Post-ness and cultural sustainability: Postmemory of the postgeneration in post-industrial cities in Serbia

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The research is driven by basic question: "What happened to the former working class in Serbia – once the driving force of socialist development, today mostly unemployed, shattered, isolated from the society as disregarded burden, and left on its own?" The emphasis is not only on the members of the working class itself, but on their descendants too – members of the second generation (Berger and Berger 2001), postgeneration, and wider community. The paper examines how the (un)experienced past affects their lives and identity-shaping nowadays, building on the emerging discourse on the concept of postmemory (Hirsch 2001), and offering a reflective insight into the intergenerational and indirect inheritance of memory and suffering. By discussing if the postgeneration is able to distance from someone else’s past, the paper explores its role in shaping collective identities and "sense of place" by fostering increasingly disappearing memory of/on the working class.

Having in mind local experiences and examples based on the concept of active citizenship (Landry and Bianchini 1995), the author perceives postmemory as a precondition for cultural sustainability and rise of new developmental visions within the former working class, as well as for sustainable development of working-class neighbourhoods within post-industrial cities in Serbia.

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