

Nostalgia: On the healing power of a happy culture of memory

1 Of broken snow globes and discarded children's sledges

The American feature film *Citizen Kane* by director and leading actor Orson Welles from 1941 was considered the best film in film history for many decades by the authoritative film journals. The content is quickly recounted, even though the film left audiences irritated and was heavily criticised after its release in cinemas precisely because of its fragmentary scenic location and temporal presentation. Charles Foster Kane, who is regarded as the most powerful and richest man in the world, is a lonely old man dying in his castle and lets a snow globe, that nostalgic children's toy of a snowy winter landscape enclosed in glass, slip out of his hands. As he does so, he utters the cryptic last word "Rosebud". The press reporter Jerry Thompson is entrusted with the task of finding out who is behind the media mogul from a humble background. The reporter's research, which results from his interviews with Kane's former companions, is presented in unsystematic and seemingly incoherent individual sequences. And as contradictory and fragmentary as the presentation is, so too is the picture that emerges regarding the private personality of Citizen Kane. Not even his famous last word "Rosebud", from which Thompson had hoped to gain the final insight into Kane, can be elucidated in the many conversations and strained interpretations. And so the motivating core of the film also seems to remain open until the end. Frustrated, the reporter goes back once more to Kane's place of death, Xanadu Castle. There, a busy sorting and clearing out of the inventory is taking place. The few worthless items are separated from the many valuable ones and thrown into a large heating oven. Just for the viewer, as it were, the camera pans into the blazing fire. There, in the flames, an old wooden sledge becomes visible. It is the sledge from Kane's childhood, the last

toy before he had to leave his parents. Engraved on one of the slats of its seat is the inscription "Rosebud".

2 On selected everyday phenomena of nostalgia

It is anything but obvious to associate this completely unsentimental, sober and analytical film "Citizen Kane" with the theme of nostalgia. Nostalgia, this feeling already described in everyday language as dazzling, touching, even kitschy, does not play even the slightest role in any scene. And yet, to a certain extent, outside the filmic events, in the heart of the viewer, so to speak, contexts resonate that undoubtedly appear as nostalgic feelings. From the snow globe from childhood days to the despairing life balance of the aged and now dying citizen Kane, alluded to in the name "Rosebud", to the clearing out of his estate, a wide, often darkened and deeply soul-searching path stretches out. It is precisely the non-represented, sober and episodic aspects of the film that will be used as an example to describe some everyday phenomena in order to get closer to the phenomenon of nostalgia.

2.1 Decluttering: Objects between pleasure and burden

So at Xanadou Castle, after Kane's death, worthless objects are separated from valuable ones. The wealth found seems immeasurable. Only a very few things are discarded as junk. But no one asks how, for example, a broken snow globe and an old wooden sledge got into Xanadou's magnificent rooms in the first place. It should have been obvious to everyone involved in the de-cluttering that these objects were obviously taken and kept by Kane himself throughout his entire life, in all the residences of his unsteady life, through all the associated de-cluttering - possibly by himself. What also goes unnoticed is the importance that Kane obviously attached to the toy. But what might be the value of a kitschy snow globe or a simple children's sleigh?

Clearing out can reveal much of what memory, memory culture and the values reflected in them mean, no matter how long they have - apparently - been in existence.

remained unnoticed. Flat removals are often the occasion for such decluttering. Those who move are more or less forced to part with many things. Only a few do this with final determination and consistency. Some things no longer fit into the new flat in terms of space or taste. Others are judged to be unnecessary or at least insignificant. It seems strange, however, that suddenly a strange magic emanates from some of these objects, which triggers memories and feelings, even imposes them, and which would make leaving them behind or even throwing them away seem sacrilegious.

Moves that become necessary in old age, when the need for care has arisen and is progressing, for example when transferring to a nursing home, are particularly dramatic. Under certain circumstances, such transfers take place out of acute situations, hardly planned, within a few days. From clothes, inventory and accumulated objects of various kinds, which previously filled spacious flats or even houses, the most important things or those that seem important must now be selected, according to the dimensions of the future room, often not even 20 square metres in size. Clothes that suddenly remind us of celebrations and journeys, chests and cupboards that remind us of painstaking but successful saving, books and knick-knacks that tell us of the slow, proud growth of all our present possessions, must now be cursorily sorted out and disposed of. A world seems to be lost with them: one's own world, the world full of values, the world full of feeling, full of stories, full of meaning. And the more important, the more loaded becomes the little that is to be salvaged to the new, strange, alien place. The significance of places, of lived (v. Dürckheim 1932) and felt spaces (Bollnow 2004), the sense of their objects being coloured by them and vice versa, becomes clearest in the mode of their privatisation, which Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* (Met. IX 2, 1046b) uses the term *στέρησις* (*steresis* = privatisation) to describe ontological primary phenomena. In this sense, deprivations are, as it were, anticipations of future deprivations. In another, opposite sense, however, decluttering is not infrequently also experienced as liberating. For the attachment to rooms and their objects can certainly be a burden - and only appear as such after it has been unloaded, so to speak. This being able to let go and finally letting go

then create a new relationship, a memory-relationship that allows what is actually significant, which loved to hide behind what had not yet been let go, to come to the fore again.

2.2 Model railways: Arcadia on pressboard

There are toys that disappear never to be seen again after a single use in storerooms, attics or junk rooms. They are never retrieved because they have left no traces in the memory. And if by chance it should fall into one's hands again, perhaps during the clearing out of a move, then at most the awareness of the time that has passed since then impresses, if at all.

But there are also toys of a completely different kind, of such a kind that one can hardly speak of "toys" anymore: Stuff that captivates while playing, that begins to become strangely eloquent, important, highly significant and somehow fulfilling beyond playing. And this beginning seems to be a beginning even before the handling, even before the first contact. Its fullness and therefore also its fulfilment precedes it, surrounds it, radiates around it: the homeliness of the snow globe, the childishness of the doll, the cutting edge of the tin soldier, the speed of the model railway. Most of these things become companions for a lifetime. Although they may superficially lose their significance as toys and - also - become collectors' items, they seem to gain in fascination and emotional importance.

A strangely special position in this context is occupied by the model railway, which seems to be everything at the same time and in equal measure: it is a child's toy in which the interests of father and child meet in a wonderful way; it grows with the child in the truest sense of the word; it is expandable with almost infinite possibilities; it is a collector's item that increases in value; as a model, it almost always remains connected to the fascination and the elemental power of the original - be it the landscape, be it the sophisticated technology, be it the unimaginable power of the locomotives. The literary scholar, cultural anthropologist and researcher on ageing Helmut Bachmaier had described the phenomenon in his associations to the exhibition

"Young people's dreams" with model railways from 100 years of Märklin tradition expressed by the article "From Heine to Virilio, the history of a fascination": the history of the technical revolution, the history of the railway, has had vehement effects from the very beginning - be it in the thereby emerging

"panoramic" experience of the landscape whizzing by or in the technically mediated compensation of imperfect male potency (Bachmaier 1993). The extent to which such fascination has taken hold to this day is shown by a glance at the sheer vast range of model railway magazines, primarily to be marvelled at in metre-long displays at railway station kiosks. In Germany alone, many thousands of adults, mostly older men, are organised in more than a hundred model railway clubs and corresponding associations, always with relevant events on site, at the original locations, with special railway trips, in old wagons, pulled by enormous locomotives, which also make their rounds in scale and detail on the pressboard at home in the model railway rooms.

With the title of a contribution by Bernd Rieker in volume 3 of the Göttingen Studies in Cultural Anthropology (see Rieker 2016), one could describe the underlying events in the phenomenon of model railways as "Homo faber meets Homo ludens": two different, even conflicting souls in the human breast - that of the craftsman and that of the player - are brought together in the handicraft game of railway modelling. Yes, they are not only brought together, but merge, as it were, into an identity: model and original obey a semiotics that is only different in scale, in that they stand for the same thing. This fact may also explain the seriousness that is often observed in railway play. "And serious the competition certainly is in popular appropriations and stagings of rail transport, with questions of authenticity and historicity, of faithfulness to scale and closeness to reality, of technical sophistication and operational coherence of the game in the foreground" (Hörz 2016, p.23). In this respect, playing with the railway never shows a mere reduction and simplification of technical or natural reality. Rather, from a psychological point of view, the ambivalent representation of model and original leads to an exaggeration of the latter, in that the limited actional possibilities *de facto* become unlimited, always controllable and controllable fields of manipulation *de*

ludo, as it were, of an individual are transformed. In this way, not only an expandable image of the world is created on pressboard, but a creation that goes beyond this world, an ideal world, an Arcadia of an artistic kind, as it were. The cultural anthropologists Peter Hörz and Susanne Klenke indeed see in this a kinship with naïve art. "Last but not least, this affinity lies in the fact that the miniature landscapes created on the plate can be understood as expressions of opinion, votes of confidence or mistrust in relation to social conditions and cultural orders. For regardless of the fact that the design of model railway layouts is considerably influenced by elements of mass-produced mass culture, the layouts embody models of a life that the layout designers regard as the 'good', the 'good', the 'good'.

'right' or 'true' life is imagined" (Hörz, Klenke 2016, p. 116). In the same vein, Rolf-Ulrich Kunze, referring to the Märklin advertising of the 1960s, describes the occupation with model railways as "[...] a sensible, not to say moral, affair - not a child's play or pastime" (Kunze 2010, p. 121).

Far more profane than these depth-psychological interpretations, but no less impressive for that, are the system-theoretically oriented approaches that describe the return of the old in technology and its nostalgic persistence: "The old becomes so cheap due to production-side factors such as mass production that it can remain the dominant technology even when 'better' technologies are available, even those that are more user-adapted or objectively more functional" (Möser 2010, p. 20). But even here, the constructively produced identity of model and reality is evident - in a sense, in a spatial as well as temporal realisation by the handers.

2.3 Brands, Fashions, Minnesang: Nostalgia in Contexts of the Collective

At certain times, certain phenomena of the past - real or constructed - are brought into transfiguration as *pars pro toto*. They are almost always mediated by media and disseminated according to the potency of the mediating media available. The concept of such media is to be understood very broadly here and ranges from literary texts to iconography, visual art and music to

to fashions and product brands. The term "media" is only used in this context to express the fact that such idealised pasts do not have to be experienced by the individual and certainly do not have to be directly related to one's own nostalgic memories. In contrast to the latter, so-called *personal nostalgia*, the former phenomenon is called *collective* or *historical nostalgia* (Stern 1992).

When the genre of the chivalric novel reached its peak around the 16th century, the age of the knight had long since passed, and not only because of the invention of gunpowder. But it was precisely the obsolescence of such a status that led to a nostalgic wistfulness and projected onto the figure of the knight, which had become the ideal, a series of specific virtues, such as bravery, dignity, loyalty, courtesy and so on. This process, in turn, elevated the object of projection and, as a consequence, drove the motivation of self-identification with the virtue-bearers accordingly. A decidedly eager reception of the associated literature by its readership was initiated. The basic structure of the phenomenon briefly described can be recognised in several collective historical nostalgia phenomena: the antique nostalgia of the classical period, the castle and palace romanticism of the early 19th century, the Biedermeier nostalgia of the early 20th century, which in part still has a certain dominance today, as well as the nostalgia for fraternisation in the communist and anti-bourgeois movements of the later 20th century.

Retro advertising, the return of old brands and a media market in the music industry strongly oriented towards nostalgia are almost mass phenomena in our days, along with so-called Ostalgie and the current blossoming of memories of the 1968 movement (see Rettig 2013, p. 230 ff.). Such enormous dissemination is certainly also due to the almost universal and easily accessible availability in the age of the digital. Searches for nostalgic products of any provenance are effortless and most of them can be dug up and consumed in seconds. The product industry gratefully accepts the nostalgic phenomenon. But its importance and consumption also points to an obviously high and widespread need for such products among the corresponding target groups.

Many of them, but by no means all, are on the border of kitsch or even cross it. They then refer to a world, pink and decorated with bows, that is not the real world of their consumers. But it would be rash to speak of escapism or kitsch, especially if it is not clear what psychological and social functions are associated with nostalgia in its entire phenomenological range.

3 On the meaning of nostalgia in the mirror of science

In our days, the term nostalgia appears as a sponge, so to speak, that soaks up everything that has anything to do with a transfigured past, with beautiful memories from a time gone by, with sweet dreams and longings for present-day substitution. Nostalgia has become an everyday term that has lost all sharpness and seems to gain its special charm precisely in such blurriness. At the same time, however, a look at the history of concepts and science shows that the art term *nostalgia* was used to designate a narrowly defined clinical picture, namely homesickness, which corresponds neither to today's use of the language of nostalgia nor to that of homesickness.

3.1 Nosological: Homesickness and Nostalgia as Discourse Products

The scientific discourse on *nostalgia*, which can be traced from its beginnings to the second half of the 20th century, begins with the dissertation of the Swiss physician Johannes Hofer. In 1688, he submitted his treatise entitled *Dissertatio medica De Nostalgia, Oder Heimwehe* to the University of Basel. His Latinised technical term *nostalgia* is based on the Greek translation of the dialect word *heimwe* (νόστος - nostos = homecoming; ἄλγος - algos = pain), which is common in Switzerland. Ludwig Pfyffer, a Swiss general had used this German word more than a hundred years before Hofer when he tried to explain the strange cause of death of a Swiss soldier in a battle report. Nostalgia had emerged as a "discourse product" (Bunke 2009, p. 196) of the

medicine to meet exactly the same nosological criteria as any other disease term. Based on theoretical ideas of ancient humoral pathology and the contemporary idea of volatile substances (spiritus) bound to the pathways of the nerve fibres, Hofer uses a materialistic-mechanistic, to a certain extent psychosomatic approach to explanation in his dissertation: By constantly thinking of home in a foreign country, the same fibre pathways are always flooded by the spiritus and thus gradually expanded, so that finally more and more flow is the result. The other fibre tracts, however, gradually atrophy. Such a vicious circle leads to gradual physical deterioration and finally to the death of the affected person. Hofer and the physicians who followed in the discourse saw the only safe therapy as the return of the homesick person to his homeland. The dualism of mind and matter, widely propagated in the philosophy of the time, especially by Descartes in his *Traité de l'Homme*, published posthumously in 1662, permitted simple, often monocausal explanations for many phenomena in the human sciences. The fundamental principle of action could be described in two directions: From the forces deriving from the *passiones* or *perturbationes animae* to the physical, or vice versa, from the physical to the state of the soul. In this sense, the Swiss naturalist and physician Jakob Scheuchzer was able to formulate a contradictory disease theory of homesickness in his treatise *Von dem Heimwehe* (1705) only a few years after Hofer: The differences in air pressure between home and foreign countries alone were now seen as the cause of the fatal illness. Scheuchzer's physical-physiological explanatory approach contributed significantly to the fact that the concept of homesickness could subsequently be almost completely detached from its personal connection and - even in contrast to Hofer - could be applied solely to spatial change, without any temporal aspect.

It was not until the discourse on homesickness turned back from pathological or even forensic to non-pathological forms of the phenomenon, to which Karl Jaspers' 1909 dissertation on *homesickness and crime* contributed, that the way was cleared in the first half of the twentieth century for homesickness to be located in the normal human emotional household and from here

its particularity in the everyday, its differentiations and connotations. An important distinction that initially took place on a phenomenological level was introduced into social science discourse under the influence of Charles Zwingmann and his work (Zwingmann 1962). The dimension of the closely interconnected spatio-temporal in the phenomenon of homesickness, implicit in Johannes Hofer's work and already lost in Scheuchzer's, came up again and found a new terminological form in this context. In contrast to the more locally oriented term homesickness and in order to distinguish it from the scientific term *nostalgia*, which is identical to it, Zwingmann introduced the term *nostalgic reaction* by emphasising above all the temporal coordinate of the feeling, which seems to be grounded in the phenomenon of separation: "The 'nostalgic reaction' - as this phenomenon is to be called - is the most frequent reaction to a separation" (Zwingmann 1962, p. 308).

3.2 Existential: Personal nostalgia and its function as a resource

While the empirical research on homesickness, which emerged about twenty years ago and was designed for clinical intervention, seems to be fading out (van Tilburg 2005, p.), there has been a lively research activity in the field of social-psychologically oriented nostalgia research around Tim Wildschut for a good ten years. Starting from the everyday concept of nostalgia as "[...] a sentimental longing for the past" (Wildschut et al., 2006, p. 976), Wildschut and his colleagues initially investigated the content, trigger and function of personal nostalgic experiences in studies with different methods. Despite all the limitations associated with artificially induced moods and feelings as well as a narrow subject group of younger students, the results were obviously valid. In fact, these could be confirmed by a large number of subsequent research projects and extended to further questions.

In terms of content, nostalgic memories have the following characteristics: they are based on life sequences with the nostalgically affected person as the main protagonist. The significance of the sequences is also closely related to the subject of the experience. Mostly, nostalgic memories consist of persons or events.

These are usually related to losses or disappointments, i.e.

"contamination sequences" (Wildschut et al. 2006, p. 978). From a dramaturgical point of view, however, this ultimately develops into "redemption sequences" (Wildschut et al. 2006,

p. 978), i.e. events of redemption. Thus, in emotional terms, nostalgic memories usually impress the subject as rather pleasantly felt, thus revealing a significantly positive affective signature overall (see Wildschut et al., 2006, p. 981). However, their positive basic character always shows a moderate affective ambivalence, in that a small part of negative feelings such as sadness or grief is mixed in, so to speak. Finally, the characteristic bitter-sweet emotional quality of the nostalgic phenomenon results from this.

Wildschut and his colleagues identified negative moods and affects as the main triggers of nostalgic memories. The feeling of loneliness or abandonment plays a special role here. But conversely, social contacts and interactions can also lead to nostalgic reactions, such as certain topics of conversation with friends. Finally, simple sensory stimuli can also be identified as triggers. First and foremost are smells and scents, which are obviously remembered particularly well - especially if they occurred in corresponding nostalgically relevant life sequences and were loaded with meaning (see Wildschut et al. 2006, p. 982). In scientific studies (e.g. Barrett et al., 2010) as in countless everyday experiences, music also proves to be a frequent trigger of nostalgic reactions.

Unlike homesickness, nostalgic feelings impress as emotions that occur frequently in everyday life and are beneficial to the self on both the personality and social psychological levels. They increase self-esteem and generate or strengthen social bonds. "Our findings indicate that, like love, nostalgia bolsters social bonds; that, like pride, nostalgia increases positive self-regard; and that, like joy, nostalgia generates positive affect" (Wildschut et al., 2006, p. 989; see also Wildschut et al., 2010). In their publication *The past makes the present meaningful: Nostalgia as an existential resource*, Sedikides et al. (2012) transferred this approach to the question of the meaning-creating and meaning-strengthening

Effect of nostalgic experiences. The results of their studies show that the feeling of social connectedness that accompanies this does indeed have significant effects on the experience of meaning: Threat to meaning leads to an increase in nostalgic memories. Nostalgic memories in turn result in a subjectively experienced reduction of threat. Thus, they ultimately contribute to uncovering structures of meaning and significance in one's own past that have not yet reached consciousness and are thus hidden (cf. Bradbury, 2012). This can go so far that even in extreme, existentially threatening life situations, a loss of meaning can be mitigated or even averted through nostalgia (see Juhl et al., 2010). To sum up: Nostalgia lifts the mood, dampens feelings of loneliness, regulates fears, provides meaning and subsequently generates tolerance and optimism. These results have now also been proven on a psycho-physiological level. In five studies, Xinyue Zhou et al. (2012) showed an interesting connection between measured room temperature, nostalgic memories and their effects on various perceptions and judgements under laboratory conditions: The lower the temperature, the faster and more intense nostalgia occurred in the test persons. The reason for this was that the room temperature was estimated to be four degrees higher by the nostalgic memories. The physical discomfort was thus significantly reduced. All in all, from a psychological perspective, nostalgia can therefore rightly be described as an existential resource (see Vess et al., 2010; Routledge et al., 2012).

4 On the Phenomenology of Nostalgia

We know neither the feelings nor the exact thoughts of Charles Foster Kane as he drops the snow globe from his hands, dying, and the word "Rosebud", the inscription on his childhood sled, on his lips. But it is intuitively immediately clear to every viewer that memories and longings must be an important moment here in the face of a significant existential life situation. In its symbolism and density, the scene exposes, like a prism, the structure of a phenomenon by obviously consciously refraining from its mere emotional character.

4.1 Nostalgia as longing: structural features and differentiations

When it comes to the phenomenology of nostalgia in the further course of the present considerations, borrowings from an approach by Paul Baltes prove to be particularly helpful. In his *position paper: Entwurf einer Lebensspannen- Psychologie der Sehnsucht (Draft of a life span psychology of longing)*, Baltes draws on a broad fund of literature and phenomenologically oriented discussions and takes up a topic that seems to be structurally very related to nostalgia (Baltes 2008; Scheibe Jahr). He defines longing as "[...] an emotionally ambivalent experience [...] that occurs when one mentally turns to what is subjectively very important to one in life and yet is missing. Functionally, it is about the search for the perfect life [...]" (Baltes, 2008, p. 78). Baltes elaborates and empirically proves six so-called structural features of the phenomenon of longing: Personal utopias, the feeling of the imperfection and unfinishedness of life, dimensional three-temporality, an emotional ambivalence, reflexive and evaluative processes, and finally the symbolic meaning of the contents of longing. It is obvious that the structural features mentioned, each in its own right, can also be observed in nostalgia. Admittedly, such a relationship is not surprising, especially since even in everyday language the talk of longing can also be aimed at the past and is then used synonymously with the term nostalgia. What seems less intuitive at first, however, is the idea that the nostalgic phenomenon should also include the future and that reflexive processes should be recognisable in it. Doesn't nostalgia *overwhelm* us with the bittersweet flood of daydreams and carry us away with it - as toys of its own game?

4.2 Dynamic: Nostalgia and reminiscence

The talk of the "good old days", which has long become a common word in connection with nostalgic memories, suggests precisely the latter: the undifferentiated, beautifully coloured past, which seems to radiate its special charm above all from the fact of having irretrievably passed. But after the previous descriptions, it should have become clear that if one wanted to understand nostalgia as such sweet mash of memories, one could not even speak of memory in the true sense. For what is made of mere or

What makes supposed memory contents real memories is understanding, that reflexive and evaluative moment which, on closer inspection, is also inherent in nostalgia. "But if understanding is added, then memory becomes recollection, namely the coming to know something ('remembering' as coming to know something). Memory means precisely this process of mentally penetrating experiences, experiences and learning materials" (Bachmaier 2015, p. 143). The rational structural feature of nostalgia, which is increasingly being denied in everyday language, should therefore be emphasised and at least roughly elaborated.

Karl Valentin's well-known quotes that even the future was better in the past and that today are the good old times of tomorrow point humorously in precisely this direction. Seen correctly, there is even a kind of invitation in them. From the point of view of *ratio*, the critical, differentiating view of the present is structurally indistinguishable from that of the past or the future. Past memories, present experience and future expectations are expressions of the same appeal for a careful, responsible and wise handling of time. From this point of view, the sweet refrain from the horrors of the past can also be a refrain from the present and the future. On the other hand, the other extreme would be just as one-sided, even foolish: namely, to make the terrible and hopeless the principle of all that is temporal, as it were. And even if the times were, are and will be dark and threatening, it is all the more important to look for glimpses of light and thus avoid absolute, abysmal despair. For not only *in spite of this*, but above all *because of it*, as Hölderlin expresses it in his hymn Patmos, the saving always grows where there is danger. Thus the range of the rational and dynamic of nostalgia extends from toys that help to compensate, channel, project and shape - to the phenomenon of memory to which existential action and existential redemption are linked. In the chapter *Das Bild (The Picture)* of Hans Peter Richter's multiple award-winning book for young people *Damals war es Friedrich (It Was Friedrich)*, the now orphaned Jewish boy Friedrich (Hebrew: Salomon), pursued by National Socialist henchmen and like-minded neighbours, leaves his safe hiding place to find a missing old photo from his happy childhood.

former childhood with a German family friend. He needs this image more than anything else in the midst of these most terrible of times. Friedrich risks his life for nostalgic motives - and the fact that he actually loses it only underlines the significance of the otherwise incidental little photo of him, his parents and friends on a fairground carousel.

5 On the resolution: The eschatological depth dimension of nostalgia

In his recently published essay *Future-Oriented Nostalgia? Evidence from the eschatological literature of the Middle Ages*, the linguist and cultural scientist Alexei Burov uses the example of medieval texts to address the question of whether nostalgia - especially in times of the worst distress and hardship - is to be understood solely in terms of a rejectionist engagement with the present, or rather "[...] at the core of eschatological longing is not expectation, but a certain cataphorically oriented nostalgia" (Burov 2017, p. 7). Indeed, semantic turns and metaphors can be evidenced there that are largely consistent with the observations presented above. "One does not long for something unknown and inexperienced, but for events that lie in the future but are perceived as a fixed and inevitable part of the individual's life experience" (Burov, 2017,

S. 14). In a kind of counterfactual setting, the abysmal evil is not countered by hope, as would be expected from eschatological redemption scenarios, but by nostalgia: the experience of salvation and the expectation of salvation coincide. The *revealed* future is transformed into fact in the cataphoric act of nostalgia and no longer impresses as a blurred eventuality.

And so it is not surprising that Christmas, the festival of light and the appearing of salvation, in the fourth century AD was placed on the date of the day of *sol invictus* set by the Roman Emperor Aurelian, i.e. on this time when the sun achieves victory over the night. And it is equally unsurprising that Christmas in winter is regarded as a festival of nostalgia - with all its positive and negative side effects. In any case, however, the eschatological and liturgically relevant texts of the Old and New Testament at Christmas

The New Testament provides a forward-looking, dynamic framework of countless nostalgic experiences that have always been able to warm people in the truest sense: Peace (Isaiah 9:1-6), justice (Psalm 96), reconciliation (Isaiah 11:6-9), comfort (Isaiah 40:1-11), joy (Isaiah 52:7-10). In this sense, nostalgic memories and nostalgic objects - be they snow globes, model trains or photos from childhood days - could be understood as symbols that point far beyond the maudlin, bittersweet self-centredness of some of their bearers and are capable of shaping a happy culture of remembrance.

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