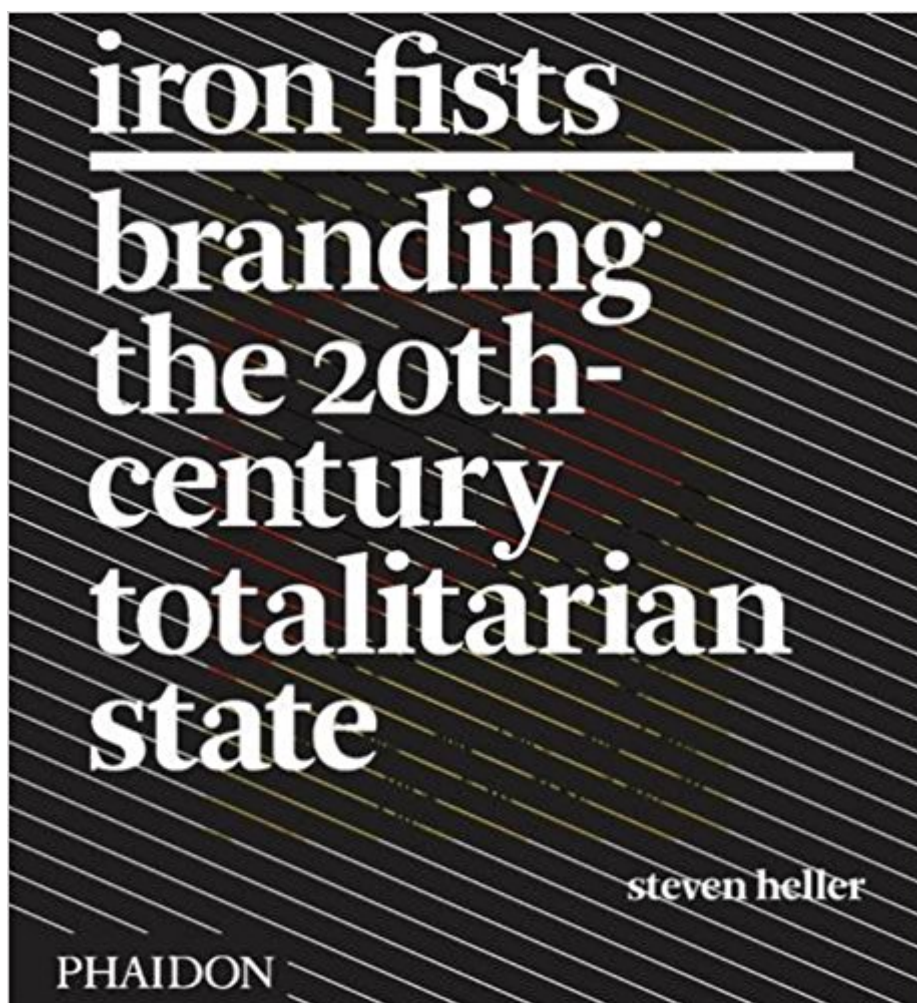


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# Iron Fists: Branding The 20th Century Totalitarian State



## Synopsis

An illustrated history of propaganda art and design from Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, the USSR, and Communist China.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

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## Customer Reviews

A reasonable introduction to the way four totalitarian governments presented their public face. The book joins a slowly expanding library of titles dealing with State graphics in China, Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union. Steve Heller had an earlier look at Germany with his 2000 published book 'The Swastika: Symbol beyond redemption' and some of that is probably included in these pages, Prestel and Taschen have both published titles covering East German, North Korean and Chinese propaganda posters. Of the four countries surveyed maybe the odd one out is Italy, the images in the book don't seem to have any distinctive feel about them, perhaps Mussolini was content to have his face everywhere and that was enough. So completely different to the Nazi way of presenting their leader and political culture. Pages fifty-two and fifty-three show a 1938 graphics manual published by the German Labor Front showing the correct types to use: Fraktur; Rotunda; Futura. Rotunda in particular seems the type of choice in so much printed matter throughout the German chapter. The Soviet Union is the clear winner for eye-catching persuasion. The 1917 revolution swept away existing design styles and new European art 'isms' influenced several designers to start afresh with bold graphics and especially photomontages. Alexander Rodchenko, El Lissitzky and Varvara Stepanova produced posters and photobooks that still look exciting today. Photography was an important part of Soviet propaganda but this didn't seem to influence the revolution in

communist China where paintings inspired the masses, paintings and illustrations were part of their culture for centuries.

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