

DISIGNO

A DESIGNKULTÚRA FOLYÓIRATA | JOURNAL OF DESIGN CULTURE

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Call for Papers for the VIII/2 Special Issue: *Total(itarian) Design*

The totalitarian art of various historical and contemporary regimes from that of Mussolini through Hitler to Stalin has become a legitimate research topic from the point of view of the total aestheticization of the world in design capitalism. One of the legacies of Romanticism—the age of "aesthetic differentiation" (Gadamer)—is the ambition to make art autonomous from other lifeworlds.

Ever since, the counter tendency of reunification has pushed back against the perceived losses to values and life qualities that result from the autonomy of art. The Romantics, and then the Avantgarde already tried to generally re-aestheticize their lifeworlds and create a certain total art of life.

These intellectual endeavours often ended up being engulfed, stolen, and culturally appropriated by totalitarian regimes before being gradually dismissed by them as degenerate or politically designated as representative of ideologies striving for a totalitarian state art based on the total aestheticization of politics. Design was the bastard child of this process and the culture industry was gradually created as an unfortunate result of the aim to blend art and life.

During the neoliberal revolution in the Postmodern era this aestheticization accelerated to that extent that we currently live in a design capitalism with its total aestheticization of the world in which virtually every aspect of our lifeworlds is meticulously designed. The "posthumous era" (Garcés) is defined by the total forgetfulness or even the unbearable designedness of being in a perfectly "sublimated slavery" (Marcuse) that hinders all our capacities to recognize the overexploitation we experience through our lives. Understanding the art of the totalitarian state could surely help us better negotiate our current conditions in design capitalism.

This call is open to (but not restricted to) the following topics

- *philosophical, ideological, and rhetorical approaches to the total(itarian) aestheticization of everyday life*
- *designing authoritarianism within contemporary democratic structures*
- *legislation and institutions in service of totalitarian art and design*
- *particular design and art practices (film, media, and beyond) from different eras and totalitarian regimes, from Pol Pot to Ceaușescu and beyond*
- *from services to surveillance: designing total(itarian) social systems*
- *totalitarianism from mass events (speeches, parades, demonstrations) to social networks*
- *total aestheticization in neoliberal and in woke policies*

Disegno accepts research papers (5000–7000 words), essays (c. 3000 words), and book/exhibition reviews (c. 2000 words). Research papers undergo double-blind peer review; reviews and essays are typically reviewed by the editors. If you are interested, please submit a 150–250 word abstract, 5 keywords, and a 140-word CV in prose form to disegno@mome.hu

July 30: submission of abstracts

August 15: feedback on accepted proposals • October 30: deadline for submitting the accepted papers • May 2025: publication

