

## **Domestic Objects: The Transformation of Everyday Life in Post-Socialist Era**

### Call for workshop & Special Issue

The idea of material culture was present from the inception of social sciences as a way to somehow mark the distinction between what people do, what people believe, what they say they do and believe, and what people have. Various instances of this effort to circumscribe materiality are revived in a ritual way, either as a generator of new theoretical frameworks, or just as an effort to reconnect with a particular set of artifacts that are central for the understanding of a subject matter. However, the stark distinction between the symbolic and the material occasionally fades out when it comes to some very humble and not so humble, everyday objects.

Contemporary domestic objects underwent dramatic transformations in physical and symbolic terms in the past 30 years. This has a particularly vivid dimension in Eastern Europe because of the huge, still extant frustration born in the years of penury before the crash of the Soviet Block regimes.

We are looking for a material culture informed perspective on the quality of life, especially in the former socialist countries but not only, through the looking glass of the objects and materials that shape our everyday existence, our domestic universe, our house cosmo-reality.

We are interested in the culture of domesticity as it was and continues to be embodied in the everyday objects that were adopted and adapted into the life of families, and how these objects changed their status in the symbolic economy of a population that lived through a transition time. The multilayered dynamic of objects implies both rapid transformations and insidious metamorphoses. A first approach is to unveil some recent archeological layers of everyday life and, in this respect, ethnographic, anthropological, sociological approaches on consumption and material culture, both qualitative and quantitative, are equally welcome.

Possible objects for thinking may include, but are not limited to: soap, toilet paper, kitchen paraphernalia, vacuum cleaners, hangers, bread, glue and sticking materials, the shower head, the remote control, the light bulb, etc.

### **Call for Workshop**

The Quality of Life Journal (Romanian Academy, Bucharest) organizes an international workshop on the topic of Domestic Objects - The Transformation of Everyday Life in Post-Socialist Era. Prospective participants are invited to send a proposal in the form of 500 words abstract with keywords by April 05, 2021.

The selected participants will be invited to send a 2000 words paper by the 1st of June, that will be circulated among participants and discussed in the workshop. The admission to the workshop is conditioned by the submission of this paper.

We plan to organize the workshop on the model of “world cafe” conversations in order to further ferment the thinking on the topics of interest for the participants. There are no participation fees. The workshop will be organized online, potentially in a hybrid formula at the Research Institute for Quality of Life in Bucharest (RIQL), according to anti-pandemic regulations and the availability of the local participants.

### **Call for papers**

The Quality of Life Journal will publish a Special Issue on the topic of Domestic Objects in the first semester of 2022. Prospective authors are invited to send a 500 words abstract, followed by five keywords by April 05<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Selected papers from the workshop as well as other contributions are welcomed. Authors are expected to deliver a final paper of around 8000 words by the 1<sup>st</sup> of October. Submission guidelines for the manuscript can be accessed at: <http://www.revistacalitateavietii.ro/instructiuniEn.html>.

### **Registration**

Please send an email to [catalinberescu@gmail.com](mailto:catalinberescu@gmail.com) and [alec.balasescu@gmail.com](mailto:alec.balasescu@gmail.com) by the 5th of April with a title, an abstract of around 500 words followed by five keywords and your contact and affiliation details. Also, please mention if you plan to attend the workshop or only submit your paper for publication.

#### Calendar:

05 March	Call for workshop & special issue
05 April	Registration deadline
01 June	Submission of draft
15-16 June	Workshop RIQL
1 October	Final paper submission