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NOTES ABOUT A POSSIBLE SOCIOLOGY OF KITSCH DURING  
ROMANIAN COMMUNIST REGIME:  
SOURCES, HYPOTHESES, INTERPRETATIONS  
(Summary)

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In a first iconoclast impetus, the “popular democracies” were inverting the order of things, masculinizing the woman and promoting her as a welder or a tractor driver. The tapestry had become an equal of idleness. But it was favoured by the communist regime when it started to get autochthonous, trying to resume the pre-existing traditions. The knitting was therefore wrenched and integrated among the artefacts forming the so-called “folk art”. Starting with the '60s, the bibelots were associated with the doilies, which were supposing an accentuated feminization of the private area (the welder woman was no longer in fashion) and the allocation of a special time for the maintenance of these objects. The pleading in favour of the handwork was also related to the moralization of the socialist conduct, which did not tolerate inactivity. Handwork was supposed to colonize a major part of someone’s leisure: a private behaviour had to concretize public morals. The functions of the “knitting” were therefore extremely various: decorative, educative – recreative by working, leisure, substitute for reading, form of sociability, ideology sending to tradition, identity, artefact.

The miniaturization of the private environment answered, somehow, the gigantism of public life. A sweetish aesthetics thus imposed itself, an aesthetic of the coloured cardboard and of the evasive kitsch. The essential thing was the displaying, the excess visualizing, and the abundance of the object décor creating the impression that it secures the existence. The individual directed his own Potemkin village: a neo-rococo universe, where the utilitarian meaning of the objects were denied by over-decoration.

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