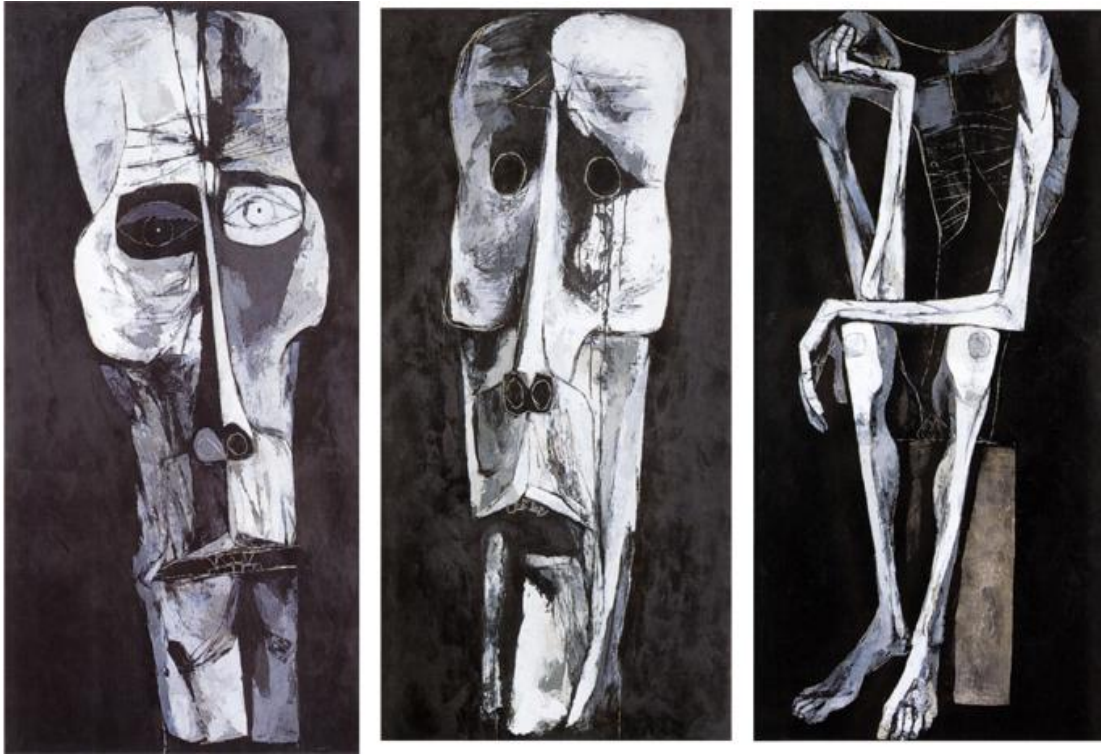


# OF RAGE AND REDEMPTION: THE ART OF OSWALDO GUAYASAMÍN



*La Espera (Waiting)*, 1968-1969. Oswaldo Guayasamín.

## A Resource Packet for Teachers

Prepared by Vanderbilt University and Georgetown University

### Lesson Plans:

The Mexican Roots of Oswaldo Guayasamín – Pan-American Political Art

Rigoberta Menchú – A Voice for the Voiceless

An Artful Protest



# Rigoberta Menchú – A Voice for the Voiceless

Prepared by Charlton Yingling & Sarah Birdwell, Vanderbilt University

**Grades: Middle and High School**

**Subjects: Social Studies**

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand the ramifications of the civil wars in Guatemala through learning about Rigoberta Menchú's work for social justice and human rights.
- Students will identify connections between social issues encountered by Rigoberta Menchú in Guatemala and social issues in Ecuador depicted in Oswaldo Guayasamín's art.

## ART IMAGES

Oswaldo Guayasamín, *Rigoberta Menchú* (1996)

## STRATEGIES

1. Discuss Rigoberta Menchú's life and the events which inspired her to work as a human rights activist for the oppressed and underprivileged in Guatemala.
2. Have students research the life of Oswaldo Guayasamín and produce a written report.
3. Divide students into small groups. Have them discuss the relationship between Menchú and Oswaldo Guayasamín. Identify the similarities and differences in the political and social circumstances each faced in his or her country. What factors might have contributed to their forming a friendship?
4. Examine the portrait of Rigoberta Menchú painted by Guayasamín. Describe the style of the artist. What is emphasized? How is Menchú portrayed?

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Have students research other notable cases of human rights violations in other Latin American countries. Prepare oral presentations of each for the class. Divide students into groups to discuss similarities and differences between the various examples.
2. Have students draw an artistic representation of their impressions of the information they gather about racism, discrimination, and exploitation in other Latin American countries.
3. Have students research other Nobel Peace Prize Laureates and the circumstances through which they came to win the prize. Identify common themes among various winners.

Rigoberta Menchú Tum t i m e l i n e	
1954 - Guatemala's democratically-elected president is toppled in a US-backed coup, starting an era of military dictatorships, which the US will support militarily and financially over the next decades.	
1960 - the Guatemalan Civil War begins, and runs to 1996.	1959 - in Chimal, Quiché, Guatemala Rigoberta is born.
1967 - Rigoberta works her first paid job as an agricultural laborer.	1966 - Rigoberta visits Guatemala City for the first time.
1980 - Rigoberta's father is killed by Guatemalan troops at the Spanish Embassy. Her mother is then brutalized and killed by Guatemalan government forces.	1979 - Rigoberta's brother is tortured and killed by the army. Rigoberta joins the Committee of the Peasant Union (CUC), and she learns Spanish.
1982 - Rigoberta helps to found the United Representation of the Guatemalan Opposition, and begins collaboration on her testimonio.	1981 - Rigoberta joins the 31st of January Popular Front, educating Maya and peasants on self-defense against military oppression. Rigoberta flees into hiding and exile.
1984 - Rigoberta narrates a film on repression of indigenous peoples, <i>When the Mountains Tremble</i> .	1983 - <i>I, Rigoberta Menchú</i> is published, Rigoberta's testimonio on her culture, people, her 23 years of life, and experiences with oppression. This work gives voice to indigenous Guatemalan struggles, and raises world awareness of the repression there by the military and government.
1986 - Guatemala elects a new president, although atrocities by the military and right-wing death squads continue for another decade.	1985 - Guatemala's military folds under domestic and international pressure for its abuses. A new constitution is adopted with civilian government.
1992 - In recognition of Rigoberta's work for social justice, ethno-cultural reconciliation, and rights of indigenous peoples, she is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.	1991 - Rigoberta works on the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
1998 - Rigoberta wins Spain's Prince of Asturias Award.	1996 - Oswaldo Guayasamin completes a portrait of his good friend Rigoberta Menchú
2007 - Rigoberta becomes a candidate for Guatemala's presidency. However, she is defeated in the first round of votes.	1999 - Some of the facts in Rigoberta's works are challenged by David Stoll. Rigoberta's close friend Oswaldo Guayasamin passes away at age 79.

## BIOGRAPHY OF RIGOBERTA MENCHU

While growing up as part of an impoverished indigenous family and community, Rigoberta Menchú experienced from an early age the racism, discrimination and exploitation faced by the Mayan people of Guatemala, circumstances which kept thousands of the country's indigenous in extreme poverty. Rigoberta's parents, respected as defenders of human rights among their community, instilled in her pride in her Quiché Maya heritage. As a teenager, Rigoberta began working with Catholic organizations on issues of social reform and became known as a laborer for women's rights. She and others in her family became very involved in human and indigenous rights and land reform issues in Guatemala.

In 1954, a US-backed coup overthrew Guatemala's democratically elected government, installing in its place a military dictatorship which quickly clamped down on political freedoms. Many of Rigoberta's family and friends began to be oppressed by the military and police in their own country, as the repressive government failed to distinguish between people taking stands for peaceful change and those using violent methods. In September 1979 Rigoberta's brother Patrocinio was taken by the army, tortured, and presumably killed. Only four months later Rigoberta's father was killed by Guatemalan forces during a political protest, and three months after this Rigoberta's mother disappeared, presumed to have been kidnapped and killed by either Guatemalan forces or paramilitary death squads. In March 1983 Rigoberta's brother Victor was also killed by the Guatemalan army.

Rigoberta had been forced into exile in Mexico in 1981, where she continued working to organize against the military dictatorship and lobby for human rights, respect of the indigenous community, and raised awareness of the situation in Guatemala. In 1982 Rigoberta began serving in the United Nations human rights subcommittee dedicated to the prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities around the world. She also began to tell her life's story to Venezuelan-French anthropologist Elizabeth Burgos Debray, who worked with Rigoberta to produce a testimonial novel entitled *I, Rigoberta Menchú*. As a result of this testimonial work, international outrage grew over the problems facing the people of Guatemala.

As a result of this recognition, Rigoberta made the acquaintance of another person dedicated to human rights and indigenous justice in Latin America, Ecuadorian artist Oswaldo Guayasamín. For decades Guayasamín had dedicated his paintings to capturing the grief of the oppressed in Latin America, speaking out through his paintings against indigenous exploitation and US intervention, for example. His paintings gave a voice to the voiceless, and in his personal life Guayasamín embraced indigenous tradition. In these senses, Guayasamín and Menchú had much in common, and the two cemented a close friendship that would last the remainder of Guayasamín's life.

In 1992, for her work in the field of social justice, indigenous rights, and conflict resolution in Guatemala, Rigoberta Menchú Tum won the Nobel Peace Prize. In 2007 Rigoberta Menchú Tum made a bid for Guatemala's presidency, trying to become both the country's first indigenous and female leader.

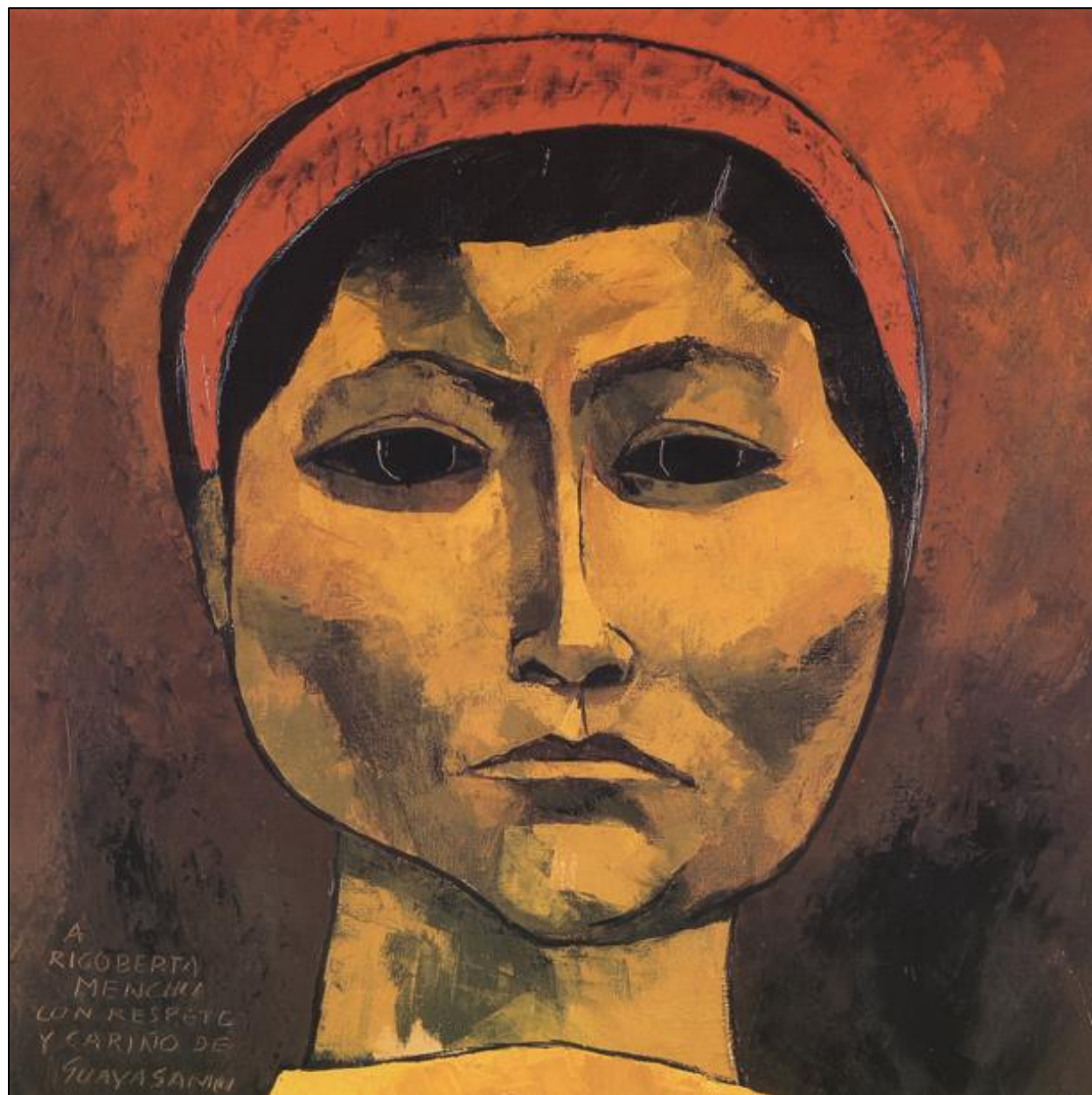
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1. Biografía de Rigoberta Menchú Tum. <http://www.rigobertamenchu.org/>
2. Calvert, Peter. Guatemala. *A Nation in Turmoil*. Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1985.
3. Fundación Guayasamín. [www.guayasamin.com](http://www.guayasamin.com).
4. Gleijeses, Piero. *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-54*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
5. Menchú Tum, Rigoberta and Elisabeth Burgos Debray. *I, Rigoberta Menchú*. New York: Verso, 1984.
6. The Nobel Peace Prize 1992, Biography of Rigoberta Menchú Tum. [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1992/tum-bio.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1992/tum-bio.html)
7. Schlesinger, Stephen and Stephen Kinzer. *Bitter Fruit: the Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala*. London: Sinclair Browne, 1982.

## RELATED RESOURCES ON THIS TOPIC

- *Human Rights in Latin America: The Death Squads* - <http://retanet.unm.edu/article.pl?sid=03/05/18/2113111>
- *Do I Have Culture?* - <http://retanet.unm.edu/article.pl?sid=03/05/18/2102111>





***Rigoberta Menchú, 1996***

Oswaldo Guayasamín

Oil on canvas

39-7/16" x 39-7/16"

## BIOGRAPHY – OSWALDO GUAYASAMIN

Oswaldo Guayasamín was born in Quito, Ecuador on July 6, 1919. He was the eldest of ten siblings. His father was of indigenous descent and his mother was mestiza. His father failed as a carpenter and mechanic and eventually found work as a taxi driver. His mother died at a young age. Guayasamín's early exposure to poverty and loss had a profound impact on his life.

Guayasamín's interest in painting began at an early age. He had begun to experiment with watercolors by the time he was six, and at the age of ten he began painting with oils. In school he was usually distracted. He barely learned to read, and while the rest of the students played, he sketched caricatures of his teachers. In his spare time Oswaldo began painting for tourists, charging two *sucre*s per picture.

At the age of thirteen he enrolled at the School of Fine Arts in Quito and quickly became one of the school's best students. It was during this time in school that politics began to influence his life and paintings. A major turning point in his life occurred when Guayasamín witnessed a stray bullet kill his best friend, an event which inspired his painting "The Dead Children," which displays a mass of bodies piled together on a street. From this time on he abandoned religion and used his art to expose the injustice of a society that discriminated against the poor, the indigenous, and the disempowered.

Guayasamín graduated from the School of Fine Arts in 1940. Shortly thereafter, magnate Nelson Rockefeller visited Quito and was so impressed with Guayasamín's art that he extended him an invitation to visit the United States, where the artist spent seven months visiting museums. In 1943 Guayasamín traveled to Mexico and met the famous Mexican muralist José Clemente Orozco, under whom he subsequently studied fresco painting. This experience would prove to have a tremendous impact on Guayasamín's later work.

Guayasamín's travels throughout Latin America and other parts of the world greatly influenced the themes in his art. Following a trip through Latin America after his sojourn in Mexico, Guayasamín embarked on the period of his art known as *Huacayñán*, which means "Trail of Tears" in Quechua. This pessimistic series of one mural and 103 pictures, painted from 1946-1951, depicts the misery and injustices suffered by racial and ethnic groups, particularly indigenous people, in Latin America. The works portray the cultures, feelings, traditions,

identities and religions of these people and attempts to give them a voice.

The phase which followed the Huacayñán period is known as "La edad de la ira," or "the Age of Rage," and was painted from 1952-1993. This phase depicts major tragedies of the twentieth century: the war in Vietnam, the Nazi Holocaust, the victims of dictatorships, and the anguish of the mothers. This period is most famous for several series of works: "The Hands" (1963-65), 12 murals of emotional aggressiveness; "The Mutilated," six oil paintings dedicated to the tragedy of Hiroshima; and "The Meeting in the Pentagon," five paintings that criticize American politics. His criticism of American politics is particularly evident in a mural he painted in 1988 that is located in the Congress building of Ecuador, which depicts an image of a Nazi helmet with the acronyms CIA on it.

The final phase of Guayasamín's work, known as "La ternura" (The Tenderness, 1988-1999), focuses on themes of compassion and love. This phase is dedicated to his mother and includes images of mothers with their children. Through this theme he emphasizes the importance of protecting life and working towards the improvement of mankind. The period also reflects the artist's search for reconciliation after a life of fighting injustices. In these works Guayasamín employed a much brighter color palette than those used in his previous phases. Due to his lifelong work to expose the plight of the downtrodden indigenous masses, Guayasamín is considered the pioneer of "indigenist expressionism."

During his life Guayasamín traveled throughout the entire America continent and also visited China, India, the Soviet Union, Egypt, Greece and all of Europe. He completed over 4,500 paintings and about 150 sculptures. In 1976 he established the Guayasamín Foundation, and through it he donated his estate to Ecuador. In 1996 Guayasamín began construction of his greatest vision, *La Capilla del Hombre* (The Chapel of Man), which is a tribute to humanity. This chapel highlights the suffering and history of Latin Americans as well as their achievements. Oswaldo Guayasamín died on March 10, 1999.

## SOURCES:

Aznar, José. *Oswaldo Guayasamín*. Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1973.

Encyclopedia Britannica. "Hispanic Heritage in the Americas," Encyclopedia Britannica online.

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Guayasamín, Oswaldo and Neruda, Pablo. *America, my brother, my blood: a Latin American song of suffering and resistance*. New York: Ocean Press, 2006.

<http://www.prensalibre.com/pl/domingo/archivo/revistad/2005/julio05/310705/dcultural1.shtml>

UECLAA. "Ecuadorian art in the Twentieth Century," UECLAA online. Available from:

<http://www.ueclaa.org/ueclaaOnline/CountryView.jsp?countryID=60&countryName=Ecuador>.



## GUATEMALA AND ECUADOR

Oswaldo Guayasamín's home country of Ecuador was part of the northern Inca Empire until it was conquered by the Spanish in 1533. After roughly three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, Ecuador gained its independence in 1822 and formed a federation known as Gran Colombia with what is now Colombia, Venezuela, and Panama. Ecuador withdrew from Gran Colombia in 1830, and between 1904 and 1942 Ecuador lost significant territory in conflicts with its neighbors. After WWII, Ecuador experienced many periods of turbulence, military rule, and episodes of subversive US involvement.

Guatemala, home of Rigoberta Menchú, was the heartland of Mayan civilization, which flourished there and in surrounding regions during the first millennium A.D. In this respect, Guatemala and Ecuador were similar, as they were parts of powerful and advanced empires before any Europeans arrive. Guatemala also went through three centuries of Spanish colonization. In 1821 it won its independence and became a member of the United Provinces of Central America, which was dissolved by 1840. During the second half of the 20th century, Guatemala experienced many changes in government, as well as a 36-year guerrilla war. Guatemala too, like Ecuador and many other Latin American countries, encountered many problems caused by foreign intervention on the part of the United States.

Based on these similar backgrounds and in addition to their commonality of purpose in striving to help their fellow man, it is easy to see how Oswaldo Guayasamín and Rigoberta Menchú were able to relate to each other easily. Today, Guatemala and Ecuador have similar population sizes (approximately 14,650,000 in Guatemala and 13,755,680 in Ecuador) and similar in geographical size. To put the size of these two countries in perspective in terms of comparison with US states, Guatemala is slightly smaller than Tennessee, and Ecuador is slightly smaller than Nevada. The population in Guatemala is about 40% Mayan, with around 22 different languages in the Mayan family spoken in the country along with Spanish. In Ecuador, the number of indigenous people is still quite significant at 25% of the population, though not as large as Guatemala.

## SOURCES

*Countries & Regions*. London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2007.

*World Factbook*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2007.

## GUATEMALA



**Population:** 12,728,111 (July 2007 est.)

**Land area:** 108,890 sq km (total)

**Ethnic groups:**

59.4% Mestizo (mixed Amerindian-Spanish – in local Spanish called Ladino) and European, 9.1% K'iche', 8.4% Kaqchikel, 7.9% Mam, 6.3% Q'eqchi', 8.6 % other Mayan, 0.2% Indigenous non-Mayan, 0.1% other

**Religions:** Roman Catholic, Protestant, indigenous Mayan beliefs

**Languages:** Spanish 60%, Amerindian languages 40% (23 officially recognized Amerindian languages, including Quiche, Cakchiquel, Kekchi, Mam, Garifuna, and Xinca)



## ECUADOR



**Population:** 13,755,680 (July 2007 est.)

**Land area:** 283,560 sq km (total)

**Ethnic groups:**

65% Mestizo (Mixed Amerindian & white)  
25 % Amerindian (indigenous)  
7 % Spanish and others  
3% Black

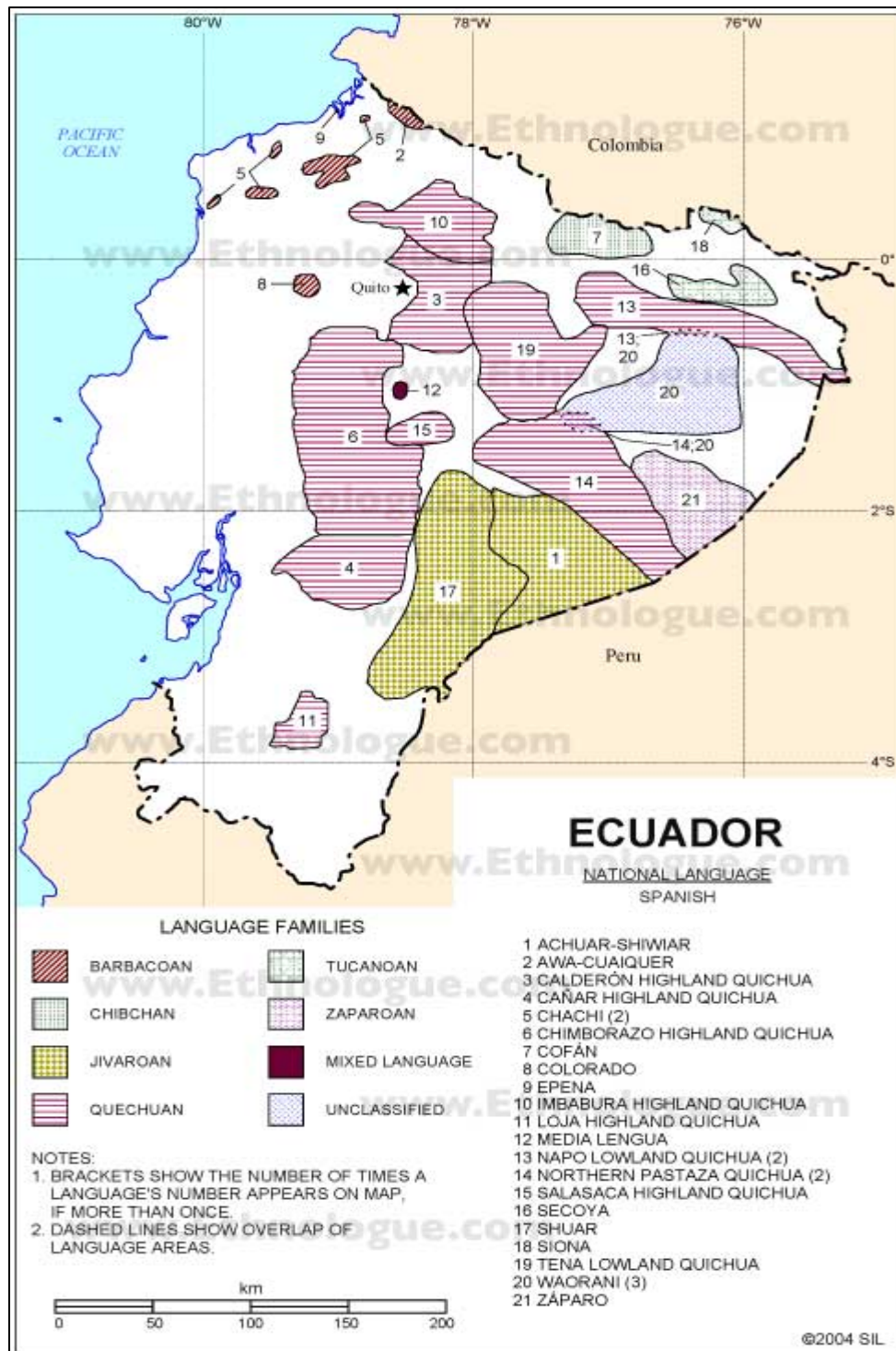
**Religions:** 95 % Roman Catholic, 5% other

**Languages:** Spanish (official), Amerindian languages (especially Quechua)



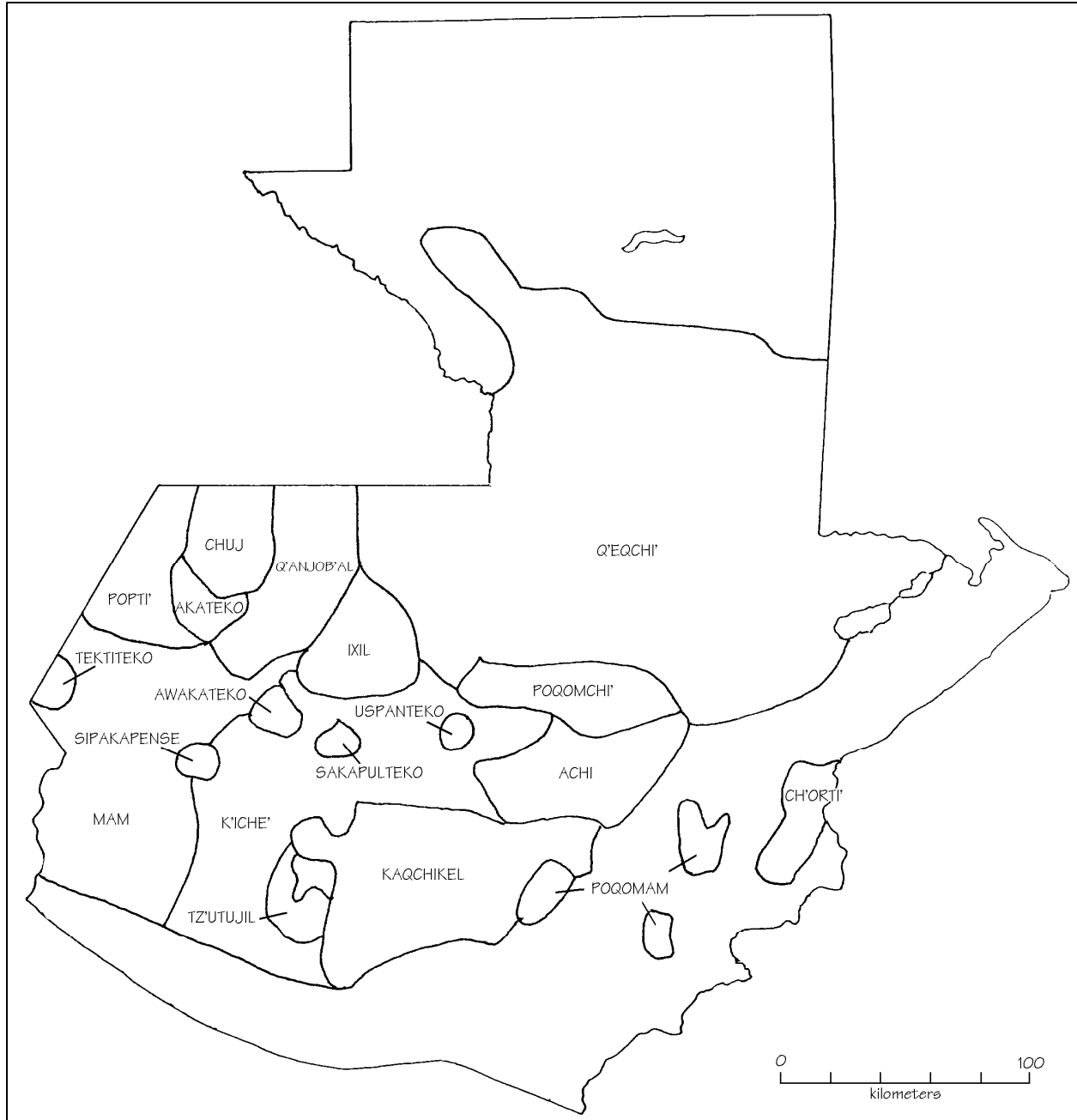
Source: CIA World Factbook

## MAP OF LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN ECUADOR



**Source:** Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>.

## MAP OF LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN GUATEMALA





## Latin America



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# The Mexican Roots of Oswaldo Guayasamín – Pan-American Political Art

Prepared by Eddie Fernandez-Calienes & Sarah Birdwell, Vanderbilt University

**Grades: Middle and High School**

**Subjects: Social Studies**

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will understand the role of political art in Latin America through learning about the art of the Mexican muralists and Oswaldo Guayasamín.
- Students will identify themes in Latin American art and politics and in events in the life of Oswaldo Guayasamín that influenced his art.

## ART IMAGES

Oswaldo Guayasamín, *El toro y el cóndor (The Bull and the Condor)*, 1957

Oswaldo Guayasamín, *El grito (The Cry)*, 1983

Oswaldo Guayasamín, *La espera (Waiting)*, 1968-1969

Oswaldo Guayasamín, *Madre y niño (Mother and Child)*, 1989

José Clemente Orozco, *Requiem*, 1928

José Clemente Orozco, *The Franciscan*, 1929

## VOCABULARY

Indigenous  
Mestizo

Quechua  
Mural

Pre-Columbian  
Pan-American

## STRATEGIES

1. Students will identify similarities in the social divisions in Mexico and Ecuador. Have them explain the implications of inequality between social groups in both countries. Describe how social injustices are depicted in the art of both the muralists and Guayasamín. Identify similarities and differences in the ways in which the artists depict similar themes.
2. Have students research the work of José Clemente Orozco and identify some key works of art. Compare these Mexican works with examples of art by Oswaldo Guayasamín. Identify similarities and differences in style and color.
3. Students will reflect on the phases of Guayasamín's art, analyzing how the progression mirrored his fight against social injustice throughout his life.
4. Have students do a report on the various indigenous groups which make up much of the populations of Mexico and Ecuador. Research their histories, the political and social reality at the time the art of the muralists and Guayasamín was produced, and their situation today.



## THE MEXICAN ROOTS OF OSWALDO GUAYASAMIN – PAN-AMERICAN POLITICAL ART

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several Latin American nations were agitating for political change. Nowhere was this more visible than in Mexico, where various segments of society had begun to resist the repressive regime of President Porfirio Díaz, who exploited the peasant and working classes in order to empower and enrich a small group of elites. In order to gain new political freedoms, Mexicans united in their opposition to the ruling government to produce political change through revolution. The result was not only a change in government, but also a change in Mexican artistic expression.

The Mexican Revolution began in 1910. Prior to the revolution president Porfirio Díaz dealt very harshly with agrarian peasants, crushing with his army those who protested reforms that stripped them of their land and rights. Peasants were not the only mistreated and dissatisfied sector of society. The working class was eager to earn better wages and working conditions, and the business sector was fed up with the extreme growth in foreign investment taking place in Mexico. All of these groups united under the leadership of Francisco Madero, Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata and eventually succeeded in toppling the Díaz regime and establishing a new government that put more power in the hands of the people.

The Mexican Revolution was also cultural in nature. Reforms in public education enabled teachers to emphasize culture, history, music, and appreciation for art, all of which contributed to the forging of a new Mexican national identity. In 1921, the Mexican secretary of education, José Vasconcelos, invited several Mexican artists to paint inspirational themes on undecorated walls in government-owned buildings that would be accessible to all citizens. Among those artists chosen was famous muralist Diego Rivera. Although his techniques drew from European art history, his subjects were from Mexican history and represented aspects of modern mestizo activities and indigenous ceremonies. José Clemente Orozco was another major figure of the Mexican mural renaissance. Like Rivera and others, he condemned Europeans as the destroyers of Mexican pre-Columbian civilizations. While frequently emphasizing the theme of human suffering, Orozco also recognized the universal bond shared by all of humanity. Admirers throughout the Americas saw his work as a model path for art in their own countries.

The Mexican mural renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s had a tremendous impact on artists throughout Latin America. In Ecuador in particular the muralists inspired a whole generation of artists to establish an identifiably Ecuadorian art with Ecuadorian subject matter and indigenism as its focus. Oswaldo Guayasamín was one of the leading artists in this movement. Guayasamín studied fresco painting under Jose Clemente Orozco. Like Orozco and the other great muralists, Guayasamín believed that art should play a social role. In their paintings they communicated what it meant to be a Latin American, emphasizing the common cultural roots shared by all Latin Americans and connecting their works of art very closely to everyday politics. Orozco's influence is evident in Guayasamín's use of strong shapes, tortured bodies, Christian iconography and dark, brooding colors. Very proud of his mestizo heritage, Guayasamín incorporated indigenous themes into his work and exposed the violence and suffering experienced by this group and other disempowered segments of society. Similar to the Mexican muralists, he embraced humanity and recognized its capacity both for creation and destruction.

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1. Aznar, José. *Oswaldo Guayasamín*. Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1973.
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## Oswaldo Guayasamín: Huacayñán, o el camino del llanto



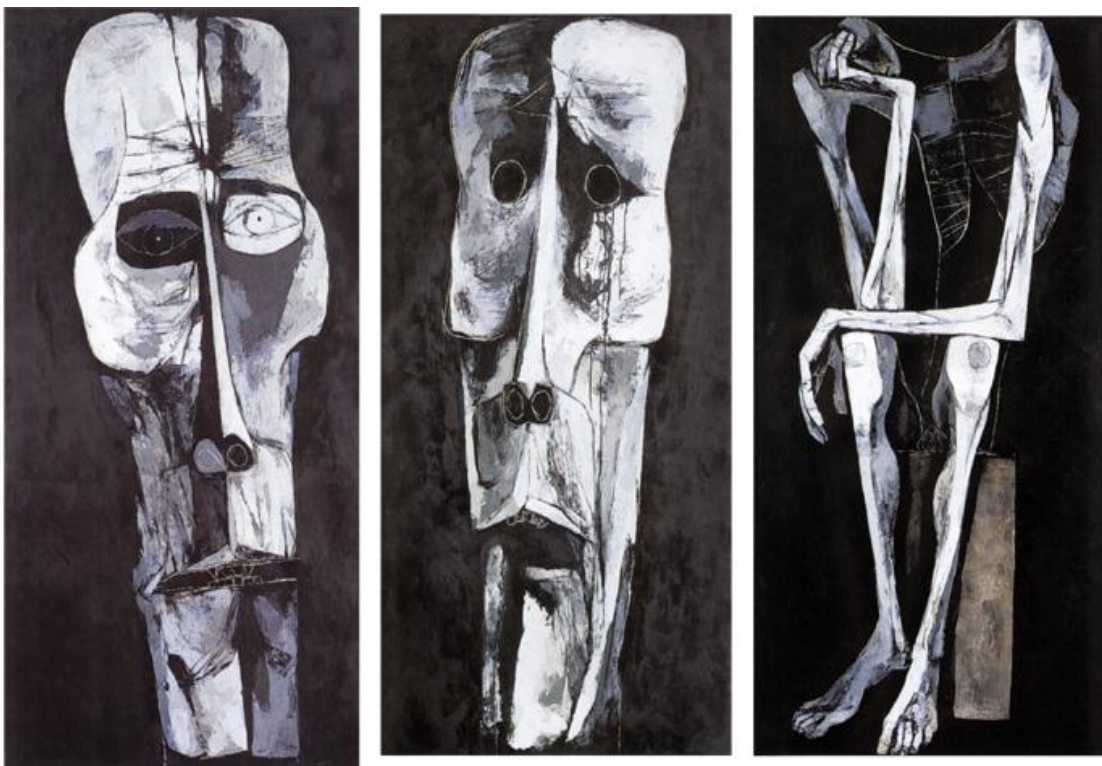
*El toro y el cóndor (The Bull and the Condor)*  
Oil on canvas, 1957



## Oswaldo Guayasamín: Edad de la ira (Age of Wrath)



***El grito (The Cry)***  
Oil on canvas, triptych, 1983



***La espera (Waiting)***  
Oil on canvas, triptych, 1968-1969

## Oswaldo Guayasamín: Ternura (Tenderness)

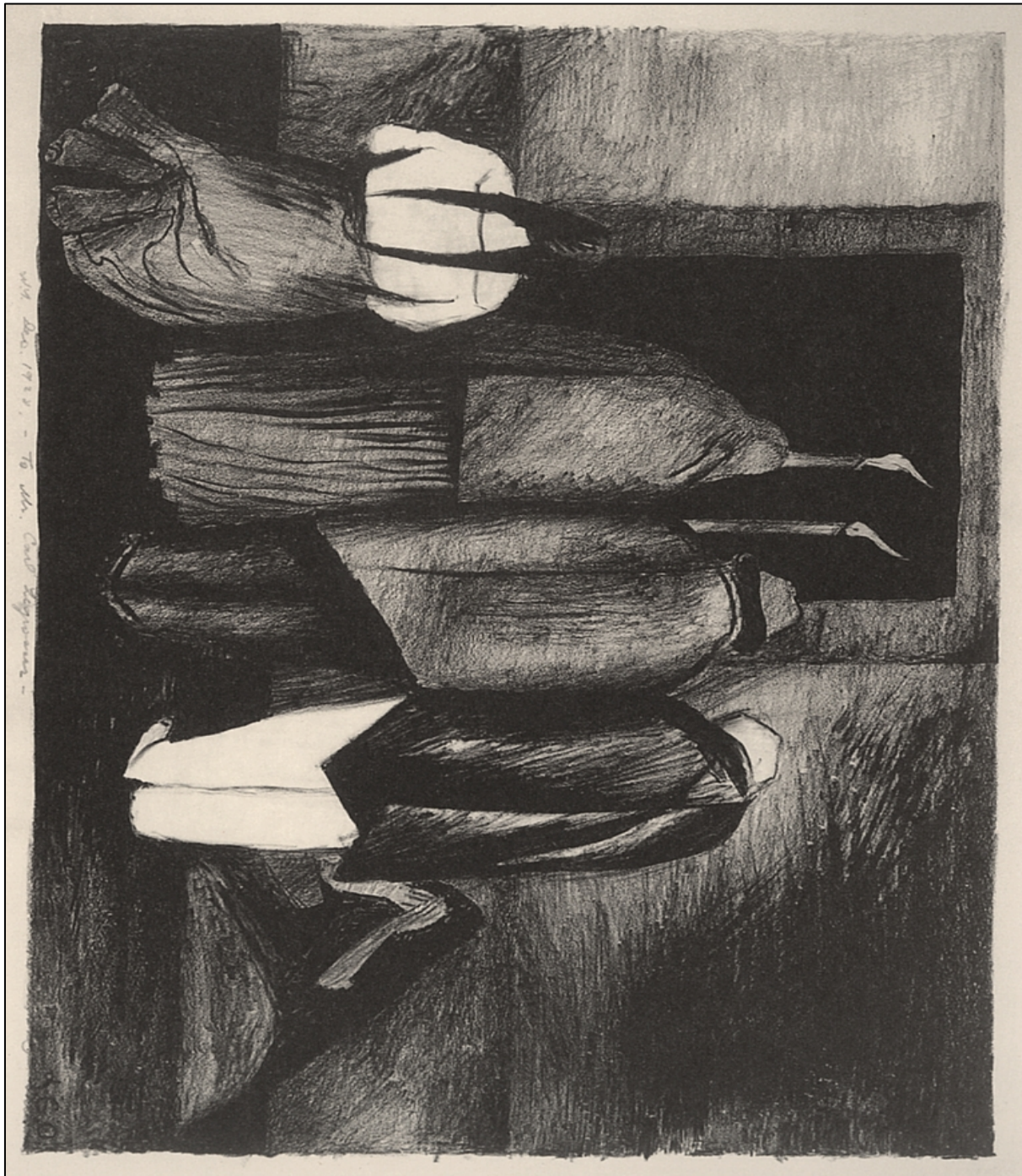


***Madre y niño (Mother and Child)***

Oil on canvas, 1989



## José Clemente Orozco

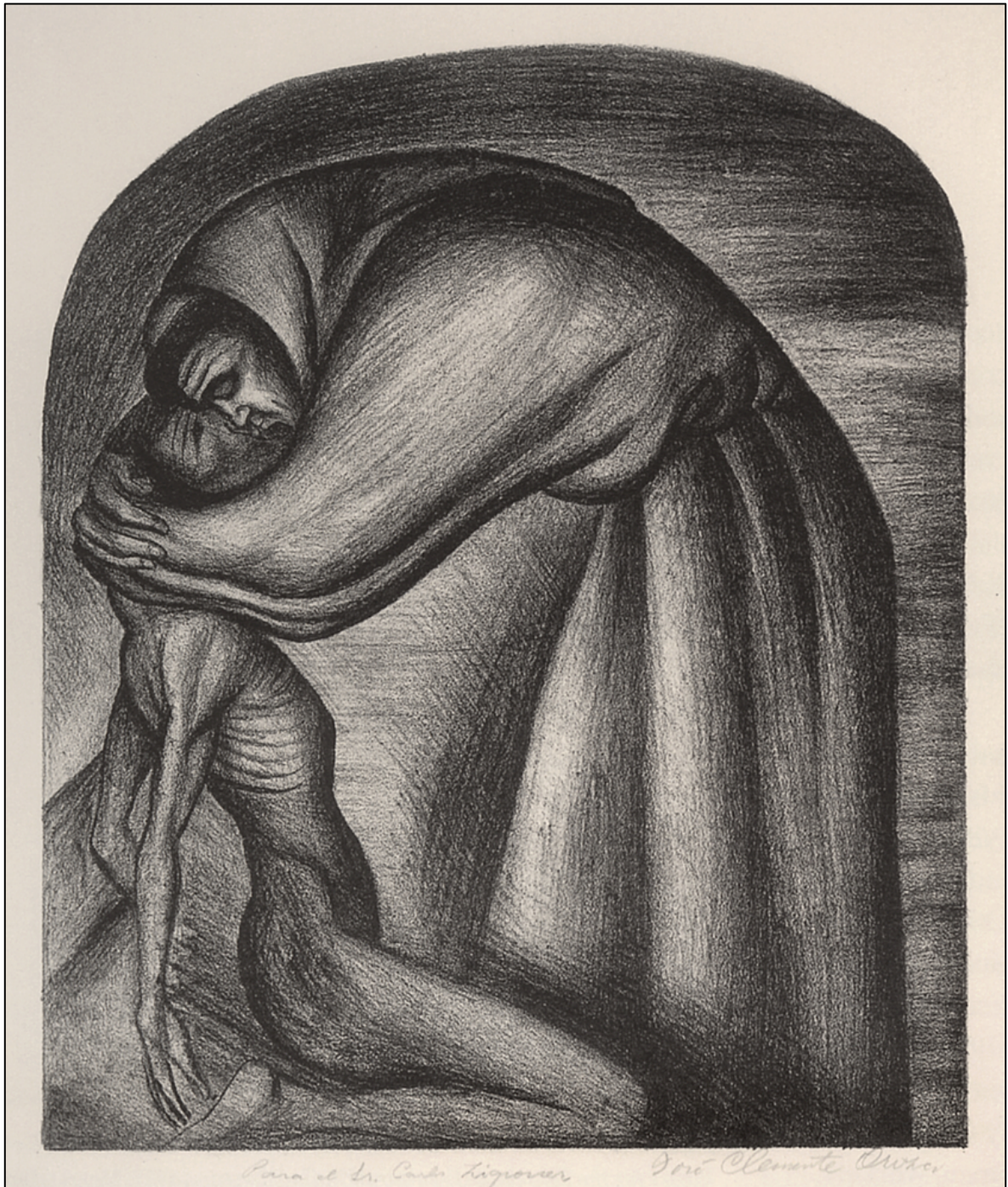


### ***Requiem***

Lithograph, 1928



## José Clemente Orozco



### ***The Franciscan***

Lithograph, 1929

## ECUADOR



**Population:** 13,755,680 (July 2007 est.)

**Land area:** 283,560 sq km (total)

**Ethnic groups:**

65% Mestizo (Mixed Amerindian & white)  
25% Amerindian (indigenous)  
7% Spanish and others  
3% Black

**Religions:** 95 % Roman Catholic, 5% other

**Languages:** Spanish (official), Amerindian languages (especially Quechua)

## MEXICO



**Population:** 108,700,891 (July 2007)

**Land area:** 1,972,550 sq km (total)

**Ethnic groups:**

60% Mestizo (Mixed Amerindian & white)  
30% Amerindian (indigenous)  
9% White  
1% Other

**Religions:**

76.5% Roman Catholic  
6.3% Protestant  
17.2% Other or unspecified

**Languages:** Spanish, Mayan, Nahuatl, other regional indigenous languages

Source: CIA World Factbook



## Latin America



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Center for Latin American Studies

# An Artful Protest

Created by: James Matthew Lesley  
Georgetown University

**Grades: 9-12**

## Objectives:

- Students will learn how art can be used as a means of protest
- Students will learn how to critically examine works of art and find themes throughout the paintings based on historical data

## Art Images:

1. Francisco Goya, *El 3 de mayo de 1808 en Madrid: los fusilamientos en la montaña del Príncipe Pío*, 1814
2. Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, 1937
3. Oswaldo Guayasamín, *Napalm*, 1976

## Key Words:

1. Joseph Bonaparte
2. Napoleon
3. Carlos IV
4. Fernando II
5. Francisco Franco
6. Basque
7. 1937 World's Fair
8. Coup d'état
9. Vietnam
10. Human Rights
11. Atrocity

**Strategies:**

1. As homework the night or class before, ask each student to write a short paragraph on what he or she personally feels it means to protest or rebel, have each student include examples of how he or she has either protested/rebelled or how he or she would like to participate in the future.
2. As a class, make a list on the board of how people protest/rebel.
3. If the students do not think of art as a means of protest introduce the idea. Be sure to explain that using art, as means of protest is not just a modern concept. See if anybody knows of examples where art is used as a form of protest.
4. Before reviewing each painting as a class, have each student write down their initial reactions to each work. Be sure to have them include feelings that the paintings invoke and what they think the paintings are supposed to represent.



# Content Outline

## I. Three examples throughout time when art has been used to protest:

1. *El 3 de mayo de 1808 en Madrid: los fusilamientos en la montaña del Príncipe Pío* by Francisco Goya
  - a. History behind the painting, what was Goya protesting?
  - b. How do the colors convey Goya's intent, what feelings do they elicit?
  - c. What are the images in the painting, what do they express?
  - d. How does the painting make you feel?
2. *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso
  - a. History behind the painting, what was Picasso protesting?
  - b. How do the colors convey Picasso's intent, what feelings do they elicit?
  - c. What are the images in the painting, what do they express or represent?
  - d. How does the painting make you feel?
3. *Napalm* by Oswaldo Guayasamín
  - a. History behind the painting, what was Guayasamín protesting?
  - b. How do the colors convey Guayasamín's intent, what feelings do they elicit?
  - c. What are the images in the painting, what do they express?
  - d. How does the painting make you feel?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Given the subjective nature of art, any answers to the questions posited unless otherwise referenced are the personal thoughts of the author. Teachers may choose to use these thoughts or formulate their own ideas to share with classes.

**1. *El 3 de mayo de 1808 en Madrid: los fusilamientos en la montaña del Príncipe Pío:***

**A. History:**

Throughout his reign (1788 – 1808) as King, Carlos IV was an ineffective monarch and “entrusted the government to Manuel de Godoy,” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2008). After the conflict between Spain and France ended in 1795, a subsequent alliance between the two occurred in 1796. In 1807, France occupied Northern Spain, which led to popular unrest. In March of 1808, as a result of this unrest, Carlos IV abdicated his throne in favor of his son Fernando II. In May of that same year, Napoleon deposed Fernando and seized power in Spain.

“The Spanish masses strongly opposed the French ... Their rioting in early May sparked a national revolt against the French...The riot started around ten o'clock in the morning (May 2<sup>nd</sup>). Large numbers of people had gathered in the street and they tried to prevent the last of the royal family from leaving...and the French soldiers encamped outside Madrid were directed into the city to restore order...The ensuing riot was over by two o'clock in the afternoon...The executions began that afternoon and lasted until early the next morning” (Uhall, 1997).

*El 3 de mayo* was painted in 1814 to commemorate the execution of Spanish citizens in 1808 by French troops. It is also the follow up painting to *El Segundo de mayo, 1808*, which commemorates Spanish citizens rebelling against the royal family departing Spain to France.

**B. Colors:**

The bright white of the shirt and yellow pants compared to the soldiers and other people almost creates a visual aura and draws the observer's focus to the central figure. Along with the central figure, the blood on the ground is the only eye-catching color. The other colors are mostly muted, bleak, and blend together. Beside the muted colors in the foreground, the background is also dark and obscured. What is the possible significance of these effects? What feelings or emotions do they bring out in the observer?

**C. Images:**

The civilians are cowering, many are covering their faces. The central figure has his arms raised, possibly in supplication for mercy or as a sign of martyrdom (Christ like). The French soldiers all look the same and their faces cannot be seen. What is the possible significance of these images? What expression does the man in the white shirt have on his face? Why are the faces of the French soldiers not visible? What feelings or emotions do these images cause?

**D. Emotions:**

Overall, what feelings and emotions does this painting bring out in the observer? Do you believe this is what Goya was trying to accomplish?



*El 3 de mayo de 1808 en Madrid: los fusilamientos en la montaña del Príncipe Pío, Francisco Goya, 1814*

## **2. Guernica:**

A Resource Packet for Teachers \* Of Rage and Redemption: The Art of Oswaldo Guayasamín  
Vanderbilt University and Georgetown University

**A. History:**

In celebration of the 1937 World's Fair in Paris, the Spanish government commissioned renowned painter Pablo Picasso to paint the center piece for Spain's pavilion. According to Herschel Chipp, it was the hope of Luis Araquistáin that Picasso's work would help bolster the failing republican government and weaken the legitimacy of Franco's military regime. Realizing the purpose behind the painting, Picasso expressed little interest in the project because as a rule he "rarely, if ever, allowed politics to intrude into his art" (Chipp, 1988). On May 1st, Picasso's reticence to participate in Spain's World Fair exhibit would end.

"On April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1937, unprecedented atrocities are perpetrated on behalf of Franco against the civilian population of a little Basque village in northern Spain. Chosen for bombing practice by Hitler's burgeoning war machine, the hamlet is pounded with high-explosive and incendiary bombs for over three hours. Townspeople are cut down as they run from the crumbling buildings. Guernica burns for three days. Sixteen hundred civilians are killed or wounded" (PBS, Guernica: Testimony of War).

After five days of hazy news reports over what occurred in Guernica, the people mobilized in "the largest May Day demonstration in the history of Paris—with more than a million manifestants—took place..." (Chipp, 1988). That same day, Picasso began his first draft of this pivotal work.

**B. Colors:**

With all of the images in the painting, why does Picasso use a black and white color scheme? Given the atrocity of the bombing of Guernica what effect do the black and white colors have on the viewer?

**C. Images:**

1. Mother with a dead child
  2. A quartered soldier with a broken sword in one hand
  3. A horse that has been stabbed with a spear
  4. A woman fleeing the burning building
  5. Another women fleeing the burning building through the window with a lantern
  6. Another person trapped within the burning building
  7. The sun, an eye, or a lamp?
  8. A bull, unscathed by all the violence
  9. A dying dove
  10. A flower
- 
1. What do all of these images signify? What emotions do they represent? Fear, horror, atrocity of war, cruelty...
  
  2. Why is the sun/eye/light so ambiguous? As an eye, the inability to hide what happened.  
  
"Thus Picasso, by indicating at one place one view and at another place another, tells us that there is no single, simple, interpretation. Just as the illumination is both sun and electric (indoor) light, the time both day and night, the place both inside and outside, so the observer is not confined to a specific position in space or even a single level of reality but is imaginatively free to perceive the theme in its widest implication" (Chipp, 1988).
  
  3. Why are some of the images (the dove and flower) so hard to discern in the painting? Loss of hope at what occurred and it is therefore hard to see anything positive. With the flower, the converse can be true, while it is hard to see, the flower is also unscathed, and maybe hope should never be lost.

4. Why is the bull the only image in the painting that has not been affected by the violence? Like the flower, it can represent a symbol of hope. Even though what happened is terrible, the spirit of Spain will recover and justice will happen. The bull is also the only figure staring directly at the observer; it can be accusation for allowing the bombing to occur. Is the bull an anthropomorphist representation of Spanish shock?
5. Even though the violence in the painting is horrific, why are the images so moderate? Does it allow the viewer to fully digest the horror of what happened? Is it effective this way or should Picasso have been more gratuitous.

**D. Emotions:**

Overall, what feelings and emotions does this painting bring out in the observer? Do you believe this is what Goya was trying to accomplish?



*Guernica*, Pablo Picasso, 1937



### 3. *Napalm*

#### A. History:

*Napalm*, was painted in 1976 by Oswaldo Guayasamín as a means of protesting the usage of Napalm in Vietnam.

“Napalm is a powder which, when mixed with gasoline, creates a thick, gel solution that readily adheres to most surfaces and is used as an incendiary weapon. Because napalm sticks to skin, victims do not experience 1<sup>st</sup> degree burns; they either experience extremely painful 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burns, 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns which kill the nerve endings, or die from asphyxiation which causes “very rapid loss of blood pressure, unconsciousness, and death in a short time.”

Napalm bombs deoxygenate the air and release carbon monoxide when they explode, causing people to pass out. Napalm was first used at the end of WWII, but much more in Korea and Vietnam, where it gained notoriety. It was often used to clear landing space for helicopters and was found to be extremely effective in demoralizing the enemy.

During the Vietnam War, the US dropped nearly 400,000 tons of napalm, and one line of an army marching song proclaimed “Napalm sticks to kids!” For many, napalm represented the violence and “fiery essence” of the horrors of the war” (Price, 2007).

This painting is one piece of Guayasamín’s larger series known as “The Age of Rage”.

#### B. Colors:

This painting consists mainly of red, white and grey, why? As in *Guernica*, by Picasso is the use of fewer colors more or less effective? What is the possible significance of all the red?

#### C. Images

The main image in the painting is a disembodied face, given the nature and title of this painting, why? Yes. It shows the destructive and horrifying nature of napalm and war. The person could be a victim of both and the disembodiment represents the aftermath of an attack

What emotion(s) are expressed on the face? Horror, anguish, fear, shock, sadness

Is it an effective representation of the nature of Napalm? Why is the face disembodied?

Why did Guayasamín choose an abstract representation instead of something more concrete and realistic? It makes the reality easier to contemplate. A grotesque image may simply disgust the viewer and not allow him or her to further contemplate the effects that war and napalm can have on people.

#### D. Emotions:

Overall, what feelings and emotions does this painting bring out in the observer? Do you believe this is what Goya was trying to accomplish?



*Napalm*, Oswaldo Guayasamín, 1976

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