Heroic Realism (1918-today)

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Born in Russia…and from Lenin’s own agenda to shock the Russian people out of their backwardness (and b/c he didn’t trust the Constructivists)

Posters became a direct medium for educating the illiterate peasant in almost every aspect of everyday life.

Adolf Hitler’s National Socialist Party also embraced Heroic Realism to combat avant garde influences…so Heroic Realism is a response to the perceived elitism of modernism (Hitler outlawed modern sans serif typeface in favor of the medieval German Fraktur!)



(and then b/c Fraktur was so illegible, he outlawed that, claiming it was a Jewish invention)

So the Heroic style was primarily a tool for dictatorships (although both sides of the Spanish Civil War used this style as well)

Advertising and editorial illustration in Western industrial democracies has often employed romantic realism as a timeworn means of enhancing a product or idea in the consumer’s eye.

Used during wartime (WWII) in the U.S. and England

Heroic Realism as an official graphic style still prevails in Soviet countries.

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| **THEMES**Idealized scenes of leaders and workersRomantic depictions of the Aryan SupermanOverbearing images of “Aryan beauty” | **DESIGNS**Staid typographic treatmentsFigurative paintingSome photography and montage |