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ÁRENDÁS, Zsuzsa – SZELJAK, György (eds): *Vándorló tárgyak. Bevándorlók tárgykultúrája Magyarországon* [Migrating objects. The material culture of immigrants in Hungary]. 2014, Budapest: Néprajzi Múzeum [Tabula Könyvek 12], 280.

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In 2011, the staff of the Ethnographic Museum began a three-year research project titled „The Study of the Material Culture of Immigrant Groups in Budapest,” not even imagining that by the time the project’s final essays are published, third-world migrants will have become one of the most important topics of public discourse. For non-European, and especially for non-Hungarian migrants, Hungary is primarily a transit country; very few settle down here for the long term. Researchers only turned their attention to them in the last few years, therefore rather little is known about their local life and local homes, their integration, their everyday strategies, their relationships with the host and the departed communities, their plans for staying and/or continuing their migration.

The research providing the basis of the volume is museologically driven; the approach is object-oriented, a very innovative point of view within migration research and unprecedented in our country. The staff of the Museum of Ethnography seek solutions for the re-thinking of the limitations and possibilities of ethnographic museology in the early 21st century. Furthermore: How can global social phenomena be interpreted through objects (or their absence)? How can such objects be contextualized and embedded into the structure of museum collections?

Ethnographic and anthropological object collection has a great tradition in the museologizing and presentation of other peoples’ cultures. But it is exactly the theoretical and methodological bases of this tradition that the research team is reinterpreting, as they were pervaded primarily by colonialism, modernization or an eleventh-hour approach, which resulted in the formation of specific museum object diasporas. This requires a rethinking of the terminology of museological activities, a conceptual change, and a renewal of methodology and enquiry. This time the museum staff embarked upon ethnographic and anthropological research not in a far-away terrain, but among the representatives of remote peoples living in Hungary. Their basic premise was that „there is a corpus of special objects connected only to migrants” (page 12) and that „migration created new local worlds and cultural shapes which can be traced back to the mingling of cultures, hybridization processes, and immigrants’ multiple ties” (page 9).

After the introduction that outlines the project’s basic concept (authored by Zsuzsanna Árendás and György Szeljak), the book, which features eight authors, starts out with two theoretical studies. Gábor Wilhelm redraws the theoretical framework for the study of material culture with an ontologically based enquiry which inspects the elastic boundaries between a person (as subject) and an item (as object). He emphasizes that objects fulfill not only a symbolic, communicative or representational role, but serve as agents; that is, they participate in social processes. With immigrants, this can be particularly detected in the case of so-called boundary objects. From among the migration theories, Zsuzsanna

Árendás highlights hybridity approaches, noting that an increase in migration leads to the emergence of new forms of mobility, „within which bodies and information, as well as different patterns of mobility mix with each other” (page 71).

The rest of the book reads like comparative research, as the authors explore various migrant groups in Budapest, in the same social space and urban context. The presence of Andean Indians in Hungary is analyzed from a 25-year perspective in an excellent study by György Szeljak and Júlia Széli. Since the early 1990s, they have been investigating the process of how immigrants who place their ethnic identity, their Indianness into focus and the global migration of objects relate to each other within the framework of economic and integration strategies. Gabriella Vörös explores Turkish entrepreneurs and thus the phenomenon of döner in Budapest; more precisely, the adaptation of a Turkish life to the consumption habits of a globalizing urban culture, as well as the integration strategies and transnational relations unfolding along the restaurant chains. Ágnes Kerezsi's research focuses on a particular group of Russian immigrants, the wives, and within an extended period to boot, because Russian women immigrated to our country even before the regime change. Her writing focuses mainly on the home and objects in the home, although, given the chosen topic, gender aspects are not strongly articulated. Gábor Wilhelm examines the material culture of East- and Southeast-Asian migrants, paying special attention to the home-making process. The target choice is quite bold, as the merely 21-page study includes groups of fairly large numbers and of very different social, cultural and migratory backgrounds; admitting to the problematic nature of his endeavor, he indicates that instead of seeking completeness, he just wants to bring to light „what is out there.” Zsuzsanna Árendás chose the hybridity approach proposed earlier in her theoretical treatise for her interpretation of Indian immigrants. Through examples of the home and everyday life, she analyzes within a global cultural context individual identity, the transitional nature of lifestyle, strategies of making connections and maintaining multiple ties. Judit Farkas' choice of topic is slightly different, as it examines a phenomenon that is not tied to the migration of people, but instead to the ingress of a religion and its related set of objects into a new milieu. Thanks to the study we gain insight into the world of the inhabitants of the Krishna valley in Somogyvámos and can follow the processes of sanctuary-creation. Edina Földessy contributed two articles to the volume. She explores the material culture of Middle Eastern immigrants through another theoretical innovation by incorporating in her research the anthropology of the senses. She describes the process of home-making from the perspective of two senses: sight and touch.

The research resulted in the publication of a complementary collection of texts in a booklet series by MaDok. In this, the immigrants appear in a more personal way: faces and objects can be viewed, life stories and interviews can be read. I highly recommend KERÉK, Eszter – SZUHAY, Péter (eds) *Az otthon tárgyai. Képeskönyv a magyarországi bevándorlók tárgykultúrájáról*. [Home Objects: Picture Album of the Material Culture of Immigrants in Hungary] (2014, Budapest: Museum of Ethnography [MaDok-füzetek 9], 264 pp.) as a follow-up to these studies, but mostly as simultaneous reading.