

The Commissar Vanishes

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a disturbing glimpse into the manipulation of photographs by stalin shows retouched portraits

this brand new edition of david king s lauded visual history is a unique and brilliant study into the
doctoring and propogandising of soviet photographs by stalin s regime from the creator of the
award winning red star over russia the commissar vanishes offers a chilling look at how joseph
stalin manipulated the science of photography to advance his own political career and to erase the
memory of his victims on stalin s orders purged rivals were airbrushed from group portraits and
crowd scenes were altered to depict even greater legions of the faithful for example a 1919
photograph showing a large crowd of bolsheviks clustered around lenin became with the aid of the
retoucher an intimate portrait of lenin and stalin sitting alone and then in a later version of stalin by
himself in each case the juxtaposition of the original and the doctored images yields a fascinating
terrifying and tragic insight into one of the darkest chapters of modern history publisher s
description

exploring an unjustly overlooked figure in 20th century british visual culture this book offers a

comprehensive overview to the work and legacy of david king 1943 2016 whose fascinating career bridged journalism graphic design photography and collecting king launched his career at britain s sunday times magazine in the 1960s starting as a designer and later branching out into image led journalism he developed a particular interest in revolutionary russia and began amassing a collection of graphic art and photographs ultimately accumulating around 250 000 images that he shared with news outlets throughout his life king blended political activism with his graphic design work creating anti apartheid and anti nazi posters covers for books on communist history album artwork for the who and jimi hendrix catalogues on russian art and society for the museum of modern art in oxford and typographic covers for the left wing magazine city limits this well researched and finely illustrated publication ties together king s accomplishments as a visual historian artist journalist and activist

the book offers a vast panorama of communism from the perspective of its collapse and inspects the world beyond the fall in the distorting mirror of its imagined prehistory providing in the process a perceptive analysis of a number of the fundamental issues of history writing

sex and the city saul bellow eyes wide shut dante and the american self barbara kingsolver acting in hollywood soviet painting in soho angels in america jane austen in the present j k rowling nothing escapes lee siegel s incandescent eye siegel possesses an intellectual range and independent perspective unmatched by his peers and falling upwards brings together the best of his essays all of them rich with the trades mark wit and intelligence that have won him many friends and a few enemies in these essential writings siegel deftly uses the occasion of a book film painting or television show not merely to appraise it but to make sense of life in a way that is more defiant of impoverished cultural norms than most contemporary artistic expression guided by the belief that a calculating self interest in art making diminishes the prospects for the imagination in life siegel celebrates authentic sensibilities and lambasts manufactured sentiments with uncanny insight yet also with incomparable logic and analytical rigor he has invented a new idiom in which the language of criticism embodies the playful creative synthesizing power that has been largely abdicated by the arts in our time in writing about works of culture siegel has created a standard by which to judge them

from 1929 until 1953 iosif stalin s image became a central symbol in soviet propaganda touched up images of an omniscient stalin appeared everywhere emblazoned across buildings and lining the streets carried in parades and woven into carpets and saturating the media of socialist realist painting statuary monumental architecture friezes banners and posters from the beginning of the soviet regime posters were seen as a vitally important medium for communicating with the population of the vast territories of the ussr stalin s image became a symbol of bolshevik values

and the personification of a revolutionary new type of society the persona created for stalin in propaganda posters reflects how the state saw itself or at the very least how it wished to appear in the eyes of the people the stalin who was celebrated in posters bore but scant resemblance to the man iosif vissarionovich dzhugashvili whose humble origins criminal past penchant for violent solutions and unprepossessing appearance made him an unlikely recipient of uncritical charismatic adulation the bolsheviks needed a wise nurturing and authoritative figure to embody their revolutionary vision and to legitimate their hold on power this leader would come to embody the sacred and archetypal qualities of the wise teacher the father of the nation the great warrior and military strategist and the saviour of first the russian land and then the whole world this book is the first dedicated study on the marketing of stalin in soviet propaganda posters drawing on the archives of libraries and museums throughout russia hundreds of previously unpublished posters are examined with more than 130 reproduced in full colour the personality cult of stalin in soviet posters 1929 1953 is a unique and valuable contribution to the discourse in stalinist studies across a number of disciplines

divargues that the rise to power of quasi nationalist demagogues in many post communist countries is the result of organized forgetting orchestrated by communist regimes that left these countries with little common history div

analyzes how the technology to alter images and rapidly distribute them can be used for propaganda and to support deception operations this work is aimed at students of information war propaganda public diplomacy and security studies in general

having gained exclusive access to the russian state film and photo archive a russian expert provides extraordinary revelations and never before seen images from deep within russia s document vaults that shed light on unexplored russian history based on a pbs documentary photos index

a critique reveals the logical flaws that joins and compromises all the major recent modes of criticism that operate under the rubric of theory

photomontage was pioneered as a technique in central europe in the 1910s where it flourished as an art form through the end of world war ii while german artists such as john heartfield max ernst and hannah höch used the medium to respond to the atrocities of war other areas of europe were simultaneously experiencing a newfound political autonomy as the austro hungarian empire collapsed for these artists namely polish and czech photomontage manifested itself in a surrealist approach to cut and paste imagery that emphasized its potential for visual poetry photo montage in print traces the explosion of photomontage art in book cover design and illustrated magazines in

the interwar period documenting the remarkable contributions of czech artists in the creation of the visual language of modern print media the publication includes some of the leading artists of the czech avant garde such as karel teige jindrich styrsky toyen ladislav sutnar and frantisek muzika

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