

Call for Papers for Open Access Journal *Mobile Culture Studies. The Journal*
Deadline for abstracts: April 15, 2021 (mail to pierarossetto@gmail.com
and etartakowsky@yahoo.fr)

The materialities of belonging: Objects in/of exile across the Mediterranean

Guest editors: dr. Piera Rossetto & dr. Ewa Tartakowsky

But to be certain of our own existence,
we need the objects, the gestures, and the words.

Herta Müller

As a transdisciplinary field of research which has been steadily growing and expanding (Faulconbridge and Hui 2016), mobilities studies (Hannam et al. 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006) gave new input also to the discussion about the relationship between migrant worlds and material cultures, between mobility and materiality (Basu and Coleman 2008). However, as noted by anthropologist Galitzine-Loumpet, “the many sociological and anthropological studies of the migratory phenomenon take only partial interest on objects; as well as studies on material culture rarely consider [...] objects within the mobility condition peculiar to migration” (2013: 4, our translation).

Since the beginning of the 2010s, a growing number of research projects and publications has appeared, seeking “to understand the relationships of humans and things in the context of flight and migration”¹ – such as “objects of exile” (Bishoff and Schlör 2013a), “precipitates of re-memory” (Tolia-Kelly 2004), a constellation of things that were left behind or taken with, that went lost or managed to survive. Objects in exile and objects of exile² are interrogated and conceived as “relational objects,” bearing a “cumulative memory” and belonging to both realms of “materiality and immateriality” (Galitzine-Loumpet 2013).

This thematic issue of *Mobile Culture Studies. The Journal ›mcsj›* is dedicated to the “unexpected directions” that research can take, when *things are taken seriously* (Brown 2001; 2004; 2015). Like human beings, things also “embark on a journey and find themselves somewhere – elsewhere in the world – again” (Bishoff and Schlör 2013b: 9, our translation). To follow the trajectories of displaced things and persons

1. <http://materialitaet-migration.de/en/> is part of the project <https://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/593397.html>; Bishoff and Schlör 2013b.

2. <https://displacedobjects.com/> is part of the project <https://nle.hypotheses.org/>

means to be open to the “surprise of movement,” to the “cultural connections between unexpected times and places” (Greenblatt 2010: 18; 17), to the dynamics of *agencement*, *assemblage* (Deleuze and Guattari 2003).

The same entanglement of materiality, agency, and subjecthood can also be considered from a less explored and yet equally fruitful perspective: a self-reflective stance from the researcher’s part – which could also include a gendered approach - towards the objects in/of exile. This perspective opens the issue methodologically to different autoethnographic practices of research (Reed-Danahay 2017) and writing (Ellis 1999), along with more traditional scientific articles. We welcome contributions in other formats which are facilitated by the online format of the journal: (scientific) interviews, the dialogic writing of contributions, audio data such as podcasts, creative examinations of the topic (narratives, poems, or illustrations).

The contributions should focus on the Mediterranean region, which has always been the place of multiple exchanges of people, ideas, and objects (Trivellato et al. 2014). The issues concerning the restitution of African heritage by the European ex-colonial empires can also be discussed as one of the angles from which to think a socio-material landscape of these “migrant” objects, their movement and the socio-political practices connected to them (Sarr and Savoy 2018).

Analyses for the thematic issue could deal with one or more of the following aspects:

1. *Research on objects*: analysis of objects brought by migrants in the relational perspective, of objects that have changed their social biotope and the reconfigurations and new status that this implies in terms of related practices.
2. *Research with objects*: analysis of objects used by researchers as a tool in their interactions with the empirical field of research on Mediterranean migration; the relationship between researchers and the objects brought from their research field and/or with respondents who have offered objects to them; how do objects stimulate the “sociological imagination” (Mills 1959)?
3. *Restitution by objects*: analysis of epistemological issues connected to creative and alternative (i.e. non-academic) restitutions of research by objects (Alexandre-Garner and Galitzine-Loumpet 2020); what happens when the researcher herself/himself is the one who moves or find herself/himself in a condition of *exilance* (Nuselovici 2013)? Why does the researcher stop at a particular object when listening, reading, looking at these stories of migration and/or exile?

As we find ourselves, paradoxically, looking at mobilities in and from a global standstill, we welcome further approaches and research questions to the unpredictable relationships between mobilities and materialities.

Mobile Culture Studies. The Journal ›mcsj‹

Grounded in the humanities, *Mobile Culture Studies. The Journal ›mcsj‹* is a multilingual, peer-reviewed, academic open-access journal without author fees, published by the Karl-Franzens-University, Graz (Austria), in the form of a yearbook. It covers the transdisciplinary field of mobility and publishes research-based contributions on the cultural and social phenomena of mobilities and their counterparts; on historical evidence of people’s mobile practices; representations of mobility in oral, written, and visual culture; and on changing concepts of mobility.

For the Authors

Consistent with ›mcsj›'s mission articles can be submitted in English, French, German, or Italian (see: <http://www.mobileculturestudies.com/mcsj/submitting.pdf>). Non-English contributions should be accompanied by an extended English summary. The contributions are peer reviewed. The average length of articles can be up to 8,000 words.

Suggestions, including a title, an abstract of approximately 350 words and a short CV, should be addressed to the guest editors:

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The deadline for abstracts is **April 15, 2021**.

Notification about acceptance will be given by **April 30, 2021**.

The full manuscripts are to be submitted by **September 15, 2021**.

Thereafter the manuscripts will be peer-reviewed and, if necessary, revised.

Publication is scheduled for **June 2022**.

Authors who are not native speakers should have texts translated and/or edited. Any expenses incurred in by Authors in connection to the editing and translation of their work will be borne by the Authors themselves.

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