IDEOLOGY, PROPAGANDA AND GENDER: IMAGES OF WOMEN ON WORLD WAR II POSTERS

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(EXAMPLE OF GEORGIA)

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The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and they may not reflect the views of Heinrich Boell Foundation Tbilisi Office



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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the general tendencies and characteristics of the image of a woman on political-agitation and methodological-instructional posters published in Soviet Georgia during the Second World War.

The aim of the research is to analyze the images of women on the propaganda posters during the war period from a gender perspective. This paper discusses the role, function and symbolic representation of the women on these posters.

In this article, the artistic methods and concepts are also emphasized through which the women depicted on the posters were given a propaganda content from an ideological point of view. Whitin the framework of this study, the image of a woman is analyzed and directly linked to Soviet ideology.

Keywords:

- World War II
- gender
- poster
- image of a woman
- symbolism
- Soviet Union
- ideology
- Soviet Georgia

Photo on the cover: loseb Grishashvili's poster. Owner: NNLE "Propaganda". All rights reserved

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INTRODUCTION

Soviet visual art provided women a variety of ideologically acceptable roles during World War II. A quick glance at the artistic trends from 1941 to 1945 (the period of the beginning and the end of the Eastern Front) is enough to see several features of a woman's image: a woman affected by the war; a warrior woman; a mother urging Soviet citizens (children) to go to war; a woman who is forced to master the "masculine profession" of her father / brother / husband who went to war, and a woman with national symbols. Images of all these types of women have appeared on posters, canvases, and movie screens. The aim of these images, of course, was to raise the fighting spirit and strengthen the invincibility of the Soviet state by using female visuals. It can be said that the image of a woman has become an important tool of propaganda. To better understand all these issues, it is more appropriate to ask the main questions in the following way: How, for what and why was the ideology attributing the image of a woman a propagandistic content on posters?

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The aim of this research paper is to study the images of women depicted on posters published in Georgia from 1941-1945. It is noteworthy that the classical, artistic analysis of visual art has an important role in this study. Such analysis involves discussing the composition of the image, including: the description of the poster, the relationship between the figures and the background depicted on the poster, as well as the representation of the meaning of the color and the font. In addition, I will try to analyze the interconnection of female representation and Soviet ideology with the posters.

METHODOLOGY

During the initial stage of the research, I searched for visual material (posters). Also I read a variety of literature and collected the relevant articles for the study.

This paper discusses the intersection of propaganda and gender, which in turn, is related to posters published during the war. This paper uses qualitative research methodology, which involves content analysis. In this study the purpose of the content analysis is to discuss the symbols depicted on Soviet ideological posters through the gender context – or put differently- to understand the intersection of the Soviet ideology and the image of a woman on a poster.

In terms of art analysis, I use a method that studies the compositional integrity of a particular work, which involves the interrelationship of all the visual characteristics of the image the description, figures and background, as well as the presenting and analyzing of the meaning of color and the font.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the framework of the study, I first searched for the National Library's digital chronicle, a collection of Iverieli posters from 1941 to 1945. The most important factor when choosing a poster was the image of the woman and the date. This paper focuses only on the posters which were used by the government for propaganda purposes. A part from presenting the posters, it was necessary to read and analyse relevant academic articles related to the research topic.

In Georgian art literature, the poster is considered in the context of graphic art. In this regard, the article of researcher Mariam Gachechiladze is noteworthy. The article talks about the history of creating and developing a poster in Georgia¹. Furthermore, discussion about the modernist tendencies of posters published in Georgia in the early 1920s were especially helpful during the research. To conclude, this paper provides an overview of the ideological demands of the poster before and after the Soviet Union.

It is noteworthy that in 1932, socialist realism was declared as the only method recognized by the government in all fields of art. Of course, this also affected the visual and content related aspects of the poster. The book "Georgian Poster²" is used in this research as a source to distinguish the differences between the posters published during the 1930s and those published during the war.

While discussing the creation of ideological, propagandistic Soviet posters, the series of posters "With a Bayonet and a Pen", created during the war, should be emphasized. This particular series of posters has been published by the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia since 1942. The following illustrations are used in this study from the above mentioned series of posters: #13, #14 and #15.

In this poster series, Mikhail Wadbolski, an artist of Polish origin working in Georgia, was actively publishing his works. In addition, I traced the artist's personal work in the National Archives of Georgia³. Along with Wadbolski's personal file located in the National Archives, the fond of the USSR Artists' Union #10 (protocol #8) was also developed.

Based on the materials of the National Archives of Georgia, a historical context comes to the fore, according to which the artists had to reflect the

¹ http://www.georgianart.ge/index.php/ka/2010-12-03-16-25-41/178-1958-.html

² Mariam Gachechiladze, "Georgian Poster", Tbilisi, 2018. https://el.ge/articles/534945?fbclid=lwAR0nGoO62 Bl7U93aEmOzlln6vp8urj193l21I-q16g9mSbxjEWepqHARwMs

³ National Archives of Georgia, Central Archive of Contemporary History, Mikhail Wadbolski's personal file: Fond 170, Record 2, Case 37, Sheet 7.

orders of the Soviet government on posters.

Unfortunately, the Soviet poster as a political-ideological weapon has not been analyzed in depth in Georgian art literature. Therefore, it was necessary to read relevant articles from other disciplines. In this regard, it was particularly important to analyze the following article - "World War II and an Artistic Poster4", where the most famous posters created during the war in different parts of the world are discussed. Furthermore, in this article the authors review the origins of the poster with a focus on the etymology of the words "poster" and "placard."

In order to highlight the ideological importance of posters, I used and analyzed articles as sources published in the Soviet press. Some of these articles were from newspaper "Communist" which was published by the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party and the body of the Council of Ministers.

The article "The Writer Soul Engineer⁵," published in 1934 was dedicated to young writers whose mission was to ensure the ideological upbringing of the Soviet person. This article is quoted in connection with a poster made by Shalva Beritashvili (illustration #13).

On the poster along with the winner Red Army soldiers, the figure of a Ukrainian woman-writer Natalia Zabila – is also depicted as a symbol of a writer standing as a guard of the Soviet ideology.

Regarding the representation of the image of a woman, the article by Suzanne Corbessero titled "Femininity (Con) scripted Female Images in Soviet Wartime Poster Propaganda 1941-1945" (2010) is important to discuss. The article is about the change of the image of women, which in turn is related to the changing of ideological discourses.

As for the Soviet press, the ideology did not spare words of gratitude from the pages of the "Communist" for the women who studied the "masculine profession" of their father, brother or husband who went to war. The posters of loseb Gabashvili (illustration #11) and Vladimir Serov (illustration #12) are in line with the article "Soviet Women are a Great Force", as well as articles and posters depicting the work of women fighting on the "home front".

The same article also touches upon the partisan women on the front lines of the battle⁷. In order to present partisan woman, a poster of Tatiana Eremnina is included in the appendix (illustration #5).

It should be noted that, nurses received special attention in the "Communist" as the newspaper emphasized the patriotic devotion of prominent nurses

⁴ Ketevan Akhobadze, Nugzar Bardavelidze, World War II and Artistic Poster, Collection: World War I and World War II and the South Caucasus: Collection of Scientific Papers of International Symposia = The First and Second World War and the South Caucasus: International scientific symposiums proceedings, Tbilisi, 2017

⁵ The newspaper "Communist"; "Before the Writers' Congress", article "Writer Soul Engineer"; August 8, 1934

⁶ The newspaper "Communist"; "Soviet Women are a Great Force"; March 4, 1942, p. 1.

⁷ The newspaper "Communist"; "Soviet Women are a Great Force", March 4, 1942, p. 1.

during the war. This article⁸ is related to the poster of Viktor Koretsky and Vera Gitsevich (illustration #6), which depicts a nurse with a Soviet soldier.

In terms of articles published in journals, the "Agitator's Notebook" and "Mnatobi" contain important information for the research. In fact, articles published in both journals address the importance of the poster.

While in the "Agitator's Notebook" G.V. Sakharova emphasizes the importance of the poster for ideology, art critic Beno Gordeziani addresses the issue of poster development in Georgia in "Mnatobi" 10. Both articles are equally important for the research because they discuss the impact of the poster on public awareness.

Darejan Javakhishvili's article¹¹, which tells the reader about the psychosocial trauma inflicted on a woman by the war, is used as supplementary material for the interpretation of the poster stories presented in the research. Two illustrations, (#3 and #4) are attached in the appendix. On both posters, a woman is represented as a victim.

In the introductory part of the article, it became necessary to present the state of women's rights in the early Soviet period. In this regard, Tamar Sabedashvili's article¹² was analyzed in order to show the attitude of the Soviet system towards women. In this article, the overall picture of women's rights in the Soviet Union is outlined.

At the end of the literature review, Lynn Atwood's publication "Creating the New Soviet Woman: Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922–53" (1999), is noteworthy. From this work, I analyzed, the subsection titled "Motherhood^{13"} which talks about the change in the status of women after the end of the war and, their "ideological load". The study is concluded with post-victory posters with a modified image of a woman (illustration #15). An excerpt from Lynn Atwood's work and the aforementioned poster coincide. After the war, the figure of a woman had returned to a conservative, stereotypical life, where the womans's main concern was again family business.

⁸ The newspaper "Communist"; "Patriotic Women of the Socialist Homeland", March 8, 1942, p. 3.

⁹ G.V. Sakharova, "Soviet Political Poster", "Agitator's Notebook", 1949, #15, p. 19.

¹⁰ Beno Gordeziani, "Georgian Soviet Graphics", "Mnatobi" Magazine, 1952, #7, p. 138.

¹¹ Darejan Javakhishvili, "Women and War - Loss and Acquisition", Gender, Culture, Modernity, Tbilisi, 2005, p. 130.

¹² Tamar Sabedashvili, "Women's Rights in the Soviet Union - Bolshevik Ideas ", Collection: "Gender, Culture, Modernity," part 2, Tbilisi, 2007, pp. 128, 129 and 137.

^{13 &}quot;Creating the New Soviet Woman: Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922–53", p. 158.

RESEARCH LIMITATION

This research began in February 2020, but was resumed only in June due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the spread of the virus access to certain materials in the National Library were restricted. Unfortunately, the materials of the national and MIA archives were inaccessible. Before the pandemic, however, the personal file of artist Mikhail Wadbolski fond in the National Archives was processed as well as the protocols of the Artists' Union of 1941-42.

In several sections of the article, posters made in Russia are used instead of posters made in Georgia. Information about posters with similar content published in Georgia can be found in newspaper articles, but, unfortunately, it was not possible to trace them physically. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the artistic-ideological tendencies of the poster were common to all the republics of the Soviet Union, and this fact does not limit the content of the study.

SOVIET IDEOLOGY AND "WOMEN'S FMANCIPATION"

Working on women's emancipation was initially an important part of Bolshevik ideology. Since the end of the 1917 revolution, a number of legislative changes were made regarding women's rights. After the revolution, women were given the right to choose their profession. They were also given the right to equal payment¹⁴. However, in terms of the full realization of women in society, no profound changes occurred. Women's rights were still viewed from the perspective of class equality. The domestic labor unequivocally remained as women's obligation. In fact, on the one hand, women became more active in the public sphere, but, on the other hand, family affairs were still considered to be a concern only for women¹⁵.

Of course, the pre-Soviet socio-gender context was different in all the republics of the Soviet Union. However, in the countries occupied by the Soviet government, as soon as the government consolidated its positions, the ideology became common in all republics.

Ideological demands on gender were also reflected in the visual arts. However, any demands made against the artist stemmed from the political situation. Since the 1930s, images about the labor in collective farms and factories appeared on posters¹⁶. But starting from the beginning of the Second World War, the situation changed radically.

During the war, Soviet propaganda gave different roles to women. The image of a woman on posters became a kind of moral face towards which, the Soviet people had to feel civic responsibility.

During the war, the image of a woman acquired several, often contradicotry meanings. In itself, such "changes" stemmed from ideological "necessity."

¹⁴ Tamar Sabedashvili, "Women's Rights in the Soviet Union - Bolshevik Ideas", Collection: "Gender, Culture, Modernity", part 2, Tbilisi, 2007, p. 129.

¹⁵ Tamar Sabedashvili, "Women's Rights in the Soviet Union - Bolshevik Ideas ", Collection: "Gender, Culture, Modernity", par 2, Tbilisi, 2007, p. 137.

¹⁶ Mariam Gachechiladze, "Georgian Poster", Tbilisi, 2018, pp. 18, 19 and 21 https://www.el.ge/articles/534945

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POSTER FOR SOVIET IDEOLOGY

"My parents did not want to let me go, but I was relieved:
At the front! At the front! Here are the posters now hanging in the museum:

"Motherland is calling you!"

"What did you do for the front?"

It affected me immensely, for example.

"It was in front of me¹⁷."

Evgenia Sergeevna Sapronova Guard sergeant, aircraft mechanic

After the establishment of the Soviet government, major changes in all fields of art occured. By 1932 socialist realism was declared the only recognized artistic method. All other styles different from it were considered formal.

Socialist realism (SR) was defined as:

"The creative method of socialist literature and art, aims at a true, historically concrete depiction of reality in its evolutionary development. SR art artistically reflects reality as it is and as it should be, it gives us a synthesis of real and ideal, aesthetics and ethics¹⁸".

This definition of social realism already meant that any work of art had to be accepted by the viewer without any individual perception, from an ideological point of view.

In fact, the government declared that art should have a politically imperative tone. "Combining the real and the ideal" was already leading to the creation of lies and falsity.

In the Soviet Union and, of course, in Georgia, all directions of sculpture, painting and graphics acquired a strictly political character. The "politicization" of art gave art the function of agitation of the Soviet government. One of the most important tools of propaganda-agitation was the poster. The function of the poster was to expose the enemies of the Soviet Union and, at the same time, to call on the Soviet people to build a socialist country¹⁹.

The art of creating a poster belongs to the field of graphics. According to their content, the posters are divided into several categories: political-agitation,

¹⁷ Svetlana Aleksievich, "War Does Not Have a Woman's Face", Tbilisi, 2017, p. 60.

¹⁸ Georgian Soviet Encyclopedia; Tbilisi, 1965, volume 9, pp. 491-492

¹⁹ Beno Gordeziani, "Georgian Soviet Graphics", magazine "*Mnatobi*", 1952, #7, p. 138.

methodological-instructional and advertising posters. Posters of theater, cinema and various concert evenings are considered in the context of posters. However, these types of posters are very specific in content and are only intended to promote films, plays or musical evenings.

In general, a poster carries a short, clear and understandable visual message. In the absence of television and digital media, the poster was a form of communication between the Communist Party and Soviet citizens. It should also be noted that words "plakat" and "poster" share the same content. The only difference is in the etymology of the word.

"Poster" is derived from the English word "post," and "Plakat" is of German ("das Plakat") origin, which in turn was borrowed from the French word "placard", which means "poster²⁰." Therefore, the use of "Poster" and "Plakat" in this paper will have the same meaning.

The main feature of the posters is the visual side and the inscription. When creating a poster, every detail is of the utmost importance. The details include graphic drawing, pictorial tonality, font outline and size. The combination of all these artistic means should create an impressive"- eye-catching and memorable poster.

It should also be noted that the style in the fine arts at a particular point in time was also reflected in the creation of the poster. So for example, the style of modernism that was prevalent in the fine arts in the early 20th century also had an impact on the visual side of posters. The artistic side of modernism was as follows: the rejection of the realistic form, the deformation of the figure and the turning of space into flatness.

Prior to the Soviet Union, modernist tendencies of European art were actively introduced and settled in Georgia. A striking example of this is the posters for futuristic events of the late 1910s. Posters of various shapes and sizes were made on the posters, which also influenced the artistic effect of the image²¹.

Because the 1930s turned out to be a period of cultural change, socialist realism in the visual arts (the only accepted method of creating images) also affected poster art. The theme of Georgian Soviet posters followed an ideological narrative. For example, in the 1930s, industrialization and the functioning of a system of collective farms were one of the main themes. The posters of this period refer to the construction of factories and the harvesting of collective farms²². (Today, most of these posters are stored in the National

²⁰ Ketevan Akhobadze, Nugzar Bardavelidze, "World War II and Artistic Poster", Collection: World War I and II and the South Caucasus: Collection of Scientific Symposiums of International Symposiums = The I and II World War and South Caucasus: International scientific symposiums proceedings, Tbilisi, 2017, p. 151.

²¹ http://www.georgianart.ge/index.php/ka/2010-12-03-16-25-41/178-1958-.html

²² Mariam Gachechiladze, "Georgian Poster", Tbilisi, 2018, pp. 19 and 21 https://el.ge/articles/534945?fbclid=lwAR0nGoO62BI7U93aEmOzlln6vp8urj193I21Iq16g9mSbxjEWepqHARwMs

Library's "Iverieli" Digital Library²³ and the National Museum²⁴). However, during the Second World War, the production of political posters in Georgia acquired a special significance²⁵ as the ideological-artistic level of the political poster increased significantly during this time²⁶.

There were reasons for this. The printing of posters in terms of propaganda-agitation, especially during the war years, had a significant impact on public awareness. The posters stirred up a militant mood and heroism within society. One of the articles in a biweekly magazine "Agitator's Notebook" (Issue #15, 1949) of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, was dedicated to the importance of propaganda-agitation posters.

"The poster is an unmistakable, used and tested weapon of Bolshevik agitation. It represents one of the most comprehensible forms of visible agitation, the most massive form of Soviet fine art. The poster, which is distributed in hundreds of thousands of copies, helps to raise and educate the Soviet people²⁷." It is also clear from this record that the government attached great importance to the poster as a means of communicating with the public and disseminating party ideas. Posters of a political-agitation nature became one of the most important mouthpieces of Soviet propaganda during the war. It was necessary to create posters denouncing the cruelty and infidelity of the enemy during the war²⁸. These types of posters are characterized by heroism, drama and a warlike spirit. In addition to the image, the poster message is also important. Call for war, celebrating victory, fighting on the "homefront", portraying the enemy and its defeat these are the main trends that appear on the poster inscriptions along with the image.

The purpose of the methodical-instructional posters was simple. Such posters explained to the viewer in detail, for example, how the population should behave during an air attack (illustration #1). As for advertising posters: it is completely "harmless" and is only intended to advertise products (illustration #2).

Soviet propaganda favored particular images of women. However, these images of women could be often contradictory. For example, Soviet propaganda portrayed women as victims, warriors, and mothers, working on the "home front" and, if necessary, attributing them with national symbols. Combining so many roles meant that the image of a woman appealed to the viewer from different positions.

For example, there was only an image depicting a heroic mother calling for her children to go to war, but also there was an image of a woman affected by the war.

²³ http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/5167

²⁴ https://www.museum.ge/

²⁵ http://www.georgianart.ge/index.php/ka/2010-12-03-16-25-41/178-1958-.html

²⁶ Beno Gordeziani, "Georgian Soviet Graphics", magazine "Mnatobi", 1952, #7, p. 138.

²⁷ G.V. Sakharova, "Soviet Political Poster", Magazine "Agitator's Notebook", 1949, #15, p. 19.

²⁸ Beno Gordeziani, "Georgian Soviet Graphics", magazine "Mnatobi", 1952, #7, p. 138.

WOMAN AS A VICTIM

The image of a woman affected by a war often appears on an image where a woman is shown alongside children. Such image becomes more tragic when the children are minors.

The poster of Ivan Guro (Ivane Gasparyan), an artist of Armenian origin, living in Georgia, echoes this theme in "One is a Sheep before a Strong Fellow" (illustration #3). The work consists of two parts. One part of the poster depicts a Nazi soldier who killed two children of a mother, who was later killed as well.

In the second part of the poster, a star with a symbolic weapon towards a Nazi soldier is depicted. This is a kind of revenge motive when a Soviet soldier holds the enemy accountable for attacking a vulnerable group. Artist Mark Abramov created a similar poster. The work he did in 1942 has the same name and intellectual meaning. In this poster, too, the enemy attacks a woman and a child, after which he is beaten by a soldier of the Red Army (illustration #4).

The posters depicting a woman as a victim focus on her unsafety and vulnerability. Such a representation of a woman confers the cruelty of the enemy to Soviet audiences. Interestingly, however, the second part of the poster, which was about revenge, spoke of the dignity and devotion of Soviet soldiers.

"...The posters more or less with artistic dignity exposed the beast of the invincible enemy and reflected the devotion of the Soviet army and the Soviet people to the socialist homeland²⁹." In the eyes of the spectator, the revenge of the soldier seemed, from a moral point of view, completely justified.

As for the artistic solution of the poster, the entourage in the poster made by Ivan Guru is very conditional. Contrasting colors are used in terms of painting. The figure of a woman and children is drawn in white tones, with very general contours. Conversely, the visuals of a Nazi soldier are clearly readable. The military uniform in black and gray with the symbol of the swastika, of course, leaves no doubt that he is a member of the Wehrmacht.

The main focus of the work clearly centers around the murder of a woman and children. The emotional charge of the poster is intensified by the feeling that this story seems to be happening at the moment. This feeling is evoked by the smoke from the Nazi soldier's shotgun and the figure of a woman who will be soon fallen on ground.

In addition to the poster depicting the brutality of war, the image of war crimes comes to life for viewers living in the republics of the Soviet Union.

²⁹ Beno Gordeziani, "Georgian Soviet Graphics", magazine "Mnatobi", 1952, #7, p. 138.

The artist chose an extremely vulnerable group to portray the ruthlessness of the enemy. In this case, a woman and her children are considered completely vulnerable and doomed to death. And while they are all represented as victims, the poster's main message still centers around the tragedy of a woman. The enemy killed two small children in front of her (mother) and then took the woman's life. In fact, by watching the death of her children, the woman first suffered a devastating moral-psychological blow and then lost the most precious thing she had-life.

Importantly, the figure of the enemy is presented in a grotesque artistic fashion. This includes drawing a disproportionate figure and giving the Nazi soldier an awkward look. If in the first part of the poster he confidently shoots the woman. In the second part of the poster a Soviet weapon is aimed at him (illustration #3). In this episode he is frightened, his weapon is downed and he surrenders to the enemy.

The poster prompts the viewer to share the tragedy of the victim depicted on the poster and help the viewer master the revanchist attitude towards the enemy. However, the icon of the enemy and, the poster's sense of sacrifice threaten to spread to future generations, which ultimately contributes to the emergence of revanchist sentiments³⁰. Generations were brought up with a desire for accountability to the enemy and a sense of the Soviet army's strength.

The poster would have been important for the Georgian audience of the Soviet period in the sense that in a country where there was no physical military confrontation, ideologically and morally, the poster would have conjured the horrors of war in front of the viewer. This image encouraged the audience to feel aggression towards the enemy, kindness towards the victimized woman, and pride towards the Soviet soldier.

Gender roles of women and men were clearly highlighted on Georgian posters during the war. The image of a man inevitably symbolized a warrior, while propaganda has given women several other roles. In addition to men, women also fought in the war. The image of a warrior woman was one of the most common face-icons.

³⁰ Darejan Javakhishvili, "Women and War - Loss and Acquisition", Gender, Culture, Modernity, Tbilisi, 2005, p. 130.

A WOMAN ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Along with conjuring up fighting spirit, it was necessary to create scenes depicting the war. Soldiers were supported by women fighting and nurses who were wounded or killed on the battlefield. Such exciting stories filled audience with sympathy for the Soviet army and elicited feelings of aggression towards the enemy.

The Georgian Artists' Union required artists to create works of art that understood specific war-related themes. We read in the protocol of the Union of Artists preserved in the National Archives of Georgia that by the decree of December 2, 1941, it was decided to organize an exhibition dedicated to the 21st anniversary of the establishment of Soviet rule³¹. However, due to the circumstances, the exhibition is dedicated to the war.

Artists had to choose one of the 86 topics in the protocol and create works accordingly. Topics included: "Black Seafarers in the War for the Homeland", "Soviet Cavalry Attack", "Every Country Sends Warm Clothes and Linen to the Soviet Army", "Germans and the Russian Winter", "Portraits of Patriotic War Heroes", "Fascist Aviation "International rules", "Severely Bombing Soviet hospitals, ambulances and ships". Among these topics are three titles, according to which the work should be dedicated to women: "39. Heroism and Courage of the Sisters of Medicine / Nadzezhda Stachko, Maria Krukovo and others. Cruelty to fascist predators: German pilots shoot civilians, elderly people, women and children with machine guns "47; Heroic case, pilot Lozhechinikova, Mashkovskava, Ivanova, Talomizina and others."

During the war, the image of a woman warrior on posters, in addition to flying, was mainly associated with guerrilla warfare. On March 4, 1942, the article "Soviet women are a great force" was published in the newspaper "Communist". The mother of a militant/partisanwoman, Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, wrote: "I am proud that my daughter went to great deeds and remained strong, honest and proud until her last breath³³".

The poster, created in 1942 by Tatiana Eremnina and titled "Partisans, Mercilessly Seek Envy" (illustration #5) completely changes the image of the victim woman. The foreground of the work is the center of the composition, where the scene of a partisan woman fighting a Nazi soldier is depicted.

Unlike the Ivan Guru poster, it is clear here that the action is taking place on the battlefield. The second and third scenes of the image are occupied by

³¹ National Archives of Georgia, Central Archive of Contemporary History, USSR Artists' Union: Fond 10, Protocol 8, Sheet 21.

³² The newspaper "Communist", "Soviet women are a great force", March 4, 1942, p. 1.

³³ Thw newspaper "Communist", "Soviet women are a great force", March 4, 1942, p. 1.

armed, warlike actions. However, the most interesting thing about this poster is the foreground. The battlefield is filled with snow. The woman has a gun and is engaged in a physical fight with a Nazi soldier.

In terms of images, the figures of a partisan woman and a Nazi soldier are clear. The focus is on the woman's attire, which is expressed in kneelength bottoms and winter, warm shoes. In this case, the woman represents a person dedicated to the homeland who is not afraid to fight face to face with the enemy. The poster painting solution is noteworthy. The fighting takes place in winter, in a snow-covered area. Furthemore, the contrasting colors of the woman's attire also attract attention. Red bottom, black jacket and white cap. These colors are featured throughout the poster as well.

As for the defeated soldier, he tries to defend himself, though his face and hands are painted red. Like Ivan Guro's artistic solution, the treatment of the Nazi soldier's face depicted as reddish and grotesque is unrealistic.

Nurses were also represented alongside with the fighting men and women. The newspaper "Communist" also wrote about the dedicated medical staff.

"In the same cold winter, Dariko Tsintsadze, a military doctor and surgeon, worked at the neighboring field hospital in Finland, near the throat of Finland. In the minus 40-degree frost, traveling long distances on foot or on horseback, and at the same time with unbridled energy, she treated the wounded fighters, and did not spare herself for them... Dariko took special care of the severely wounded. She spoke to them in a calm voice, with great care, encouraged them, strengthened the hope of recovery, and calmed them down and only after that would she go to rest³⁴".

The poster of Viktor Koretsky and Vera Gitsevich is also dedicated to a nurse standing next to a Soviet soldier (illustration #6). The soldier on the poster is one step ahead and is followed by a nurse. On their background, there is the symbol of the state, the red flag, and in the backdrop of the poster there is an episode of military operations.

Although this poster was published in Russia, the article quoted from the "Communist" is dedicated to a Georgian woman, and the image as well as text share a common idea - expressing the high professional self-awareness of Soviet nurses and their devotion to the homeland.

At the same time, methodological posters are important with regard to women, who went to war. These types of posters focus on how a person should behave during or after an air attack. A poster created by Ivane Gavasheli in 1941, "How to Fight with the Fascists Parachute Landings," clearly shows that female warriors are also actively involved on the battlefield.

The poster is a kind of military instruction that explains the viewer what to do step by step and shows the different ways of dealing with enemy paratroopers (illustration #7).

^{34 &}quot;Patriotic Women of the Socialist Homeland", the newspaper "Communist" newspaper, March 8, 1942, p. 3.

Interestingly, posters related to domestic labor were also published in the same period (illustration #8). Taking protective measures applies equally to women and men, but when it comes directly to household chores, only women are responsible.

The main character of the methodological-instruction poster published in 1941, "Do Not Break the Rules of Fire Safety", is a woman whose "negligence" causes a fire. Another instructional-methodological poster (illustration #9) portrays the fire as a threat to the city during the war.

MOTHER'S FACE ICONOGRAPHY

In addition to the above mentioned roles, the ideology used the image of the mother to evoke a heroic mood in Soviet citizens. Here, I mean the poster "The Motherland is Calling Us" created by Irakli Toidze in 1941. The aim, of course, was to raise the fighting spirit and to strengthen the invincibility of the Soviet state by using female images.

This meant that Soviet people had to be morally resilient. "The Motherland is Calling Us" was created shortly after the begining of the war. The main question when talking about this poster is why the mother is calling on Soviet citizens to go to war? At the same time, it is noteworthy that the woman depicted in the poster is middle-aged, which makes the moral impact on her children more apparent.

Since Stalin and the Soviet Communist Party were making a politically "necessary" decision about the war, then the mother pictured on the poster had to acquire an emotional load. In this case, the expression of the mother is equated with concepts such as the struggle for the homeland and patriotism. It lacks the sense of care characteristic of a mother and is given only the propagandistic function.

The mother on the poster symbolizes the homeland that Soviet soldiers must protect, but she does not look like a frightened woman. On the contrary, the woman on the poster is full of warlike spirit. In addition, she is responsible for the moral stability of Soviet citizens. The woman calls on any visitor to take a military oath.

Fulfilling a mother's call means paying a debt to the homeland. According to Toidze's poster, presumably all Soviet mothers should identify themselves with this poster. In addition, the poster's artistic nuances should be emphasized. There are only two contrasting colors on the poster: black and red.

The spotty nature of the colors made the poster very eye-catching and memorable. The gesture of a woman is quite symbolic. In analyzing the composition of the poster, it becomes clear that the figure indicates at gunpoint and the start of the war with the impending calamity.

At the same time, Toidze's "mother" holds a military oath with a second hand, which shows the obligation of the Soviet citizen to fight. Toidze's poster achieved its goal. It impacted on the society. The mother's face became an ideological weapon. Toidze turned the image of mother into a tool of manipulation³⁵ (illustration #10).

³⁵ Temur Kantaria-Jabadari, "A Few Words about the Mother" (read a report at the Giorgi Chubinashvili National Center for Art History and Monument Protection), 2017.

The following lines were dedicated to Toidze's poster in magazine "*Mnatobi*": "Among the Georgian artists working on the poster, Toidze's fruitful work should receive special mention. It belongs to the leading group of Soviet artists who create the common style of the Soviet poster and bring to the highest level the ideological-political and artistic dignity of the poster³⁶..."

As for the national symbols: Georgian national symbols are not visible on the poster. The figure is designed in such a way that any Soviet citizen can identify with it. After the end of the war, Toidze's poster remained a symbol of the "Great Patriotic War".

While the previous chapters discussed posters designed to raise the spirit of war within society, the Soviet authorities also paid great attention to women who stayed at home so called on home front.

³⁶ Beno Gordeziani, "Georgian Soviet Graphics", magazine "Mnatobi", 1952, #7, p. 138.

WOMAN ON THE "HOME FRONT"

From the ideological point of view, women who remained on the "home front" and mastered the "masculine profession" of their father, brother or husband who went to war, deserved "praise". The newspaper "Communist" often published articles in which the author praised women who had been subjected to physical labor before the return of a male family member.

"When the Soviet women sent their, husbands, children, brothers and fathers to the front lines, they said: "We will substitute you" Today we can perform any profession of men ... Go. We will substitute you! "Thousands of women and girls have already mastered the "masculine professions" and have entered in the field of production and collective farming, where they do not lag behind men at work, and in many cases they work better³⁷".

These articles were accompanied by illustrations. The personal file of Mikhail Wadbolski, an artist of Polish origin working in Georgia, contains a document in which the author talks about the image of a woman, specifically, the themes included in the poster series "With a Bayonet and a Pen." "The posters depict those who work in the backyard: women who replace men in factories, mills and collective farms³⁸," - this phrase is indicated in the document.

The poster of Georgian artist loseb Gabashvili is considered in the context of the "Home Front". Gabashvili belongs to the second generation of modernist artists. The poster created by Gabashvili in the 1940s is also ideological (illustration #11). The poster calls on female collective farmers to study the profession of tractor driver to substitute the men who went to war. The foreground of the image depicts a man going to war, while in the background a woman can be seen sitting on a tractor.

The woman holds the wheel with one hand, while with the other she greets the man walking on the front. One interesting aspect is the figure of a man who has already received an award from the state, a medal shown on his chest. The man depicted on the poster is a generalized image of a man working in a Soviet collective farm. The man who went to war, no matter how successfully he worked on the collective farm, is now obliged to fight with the same success on the front-line.

The wallpaper on the poster is very conditional and only the outline of the landscape can be read. The main focus is on the fact that a man goes to war and is substituted by a woman. Also very noticeable is the call to women, which is written in Russian with red color. Of course, the call encourages women to

^{37 &}quot;Soviet women are a great force", the newspaper "Communist", March 4, 1942, #53, p. 1.

³⁸ National Archives of Georgia, Central Archive of Contemporary History, Personal file of Mikhail Wadbolski: Fond 170, Record 2, Case 37, Sheet 7.

pursue a career that was not previously considered a "suitable job" for them.

Mania Kuliashvili, a tractor driver herself, responds to the study of the tractor profession by women during the war in a letter published in the "Communist" in 1942. "We have mastered the tractor. We, women collective farmers, have all the means to do all the work in agriculture, all kinds of masculine professions, to do everything to help the front and the homeland, to accelerate the destruction of the German occupiers. Personally, I was still there last year, when my brother, a tractor driver-brigadier, went to the Shakhro front, I went to Gori MTS³⁹ and asked there to teach me how to drive a tractor. My request was accepted⁴⁰".

The letter published in the "Communist" and the poster of loseb Gabashvili share the same idea. It should be noted that Soviet propaganda worked equally "successfully" in the press and in the arts. On the theme of "Home Front" in 1941, Vladimir Serov created a poster titled "We Will Change!" (illustration #12). The foreground of the poster depicts a woman dressed in a work uniform. She is preparing to do "men's work" in the factory. At the same time, she is looking at the Soviet army, which is depicted in the background of the poster. The army goes to the front with a firm step in the style of a parade⁴¹. In terms of the painting solution, the contrast of colors is still used. The dark tonality of the female figure and the red army create an impressive artistic composition. The caption, "We Will Change You!" is also written in a clear, large red font. The expression of a woman who is more angry than sad deserves special mention. It is clear from her face that she is ready to perform her duties. The attitude of a woman as an individual towards processes, or any human feeling, such as, for example, the fear that a person naturally possesses during a war, has disappeared from her face. Vladimir Serov's poster depicts women's participation in the war industry as one form of heroism, though viewed as a temporary phenomenon⁴². The Soviet government needed women to substitute the workforce, but in the end, women still failed to obtain the status of ideal workers⁴³. It is clear that Soviet ideology only needed to temporarily praise women left on the home front.

It is true that women began to do the same work that men used to do, but this was more of a substitution of the workforce, than a demonstration of equality between women and men. This was well proven after the end of the war, when a woman's main concern became reproduction and household chores.

³⁹ Means a car-tractor station - Note T.B.

⁴⁰ Mania Kuliashvili, "We Have Mastered the Tractor", the newspaper "Communist", March 8, 1942, p. 3.

⁴¹ Femininity (Con) scripted Female Images in Soviet Wartime Poster Propaganda 1941-1945 "Aspasia, The International Yearbook of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern European Women and Gender History, 2010, p. 107

⁴² Femininity (Con) scripted Female Images in Soviet Wartime Poster Propaganda 1941-1945 "Aspasia, The International Yearbook of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern European Women and Gender History, 2010, p. 108.

⁴³ Tamar Sabedashvili, "Women's Rights in the Soviet Union - Bolshevik Ideas", Collection: "Gender, Culture, Modernity", part 2, Tbilisi, 2007, p. 128.

Any image on the poster should have been equally imperative and understandable to the inhabitants of all the Soviet Union republics. Therefore, ethnic signs are not seen on the posters. However, there were exceptions when the ideology required an ethnicity reference.

THE IMAGE OF A WOMAN AND NATIONAL SYMBOLISM

The origin of the woman depicted on the posters was expressed via ethnovisual symbols or a specific person was depicted as an important figure for specific republics. Such a figure, for example, could have been a writer.

Painter Shalva Beritashvili created a poster in 1943 dedicated to the liberation of Kharkov from Nazi troops (illustration #13). A pedestal is seen in the background of the city, on which a figure of a Ukrainian writer and poetess, Natalia Zabila, is depicted with Soviet army soldiers. The poster is also interesting because above of these figures, there is also the figure of Lenin on a larger pedestal.

In terms of composition analysis, it is interesting to note that the figures in the foreground of the work are both sculptures and representations. It is equally noteworthy that the figures depicted on the poster repeat the principle of Soviet sculpture. Sculptures in the style of socialist realism are characterized by the movement of figures; for example, stepping forward, a step that will bring progress and victory together⁴⁴.

Of course, the figure of Lenin is important, as he is the inspirer of the strong, victorious Soviet Union. Given the dramatic charge of the poster, it's right for him to form an ideologically strong connection that defeated the idea of fascism and Hitler. Therefore, the ideological load of Lenin's figure is significant. He seems to be considered the ideological co-author of this victory.

The urban environment of Kharkov is interesting, with no trace of the collapse of the war anywhere. Moreover, the Soviet flag is seen flying from the tallest building.

The Red Army depicted on the poster announces the next victory and invincibility of the Soviet troops. The characters, including the figure of Natalia Zabila, do not show what was sacrificed to win this victory. The main focus is on the final battle, the victory over the enemy. The figures depicted on the poster are heroes of the Patriotic War.

Every notion of a "hero" had a special significance in Soviet ideology. Remarkably, heroism was also an integral part of the propaganda art. The figure of Natalia Zabila is associated with Ukraine. In fact, ideology personifies national identity through the image of a woman. The figure of a woman carries the image of a hero, a fighter for the homeland.

⁴⁴ Tamar Shavgulidze, "Principles of Socialist Realism", Magazine "Academia", #4, 2015, p. 143.

This can be proven by the poems of Natalia Zabila and Galaktion Tabidze attached to the poster in both the Ukrainian and Georgian languages.

"And there was the previous sigh of a Ukrainian woman. Instead, it is a way of revealing the future!" (illustration #13)

Natalia Zabila's profession as a writer is also noteworthy.

As Stalin put it: "The writer is the engineer of thehuman soul⁴⁵".

Galaktion's lines already mean "the end of suffering" for a Ukrainian woman. "It is very clear" that the Soviet troops have the next victories ahead. Of course, the unification of the principles of sculpture and poster acquired a strong ideological role and a special emotional charge for the viewer.

The Ukrainian woman depicted on the poster created by Mikhail Wadbolski (illustration #14) is loaded with unique symbols. Her ethnic traits are recognizable by her attire and hairstyle. The geometric ornament and flowers really evoke the association of a Ukrainian woman. The poster was printed in the series "With a Bayonet and a Pen" and was dedicated to the capture of Kiev by the Red Army.

The happy woman on the poster greets the Red Army soldiers. This poster also celebrates victory. Yet unlike the previous poster, this poster evokes more heartfelt emotions: an atmosphere of joy brought on by the return. Both posters have in common that a particular city and ethnicity are associated with the image of a woman. The public is informed of the victory of the Soviet Army through the image of a woman.

Evidenced by the series of posters titled "With a Bayonet and a Pen" that had been published since 1942, it seemed like a rule that each poster had to contain a poem about the winning city. The image of a woman turned out to be the best way to celebrate the victory.

^{45 &}quot;Before the Writers' Congress," article "Writer Engineer of the Soul", the newspaper "Communist", August 8, 1934, p. 3.

VICTORY OVER THE ENEMY: CHANGES TO THE IMAGE OF A WOMAN

Beginning in 1943, after the Soviet Army improved its military positions on the front, the image of a woman on posters began to change. The image of a woman portrayed on posters returned to a more conservative gender role⁴⁶. In short, once the ideological burden on the female figure was removed, the image of a woman became more stereotypical with her main features being that of a smiling woman who meets the victorious Red Army.

The representation of this scene is reflected in one of the posters created by Mikhail Wadbolski, which is dedicated to Soviet troops entering the Ukrainian city of Tarnopol (illustration #15). If we look at the work through the artistic analysis method, we can see that the poster consists of two parts. One part directly occupies the image and the other the text.

It was also mentioned above that the poster includes a textual part along with the image that is aimed at the public. In this case, the case is different. The text is not a call to action, but a poem by the famous poet Kolau Nadiradze. The poem is dedicated to liberating the city from the enemy. The joy depicted in the Red Army is also expressed in the scene depicted on the poster. The population meets the Soviet soldier.

What is most eye-catching on the poster is the woman in the foreground, who greets the soldier with a happy face, smiling at him and holding, flowers. The poster background where the buildings are visible is also important. Nowhere in the background can the viewer see the destruction which the war left on the city. Neither the demolished building nor the people affected by the fighting can be seen on the poster. It is as if the population celebrates not the liberation from the enemy, but greets a foreign guest who has arrived in the city.

However, even on Wadbolski's poster, the emphasis is shifted from war-torn city to the importance of victory. People meet the Soviet army with such joy that it is as if no one has lost their beloved ones in the war. This is also an attempt to see the situation one-sidedly. The Soviet citizens are the winners of the poster, but the price of the victory is nowhere to be seen.

Since the end of the war, ideology has focused on women's reproduction. The ideology demanded pluralism, which obligated women to become wives

⁴⁶ Femininity (Con) scripted Female Images in Soviet Wartime Poster Propaganda 1941-1945 "Aspasia, The International Yearbook of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern European Women and Gender History, 2010, p. 104.

and patriotic Soviet women. Motherhood was presented as the most important function of a woman, which at the same time should have been a source of her personal happiness⁴⁷.

The poster and its interpretation clearly show the apparent injustice done to women by the authorities. After struggle, devotion, along with all sorts of dramatic and tragic roles, Soviet ideology simply no longer needed a female persona. Even their heroism was recognized much later after the end of the war.

⁴⁷ Lynn Atwood, "Creating the New Soviet Woman: Women's Magazines as Engineers of Female Identity, 1922–53," 1999, p. 158.

CONCLUSION

The depiction of a woman's image on the wartime posters served only one purpose - political agitation. In all sub-chapters of this research, it was obvious, that during war period, representing women on posters meant to serve the Soviet ideology. The fact that in general, during Soviet times, art and culture played the role of propaganda is obvious even at first glance, however, at the same time, from different fields of art, the government chose posters in order to ensure ideological impact.

Consequently, fulfilling the government order meant that artists were given the task to channel ideologically necessary visual message to the public. In order to understand the general context, it is important to analyze that similar to posters, press was also used to reinforce the same ideas and emotional charge in society. In fact, it was a tied ideological circle in which visual arts had important role. By creating a propaganda poster using the image of a woman, gender ideology, visual arts, and Soviet propaganda intersected. The poster was supposed to send a specific message to the public, which in turn should have been easy to understand and at the same time provide a strong emotional load.

Therefore, the Soviet authorities made the image of a woman as one of the main tools of propaganda. However, the following question comes up: why was a female figure chosen? The answer is clear: the image of a woman had an emotional charge that manifested itself for the viewer in war or on the home front, in the ideological use of the mother's face, in the loading of national symbols, and in the image of the victim.

All of the listed face-icons evoked different emotions in the audience. It could have been fear, pride, morality, desire to fight, joy of victory, and so on. This means that the ideology influenced society and ordinary citizens, from a moral and psychological point of view. This was accomplished, through the visuals of a woman depicted on a poster. Such images helped the government win the hearts of the people in order to influence their mood and create a common public opinion.

By adjusting to different roles for women, the government was emphasizing on the emancipation of Soviet women. However, this was an illusory reality. After the end of the war, women were again given traditional duties, mainly related to family affairs. Accordingly, the image of a woman on the posters also changed. One of the main themes of the post-war posters turned out to be the family role of women.

The message, which was conveyed in the image of a woman during the war, along with the reception for a Soviet citizen, was also emotionally charged. In many cases, it became even crucial during the war⁴⁸.

⁴⁸ Svetlana Aleksievich, "War Does Not Have a Woman's Face", Tbilisi, 2017, p. 60.

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- 18. http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/5167
- 19. https://www.museum.ge/
- 20. "Before the Writers' Congress", article "Writer Soul Engineer", the newspaper "Communist", August 8, 1934.

APPENDIX



ILLUSTRATION #1

Editor: S. Otiev

Name: Let's Turn Each House into a Castle

Publisher: Sakhelgami

Year: 1941

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli" of National Parliamentary

Library of Georgia

http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17496



Author: Наркомпищепром Грузинской СССР

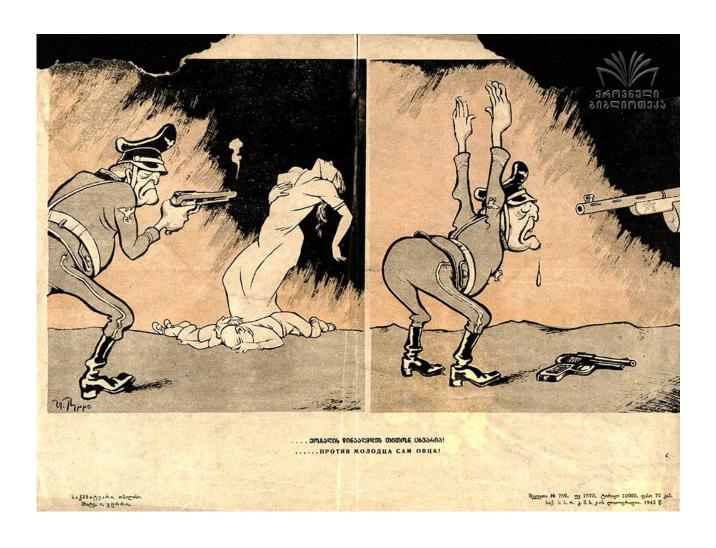
Name: Request a Small Alcoholic Sparkling Drink "Tbilisi"

Publisher: Lithography of the Georgian SSR

Year: 1942

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17497



Author: Ivan Guru

Name: One is a Sheep before a Strong Fellow

Publisher: Sakmkhatvari

Year: 1942

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17495



Author: Mark Abramov

Title: One is a Sheep before a Strong Fellow

Publisher: Орджоникидзевское краевое издательство

Year: 1942

https://www.prlib.ru/item/361217



Author: Tatiana Eremnina

Title: Partisans, Seek Revenge without Pardon!

Year: 1942

https://artchive.ru/sl/artists/19292~Tatyana_Alekseevna_Eremina/

works/547890~Guerrillas_take_revenge_without_mercy



Authors: Viktor Koretsky and Vera Gitsevich

Title: Stand Next to a Front Friend! Comrade is Helper and Friend of the Fighter!

Year: 194

http://yahooeu.ru/pics/18454-plakaty-velikoj-otechestvennoj-vojny-chast-2.html



Editor: Ivane Gavasheli

Title: How to Fight Fascist Parachutists

Publisher: Sakhelgami

Year: 1941

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17509



Editor: V. Baramidze Title: Fire Rules Publisher: Sakhelgami

Year: 1941

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia **http:**//dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17507



Author: Unknown

Title: Clean Attic and Stairs Publisher: Technology and Labor

Year: 1942

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17489



Author: Irakli Toidze; S. Samkharadze **Title:** The Motherland is Calling Us!

Publisher: Tbilisi; State Publishing House; Lithography of the USSR

Year: 1941

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/17615



Author: loseb Gabashvili

Year: 1940s

Owner: NNLE "Propaganda". All rights reserved



Author: Vladimir Serov Title: We Will Change You!

https://www.historyworlds.ru/gallery/raznye-temy-iz-istorii/

sssr1/cccp-plakat/10774-zamenim-1941g..htmln



Author: Shalva Beritashvili

Name: Greetings to the Native Kharkov!

Publisher: Sablitgami

Year: 1943

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/18084



Author: Mikhail Wadbolski, Otar Egadze **Author of the poem:** Shalva Dadiani

Name: Kiev

Publisher: Sablitgami **Year:** Unknown

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/280124



Author: Mikhail Wadbolski

Author of the poem: Kolau Nadiaradze **Tbilisi:** "Communist" Publishing House

Year: Unknown

Owner: Materials are taken from a digital library "Iverieli"

of National Parliamentary Library of Georgia http://dspace.nplg.gov.ge/handle/1234/283251

