

## **Reactivating the past: a case study analysis of a non-museum-based Yugo-nostalgic exhibition in Serbia**

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### ***Abstract***

With the dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia followed by ethnic cleansing, massacres, and the urbicides of large cities, such as Sarajevo, Vukovar or Mostar, the discourse of “brotherhood and unity” was suppressed, and any sense of it being genuine has been lost.

The policy of multiculturalism was instantly transformed into a re-emerged nationalist policy, and the institutions dealing with the representation of the memory were reinforced in order to re-define, construct, or at least upgrade the new interpretation of the recent past from the new national perspectives. Since the fall of the Milošević regime, the politics of memory has been transformed into new sets of visual representations. One of them is the Yugo-nostalgic competing discourse that was visualized recently through a temporary exhibition based on a private initiative. In this article, the contemporary image of the given type of nostalgia through case study research of a Yugo-nostalgic exhibition, which took place in Belgrade from October 2013

January to 2014 is analyzed. The main elements, events and personalities that were selected for construction of the newly actualized trend are recounted.

**Keywords:** Yugo-nostalgia, exhibition, Serbia, Belgrade.

## Introduction

Starting in the 1980s, Serbia introduced the actualization of previously oppressed issues and, in such way, reinterpreted its past. Selection, fragmentation or absolute negation became a new political framework closely tied to the aggressive nationalist politics of the Milošević era. Historical revisionism and a discourse of self-victimization became predominant methods of popularizing the history. The role of the Serbian Academy of Science, various nationalist novelists, such as Dobrica Ćosić, and media that were actively reinforced to produce news about ethnic conflict (Malcolm (1996): 338) were ultimately constructing the nationalist discourse, fixing and legitimizing Milošević's politics of military intervention.

The revision of the Second World War with the new emphasis on the crimes committed by the Partisans, the authoritarianism of Titoist

Yugoslavia, and the redefinition of the figure of Draža Mihailović and the Chetniks constructed a new ideological imagination of the past. Anti-communism, nationalism, and traditionalism became the key ideological tools, and the Second World War discourse was used as a fertile space for the reinterpretation of the past in this regards. The Chetniks became a perfect figure representing these new ideological values. Additionally, the actualization of discourses related to the Second World War made it easier to compromise the victory of Tito's Yugoslavia policies (Stojanović (2011): 232).

The narrative of "brotherhood and unity" became marginalized, freeing up space for newly- emerged nationally-based narrations in Serbia. In order to justify the wars in the former Yugoslavia, a new national historical consciousness was implemented. It "was a blend of [the] delusion of grandeur, and self-pity, of national arrogance and self-victimization" (Stojanović (2011): 224). However, the fall of the Milošević regime did not end the decades-long ideology, which he had embodied. The nationalist mythical frame, accompanied by an anti-European discourse, an imaginative "Serbianness", and the negation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), remains to be exploited at different public discourses even fifteen years later (Horton (2011): 177, Stojanović (2011): 232). As an example, the rhetoric of Vojislav Koštunica and other representatives of DSS party who try "to unite the Serbs around a romantic and nationalist version of anti-communism" can be mentioned (Buchenau (2011): 124).

Democratic progress is fragile; many sectors of the economy, such as the oil industry and Serbian Telekom, are state monopolies, “the government is the generator of corruption” (Ramet (2011): 9), history textbooks remain under the publishing monopoly of the Council for Textbook Publishing that is closely related to reliable members of the ruling parties (Stojanović (2011): 223) and finally, the free media as well as liberal elite and civil society have been marginalized” (Dulić (2011): 30).

Describing the contemporary political, economic and cultural situation in Serbia, experts give quite dark evaluations. Thus, in 2005, Washington’s Heritage Foundation has ranked the country near the bottom of the economic freedom index. Additionally, Serbia is characterized by the high level of corruption and a transit country for trafficking illegal drugs, with the center of such activity in the Sandžak region (Ramet (2011): 8). In 2007, Transparency International ranked Serbia below Mauritania, Madagascar, Lesotho, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Botswana on its corruption perception index (Ramet (2011): 9). Another alarming phenomenon, which was cited by the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, is the different types of violence in all spheres of public life, such as street, domestic and institutional violence (Dulić (2011): 28). This is accompanied by the retrograde ideologies and open homophobia (Dulić (2011): 28).

Even though the pre-conditions for the overall neglecting of the civic values and nationalism patterns may be found in the habits and culture,

according to Ramet the main “success” in the actualization of the nationalist rhetoric is that of the Serbian elites who have used its special strategies and tactics over the past quarter of a century (Ramet (2011): 10). Dulić (2011) is of a very similar opinion, claiming that Serbia’s transition has been an elite-driven and did not change after the death of Milošević.

As the reaction to the unceasing state intervention into the economy, education, and media, concurrent discourses are emerging, one of which is the Yugo-nostalgic discourse, working as one possible reaction to the homogenization of identity and provoking the multicultural patterns that were oppressed during the period of Yugoslav disintegration (Boskovic (2013): 57).

Our empirical research will draw some attention to the latter aspect and will deal with an analysis of the construction and representation of the vision of the recent past in the public sphere. Nevertheless, we assume that this article will not be able to cover the broad dimensions of the representation of nostalgia in Serbia, which has to include different actors and institutions, but rather draw attention to the trends of actualized memory through the unique content of the non-museum-based exhibition that took place in Belgrade. We aim to analyze the elements through which the Yugo-nostalgic discourse is constructed, what events or personalities are displayed and how, consequently, the image of the socialist past is represented.

We have applied the analysis of visual data and a semi-structured interview with the guides of the exhibitions as the most relevant methods for our research. In the following section, we will describe our findings dedicated to the exhibition, specifically regarding the location, main elements, and predominant discourses.

In the next section, we will present the main aspects of the research subject.

### **Some Finding on Nostalgia**

Yugo-nostalgia is evident in almost every corner of the former republics (Buric (2010): 227, Velikonja (2008), Volčič (2007)) and may be included in the broader context of the nostalgia as a cultural phenomenon. The given phenomenon “has become a key term in discussions of the varieties of remembrance commonly practiced and represented in contemporary Western culture” (Radstone (2007): 112). We are observing the emergence of the new dimension of remembering through the whole Europe, which might be called the nostalgia boom. This boom is the reaction to the rapid social changes in the form of activated attempts to preserve continuity of identity (Davis (1977): 419). According to Dames (2001), it first acts as a reaction to the modern crisis

of identity. The identity construction is closely tied to the political dimension because the individual is constructing the imagined world of comfort and sanctuary as a reaction to non-satisfactory contemporary conditions of his life.

According to Velikonja (2008: 28), the main traits of a nostalgic narrative are ex-temporality, ex-territoriality, sensuality, complementarity, conflicted story lines, unpredictability, polysemism episodic nature

The key element, which is easy to find when describing the nostalgic phenomenon, would be its episodic nature, which eventually aids in understanding the mechanism of its vitality because it gives a “green light” to use a partial image of the complicated reality and to dismiss the political background of this event (Velikonja (2008): 28).

Traditionally, nostalgia has been associated with false memories and forgetting where the individual was seeking refuge from turbulence (Lowenthal (1989): 21), with the abuse of history and depthlessness (Radstone (2007): 114). It has different dimensions, including cultural, political and economic. The nostalgic affiliation may be divided into three perspectives: 1) nostalgia as a world phenomenon, 2) post-socialist nostalgia, typical for countries of the former socialist block, with a similar modus of collective remembering, and finally 3) Yugo-nostalgia, a typical phenomenon of the post-Yugoslav countries.

Consequently, the post-socialist nostalgias as any other form of remembering “works as a form of selective amnesia, idealizing the past by refereeing to the low unemployment rate and strong sense of community” (Cooke (2005): 104). It is criticized for structuring knowledge in such way that the real problems of the existence are negated, for instance, the problems of human freedom, lack of transparency or anti-democratic rule (Cooke (2005): 104)

When generalizing the features of the second dimension, the post-socialist nostalgia, Boyer (2010) defines five main characteristics of them:

#### 1. Nostalgia is Heteroglossic

The author uses Bakhtin’s term to emphasize the plurality of images and ideas that ground the nostalgic discourse(s). All of them do not homogeneously deal with a grief for or obsession with the past, but rather “represent the dialogical gossamer of idiosyncratic references, interests, and affects that are channeled through nostalgic discourse” (Boyer (2010): 20).

#### 2. Nostalgia is Indexical

This means seeing nostalgia as an indexical practice, the process of the ongoing identification of the person with the world, one lived before



from the collective memory experience (personal vs. collective identification).

### 3. Nostalgia is Allochronic

The given phenomenon is not limited to one region (Eastern Europe), and is not only the product of the local actors, but also the constructions provided by the post-colonial thinking of former empires.

### 4. Nostalgia is Symptomal

That nostalgia is a growing trend in all parts of the Europe.

Another author, whose research on nostalgia has become a classic in its field, is Svetlana Boym. She identifies two types of nostalgia: restorative and reflective. "Restorative nostalgics" do not think of themselves as nostalgics and believe that their project is about truth. "This kind of nostalgia characterizes national and nationalist revivals all over the world, which engage in the antimodern myth-making of history by means of a return to national symbols and myth" (Boym (2001): 41) Restoration signifies a return to the original stasis (Ibid: 49), where the reflective nostalgia's focus "on to the meditation on history and the passage of time" (Boym (2001): 49). In the empirical part of this paper, we will be able to observe what kind of nostalgia is represented in the chosen exhibition in Belgrade, but before moving to the analysis, we some types of the Yugo-nostalgia phenomenon should be introduced.

## Some finding on Yugo-Nostalgia

The bars and restaurants throughout the territory of the ex-Yugoslav countries that display socialist aesthetics with particular reference to Yugoslavia as a key structure of their design concept are an example of Yugoslav nostalgia. Such are the cases from Sarajevo (Velikonja (2008)), Podgorica or Ljubljana (Boym (2001)). The hotels or hostels decorated in similar styles are another example. Rock bands using the Yugoslav context for their songs (Volčič (2007): 33) or the media-scape of recently produced films reflecting on Yugoslavia, such as *Tito and Me* (1993), *Tito Among the Serbs a Second Time* (1994), *The Road of Brotherhood and Unity* (1997), *Marshal* (2000) and other are just some of the examples collecting the activation of the re-actualization of Yugoslav context. The hair salon where one can be styled with Jovanka Broz's unique hairdo or signs on the restroom reading "Tito" and "Jovanka" are other details of the puzzle. The two main Serbian football teams still use the red star as a part of their emblem and continue to use the socialist names of *Partisan* and *Red Star* (Bancroft (2009): 12).

The geography of the phenomenon is spread through all ex-Yugoslav territories, and a single place cannot be defined as a major center of nostalgia production and consumption. In our research, we would add to this collection our observation of the new form of commemoration practice: the exhibition.

Even though the phenomenon is visible in all former countries, the works analyzing the nostalgia in the post-Yugoslav countries are scant. The phenomenon was theoretically conceptualized by Velikonja (2008), its main forms were described by Volčič (2007), and its relatively new form of existence in the virtual space was analyzed by Boskovic (2013) and Mazzucchelli (2012).

Analyzing Yugoslav nostalgia, Volčič (2007) distinguishes three main aspects that reproduce the phenomenon political, cultural and economic field and typically overlap with each other.

1. Revisionist nostalgia, which works as a political type of commemorations and mobilizes the image of the past as an inquiry for revision of the official interpretation of the former period and as the renewal of a shared sense of belonging. Usually, revisionist nostalgia is visible as a form of public debates.
2. Esthetic nostalgia, which functions as a cultural phenomenon and aims to preserve an authentic Yugoslav culture.
3. Escapist, utopian nostalgia, which is the most ahistorical from all three types: the commercial phenomenon that is based on exploitation of the images of “idyllic” Yugoslavia.

Analyzing these highly eclectic, liquid and fragmented practices of the commemoration of the former past, Velikonja discovered that some of them (if not the majority) appeal to the image of Josip Broz Tito. The first and the only president of Socialist Yugoslavia is the element of the

nostalgia discourse that permeates the different imaginary spaces that could be classified as nostalgic. Therefore, Velikonja made a step forward in the classification of the given term and distinguished the sub-phenomenon of Titostalgia. He defined this as a nostalgic discourse on the late Yugoslav president, which consist of a series of disconnected discourses, each of which add some new elements to the contextual picture. The main peculiarity by which the image of Tito may be included in the nostalgia perception is the ironic decontextualization of the leader's image. For this reason, the real historical leader is of less interest to the nostalgic-sympathizers; it is the constructed image that is valuable. Titostalgia, therefore, is dealing "not with the resurrection and conservation of a real person, but it constructs the new utopian narrative of needs" (Velikonja (2008): 130). Titostalgia is a life of Tito's image after his death, the symbolic life after the physical life.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Yugo-nostalgia was analyzed on different levels with the application of broad verity of methods. Velikonja (2008) represents the theoretical conceptualization and allocation of the sub-phenomenon of Titostalgia, Volčič (2007) determined the core forms of this phenomenon, and Boskovic (2013) and Mazzucchelli (2012) concentrated on the analysis of the virtual Yugo-spaces. However, the phenomenon still lacks sufficient analysis in different dimensions, such as the ties with the political policies of the analyzed post-Yugoslav countries, the qualitative analysis with the representatives of the classified groups, the statistical data and comparisons on the number and characteristics of the given fragmented

groups throughout ex-Yugoslavia, the nostalgia economy, and finally the condition of memory policy in the representation of the given phenomenon in the public space.

### **The “Good life in Yugoslavia” Exhibition**

For this study, we have selected the case study analysis of the exhibition that took place in Belgrade, Serbia. We proceeded with the visual analysis in December 2013. We had several reasons for choosing the exhibition: the typical location, the fact that the initiator that does not have a direct connection to any of the museums in Belgrade, the declared nostalgic content, the massive promotion that accompanied the exhibition and the interest that the exhibition had among the visitors. The last argument is based on the pilot observation conducted near the entrance to the exhibition.

The location of the exhibition stresses its non-traditional character and place it in a different context than traditional ones have. The central area of the city (an upmarket shopping street with boutiques, restaurants and bars), everything connected with conspicuous consumption, was the place chosen to organize the exhibition. The two-story building is attached on one side to a *Sephora* cosmetic shop, on

the other side to boutiques included into a visually similar row. The entrance showcases are decorated with the pictures of eclectic products related to Yugoslavia: a *Zastava* car, a sausage kiosk, a package of coffee, a dental chair and a motorbike (Pic.1). The upper part of the showcase invites both in Serbian and English to visit the *International Exhibition of Good Life from 50's till 90's*.

Picture 1: Entrance to the exhibition



A young man in a Yugoslav police uniform is inviting pedestrians to visit the exhibition. He is smiling and allows to people to take photos with him (at no extra charge). Some of the passers-by are showing their interest and come closer to look inside the giant window to receive their

first instant impression on the value of the offer. The entrance door is transparent and bombards the observer with the Zastava car inside, with the retro-style coffee counter and food kiosk similar in style. When stepping inside, one notices that the kiosk is an imitation of the popular Belgrade sausage kiosk of the Yugoslav era. A young lady, dressed in a socialist sales uniform is preparing sausages, which one can buy at a reasonable price in Serbian dinars equivalent to several euros. Boiled eggs, coffee, and some other modest courses are included in the menu. The image of the seller is in contrast to the smart phone that she uses when nobody is buying food, the tattoos visible on her body and some piercings on her face.

The most popular product is the Belgrade hot sausage with a piece of bread. In socialist Yugoslavia, a similar kiosk was located at the city center, functioning both as a salespoint and as the common meeting place. We think that such places are valuable places of initiation of proper city identification and may be classified in the same category as city monuments, which play a role of city markers or identifiers of the urban landscapes. Additionally, if it became associated with a cultural urban custom, a sausage kiosk will be the point of one's initiation into city life. When the product symbolizes some collective taste while being popular, one becomes included in the shared city tradition. Symbolically, by trying the ritual food (sausage at this kiosk is no longer a simple sausage as in other places, but rather a sacral food), one confirms one's status as a 'real', 'true' visitor of the city.

Therefore, when the contemporary exhibition invites the visitor to re-actualize the lost tradition by using the Yugo-entourage and visitors' imagination, it imprints on the visitor's perception more deeply than any other type of museum exposition. It happens because the person is becoming involved in several additional levels of perception in comparison to standard exhibitions. One not only observes and touches the objects, but also shares/experiences the re-actualized common practice. Even if the taste of this sausage has little in common with its authentic socialist version, even if the waitress, with her piercings and tattoos, does not have much in common with the socialist waitresses, the act of involvement into the theatrical Yugoslav everyday practice makes the visitor believe in the deeper "realness" of it and establishes closer ties with the material performed at the exhibition. In such way, the mechanism of nostalgic attractiveness may be formed. The shared cultural practice based on the imaginary level creates the new utopias and new worlds of a country that never existed: the peculiar idea-landscapes, in the word of Appaduraj (1993).

Funding for this exhibition was private; a model of self-sufficiency is used. In our opinion, the organizers are using a for-profit model and thus view the exhibition as a business project with possible risks and possible profit. The reasons for considering exhibition to be a commercial project are the following: first, the leasing of premises; secondly, non-installation inside any of them; thirdly, the emphasis on the positive/nostalgic essence of the exposition.



The uniqueness of the given exhibition in comparison to other public representations is formed by a variety of the aspects, including:

1. It is based on private initiative and financial sources.
2. It is not located inside any museum building.
3. It is a commercial project.
4. It represents Yugoslavia in a selectively formed, positive way.
5. It uses the word “nostalgic” in self-description for the purposes of self-promotion.

In order to understand the main features and special details that construct the space of Yugoslavia, we will briefly describe the exhibition space and its sections.

The exhibition itself is located on the second floor of the building; an entrance fee policy equal to other Serbian museum fees is charged.

It contains detailed plaques in a current style, prepared both in the English and Serbian languages. The space is divided into sections, each of which represents a particular issue: for example, Yugoslav music, media, medicine, consumer goods, sport, traveling and so on. The descriptions of the plaques made for each of the sections are sufficiently detailed.

Each section is organized in the form of installation and attempts to present an atmosphere by reconstructing the average authentic view of

the private office, shop or a dental office. The first section displays the image of the socialist shop. Shelves are filled with Yugoslav products, and the center of the room is used for displaying the main element: the sales space, accompanied by a cash register, scales and small decorative details, such as the journal that the seller is reading (Pic.2).

Picture 2: Shop, Section of the exhibition



One of the sections is dedicated to the representation of a typical office. The room is decorated with a picture of Tito on the wall; a shelf with the small radio and table with several accounting ledgers on it. However, the significantly interesting item for us might be the plaque, which accompanies the section. It describes the function of through two roles: director and the employee. We will skip the whole description because it is too long, but will mention several important sentences. "To be a director in the context of workers' self-management meant more headaches than privileges...". Moreover, a description of the employee: "An employee was also a self-manager... He could complain about his small salary... director... director's secretary... However, he also could get a loan... and knock back a brandy on a break. That is why the employee came into his office every day".

The given description emphasizes the self-management system of the Yugoslavia and shows its benefits in an ironic manner. Through the text, one will find the reference to the real problems of self-management; however, the dominant strategy is to show the advantages of the given economic model by including it in the context of the everyday life.

The ironic context used on the plaque allows us to define the type of the nostalgia applied here. Boym (2001), whom we have already cited, defines two types of nostalgia: restorative and reflective. The first category of nostalgia is based on the nationalist revivals. Such nostalgics do not think of themselves in terms of nostalgia, but rather they believe that their project is about truth. Another type, the reflective nostalgia,

focuses “on the meditation on history and the passage of time” and, unlike the other category, which is deadly serious, it can be ironic and more reflexive (Boym (2001): 49). Consequently, we would define the exhibition to be a reflective type of nostalgia.

Another section is a room dedicated to Yugoslav media. The walls of the room are decorated with the prints from the different newspapers. The center of the room is occupied by the table on which dozens of Yugoslav magazines are placed. Each visitor is welcome to spend as much time as he wants by viewing comics, daily newspapers or soft pornography. Such participation contributes to forming a closer attachment with the given period of the history and, therefore, more attention should be given to it.

### **Innovative forms of participatory activity**

During our observation, the exhibition was used as an active and lively space of different forms of participatory communication. Visitors were invited to try, taste, smell, check, hear, and experience the issues of the each section.

The composition of visitors cannot be homogenized and consisted of very different age and social groups. A company of three young female students was using their smart phones to take produce selfies; the Yugoslav artifacts or the whole context of the section were used as a background. Simultaneously, several families and elderly couples were reading each plaque they encountered on their way through the education space.

The basement floor functioned as a store, selling Yugoslav-related goods and unconnected products, such as handmade apparel and accessories. In addition to the commercial offers, one found the continuation of the exhibition space, which portrayed a typical Yugoslav classroom. Different creative forms of participation activity were offered, such as the possibility to wear parts of a Pioneer uniform, perform as a teacher or pupil near the blackboard, and experience sitting at the desk and filling copybooks (Pic.3).

Picture 3: Participation activity, section of the exhibition



While traditional museums are usually working with two or three basic biological types of perception (visual, auditory and sometimes tactile perception), this exhibition expanded the interactivity with the gustatory and olfactory types of biological perception. The organizers created a space with a broad number of interactive possibilities: from the promotion of the “Yugoslav policeman” in front of the building to the “authentic” Belgrade sausage kiosk selling popular Yugoslav era food. The promotion of Yugo-nostalgic affiliation, the selectivity of issues for representation, together with contemporary methods of communication

generate the trend of the simplification of the past together with its deeper digestion.

We have described gustatory type: selling and tasting food; the olfactory type means the usage of the smell as an element of the representation. One of the sections dedicated to “The smells in Yugoslavia” invited the visitor to experience the smell of the everyday life, such as the smell of burnt milk, bread from the bakery or chewing gum. As the types of aroma connected to body care, famous perfumes such as Bulgarian Rose, Pino Silvestre or the after-shave lotion Brion were offered.

Altogether, smells construct a new dimension of the perception of the Yugoslavia and enable the reinforcement of ideas and stronger imaginary ties with the former historical epoch.

## **Yugoslav passport as the nodal element**

The distinctive nodal point of the exhibition concept may be understood through a significant material element in the system of Yugo-nostalgia: the Yugoslav passport. The accentuation of this element and its placement gold frame confirms our statement. The plaque, dedicated to the frame is titled ‘The father of all passports’ (Pic. 4).

Picture 4: Yugoslav passport, plaque from the exhibition



The text that accompanies is the following:

“Average Yugoslav had what no Russian or American had: a passport with which he couldn’t go only to Greece [sic] (due to the dispute about the name of Macedonia), Albania (because of



stubborn Enver Hodza) and to an insignificant number of destinations, in which not many persons were interested.

“Red passport of SFRY represented the zenith of diplomacy during the cold war and the world divided into blocks. It represented the best ranked passport on the black market, where its price reached the unbelievable amount of 10,000 American dollars”.

The connotation of the text affiliates the link with geopolitical discourse, the discourse of illegal economics, and the discourse of supremacy. The first is represented by phrases such as “zenith of diplomacy” with which the Serbian exhibition specifies Russia and the USA as the most relevant countries for reference and comparison; the second shows the relevance of the non-formal forms of economic activities (the black market), and mentions the better position compared to the countries-polarities (Yugoslav had what no Russian or American had) and the title (“The father of all passports”) constructs the discourse of supremacy and symbolic dominance.

The passport works as an element of collective fetishism, as the absorption and material symbol of the utopian world of the “golden age”, which is appealing to shared frameworks of memory. We do not consider the illustration of the passport to be a representation or confirmation of the historical period, because any artifact is dependent on the interpretative context or, in other words, to the discursive regime

into which it is included. The Yugoslav passport, like any other element, could have become the symbol of oppression, authoritarian rule, backward aesthetics or anything else if included in a different contextual framework.

## **Conclusions**

The title of the exhibition, which contains a reference to the “positive” image of the subject of its representation, puts itself simultaneously into a concrete frame of collective memory entitled “Yugo-nostalgia”. From the analysis of the plaques and the visual analysis of the exhibition, we have identified the given exhibition to be reflective nostalgia. The irony and reflexivity were the main elements that showed its anti-restorative nature. However, the difference between history and nostalgic representation is grounded in the selectivity of the facts and exclusion of the conflict-based memory. The utopian “national belonging” is portrayed as a conflict-free and closed period, carried by Yugoslav citizens who homogeneously shared the same beliefs, norms and traditions (Duyvendak (2011): 84). Such an image is constructed through, first of all, the dominance of the everyday life narrative, such shopping, work, the daily mail, or music. This exhibition, in this regards, may be identified as aesthetic nostalgia (Volčič (2007)), because it

attempts to preserve the culture of the Yugoslav period by displaying its media, music or design.

Another important characteristics of the given exhibition, which places it into a nostalgic context, is its commercial aspect. Commercialization is the leading aspect of the nostalgia when the past is transformed into a publicly traded commodity (Radstone (2007): 112). The commercial aspects were described by Volčič (2007), Velikonja (2008), Radstone (2007), Bancroft (2009) and others and are congruent with our observations. The exploitation of the Yugo-brand through commercial offers, such as the sausage kiosk or Tito statuettes, creates a world of “materialized nostalgia” (Bancroft (2009): 13). From another side, the re-actualization of the former period of the common history through the selected positive image represents the need for a revision of the existing narrations dedicated to the interpretation of the past. Simultaneously, the vitality of the utopian discourse indicates the dissatisfaction with the contemporary aspect of the living conditions, politics or economy. In the framework of the given study, we aimed to represent the new trend of Yugo-nostalgia in the form of a case study. We see our study as a small contribution to the analysis of the complex and diverse phenomenon. Further research on the relation between nostalgia and the political dissatisfaction may contribute to the understanding of basic patterns of political perception in Serbia. Such findings may become the logic development of this study.

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