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**Lithuanian “Dailė” Art Production Factories in 1945–1990:  
the Aspects and Contexts of Design**

**ABSTRACT**

The centenary of the restoration Lithuania’s independence inspired a reflection on the history of Lithuanian modern design. In 2018, exhibitions were held not only in Lithuania but also in the neighbouring countries – Latvia and Estonia – accompanied by catalogues that reviewed design processes, highlighted the most prominent local design examples, and attempted to grasp the nature and dynamics of their development, as well as define their significance in the context of cultural history.

One of the most important producers of design in soviet-era Lithuania was the Art Production Factories “Dailė”. Three “Dailė” main branch factories operated – in Kaunas (since 1945), and in Vilnius and Klaipėda (both independently from 1946). Such enterprises – art production factories – were only possible under the conditions of a totalitarian regime and a state-controlled economy. They were constructs created by the dominant ideology and political system. The “Dailė” Art Production Factories brought together artists from various disciplines. They developed and implemented public space art projects, designed decoration for festive events, instalation for exhibitions, museum displays, as well as interiors and exterior decorations for public buildings. This was also the setting where so-called industrial art – decorative and utilitarian objects – was developed and transformed.

The aim of this dissertation is to determine the place, character and significance of the “Dailė” Art Production Factories’ production in the context of Lithuanian design history, emphasizing the institutional strategies shaped by Soviet ideology and supported by the control of the totalitarian regime.

The dissertation analyses the specifics of Soviet design – artistically crafted objects for everyday life and environment, their aesthetics, and the mechanisms of their production and consumption. The period studied spans from 1945 to 1990. The first chapters address the prehistory of the factories, tracing back to the interwar period and examining the conditions that led to the founding of the “Dailė” Art Production Factories. The main analysis focuses on their operations from their establishment in 1945 until the declaration of independence in 1990, when the system began to disintegrate, losing both its ideological and economic foundations.