DE HERNAN CORTES NO FUE TRIUNFO NI DERROTA FUE EL DOLOROSO NACIMIENTO DEL PUEBLOS MEZTIZO QUE ES EL MEXICO DE HOY

("On the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 1521/Heroically defended by Cuauhtemoc/Tlatelolco fell in the power of Hernán Cortés/It was neither triumph nor defeat/It was the painful birth of the mixed people/That is Mexico of today.")

In the foreground surrounding the simple marker are the Aztec ruins. In the background, we see the crisp geometry of a Mario Pani housing high rise, representing Mexico of today. A housing project can indeed be a national monument—even if it has become today a painfully ironic and dilapidated one. Not far away, another plaque stands to commemorate fallen student activists and their supports. The Plaza was the site of another slaughter in 1968, the massacre of student demonstrators by the military.

### *The One-Hundred-Peso Note*

When I was in Peru examining one of the many statues erected to Spanish *conquistadores*, a nun told me, "You need to go to Mexico. All over Latin America we put up statues to the *conquistadores*—but the Mexicans, they build statues to the Indians. They know who they are."

The figures of the Native American and the *mestizo* are part of Mexico's national iconography. Indigenous rulers are featured in public art the way the Founding Fathers of the United States appear on currency—as if to claim a continuity of regime between Aztec times and today. (The ancestors of today's Mexicans slaughtered and probably ate most of the Aztecs enshrined by modern Mexican state iconography. The Aztecs were predatory colonialist invaders from the north; their neighbors couldn't get rid of them soon enough once they hired Spanish mercenaries to help them.)

The Mexican hundred-peso note features Nezahualcōyotl ("Fasting Coyote"), the great poet king of the fifteenth century. He was not Aztec; he was king of Texcoco, then an independent city state. In addition to being featured on the hundred-peso note and being remembered as a poet, he also has a vast Mexico City slum named after him. The note features Fasting Coyote, looking very much like a Native Americanized Lenin, along with one of his poems, translated to Spanish from Nahuatl:

Amo el canto del zenzontle, pájaro de cuatrocientas voces, amo el color del jade y el enervante perfume de las flores, pero amo más a mi hermano el hombre. I love the song of the mockingbird, Bird of four hundred voices. I love the color of jade And the intoxicating perfume of flowers, But more I love my brother, man.

The poem (whether it was written by Nezahualcōyotl or not) is a good one. The king had a sensitive side; he is said to have erected a temple to the invisible, unknowable God who permeates and penetrates all. No images were allowed, nor blood sacrifices, not even of animals. In his other temples, however, Nezahualcōyotl practiced the same religion as his Aztec neighbors, complete with human sacrifice and cannibalism.



## Strategies for Teaching and Learning

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I present here two techniques for learning. One requires little or no technology, but can be readily employed with an interactive whiteboard or similar projector-screen technology. The other allows students to use their own smart phones for educational purposes.

### **The Freidlaender Method**

Linda Friedlaender is Curator of Education for the Yale Center for British Art at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. She has developed a system using art appreciation to increase the observational awareness of medical students. Evidence suggests her method of training observational skills substantially increases students' attention to detail and powers of observation, thereby reducing physician errors and medical harm to patients. <sup>33</sup>

Her method, which I have experienced, is relevant not only to medical students but to anyone seeking to increase his or her ability to attend to visual information. It is simple. Students are divided into groups of five or six. Students stand before an image—in her particular setting, a notable work of British art—with no label or with the label covered. An electronic image, as on an interactive white board or projector screen, may be used. Students are given ten minutes to observe the image, and in my class they will be encouraged to take notes. At the end of ten minutes, a facilitator (the teacher or a student trained in the method) asks open-ended questions to solicit the students' responses to the question, "What do you see?" In my classroom, this will be done in Spanish. Students will comment on what they have observed and will be instructed to comment without interpretation. Once students have given a detailed description of the image, they will be asked for their interpretation of it. They will be asked to give groups or clusters of observational data in order to support their analysis. The teacher will be alert to details they may have been omitted. <sup>34</sup> In the end, the teacher or facilitator will reveal the provenance of the image and ask the students to discuss its significance.

### **Using QR Codes**

QR codes are a means of encoding data in a printable black-and-white image—in many ways similar to a bar code, but with a much greater density of data. This allows QR codes to encode things like a text passage or an Internet address. QR codes look like square blotches of digitized black-and-white spots. It is very simple to create your own QR codes through free sites that will allow you to encode text or Web addresses and save or print your own QR codes for classroom use. Free and readily available applications exist to allow users to read QR codes using their cameras and links to Web sites. (See the section "Resources" below for recommended QR code applications.)

Students may use QR codes in a variation of the classroom gallery walk. First, the teacher prepares an image to post of a significant artifact—say, for example, one of Franco's medals. Then the teacher compiles a list of Internet resources that would help the students figure out the meaning of the artifact and prepares and prints a QR code for each one. Students then use their smart phones to access and interpret the information to which each QR code links. Generally, students will work collaboratively in groups since not every student will have a smart phone to use.

## Student Activities

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The varied media and the interplay of themes in this unit will offer the potential for a diverse range of activities that will engage students' creativity and critical thinking skills along with their productive and interpretive language skills. There is ample opportunity to employ classroom technology and students' personal hand-held devices as well as activities that require little use of technology beyond the ability to display an image.

The activities in the unit are arranged by country and chronologically by artifact for maximum clarity and coherence. We will open in 1959 with the *Valle de los Caídos* basilica and monument and will proceed to the 1964 Franco Peace Medal. Moving across the Atlantic and ahead to 1965, we will study the *Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco* and will proceed to contemporary Mexico with the hundred-peso note featuring Nezahualcōyotl. The concluding project will invite students to muster their own creative skills to combine text and image to design a medal, monument or banknote on their own.

### Art Detective

Each artifact will be introduced through the Friedlaender method described above. Because the activity will be conducted in Spanish, accommodations must be made to facilitate the experience for language learners. Some days before each new artifact is introduced, students will receive a vocabulary list with appropriate vocabulary that will help them navigate the experience with minimal frustration and reliance on circumlocution.

After completing the Friedlaender method, the question-and-answer experience with an image or images of the *Valle de los Caídos*, students will read an excerpt of oral history detailing the treatment of vanquished leftists by Franco's forces.<sup>35</sup> The passage is the testimony of Manuel Moreno Ramírez, a fifteen-year-old boy describing the massacre of captured loyalists in the bullring of Badajoz following the capture of that city. Students will conduct a think-pair-share activity in which they will verify comprehension of the passage about the massacre and will then share their impressions of it. As a writing assignment, students will be asked to evaluate the stone cross and basilica of the *Valle de los Caídos* in light of the testimony given by Manuel Moreno Ramírez.

### QR Detective

The teacher posts an image of two different artifacts and displays in the classroom or hallway the series of QR codes linked to information that will help the students identify and understand the objects. The teacher shows the students how to access a QR code using a smart phone. The teacher then tells the students they will be responsible for figuring out the provenance and meaning of the artifacts provided using their smart phones to read QR codes. The students are given two artifacts, each with five QR codes. The QR codes are not segregated by object, but are presented at random; the students will have to determine which Internet resource relates to which QR code.

Presenting the Franco Peace Medal of 1964, students will be given links to related images and media. They will encounter, of course, the front and back of the medal. They will also have links to film clips of the 1964 celebrations and to posters commissioned by the regime for the twentieth-fifth anniversary of the war's end. Other images may include Spain's vice president at the time, Agustín Muñoz Grandes, posing first with Hitler

during World War II and later with President Eisenhower. Students will discuss the sequence of images and will attempt to connect the different images, text, and voice information. As a whole group, we will compare our findings and conjectures and discuss the significance of the 1964 peace celebrations in Spain.

We will conclude by discussing the *tú* versus *usted* forms of address in Spanish. Students will brainstorm about the ways choice of formal or informal address can make a speaker or writer more or less influential depending on the situation.

### **Learning With Maps and Photo Essays**

Google Maps gives an excellent view of the buildings and terrain at the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* in Mexico City. Using an interactive whiteboard or other display, we will examine the three types of architecture extant at the site (Aztec, colonial Spanish, and modern Mexican). Students will be asked to make inferences about the time period and provenance of each different type of architecture they see.

Students will then take in a series of photographs of the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* and the *Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlateloco*. In no particular sequence they will see photos of the newly constructed urban complex and photos of the violence that broke out there in 1968 when government troops attacked student protestors. They will see the damage caused by the 1985 earthquake. Students will see the present state of the complex, with once-gleaming buildings covered in graffiti and causeways filled up refuse due to the interruption of trash collection. Students will work in small groups in the target language to place the photos in chronological order and write a caption for each picture. Groups will present their results to the class.

### **Money Talks: the Indigenous Past in Modern Mexican Nationalism**

Students will read, interpret and recite the poem of Nezahualcōyotl that appears on the hundred-peso note. As a class, we will compare the image of Nezahualcōyotl that appears on the banknote with images of Aztec and other indigenous rulers taken from modern Mexican murals.

As a concluding project, students will combine images or forms with Spanish language text to create a medal, monument, or banknote of their own design. They will record audio or video of themselves giving an explanation of their artifact and the rationale behind their intended propagandistic effect. Students will upload their recordings and images of their artifacts to educational blogging site to create a virtual gallery. Students will also create QR codes to accompany their artifacts that link their artifacts to the uploaded video files. Students will then have a gallery opening presentation in which they will be able to circulate from one artifact to another, listening to the different presentations. Instead of the class sitting and waiting while each student presents in sequence, students will access their classmates' presentations with the QR code links accompanying each artifact.

## **Resources**

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Bibliography for Teachers (see also bibliography below)

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[http://www.healio.com/~media/Journals/JNE/2009/11\\_November/10\\_3928\\_01484834\\_20090828\\_02/10\\_3928\\_01484834\\_20090828\\_02.pdf](http://www.healio.com/~media/Journals/JNE/2009/11_November/10_3928_01484834_20090828_02/10_3928_01484834_20090828_02.pdf) : The approach to art outlined in this article is a practical, engaging, and easy to implement practice for teachers to implement. The article gives evidence and support for practical outcomes associated with art appreciation and the study of art history. This is a must read for any teacher using art in the classroom.

Reading List for Students, Including Images

El Valle de los Caídos

Abadía de la Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos. "Valle de los caídos - Abadía de la Santa Cruz." Valle de los caídos - Abadía de la Santa Cruz. <http://www.valledeloscaidos.es/> (accessed August 15, 2013). The official web site of the Valley of the Fallen features useful information and images.

Casanova, Julian, Francisco Espinosa, Conxita Mir, and Francisco Moreno Gómez. *Morir, matar, sobrevivir : la violencia en la dictadura de Franco*. Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 2002. Page 76 contains an excerpt of oral history from a massacre Franco's forces committed at the bullring in Badajoz.

Walden, Geoff. "Third Reich in Ruins." Third Reich in Ruins. <http://www.thirdreichruins.com/> (accessed August 15, 2013). This collection of photographs of German architecture from the Nazi era should be useful for comparison.

Wikimedia Commons. "Valle de los Caídos - Wikimedia Commons." Wikimedia Commons.

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Valle\\_de\\_los\\_Ca%C3%ADdos](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Valle_de_los_Ca%C3%ADdos) (accessed August 15, 2013). A collection of photographs in the public domain documenting the Valley of the Fallen.

*Medalla 25 años de paz 1939-1964*

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<http://www.todocoleccion.net/medalla-25-xxv-anos-paz-1939-1964~x26903329> (accessed August 15, 2013). Photos of the 1964 Franco peace medal from an auction site.

Jimenez, Aurelio. "Carteles año 1964." Muestra de pintura onubense. <http://www.aurelijimenez.com/64.html> (accessed July 15, 2013). This collection of hard-to-find posters from the Franco regime's 1964 celebration of 25 years of peace yields highly accessible and illustrative examples of authoritarian propaganda.

Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco

F., Mario. "El desdichado Conjunto Urbano Nonoalco-Tlatelolco." archivo L.

<http://hugofl.blogspot.com/2012/10/el-desdichado-conjunto-urbano-nonoalco.html> (accessed July 15, 2013). In addition to providing a concise and readable summary of episodes in the tumultuous history of Tlatelolco from 1521 to present, the article includes a photo essay contrasting photographs of the urban complex taken when new with footage from the 1968 student uprisings and the 1985 Mexico City earthquake.

México 100 pesos

Irving, Clay. "Mexico Paper Money Collection." Panix - Public Access Networks Corporation.

<http://www.panix.com/~clay/currency/Mexico.html> (accessed August 15, 2013). Images of Mexican currency.

nextick. "Flickr: nextick's Photostream." Welcome to Flickr - Photo Sharing. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jetdedt/page2/> (accessed

August 15, 2013). This photo set features an enlarged view of the poem on the Mexican 100 peso note.

#### Materials for Classroom Use

DroidLa. "QR Droid™." Google Play Apps. <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=la.droid.qr&hl=en> (accessed August 15, 2013). QR Droid is a user-friendly utility for Android devices.

Kaywa AG. "Free QR Code Generator and QR Management with Tracking, Analytics and Support." Kaywa.com. <http://qrcode.kaywa.com/> (accessed August 15, 2013). This easy to use website allows teachers and students to create easily embedded and reproduced QR codes into a wide variety of classroom projects and activities. With the use of students' own smart phones, tablet computers, or media players to read the codes, any two-dimensional display can contain links to dynamic multimedia content.

QR Code City. "Scan - QR Code and Barcode Reader." iTunes Preview. <https://itunes.apple.com/app/scan-qr-code-barcode-reader/id411206394?ign-mpt=uo%3D6&mt=8> (accessed August 15, 2013). The iPhone application "Scan" is a popular and highly rated QR code reader known for its ease of use.

## Implementing Common Core Standards

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### Knowledge of Language

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.11-12.3 and L.9-10.3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

The study of the political uses and importance of informal versus formal address in European authoritarian movements will make students more conscious of the importance of word choice, both in Spanish and English.

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

Students will compare 1960s magazine portrayals of the Unidad Habitacional Nonoalco-Tlatelolco from the time of its construction with contemporary images culled from social media. Students will also compare Francoist propaganda in different media from the late 1950s to mid-1960s with firsthand accounts of repression by the regime.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Students will integrate what they have learned about the methods and message of nationalist propaganda with prior knowledge of Spanish-speaking cultures to create a piece of Spanish language nationalist propaganda of their own.

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<http://www.mediavida.com/foro/off-topic/bando-tus-antepasados-durante-guerra-civil-413660> (accessed July 14, 2013). An internet forum discussion thread from Spain: "Which side did your ancestors fight on during the civil war?"

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[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/03/books/review/Benfey-t.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/03/books/review/Benfey-t.html?_r=0) (accessed July 13, 2013). A review of Steven Heller's *Iron Fists*.

Blaye, Edouard de. *Franco and the Politics of Spain*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976. A good survey of Franco's reign.

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<http://www.todocoleccion.net/cartel-25-anos-paz-1964-ilustrado-por-gargayo~x23700871> (accessed July 15, 2013). A poster from the 1964 peace celebrations.

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<http://www.marioconde.org/blog/2010/02/el-tuteo-fascista-y-el-ustedismo-progresista-socrates/> (accessed July 15, 2013). Mario Conde discusses the political and social implications of the Falangist/Fascist use of informal address and the progressive maintenance of formal address in modern Spanish.

Casanova, Julián, Francisco Espinosa, Conxita Mir, and Francisco Moreno Gómez. *Morir, matar, sobrevivir : la violencia en la dictadura de Franco*. Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 2002. A history of Francoist repression.

DiGrazia, Christine. "Yale's Life-or-Death Course in Art Criticism." *The New York Times*.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/19/nyregion/yale-s-life-or-death-course-in-art-criticism.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm> (accessed July 16, 2013). DiGrazia describes Linda Friedlaender's technique for building the observational powers of medical students.

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<http://hugofl.blogspot.com/2012/10/el-desdichado-conjunto-urbano-nonoalco.html> (accessed July 15, 2013). A great article and collection of photos about the Conjunto Urbano Nonoalco-Tlatelolco.

"Franco, ese hombre: 25 años de paz." YouTube. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xcab1zz\\_Kfg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xcab1zz_Kfg) (accessed July 15, 2013). A Spanish film from 1964 captures details of Franco's celebration of twenty-five years of peace.

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Help Catalonia. "Help Catalonia: Spanish Nationalism (3)." Help Catalonia. <http://www.helpcatalonia.cat/2011/06/spanish-nationalism-3.html> (accessed July 15, 2013). More posters from Franco's Spain.

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