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"RED SHADES": NOSTALGIA FOR SOCIALISM AS AN ELEMENT OF CULTURAL PLURALISM IN THE SLOVENIAN TRANSITION

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I. Mapping nostalgia

The following images could well belong to Slovenia in 1966 or 1986:

- graffiti with Yugoslav and partisan symbols,
- Tito's image in commercial branding,
- opinion surveys reflecting respondents' relatively positive opinions about their lives under the socialist regime,
- restoration of huge hillside inscriptions with Tito's name,
- collections and new interpretations of recordings of revolutionary songs,
- retro-styles in design and popular culture,
- red stars with hammers and sickles on t-shirts worn by teenagers,
- socialist recreational rituals and celebrations, like the "Youth Relay-Race"

Yet these and similar images belong to 2006 and after. I doubt that anyone a decade and a half ago could imagine to what extent these images would return to the cultural, social, and ideological landscape of the Slovenian post-socialist transition. As ironic as it may seem, one of the most outstanding, intriguing, and unexpected features of the transition throughout the former *Ostbloc* is nostalgia for the socialist past. Today we find nostalgic remnants and constructs for the socialist past practically on every street corner: in popular culture, advertising, in subcultures, in cyber space, as well as in people's beliefs, reflections, and mentalities. The more, it seemed, that Slovenia once and for all turned its back on its socialist and Yugoslav past, the more persistent nostalgia became. If the Slovenian president concluded his speech on the eve of independence, 26 June 1991, by saying "that nothing will be the same again as it was before," the logical reply of Yugonostalgics was, "for us, 1991 is not year zero."

Here I will discuss the positive side of Slovenes' collective memory of their socialist past—that is, "Red" nostalgia. Immediately, obvious questions arise; for example, is not "nostalgia for socialism" a contradiction in terms or a paradox, and why are people nostalgic for times that were, if we follow the present, dominant discourse, "dark ages," "a time of tyranny," "a Communist Reich"? One may ask whether they no longer remember those times, or remember them well, or are suffering from "fear of freedom" or of the injustices and crises this "new freedom" has brought.

Nostalgia usually appears when the present condition is experienced as worse than the previous one. So, in those post-socialist countries where the costs of transition were high, even enormous—including wars, economic recession, political instability, and social problems—it seems quite logical. But what is particularly interesting is that we have found it in the comparatively most efficient transitional societies as well (like *ostalgie* in ex-East Germany). Slovenia is a good example: despite its many serious problems, such as unemployment, a rise of xenophobia, patriarchy, religious integrism (i.e., ideological attempts to merge religious identity with national, political, or ethnic exclusivism), the rise of social inequality, and partitocracy (i.e., absolute rule of political parties' elites, leading to the politization of all spheres of social life). The Slovenian transition was relatively successful, as indicated also (of course with critical caution, *cum grano salis*) by various international parameters and classifications, like the Human Development Index, "Freedom in the World" country ratings, GNP per capita, and The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index.

As background, let us consider some theoretical notions about nostalgia, starting with the relation between the memory and nostalgia. They have in common that they are both arbitrary social and cultural narrations, inexact stories that, for their creators, are "real" as "true" documents of the past. The main difference between the two is that memory is a much broader phenomenon because it includes both positive and negative elements (e.g., happy and unhappy episodes). If for Fredric Jameson "history is what hurts" (1988: 102), then nostalgia is "memory minus pain" (Velikonja 2006: 103). It is the "sunny side" of personal or collective history.

In an essentialist view, nostalgia is a consequence of "lived experience" (Davis 1979), but in a constructivist view, nostalgia is just a "construct," a "narrative" like any other, and undoubtedly ideological (Stewart 1993). Thus, it is a "fiction" which may include "true" events, but it is also, or mostly, a construct made by those experiencing nostalgia. In short, it is not only about past realities, but also about past dreams; not only about how we once were, but also how we never were. To use a metaphor, it is a painting or a picture, not a photo or a mirror of the past; it is a fictional movie, not a documentary; and a nostalgic person is a storyteller, not a chronicler.[1] Nostalgia always speaks more about present

[1] The logical question from this is if not from the "lived experience," then from where come the images for nostalgic reveries? The answer would seem to be that they come from contemporary media, from the "society of spectacle" (to use French situationist Guy Debord's term, [1994]), which erases time, geographical, cultural, ethnic, and generational borders. In the words of another French thinker, Jean Baudrillard (1994: 6), in situations of plentitudes of copies without the original, "when the real is no longer what it was, nostalgia assumes

wrongs and hopes (or lack of them) for the future than about the idealized past. For this reason, the crucial ideological questions remain: What, when, and by whom certain content and images become the objects of nostalgia?

The short definition of nostalgia is that it is "sad love," "bitter-sweet memory," "romance with an unhappy end," or "a retrospective utopia." I would propose a more comprehensive definition: nostalgia as a complex, multi-layered, changing, strongly emotionally charged, personal or collective, (un)instrumental narrative which in a binary way celebrates and an the same time mourns romanticized or lost people, objects, and sensations, in sharp contrast with inferior present ones, and at the same time regrets their irreversible loss. It is not (only) something intimate, like an innocent tale that provides fulfillment in and of itself, but can also be a powerful social, cultural, and political force with practical effects in its environment.

Investigation of the phenomenon of nostalgia must start from two sides, which are of course intertwined. Nostalgia is, on one side, an imposed, hegemonic discourse of certain groups and their media ("top-down" nostalgia, to use maybe not very appropriate metaphor), while, on the other side, it is a "hard" socio-cultural fact or a "real" mentalities ("bottom-up" nostalgia). Svetlana Boym speaks of "reflexive nostalgia," which "lingers on ruins, the patina of time and history, in the dreams of another place and another time" (2001: 41, 42–55).[2] Thus I propose to differentiate between the "culture of nostalgia" and "nostalgic culture." The "culture of nostalgia" is a discourse constructed and promoted by influential social groups (for example, by political parties, enterprises, producers of popular culture, artists, subculture groups, advertisers, or simply by some nostalgic enthusiasts): it is instrumental, "contrived" by its inventors or/and promoters, who want to achieve something with it. "Nostalgic culture," in contrast, is a mental pattern, an inclination toward some past for which nostalgia is experienced. In other words, nostalgic narratives in popular culture, advertising, politics, and elsewhere may or may not reflect whether and how people "really" feel nostalgia for the past. Likewise, people may be nostalgic about something, although this is not adequately present (or not reflected at all!) in the dominant media, cultural, and political discourses. A very good example of this is *jugonostalgija* (Yugonostalgia): it was present immediately after the country's collapse in 1991, despite the fact that Yugoslavia was portrayed negatively in

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its full meaning." In other words, since today nostalgic images are everywhere, you can be nostalgic for practically everything!

2 Of course, both these "ideal types" act together and refer to each other, but because on some occasions they are congruent, and in some they are contrary to each other, it is important to draw a distinction between the two.

dominant discourses, and that there was absolutely no nostalgic contents in them.

II. "The culture of nostalgia" as public discourse

Generally speaking, nostalgic narratives are common in contemporary culture and public discourses. They are by no means limited to societies that have recently experienced radical changes or revolutions. Nostalgia is not a new, East European peculiarity—something that can emerge *only there*, as some tendentious observers would put it. East European nostalgic stories are more or less similar to those in other parts of the world: they are about the good old times, golden oldies tunes and movies, lost true values, a sense of security, grandma's cuisine, everyday commodities, onetime solidarity, and the like, but with an important additional dimension—that is, they are somehow linked to a different, socialist political system. Here are some features of post-socialist nostalgia of the "top down" type in contemporary Slovenia:

1. Nostalgic content appear frequently in popular culture: collections of old songs—pop songs or communist or partisan songs—are republished and reinterpreted;[3] retro trends in industrial design, fashion and interior design; reruns of movies and TV shows, etc.
2. "Nostalgia sells": old brands and products are advertised (a typical slogan for a kind of Slovenian Yugoslav Coca Cola, Cockta, goes, "Beverage of our and your youth!"), Tito's image became a posthumous endorsement (e.g., for Mercedes autos, the daily *Dnevnik*, bitter liquors, and photocopiers).
3. Communist or partisan iconography is often used, misused, or abused—in short, reinterpreted—in urban culture and subcultures. Good examples are to be found in graffiti.[4]
4. Cyber-nostalgia: socialism as such seems to have survived and happily lives on in cyber-space (e.g., web-pages like www.titoville.com and www.nastito.org). As in some other countries (e.g., in Bulgaria, www.spomeniteni.org, and in Albania www.pksh.org/kenge.htm or www.enverhoxha.info), designs and

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[3] Examples are: Rock Partyzani (www.rockpartyzani.com with their first album *Dan zmage (Victory Day,* 2007), the collections *Tistega lepega dne…* (*On That Beautiful Day…* n.d.) and *Tito – SFRJ* (*Tito – Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* n.d.), and individual songs by artists and bands like Zaklonišče prepeva and Magnifico.

[4] Many of them with the silhouette of his portrait and inscriptions like "Long Live Comrade Tito!," "Back with Tito," and "Tito Party OF KPY" (Tito, [communist] Party, Liberation Front [anti-fascist organization in Slovenia during WW II], Communist Party of Yugoslavia), or just "Tito."

contents can usually be attributed to artists, writers, journalists, and, of course, webmasters in their thirties or early forties.

5. Politically instrumentalized nostalgia: The main reason it exists is disappointment with the transition on the part of large parts of the population. In the last sixteen years some prominent ex-communists remained in power or reclaimed their positions.[5] Two political parties, Liberal Democratic Party and United List of Social Democrats, with origins in communist organizations have been among the strongest. As a rule, they largely distanced themselves from the negative dimensions of socialism and their success cannot be interpreted as a logical consequence of nostalgia. On the other hand, they could always rely on the positive legacy of past times. Curiously, though, in some post-socialist countries, "red nostalgia" has much in common with "black nostalgia" (McFaul 2001: 91, 175–79, 296, 297; Boia 2001: 234[6]). In Slovenia, the leader of the extreme right and xenophobic Slovenian National Party, Zmago Jelinčič, has publicly celebrated Tito and erected a private monument to him in his backyard.

III. "Nostalgic culture" as a mentality pattern

People may feel and demonstrate nostalgia for socialist times no matter how (under)presented they are in the public discourse. Features of post-socialist nostalgia "from bottom up" are:

1. Nostalgia for socialism as an immediate answer to transitional problems. In sharp contrast to the bold promises of prosperity, democracy, freedom and tolerance of the early 1990s, post-socialist societies were soon faced with serious problems. Like in post-Franco Spain of the *desencanto* years, opinion polls show that people are extremely critical of economic, social, and political conditions. They again feel betrayed and dissatisfaction with the present are perfect grounds for the rise of nostalgic sentiments. According to public opinion polls[7] in the last decade,

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5 Milan Kučan, the first president of Slovenia, was the leader of Slovenian League of Communists in the second half of the 1980s. Janez Drnovšek, the second president of Slovenia, was a member of the collective presidency of Yugoslavia from 1989 to 1990 and for some months (in 1989–90) even its president.

6 See also Damien Roustel, Bitter Victory for Romanian Miners, *Le Monde diplomatique*, English version, February 1999, www.mondediplo.com/1999/02/18roman (accessed 28 November 2004).

7 These data are from the *Slovensko javno mnenje* (Slovenian public survey) research project, which has been based for forty years at the School of Social

- from sixty to seventy per cent of Slovenians thought that "numerous problems and difficulties had accumulated" in the society.
- Between fifteen to twenty-eight per cent thought that "we are in a deep crisis," while only two to nine per cent felt that "in general, everything is good and in order" (Toš et all., 1999: 632, 856; Toš et all. 2004: 164, 186, 296).
- 45.3 (1996), 47.6 (1997), 25.1 (2000), 34.2 (2001), and 39.1 (2002) per cent of respondents considered the Slovenian economic situation "very bad" or "bad"; it was "neither good nor bad" for 40.5 (1996), 42.4 (1997), 50.2 (2000), 49.6 (2001), and 46 (2002) per cent; while the situation was "good" or "very good" according to only 10.6 (1996), 6.6 (1997), 20.2 (2000), 13.1 (2001), and 10.3 (2002) per cent of respondents (Toš et al. 1999: 688, 708; Toš et al. 2004: 187, 246).
- When asked in 1995 "Are your expectations from five years ago, when we changed the old political system with the new one, fulfilled?" most responded "I'm disappointed, I expected more" (46.8 per cent). Half again as few responded their "expectations were mostly fulfilled" (24.1 per cent), followed by those who answered "I did not expect much good from the change, and that is precisely what happened" (9.3 per cent) (Toš et al. 1999: 604).
- When asked about poverty in Slovenia in 1995 as compared to ten years before, sixty-five per cent of respondents thought that there is "more" of it, 22.7 "more or less the same," and only 9.5 per cent "less" (Toš et al. 1999: 536).
- There is similar (dis)satisfaction with political conditions now. When Slovenians were asked how they are "(not) contented" with the state of democracy, a survey from 1999 to 2004 showed that the share of "contented" and "quite contented" was 47.3 and 43.2 (in 1999), 52.2 (in 2000), 31.2 (in 2001), 41.5 (in 2002), and 28.5 per cent (in 2004) of respondents; while those "not very contented" and "not contented at all" made up 43.2 and 52.6 (in 1999), 41.8 (in 2000), 62.3 (in 2001), 50.2 (in 2002), and 67.3 per cent (in 2004) of respondents (Toš et al. 1999: 600, 639, 684, 708; Toš et al. 2004: 59, 135, 191, 245, 359, 593). When they were asked in 1999 to judge current political system in Slovenia on scale from 1 to 10, the sum of the three categories "it is bad" comprises 31.6 per cent, and the sum of three categories "it is

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good" is only five per cent. By comparison, these same respondents' opinions of the previous, socialist political system accounted for, in three categories "it was bad," 30.3 per cent of respondents, and in three "it was good," 13.3 per cent (Toš et al. 2004: 136).

2. Nostalgia idealizes the socialist epoch and regime in comparison with an unjust present. Socialism had many features that were and are still appreciated: full employment, social and health security, social justice and equality, solidarity, and free housing, not to mention the perceived achievements of the anti-fascist struggle, liberation war, and nonaligned foreign policy. So, many disappointed people repeat almost identical phrases: "after all, it was not so bad..." or "…we had nothing, but we were happy…" Public opinion polls from the second half of the 1990s show that

   - Slovenians generally described their life in Yugoslavia as "good" and "very good" (86.1 to 88.2 per cent); only 5.2 to 7 per cent called it "bad" or "very bad" (Toš et al. 1999: 565, 872; Toš et al. 2004: 474).
   - Respondents' opinions on the former system in 1995 were quite balanced: "it had bad and good sides" for most of them (sixty-nine per cent); "it was mostly good" (18.5 per cent); and "it was mostly bad" (7.1 per cent) (Toš et al. 1999: 605).
   - Opinions about the living conditions in Slovenia in the post-war period are similar. Their relative proportions remained, from the second half of the 1990s, quite constant: approximately two-thirds thought that in that time there were "many good things but also many bad things"; from nineteen to twenty-five per cent of respondents said that it was a "time of progress and good life"; while only from 3.9 to 7.3 per cent of them were convinced that that was a "time of fear and repression" (Toš et al. 1999: 564, 631, 782, 871; Toš et al. 2004: 163, 186, 296, 496, 560).
   - The thesis "Despite Communism we lived relatively freely in the decades before our independence," (posed in questionnaires in 1995, 1998, and 2003) drew "complete agreement" and "agreement" from 68.1 to 76.4 per cent of the respondents, while only "complete disagreement" and "disagreement" from 6.6 to 10.7 per cent (Toš et al. 1999: 564, 871, Toš et al. 2004: 473).

3. Nostalgia preserves and legitimizes old identities. People in post-socialist societies do not want to reject certain elements of their personal and collective identities and histories. Most of them do not have a past other than the one under Communism and, of course, they feel that no one can take it away from them. Responses to the question

in a 1997 opinion poll asking in which historical period Slovenians were most happy, showed a large majority of the respondents (fifty-seven per cent) were "most happy" in the period 1945–89/90, only seventeen per cent after 1991, and twelve per cent before 1945. While "the least happy" period seems to be before 1945 (37.7 per cent), after 1991 (24.7 per cent), and 1945–89/90 (only 17.3 per cent) (Toš et al. 1999: 748). When asked, in 2003, what was the standard of living and material conditions of people in different decades, the outturns were again very interesting: the 1980s were "good" or "very good" (for 56.8 per cent of respondents), as were the 1990s (for 47.1 per cent), and the 1950s (6.6); while the 1930s were "bad" or "very bad" (for 65.1 per cent of respondents), as were the 1950s (63.4 per cent), and the 1990s (13.1 per cent) (Toš et al. 2004: 469).

4. Nostalgia for times past does not automatically (or even not at all!) mean nostalgia for the past regime. In other words, people mourn for the old times but not necessary for the old regime. When asked in polls whether they would like a return of socialism, a large majority firmly responds No. In 1995, a solid 78.2 per cent of respondents "completely" or "mostly disagreed" with the option to reinstituting the self-management socialist system under the leadership of the communist party, and only 11.4 per cent "completely" and "mostly agreed" with the proposition (Toš et al. 1999: 615). In 2001, responses to the statement "we should return to the rule of communists" were as follows: "strongly disagree" and "quite disagree" (68.1 per cent), with only 20.2 per cent "quite agreed" or "strongly agreed" (Toš et al. 2004: 300). One ex-communist functionary explains:

> Yugonostalgia in Slovenia exists, but not as a wish for a return of the common state… There exists another type of nostalgia. If we breathed with one region for seventy years, it must have been created some human, family, cultural ties, some very intimate relation to the places that are not our "immediate" homeland.… These are things that one experienced as part of life and we cannot simply forget them (Čepič 1995).

One journalist frankly admits, "If I think about Yugoslavia, I first remember a splendid childhood and adolescence in socialism and tiny quotidian objects that we can not find anymore... (...) From the former state we certainly remember only what we like" (Štaudohar 2004).

5. Personal nostalgia also merits mention, if for no other reason than people are nostalgic for their personal pasts (their youth, romances, people they knew, tunes they listened to, and so forth). No matter what the broader conditions, there are persons, events, and things worth remembering.

6. Nostalgia in general increases when the dynamics of social, political, cultural, and other changes are intense. The faster and deeper the changes, the more there is to be nostalgic for; the more everything becomes relative, the greater is the yearning for the absolute and unshakeable. Slovenia, as a typical "draughty" society with very a turbulent modern history and with all kinds of transitions, is a typical case of it.[8]

7. "Titostalgia" would deserve a special attention and a separate study. Here I present only some aspects of it. As some other "infallible leaders" from the past, Tito seems to cast a "long shadow": he is "born again" in a politically, ideologically, socially, and culturally different world. Ironically, we can speak of "the return of politics through popular culture and every-day life." According to public opinion surveys, Tito was the sixth (in 1995), the fourth (in 1998) and again the fourth (in 2003) most important personality in Slovenian history (Toš et al. 1999: 554, 866; Toš et al. 2004: 468). His historic role was characterized as "very positive" and "positive" by 83.6 per cent (in 1995), 84.3 per cent (in 1998) and for a meteoric ninety per cent (in 2003) of respondents (Toš et al. 1999: 563, 870; Toš et al. 2004: 473). Polls of different Slovenian media also showed appreciation of Tito's historical role: in 2000, his rule was seen as either "excellent" or "good" for 45.1 per cent, and only ten per cent responded "poor" (Požun 2000). In the 1995, 1998, 2001, and 2004 polls he was considered a "positive personality" by 67.2, 63.9, 79.3, and 79.5 per cent of those questioned and a negative one by only 10, 10.2, 7.2, and 12.1 per cent (Hrastar 2004: 23). In the Slovenian daily *Delo*'s inquiry on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his death, in May 2005, he was considered a "positive personality" by sixty-nine per cent and a "negative" one by twenty-four per cent.

But there are other manifestations of this curious affection for him. His image, name, and legendary mottos appear in advertising, popular culture, subcultures, web-sites, and widely in public. He is imitated by one professional actor-impersonator, Ivo Godnič, who appears in public events and in some television comedy shows. He is also the founder of the "Slovenian Patriotic Society Marshal of the Peace Tito," which aims to "cultivate everything positive Tito taught us" (Hrastar 2004: 23) On Tito's birthday, 25 May, there are youth festivals and concerts and even

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[8] This example from my family is not an isolated one: living practically in the same place, my great-grandparents were born in the Habsburg Austrian Empire, my grandparents in Austria-Hungary, my parents under the fascist Kingdom of Italy, I in socialist Yugoslavia, while my daughter now lives in the "(finally) free and sovereign state of Slovenia" and in the EU. Thus five generations, five states, five regimes! If you are always "in between," always in a kind of transition, there is always something, sometime, someone to be nostalgic for.

imitations of the Youth Relay-Race: like in the "old days," people stand in double rows, there are speeches, and a cultural program dedicated to Tito. His fans appear "fully equipped" with flags, badges, and old uniforms (or at least parts of them), or inscriptions on their t-shirts. In 2005, more than forty per cent of all visitors of his tomb in Belgrade were from Slovenia (while Slovenians made up only about ten per cent of the Yugoslav population!). The village of his birth, Kumrovec, is now again a popular place for pilgrims from all post-Yugoslav states, especially on his birthday. Many streets still preserve his name, and few new clubs or cafes bear his name and are decorated with his photos and emblems of the *Juga* (a popular abbreviation for Yugoslavia). As Debord (1994: 137) observes, the function of spectacle "is to bury history in culture": what we are facing here is, in George Lipsitz's words, the "transformation of real historical traditions and cultures into superficial icons and images" (1997: 134).

8. Different groups of people receive the same nostalgic stories in quite different ways. Yugonostalgia is for some older generations a positive memory; for post-Yugoslav generations it is a point of resistance against an exclusively pro-Western or pro-European orientation of Slovenian society; for some it is cultural matter, for others ideological, and for yet others a matter of old friendships, etc.

9. Post-socialist conditions offer the affirmation of a wide variety of parallel nostalgic paradigms. We can speak of their coexistence as well as tensions, even struggles between them. Since the socialist period is the most recent object of nostalgia, the strongest nostalgic current is of course for things socialist—nowadays nostalgia most often "speaks socialist." But there are some other objects of nostalgia—for Habsburg times ("Austrostalgia" appears in many areas of ex-Habsburg Central Europe [Baskar 2003]), for national-religious symphony and integration, for quiet and self-sufficient rural life, for the lost national unity that existed during the time of the Slovenian Spring in the late eighties, which resulted in the war for independence in the summer of 1991.

IV. Conclusions

The Slovenian case shows that nostalgia for the socialist past does not directly depend on social, economic, or political success of the post-socialist transition. Present-day nostalgia in Slovenia can be understood in three ways. First, as a conservative explanation and solution to contemporary dilemmas because it provides a false shelter in an idealized past—in other words, it is an escapist maneuver that detaches people from contemporary problems and distracts them from hope for a better future. Second, nostalgia may be understood as one of the competitive hegemonic discourses which compensate for the lack of sense (or "legitimation

deficit" in Habermas's terms [1975]) of late capitalist societies. It socializes people around harmless and innocent images of the past—for those in power, *retrospective* is always better that *prospective*. But there is also a third understanding of this intriguing phenomenon, deriving from Boym's notion that "nostalgia can be both a social disease and a creative emotion, a poison and a cure" (2001: 354). It can also be treated as a dissident strategy in rapidly changing times. As a utopian search for the lost just world, it preserves continuity of identity in the face of historical and ideological discontinuities and protects against narrative breaks in people's life stories.

Some of these features of post-socialist nostalgia are typical for Slovenia, while others are the same as or very similar to those in other transitional societies. Particularly interesting is the combination of old socialist images and symbols with those from the contemporary media (and sometimes also from some older traditions). Nostalgia is by no means an exclusive discourse or fixed mentalities: instead of being a passatistic "enclosed garden," it is inclusive and open to novelties. In many occasions it is a part of new hybrid identities, cultural production, esthetic choices, or social strategies. Thus nostalgia is becoming more a question of choice, not a fate, and as such it is not only mimetic, apologetic, strict, serious, "first-hand," but also satiric, funny, ironic, grotesque, "second-hand," and subversive.

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POVZETEK

'RDEČE SENCE' - NOSTALGIJA ZA SOCIALIZMOM KOT ELEMENT KULTURNEGA PLURALIZMA V SLOVENSKI TRANZICIJI

Avtor v tekstu raziskuje enega izmed najbolj nepričakovanih pojavov v slovenski postsocialistični tranziciji: nostalgijo za socializmom in za prejšnjo državo Jugoslavijo. Kot taka je jugonostalgija podobna nostalgičnim fenomenom v drugih nekdanjih socialističnih družbah. Loteva se je iz dveh izhodišč: prvič, kot 'kulturo nostalgije', torej kot javni diskurz, kot ga ustvarjajo nekatere skupine in posamezniki, ki imajo od tega določene koristi oz. zaradi določenih namenov (oglasevalskih, komercialnih, političnih, mnozično-kulturnih itn.). Drugo izhodišče je 'nostalgična kultura' kot mentalitetni vzorec, torej kot občutenja, mnenja in pobude ljudi o tem obdobju (kar se kaze skozi različne javnomnenjske raziskave, izjave nekaterih posameznikov, jugonostalgične prireditve ipd.). Sklepna ugotovitev članka je, da nostalgija za socializmom v slovenskem primeru se zdaleč ni le zaprta, nazaj zazrta oblika družbene predstave, ki bi bila omejena na starejše generacije, ampak da je aktivna oblika raznih diskurzov in praks, odprta za novosti, ter kot taka del novih hibridnih identitet, kulturnih produkcij, estetskih izbir in socialnih strategij.