

Abstract

Socialist Realism was a tool for producing socialism; it was not so engaged in making art as it was in making reality. More than anything else it was a political and aesthetic doctrine aimed to promote the values of the Soviet Union and to educate people about the new social system. The concept of art for art's sake is unknown to totalitarian system. Socialist Realism was used to instill the ideology necessary to the Party and State into the consciousness of the masses. Portrait paintings were used to celebrate the great leaders and establish the ideals of new morality, historical paintings glorified the heroism of revolutionary struggle, and landscapes emphasized the beauty the Motherland and the greatness of social transformation.

Thesis: Socialist Realism was not a pure artistic form, but just a tool for propagandizing Soviet ideologies.

Methods: This paper performs qualitative analysis of the Socialist Realism paintings to deconstruct pervasive strategies behind the visual elements in the paintings used to promote and instil the ideals of socialism.

Utopia

Soviet reality was imagined as "a conflict-free idyll in which beautiful relations among people persisted", and art was merely a reflection of this reality. The people portrayed in the paintings became prototypes of the ideal body, behavior, and consciousness.



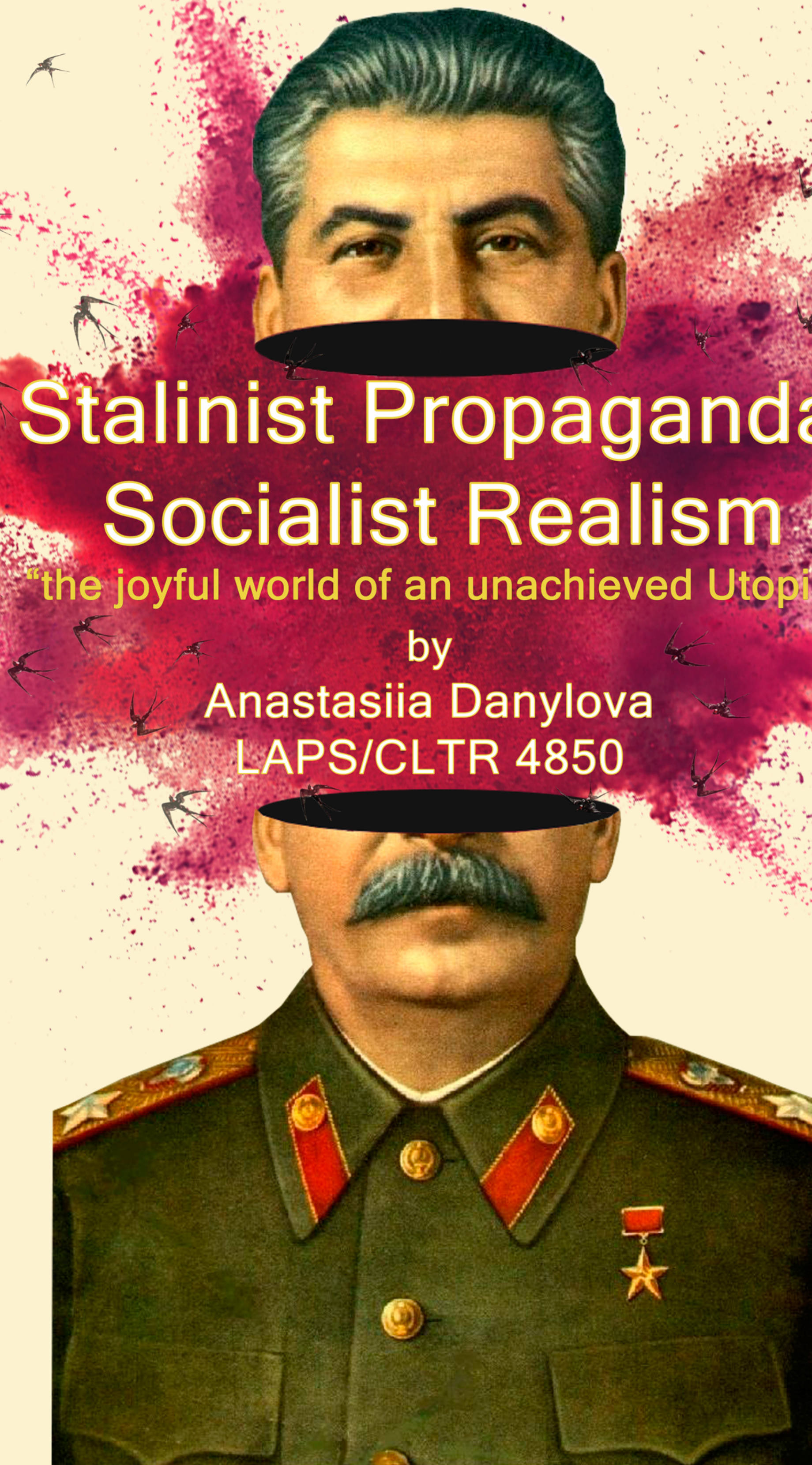
Vasilev, Aleksei. They are Writing about Us in Pravda. 1951. Oil on canvas.



Plastov, Arkadi. Collective Farm Festival. 1937. Oil on canvas.



Deineka, Aleksandr. Donbas. 1947. Oil on canvas.

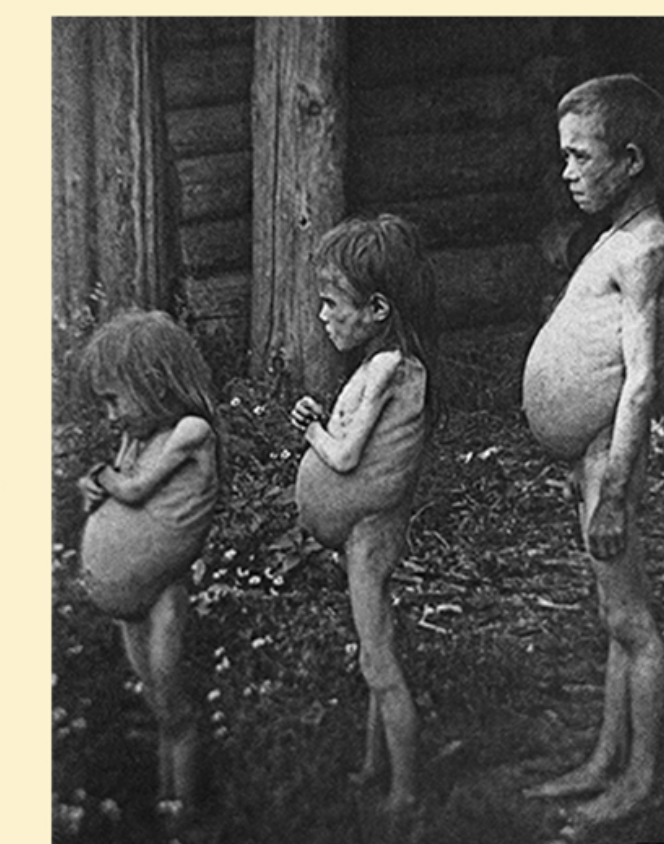


Conclusion

Socialist Realism was a form of artistic propaganda established by the Party. Socialist Realism was the expression of the Soviet ideologies; its aesthetics were totally constructed by the needs and goals of the Party. Its foundation resulted in the need of art that could be easily understood by the masses. The Party required art that could educate and inspire people for a social transformation. Socialist Realism appeared as the guidelines of Soviet life. The Party needed to educate and impress people with Soviet culture and ideas. In order to validate and promote the new system, it had to be portrayed in a positive light. Art had to give people a vision of reality that they could love and enjoy. Making art realistic helped people to trust the new system and accept its rules. However, Socialist Realism presented a very constructed, one-sided, and idealized picture of reality, omitting anything that could damage it. The paintings portrayed illusion of reality that had to entice people to work hard for the development of their country, even if it went against their individual needs or desires. Socialist Realism was always under the jurisdiction of the Soviet propaganda.

Reality

Traces of joy and optimism were lost in the struggles of people to survive. During 1930s there was a large famine on the territory of the Soviet Union, which resulted in deaths of many millions and severe food shortage throughout the country.



Taken from <http://terry.ucoz.ru/news/zgadaem/2010-11-29-120>



Taken from <http://uateka.com/uk/article/society/heritage/1258>



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