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Summary
(Post)memory of war.

Contemporary interpretations of war crimes among the Bosniaks community.

The dissertation entitled: “(Post)memory of war. Contemporary interpretations of war crimes among the Bosnian community” is devoted to the problem of memory of the Balkan conflict and its transmission to contemporary ethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The undertaken reflections were guided by a general idea that the past is a part of the present, because it is constantly present in our lives. Martin Pollack in his introduction to *Topography of Remembrance*, rightly remarked that “great history will be easier to understand” when we take a look at it “from the inside, from the perspective of individual experiences”¹.

The main goal of this dissertation was to show the contemporary ethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the perspective of the second generation of the Bosniaks community. That is why it was crucial to get to know the individual viewpoint of young people on past events. The researcher was interested in the attitudes of second-generation representatives towards the crimes committed during the war in 1992-1995, and the impact of this crimes on the ethnocultural identity of young Bosniaks. The framework of the research reflection was the category of memory, analyzed from different research perspectives; both through the prism of post-memory, as well as studies on the politics of memory.

From a general point of view, we can consider that the work is fully inscribed in the field of memory studies. The author analyses her research results mainly in the context of the theories of the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (social framework of memory) and the German Egyptologist Jan Assmann (cultural and communicative memory). Reference is also

¹ M. Pollock, *Topografia pamięci*, Wołowiec 2017, p. 5.

made to Pierre Nora's concept of places of memory (*lieux de memoire*), as well as to the already signaled idea of post-memory by Marianne Hirsch.

The choice of topic was influenced by various factors. One of them was the lack of sources dealing with the memory of the second generation in the Balkan context, although the subject of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its consequences, as well as issues related to the identity of the Bosniaks, has been repeatedly discussed in scholarly circles, both in political, historical, and anthropological terms. Since a similar scarcity of sources applies especially to the Bosnian context, it had a decisive influence on the author's choice and clarification of the research area.

The initial and most important research objective was to determine whether post-memory affects contemporary ethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the research, new questions arose:

1. Is there an inherited post-war trauma among the second generation?
2. Is it possible to speak about the nostalgia of the second generation (postnostalgia)?
3. Does post-memory have an impact on the rise of nationalism?
4. What impact does the Bosniaks politics of memory have on the perception of war?
5. Has intimate memory been infected by the politics of memory?
6. What impact does the Western narrative have on the perception of war?

A deeper reflection on memory, both from an individual, intimate, and collective perspective, makes it easier to understand the meaning of many behaviors of the Bosniaks community. After a deep analysis of the collected material and a comparison of many of the statements, it seems legitimate to conclude that these are learned discourses (even “speeches”) on specific topics. However, the narratives of the interviewees are shaped differently when the subject of the interview touches upon a more intimate area – when someone close to the interviewee is involved in the reported event, then the respondent's view of the problem is quite different. It is often based on deeper reflection and privatizes the family's wartime experiences.

As a result, the respondents often expressed certain dissonances between their personal narratives and the course of events in the 1990s. Hence, it seems to the author that the young generation is simultaneously “ruled” by three types of memory – individual, national, and Western.

History, memory, and knowledge of the past is helpful in rebuilding the postwar community, however at the same time it tends to distance it from the community's readiness to co-create the “universal” truth about past events. This problem is particularly evident in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, studied by the author, where a number of different “memory booms” seem to result in the maintenance of social divisions rooted in history. Interestingly, the observed confrontation of different versions of memory takes place not only at the inter-ethnic level, but also at the intra-group level.

The case of young Bosniaks is a perfect example of the fact that the inhabitants of the region have many narratives about the past. What is more, they do not always know in which context to implement one of them. During the research it was clearly noticeable that the interpretation of the past was different in an individual conversation with the researcher than in a group of friends.

Moreover, the respondents' statements also differed depending on whether they were said during conversations in a group of students or in conversations with friends from the place of origin. It was also not uncommon to see "attempts to cut off memory" on the one hand and, on the other hand, attempts to free themselves from national narratives.

The research material and its comprehensive analysis allowed us to determine how the multiple voices on the war past perceived in the field and the accompanying cognitive dissonances among young Bosniaks influence the condition of interethnic relations in contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina.