



Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black



Међународна научна конференција
**РЕГИОНАЛНИ РАЗВОЈ,
ИДЕНТИТЕТИ И ДЕМОКРАТСКА ИНТЕГРАЦИЈА**
6–7. октобар 2023, Ниш, Србија

International Scientific Conference
**REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
IDENTITIES AND DEMOCRATIC INTEGRATION**
6th and 7th October 2023, Niš, Serbia



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КЊИГА САЖЕТАКА
BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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BELONGING AND IDENTITIES OF THE SECOND GENERATION OF *EXILES* – THREE CASE STUDIES

In this paper, we searched for an answer to the question of how the descendants of exiles self-negotiate the issue of personal, family, and collective identity and belonging in the light of the experiences of collective trauma to which their family members were exposed in the wars of the 90s of the 20th century. The assumptions from which we started are - that the tragedies of families and collectives are kept as family secrets, that our young interlocutors have little knowledge of this, and that they justifiably assume that stories about these events reached them only in fragments. Furthermore, the descendants of exiles face “truncated belonging”: they are neither here nor there, and they have no clear idea of where home is. To test these hypotheses, we talked to three young men who were born after the exile of their families and collectives from their homeland. Our respondents confirmed that family tragedies are rarely talked about, but the thought of the existence of such secrets occasionally “overflows” into their consciousness and causes a series of unpleasant feelings. They are constantly self-negotiating about Who are they and where do they belong? They cannot define own identity, and in this conditionally speaking confusion, they are held by the firm determination of their parents that they belong somewhere else, as well as the fact that all three were exposed to rejection by their peers from the environment in which they grew up because they are recognized as *different*. These findings should worry us and encourage us to deal more with the topic of exile and identity both in the domain of public discourse and in the scientific field, since a good part of the inhabitants of our country bear the trauma of exile in their (in)direct experience and it is justified

to assume, the feeling of “homelessness”. Finally, in the face of such human suffering, it is not ethical to remain silent.

Key words: exile, collective trauma, identity, home