

# Nostalgia

And its role in post-war and post-colonial



# What is “nostalgia”?

- “Oh, what happened to you?  
Whatever happened to me?  
What became of the people we used to be?  
Tomorrow's almost over,  
Today went by so fast,  
Is the only thing to look forward to the past?”

*The Likely Lads, British sitcom from 1960s*

# What is “nostalgia”?

- *Nostos* to return home and *algai* a painful condition
- Common features:
  - **the material of nostalgic experience is the past**
  - A *personal* past, not one based on second-hand experience
  - How long is “the past”?

# What is “nostalgia”?

- “...a normal psychological reaction triggered by fear of actual or impending change”
- Nostalgia uses the past “falsely” in “specially reconstructed ways”, but it is not the product of the past
- Nostalgia is memory with the pain removed

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# What is “nostalgia”?

- Nostalgia is the continuity of identity in the face of new demands;
- Nostalgia thrives on transition;
- “...the nostalgic reaction is most pronounced at those transitional phases in the life cycle that exact from us the greatest demands for identity change and adaptation” (Davis 1979: 49)
- Pathological condition bordering on depression

# What is “nostalgia”?

- “Nostalgia is a mourning for the impossibility of mythical return, for the loss of enchanted world with clear borders and values”
- Nostalgia, as a historical emotion, is a longing for that shrinking “space of experience” that no longer fits the new horizons of expectations.”

Svetlana Boym,  
Professor of Slavic and Comparative  
Literatures at [Harvard University](#)

# Three conditions for nostalgia:

1. Linear time
2. Deficient present
3. Material objects from “the past”

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# Nostalgia and its relevance for social sciences

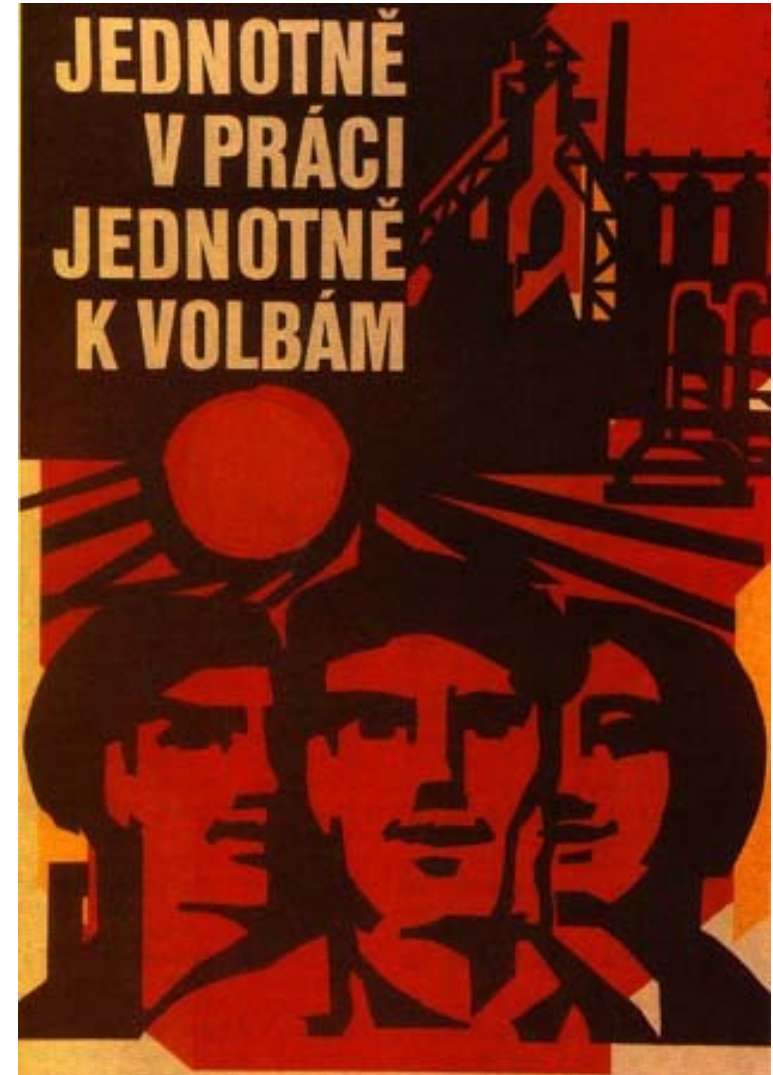
- Nostalgia is a “psychological telephoto lens” that “Idealises the past and presents it as a sentimental realm of pure innocence. **Nostalgia idealizes its object**”
- Module can be placed in general field of
  - Politics of nostalgia
  - Politics of decline

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# Post-war and post-colonial Czechoslovakia

- The main Czechoslovak clichés constantly brought up about the past socialist/communist regime:
  - Housing
  - Labour
  - Vehicle Industry



# Post-war Sweden

- clichés brought up about the past:
  - Unemployment almost disappeared from Swedish consciousness in post-war period
    - However found again in 1990s
  - Housing

# Nostalgia in Sweden

- Reaction to:
  - European integration
  - Geopolitical change around the Baltic sea
  - Rapid industrial change → knowledge economy and neocolonial
  - Diversity policies
  - Younger generation confronted with new social reality, compare to the generation of their parents
  - Generation who grew up in steady welfare and economical expansion have to confront their children with new reality

# 2005 and 2006 debate on Swedishness

- Nordic modernity – gender equality, work ethic, secular Protestantism, consensus culture, assumptions of sameness, cultural homogeneity

VS.

- Perceived threats like Muslim communities

= delayed post-colonial debate in Swedish academic discourse

- Sweden Democrats – Swedishness is under a siege

# Sweden Democrats

- Nationalist response to the nostalgia
- „Looking to history for sources of identity in a time where, allegedly, all identities are in flux.“ (Andersson 2009: 241)
- Roots in Nazi movement: party leader Anders Klarström associated with the Nazi Nordic National Party
- Ties to white power movement
- founded in 1988
- Today's chairman: [Jimmie Åkesson](#)

# Party in parliament

- 2010 elections – in Parliament for the 1st time: 5.7% (20 seats)
  - (4% election threshold)
- 2014 elections: 12.9 % (49 seats)
- In isolation; no cooperation with other parties
- 2018 elections?

# Sweden Democrats

- „Cultural reproduction of the Swedish nation is a central theme running through all of the gender-related effort of Sweden Democrats.“ (Towns, Karlsson, Eyre: 2014)
- Xenophobic populist party
- 1991-1994 – New Democracy
- Cultural racism is central

# Sweden Democrats

- Women to a lesser degree than men vote and participate in these parties (Towns, Karlsson, Eyre: 2014)
- Migration sceptics, anti-immigration, nativism, xenophobia  
xxxx racism
- Racism expressed in ways which does not include „race“



# Sweden Democrats

- Exclusionary racism – getting rid of them, losers' racism
- Exploitative racism – winners racism, labor force that can be used for low-paid work, aspect of global reproduction of capitalism  
(Mulinari and Neergaard 2014: 45)
- Patriarchal order at the heart of men's support of the party
- Concept of caring racism: party creates community where people care for each other, time and resources for common good, caring of their people, women- caring mothers and men- protectors and caring fathers of the nation  
(Mulinari and Neergaard 2014: 53)

# Anti-immigration, anti-liberal: meet Sweden's far-right future – video Guardian

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A84b7qIxQMU>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2015/nov/23/meet-the-young-supporters-of-swedens-far-right-video>

# Spot I.

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VR-lAGj\\_dIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VR-lAGj_dIQ)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pumIT31qqQQ>
- <https://youtu.be/n40tm2P374w>

# Questions:

- Do you think that nostalgia is somehow present in the heritage of your nation, country, ethnicity, minority, ...?
- Can you identify the main features of nostalgia within your nation, country, ethnicity, minority, ...?
- Does it have any nationalist outcomes?

