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## Nostalgia, Anxiety, Politics

Media and Performing Arts in  
Egypt, Central-Eastern Europe,  
and Russia

Edited by  
Tetyana Dzyadevych

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# Nostalgia, Anxiety, Politics

*Media and Performing Arts in Egypt, Central-Eastern Europe,  
and Russia*

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*“Nostalgia, Anxiety, Politics: Media and Performing Arts in Egypt, Central-Eastern Europe, and Russia”, edited by Tetyana Dzyadevych, is an innovative interdisciplinary collection of essays that probes the complexities of collective nostalgia. Dzyadevych brings together a diverse group of scholars who open new avenues for analyzing the aesthetics of nostalgia across historical and contemporary socio-political contexts, with case studies ranging from Egypt to the post-Socialist bloc, including Romania, former Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. The volume contributors examine a wide array of media—film, music, digital photography, home videos, archival footage, circus arts, contemporary television series, and political campaign videos—to question the generation, channeling, and weaponization of nostalgia by media production agents. The book sheds light on the surprising and powerful ways in which the aesthetics of nostalgia shape contemporary political processes, offering insights into the global resurgence of populism and authoritarianism. It serves as a poignant reminder of how the manipulation of collective nostalgia through various media forms can influence contemporary political landscapes and shape the future.*

**Dr. Maria Khotimsky**

Department of Global Languages  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

### About the editor

**Tetyana Dzyadevych** is a researcher, commentator, and analyst of contemporary Russian and Ukrainian culture and literature. Currently, she works at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Before, she was an assistant professor of Russian and Eastern European studies at Grinnell College (USA) and a visiting scholar at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University. Tetyana Dzyadevych was born and raised in Kyiv (Ukraine). She received intellectual training and education in Europe and the USA. She holds a Ph.D. in literary theory from the University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin (Poland) and Slavic studies from the University of Illinois at Chicago (USA). Her area of interest is Russian and Ukrainian literature of 19th-21st c., politics and art; and visual and performing arts and pop culture. Her scholarship primarily focuses on works of the late Soviet period, perestroika, and post-Soviet period. Dr. Dzyadevych studies cultural production to explore and explain how art and literature shape and reflect their audiences’ political identities.

### Summary

This volume shows that the cultural production of nostalgia is a major tool for structuring feelings of resentment and anxiety. The current volume is concerned with collective nostalgia as it has been elicited, channeled, and weaponized by media production agents. The book aims to analyze how the performing arts and media (music, cinema, TV, etc.) generate and shape the feeling of collective nostalgia. It shows how the cultural production of nostalgia reflects distinct social-political contexts and serves particular political purposes. The collective monograph prioritizes cases from the post-Soviet context. However, the authors do not argue that the collapse of the socialist bloc in general, and the USSR in particular, has established some unique nostalgic precedent. The book claims that mechanisms of producing nostalgia and marshaling it for political purposes are broadly similar in most (modern or postmodern) settings. It is not our intent to demonize Russia, nor do we want Russia to be our dominant frame of reference, even if, in most of our cases here, ‘nolens volens’ appeared first in Russia-centric post-Soviet discourse. The “Russian bloc” has been placed in the second part of the book in order to give primacy to non-Russian subjects.

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**SUBJECTS** Cultural Studies, Media Studies, Sociology

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