Katerina Clark

The Soviet Novel: History As Ritual

The Soviet Novel: History As Ritual is a comprehensive study of the Soviet novel from a comparative and historical perspective. Written by Katerina Clark, the book explores the evolution of the socialist realist novel during the Stalinist era. Clark's work is notable for its innovative approach, which draws upon anthropology, history, and literary theory to provide a fresh understanding of Soviet literature.

Clark's study is divided into several parts, each focusing on different aspects of Soviet novelistic production. The book begins with an exploration of the historical and cultural context in which the Soviet novel emerged, highlighting key figures and events that shaped its development. Clark then goes on to examine the aesthetic and ideological dimensions of the socialist realist novel, providing detailed analyses of individual works and authors.

One of the most significant contributions of Clark's study is its emphasis on the dynamic relationship between literature and society. Clark shows how the Soviet novel, with its dual function of entertainment and propaganda, responded to the challenges of the era, including the need to promote a collective identity and to reinforce the authority of the state. Her book is essential reading for anyone interested in the history of Soviet literature and its role in the construction of a totalitarian society.

In summary, The Soviet Novel: History As Ritual is a groundbreaking work that has had a profound impact on the study of Russian literature. Its detailed and nuanced analysis of a complex and often neglected period of literary history makes it an indispensable resource for scholars and students alike.