

see and listen to my thoughts and ideas, rather than focus on my physical appearance.

My hijab reflects more of me than a million strands of hair ever could. I am anything but oppressed.

People shouldn't conceal their thoughts beneath their clothes to please society. Hijab was my solution. With it, I set myself free, all the while unapologetically defying gender norms.

What could possibly be more feminist?

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ANALYZING VISUAL TEXTS

Recognizing Rhetoric

Understanding the rhetorical situation underlying a written text helps us read between the lines to fully grasp its message — and this is also true of all kinds of visual texts. Even artists create work within a specific context and use specific strategies to portray their subject matter in a particular light. As an example, let's look at the painting by the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) entitled *Self-Portrait on the Borderline between Mexico and the United States*.



© 2017 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/Private Collection/Photo ©Christie's Images/Bridgeman Images

More than a self-portrait, this painting, completed in 1932, is a commentary on two societies — traditional Mexico and a heavily industrialized United States. In this case, the speaker is the artist, who stands at the center of the painting. The occasion is that Kahlo was traveling in the United States with her husband Diego Rivera, who was commissioned