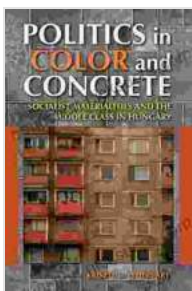


# Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary: New Anthropologies of Everyday Life

The material culture of the middle class in Hungary during the socialist period has been relatively neglected in anthropological research. This article draws on ethnographic research to examine how people used objects, spaces, and practices to negotiate their everyday lives and construct their identities.



## Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary (New Anthropologies of Europe) by Krisztina Fehérváry

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 6610 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 479 pages  
Lending : Enabled



The article begins by providing a brief overview of the history of the middle class in Hungary. It then discusses the theoretical approaches that have been used to study material culture, and argues for the importance of a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between objects and identity.

The main body of the article presents ethnographic data on the material culture of the middle class in Hungary. This data is drawn from interviews, participant observation, and archival research. The article examines how people used objects to create a sense of home, express their individuality, and negotiate their relationships with others.

The article concludes by discussing the implications of the research for our understanding of the middle class in socialist societies. It argues that the material culture of the middle class in Hungary was a complex and contested terrain, and that it played a significant role in shaping people's everyday lives and identities.

## **The History of the Middle Class in Hungary**

The middle class in Hungary has a long and complex history. It first emerged in the 19th century, as a result of the country's rapid industrialization. The middle class grew rapidly during the interwar period, as Hungary became a more prosperous and developed country.

After the Second World War, Hungary became a socialist country. The socialist government nationalized industry and collectivized agriculture. This led to a decline in the size of the middle class, as many people lost their jobs or were forced to work in the state sector.

However, the middle class began to grow again in the 1960s, as Hungary adopted a more market-oriented economic system. This growth continued in the 1970s and 1980s, as Hungary became one of the most prosperous countries in the Eastern bloc.

After the fall of communism in 1989, the middle class in Hungary continued to grow. Today, the middle class is the largest social class in Hungary, and it plays a significant role in the country's economy and society.

## **Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Material Culture**

The study of material culture has a long and distinguished history in anthropology. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the relationship between material culture and identity. This research has shown that objects can play a powerful role in shaping our sense of self and our relationships with others.

One of the most influential theoretical approaches to the study of material culture is the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu argues that objects are not simply neutral things, but rather they are imbued with social meaning. He argues that the way we use and consume objects can reveal our social position and our cultural values.

Another important theoretical approach to the study of material culture is the work of Arjun Appadurai. Appadurai argues that objects are not simply static things, but rather they are constantly moving and changing. He argues that the way we use and consume objects can reveal our global interconnectedness and our changing cultural identities.

## **The Material Culture of the Middle Class in Hungary**

The material culture of the middle class in Hungary during the socialist period was a complex and contested terrain. People used objects to create a sense of home, express their individuality, and negotiate their relationships with others.

One of the most important ways that people used objects to create a sense of home was through the decoration of their apartments. During the socialist period, most Hungarians lived in small, state-owned apartments. People used their furniture, curtains, and other decorations to make their apartments more comfortable and stylish.

Another important way that people used objects to express their individuality was through fashion. During the socialist period, there was a limited range of clothing available in Hungary. However, people found ways to express their individuality through the way they wore their clothes and the accessories they used.

Finally, people used objects to negotiate their relationships with others. For example, people used food to show their hospitality and to build relationships with their friends and neighbors. They also used gifts to show their appreciation for others and to maintain social ties.

The material culture of the middle class in Hungary during the socialist period was a complex and contested terrain. People used objects to create a sense of home, express their individuality, and negotiate their relationships with others. The research presented in this article provides a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between objects and identity in socialist societies.

## **References**

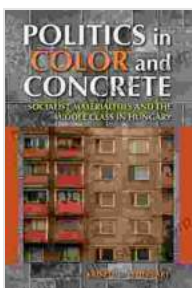
Appadurai, A. (1986). *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Humphrey, C. (2002). *The unmaking of Soviet life: Everyday economies after socialism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Kornai, J. (1980). *Economics of shortage*. Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company.

Stark, D. (1992). *The collapse of communism and the transition to market economy: A sociological perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

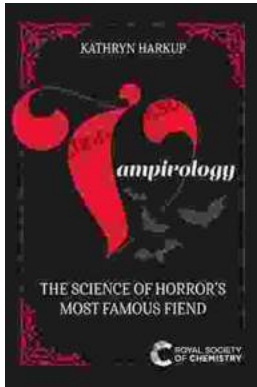


**Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary (New Anthropologies of Europe)** by Krisztina Fehérváry

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 6610 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 479 pages  
Lending : Enabled





## The Science Of Horror: Unmasking the Neuroscience Behind Our Most Famous Fiend

Horror, a genre that has captivated audiences for centuries, holds a unique power over our minds. It elicits a complex tapestry of emotions, ranging...



## Ice Cream with Daddy: A Sweet and Savory Summer Memory

Ice cream with daddy is a sweet and savory summer memory that will last a lifetime. The cold, creamy treat is the perfect way to cool down on a hot...