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**Visualisation of Everyday Life and the Discourse of Modernism in Interwar
Lithuania**

In 1918 Lithuania not only had to re-establish its national statehood, but also had to cope with the processes of modernization, as well as with the economically and politically unstable climate. In addition, the events that led to social modernisation, such as the First World War and its aftermath, the development of technology and psychology, the struggles of the working class and the women's rights movement, were important factors in the significant changes in the social structures of society. The combination of these factors contributed strongly to development of cultural modernism, in the face of which aspects of everyday life and their materialisation in culture were also changing. Many artists turned to the everyday life and historical present of the time to reflect and document sensitive social issues. From poverty, unemployment, social inequality and exclusion to prostitution, childcare and custody, and women's reproductive rights.

So far, the tendency to look at the period as a narrative of a prosperous and modernising state still prevails in the study of Lithuanian interwar history. Naturally, such historiographical approaches and their assertion in society have emerged as a result of the desovietization of the history of independent Lithuania and its cultural heritage. The ideology of everyday life was an important part of propaganda during the Soviet period, and its expression in Lithuanian interwar cultural life remained unrevealed or was integrated into the narrative of Soviet ideology. The works reflecting on everyday life in interwar Lithuania, especially those that were more harshly critical, were useful to Soviet ideology, primarily to deconstruct the historical memory of a state and to develop a mythologised narrative of the Lithuanian people's liberation from the grip of *bourgeois fascist* Lithuania. On the other hand, the history of everyday life in interwar Lithuania was not reflected upon, and the perception and reception of this legacy became problematic after the restoration of Lithuanian independence in the 1990s. In some cases, it has become completely unknown to the wider

society due to a lack of research, or it has become too marginalised, in some cases even politicised.

Thus, the object of this dissertation is the works of art and photographs of the First Republic of Lithuania (1918-1940), which represent and reflect on the socio-cultural reality of everyday life associated with the processes of modernisation of the state and society. For the purposes of this thesis, socio-cultural aspects of everyday life are defined as complex and specific, including gender, national or ethnic belonging, various social roles and socio-economic status, etc.

The aim of the dissertation is to analyse and interpellate a purposefully concentrated corpus of visual production to determine what part of interwar reality it allows to reconstruct, and to what extent the accumulated images are typical, in other words, representative. The aim is also to investigate the place of this heritage in the history of Lithuanian modernism, its significance in the context of state cultural policy, art education, the emergence of new principles of artistic language, the dissemination and migration of artistic ideas, and the self-creation and differentiation of artistic communities.

It is hoped that the perspective of everyday life chosen for this thesis as a micro-historical view will broaden the debate on the history of modern art in Lithuania and in the wider Eastern European context.