



KUTILSTVÍ

ANTI-KITSCH, OR HOW TO MAKE A SOCIALIST DOILY

The Politics of Amateur Art in post-1968
Communist Czechoslovakia.

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In this talk, I approach domestic sewing projects as a form of DIY, drawing on late socialist Czech and Slovak popular magazines and books, as well as on contemporary ethnographic interviews that reflect on the period. I show how the communist authorities promoted traditional needlecrafts as a kind of amateur arts, attempting to create a moral and aesthetic synthesis between the historical material culture of the peasantry and modern, socialist domesticity. However, they also viewed such projects as inherently problematic because they marked the point where the power of the state as the designer and director of everyday life ended, and the agency of the homemaker began. Looking at the historical material, I show how the authorities attempted to draw a particular distinction between ideologically problematic 'kitsch' and socialist 'good taste' by making a connection between aesthetic beauty, socialist production, civic engagement, and national pride.

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» **Kampus Hybernská, místnost 3D**
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