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Transnational Educational Strategies during the Cold War: Students from the Global South in Socialist Yugoslavia, 1961–91

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Introduction

Unlike Great Britain, France, and Germany, which historically attracted students from Central and Eastern Europe (Karady 2004), Yugoslavia had no tradition of international education. In the 1960s, when students began to arrive from neighbouring countries such as Albania and Bulgaria, a rapidly developing education system enabled Yugoslav universities to admit them. After Yugoslavia gradually turned to the Global South following its expulsion from the Cominform in 1948, "foreign students" – mainly from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia – grew from only a few dozen in the mid-1950s to over nine thousand in 1984–85 (Savezni zavod za statistiku 1965 et seq.). Its rapprochement with the "Third World" accounts for this sudden influx. Other factors that have largely been overlooked point to the importance of social conditions in receiving international students in Yugoslavia. The large-scale changes in the social structures of the state and the education system and the growth of the professions and industry are the less visible factors behind these student inflows.

Since Yugoslavia had one of the highest illiteracy rates in Europe during the interwar period (Martić and Supek 1967), the mere presence of international students had a social, political, economic, and cultural significance. It affected the outlook of Yugoslavs beyond the high echelons of diplomacy and foreign trade. Still today, the Patrice Lumumba university dormitory in Belgrade bears the name of one of the most emblematic figures in the struggle

for an independent Congo.[1] Students organized large demonstrations in Belgrade and attacked the Belgian Embassy after his assassination on 17 January 1961 (Fichter 2016). Historians have shown that such expressions of solidarity affected socialist societies, writ large beyond diplomacy, allowing a second generation to "develop new political subjectivities and identities at home" (Mark and Apor 2015, 856), what could be termed in this respect a "Yugoslav habitus."[2] Yet despite the abundance of sources, both archival and nonarchival, studies on the "new socialist internationalism" have rarely considered the perspectives of the protagonists of the Third World in this transnational dynamic (Sanchez-Sibony 2014).

Much of the existing literature on international students in Yugoslavia has emphasized the nation's remoteness from both East and West, its investment in the largely non-European Non-Aligned Movement, and its own precarious status in global power dynamics (Lazić 2009; Bondžić 2011; Bogetić 2014; Kuč 2019; Mitrović 2015; Wright 2020). Along with social ownership and workers' self-management, Yugoslavia made its non-alignment one of the key principles of its specific form of socialism (Kardelj 1979), in the words of economist Branko Horvat (1976) "associative socialism." Yugoslav diplomacy, however, was just one dimension of the large-scale social change brought about by the construction of a socialist state. Anticolonial internationalism in the political, economic, and cultural spheres went hand in hand with the democratization of higher education, which provided the sociohistorical conditions for the production of a Yugoslav outlook, informed by non-alignment and "Third Worldism" (Robertson 2015).

Delving beyond conventional approaches in history, political science, and diplomacy, this chapter contributes to opening up studies of non-alignment to a greater variety of disciplines, sources, and methods. Rather than viewing the presence of international students in Yugoslavia as a by-product of its foreign policy of non-alignment, we view Yugoslav diplomacy as only one dimension of the large-scale social change brought about by the construction of a socialist state. We rely on a sociological field-theoretic framework (Dugonjic-Rodwin 2021) and combine, as a result, a review of Yugoslav archives with statistical data and interviews with alumni of Yugoslav universities from the period 1960–90. We place less emphasis on top-down policies pieced together exclusively from archival sources and focus more on the social conditions of reception to which the trajectories and the experience of international alumni

bear witness. How did the democratization of Yugoslav higher education inform the policy of non-alignment? What can be said about student flows and their evolution? Why did these students choose to study in Yugoslavia? In addressing these questions, we distinguish three levels of analysis: macro (global flow of international students), meso (the Yugoslav education system, institutions and programs for international students), and micro (experiences and trajectories of international alumni).

We also bring in a sociological framework to understand educational strategies in a transnational context. In a social and scientific context dominated by the culture of individualism (Elias 1983) and methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Shiller 2002), we are encouraged to value national contexts and individual variations over common traits and other levels of analysis. In spite of this individualist paradigm, Elias (1983) stressed that from the point of view of temporality, the relevant unit in history is not the individual but the specific configuration of social structures. In the case under study, however, individuals outlive institutions in the multiple countries through which they navigate. Indeed, students' trajectories are marked by contexts of changing political regimes in the countries of departure – be it in Iraq, Kenya, or Algeria – as well as the break-up of social structures in the host country, Yugoslavia. International alumni who stayed in Yugoslavia are therefore a case in point for questioning conventional views on transnational educational strategies as a form of social distinction at the national level. While this has shown to be a valid approach to internationally mobile elites, it is limited to studies of dominant classes and less valid for those of dominated classes, ethnicized and stigmatized social groups such as "foreign students" whether they are immigrants or stateless refugees. These are all social conditions that fragment and weaken cultural capital and decrease the profitability of educational qualifications (Serre and Wagner 2015, 447).

A Note on Theory, Method, and Sources

Internationally oriented elites have been said to accumulate national and international forms of capital by expanding across overlapping national and international boundaries. Based on cross-country comparisons, the consensus among scholars is to consider new forms of "international," "transnational,"

or "cosmopolitan" capital as resource multipliers (Aguiar and Nogueira 2012; de Saint Martin, Broady, and Palme 1995; Weenink 2008). Whereas the comparative advantage of field theory is to stress the joint action and multidimensionality of different types of resources (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic), hasty theorizing of new forms of capital often misses this point, considering Bourdieu's concept of capital as a variable whose "effects" can be isolated from others as in a regression analysis, the dominant form of quantitative inquiry in sociology, suggesting that capital is something people "have" (Besbris and Khan 2017, 150). Moreover, to study international trajectories, it is necessary to interpret data coming from different national contexts (David-Ismayil, Dugonjić, and Lecler 2015), which adds to the variations in historical periods and local contexts and represents an "epistemological obstacle" (Bachelard 2004) given the national anchoring of academic disciplines such as history and sociology (Heilbron and Sora 2018).

In other words, sociologists are still reluctant to analyze trajectories that fit into multiple national contexts. We focus on those who stayed in Yugoslavia, specifically Serbia, as a way to address this obstacle. It also allows us to construct international alumni in Yugoslavia as a case study for analyzing educational strategies in a transnational context of possible educational investments where economic and/or social capital may have been converted into cultural capital and its value more or less recognized on the market or in a social space or field – referred to as "symbolic capital" or "symbolic profit" (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990), a kind of resource that is defined by Bourdieu (1985) as the relationship between a property and its recognition within a given field, market, or society at large. Our interview questions thus focused on family histories and the individual trajectories to identify the different kinds of capital that defined students' origins and social positions. Rather than using interviews as illustrations or empirical evidence for arguments, we analyze them along with the social properties of the interviewees as advocated by Bourdieu (1981). This chapter describes their educational strategies; that is, the improvised investments, sometimes at a loss, these individuals made in a transnational setting and analyzes them in terms of their symbolic advantages and disadvantages; that is, their recognition or lack thereof in the host society (Bourdieu 1985). Note that the sociological concept of strategy does not designate calculated action in Bourdieu's field theory, but rather actors' capacity to improvise with regard to internalized dispositions, mental structures or "habitus," and external

constraints (Sapiro 2015). Their trajectories raise the question of the value of capital in its different forms (Bourdieu 1986) and within specific spheres of activity or "social fields," in particular its "reconversion," defined as a change in strategies of reproduction according to the specificities of different social contexts (Bourdieu 1972; de Saint Martin 2011).

The archives contain contradictory data on student numbers depending on the source: the Yugoslav Student Union, which dealt with practical matters such as residence, political, social, and cultural activities, or the Commission on International Cultural Relations, which awarded scholarships to international students and centralized their recruitment at the federal level.[3] The best option was to use data from the Federal Institute of Statistics (Savezni Zavod za Statistiku) for the period 1950–90, with the aim of considering the proportion of the official category "foreign students" among the total number of students and then comparing it with data for other countries. The archive collects documents produced by student associations and other official state bodies and lacks data not only on students' encounters with Yugoslav society and its members but also on their origins and social positions. Data on the fate of international students after their studies is missing as well. We have collected this data by conducting eight interviews in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, mainly in Belgrade and Vojvodina.

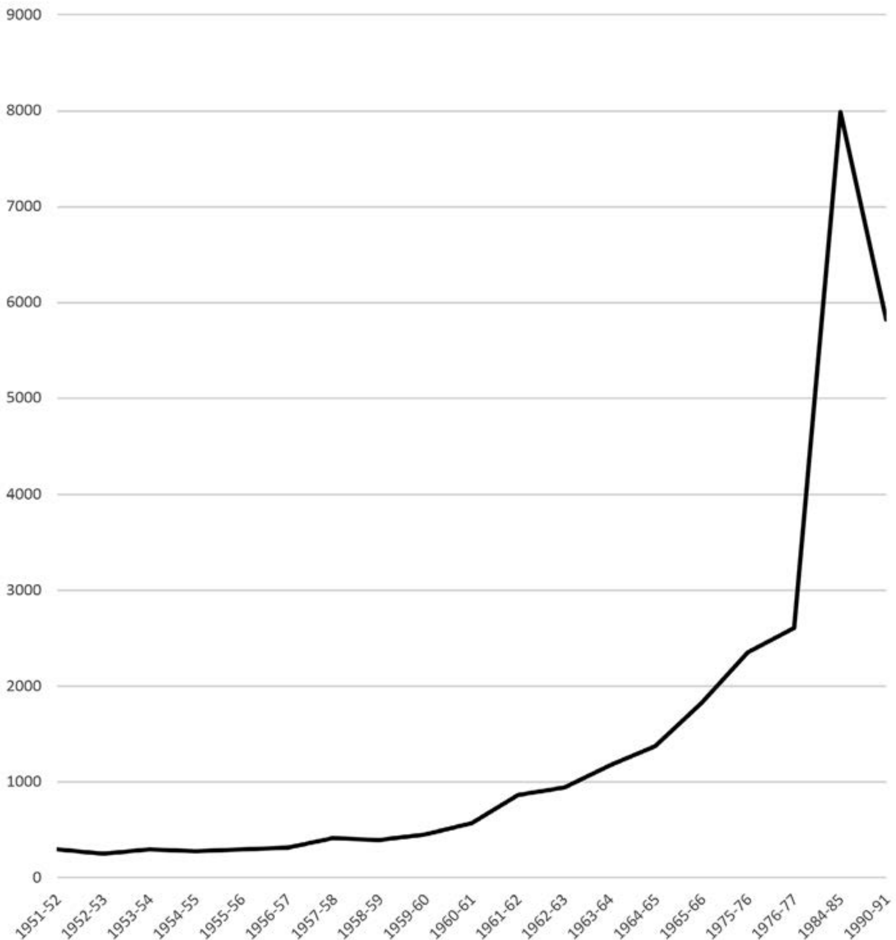
Given the limited resources[4] available for this study and the epistemological challenges of researching international trajectories evoked above, we decided to focus on those who remained in Yugoslavia during and after the ethnonationalist wars of the 1990s in order to have the same reference for the social structures of the "host country." We therefore excluded an exploratory interview that we had conducted with Asbneth, originally from Ethiopia, who studied economics in Belgrade yet settled in New York. In contrast to other scholars working on international students from the Third World, who were able to approach alumni associations like Soyuzniki – Russian for "associates" – in Montreal, Canada, we sought interviewees through personal and professional contacts and obtained a small "snowball effect." While interviewees were difficult to find due to the lack of alumni associations or other institutional structures, they were all available and enjoyed recounting their lives. Whereas female students were invisible in the archives, federal statistics presented fragmentary data, and interviewees' narratives shed light on the interdependence between gender and race as analytical categories. We plan to conduct more

interviews, including women and the children of alumni living in the post-Yugoslav space. The rest of the chapter is organized in two sections. We provide a brief portrait of higher education in Yugoslavia and the evolution of student enrolments from 1961 to 1991 to convey how non-alignment is constructed from below, based on processes of democratization and internationalization. We then focus on the ten-year period between 1955 and 1965 to analyze geographic origins before examining the trajectories of the interviewees and their social origins.

Democratization and Internationalization of Higher Education in Yugoslavia

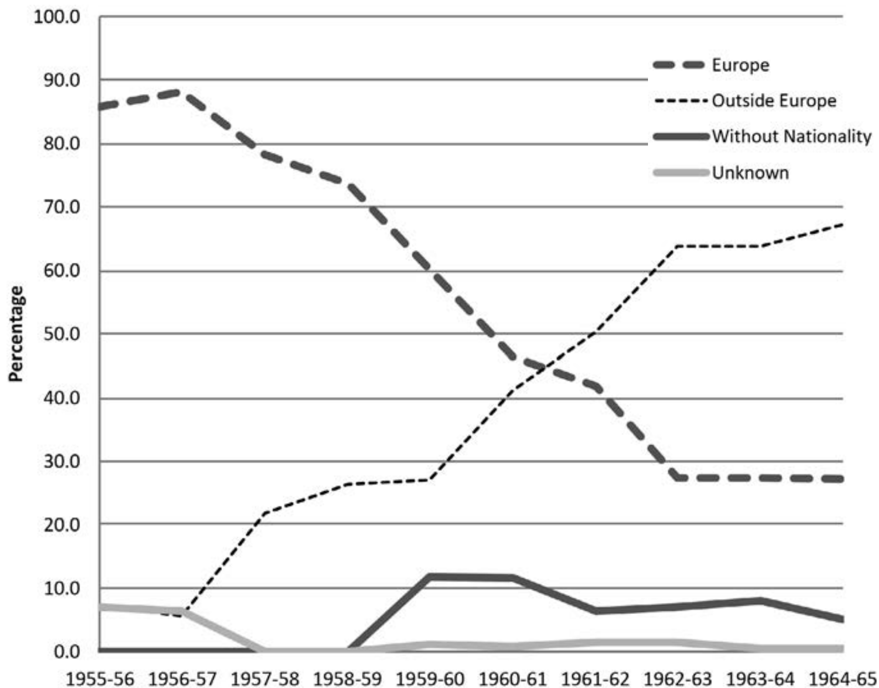
The democratization of education was rapid and widespread in Yugoslavia, such that the enrolment rate in higher education in the 1960s exceeded that of many highly developed European states such as Sweden (Castel 1968). However, unlike students in French universities, one-third of Yugoslav students came from technical schools or professional backgrounds. Despite variable framing of vocation-oriented reforms (Bacevic 2016), democratization was largely achieved through the expansion of technical education at the secondary level, as argued by Castel (1968). This presupposed two things: first, that technical schools were an effective preparation for higher education and second, that technical education had to be socially recognized (Martić and Supek 1967). Between 1939 and 1964, the number of students attending traditional secondary schools (*gymnasium*) declined, in contrast to the number of students attending technical secondary schools, which increased fifteenfold (ibid.). This growth in technical education brought Yugoslavia closer to the full enrolment of its population, dramatically reversing the prewar trend of widespread illiteracy, which had reached 50 per cent in 1938 (ibid.). No state in the region, either before or after socialist Yugoslavia, had invested so much in educating its people. This best illustrates how education entailed profound changes in social structures.

While there were only three universities before the socialist period – in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana – in the kingdom of Yugoslavia, there were 158 in 1975. The number of secondary school graduates increased tenfold; the number of students more than doubled in ten years, rising steadily from 54,763



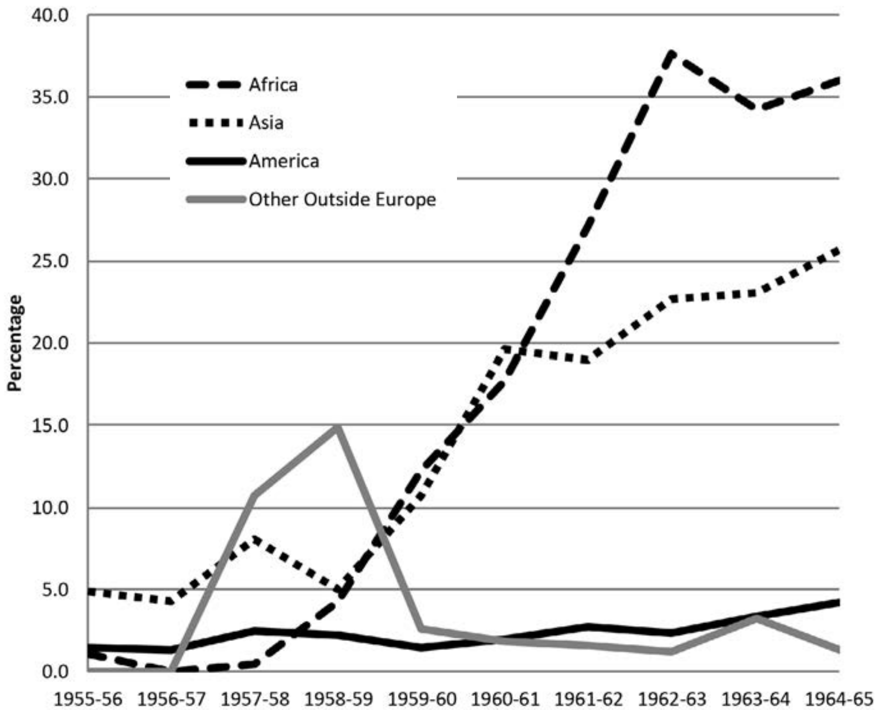
13.1 The evolution of students in Yugoslavia, 1951–91, in absolute numbers.

in 1951 to 140,574 in 1960 (see figure 13.1). In the postwar years, the main task of higher education in Yugoslavia was to train highly qualified professionals in economic, social, and cultural spheres. According to this criterion, socialist Yugoslavia ranked fourth in Europe, after Sweden, the Netherlands, and the USSR (Calic 2019). In 1954–55, among students with scholarships from twenty countries, a third came from India and Burma. When significant numbers of students from non-aligned countries began to arrive at the universities of Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Skopje, Novi Sad, and Sarajevo in the late 1950s, the



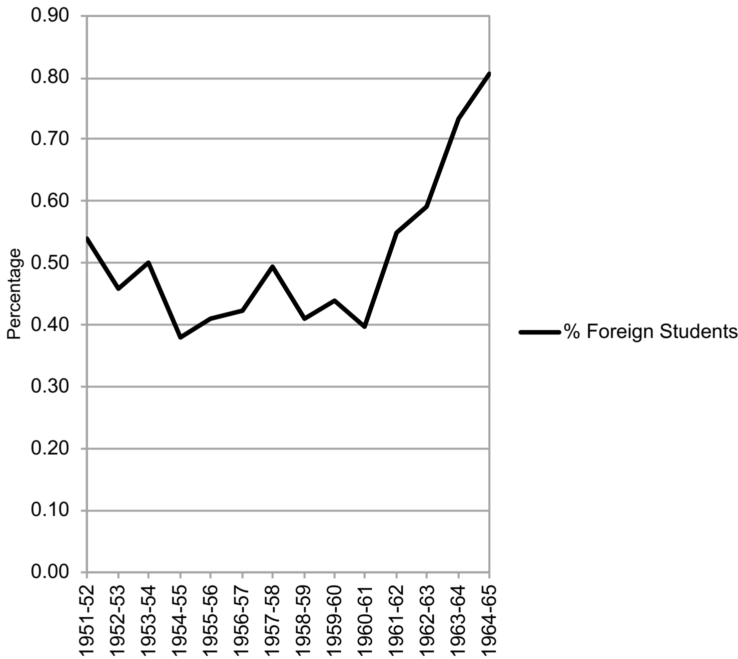
13.2 Proportion of international students by nationality, 1955–65.

proportion of non-European students surpassed that of European students in 1961–62 (see figure 13.2). The share of North and South America together was less than 5 per cent; however, there was a slight but steady increase throughout the period. The League of Yugoslav Students' Central Committee (Centralni Odbor SSJ) had predicted that the number of international students in Yugoslavia would reach two thousand in 1961. While this did not happen during the period under study, in 1961–62, more than half of all international students were from non-European countries, and after 1962–63, more than two-thirds were from outside Europe. Indeed, the number of European students declined over the ten-year period: in 1955, 85.6 per cent were from Europe, while in 1965, 76.2 per cent were from non-European countries (see figure 13.2). In contrast, the proportion of African students more than doubled in 1958–59 (4.3 per cent) and again in 1962–63 (37.6 per cent) compared to the previous year.



13.3 Proportion of non-European students by region, 1955–65.

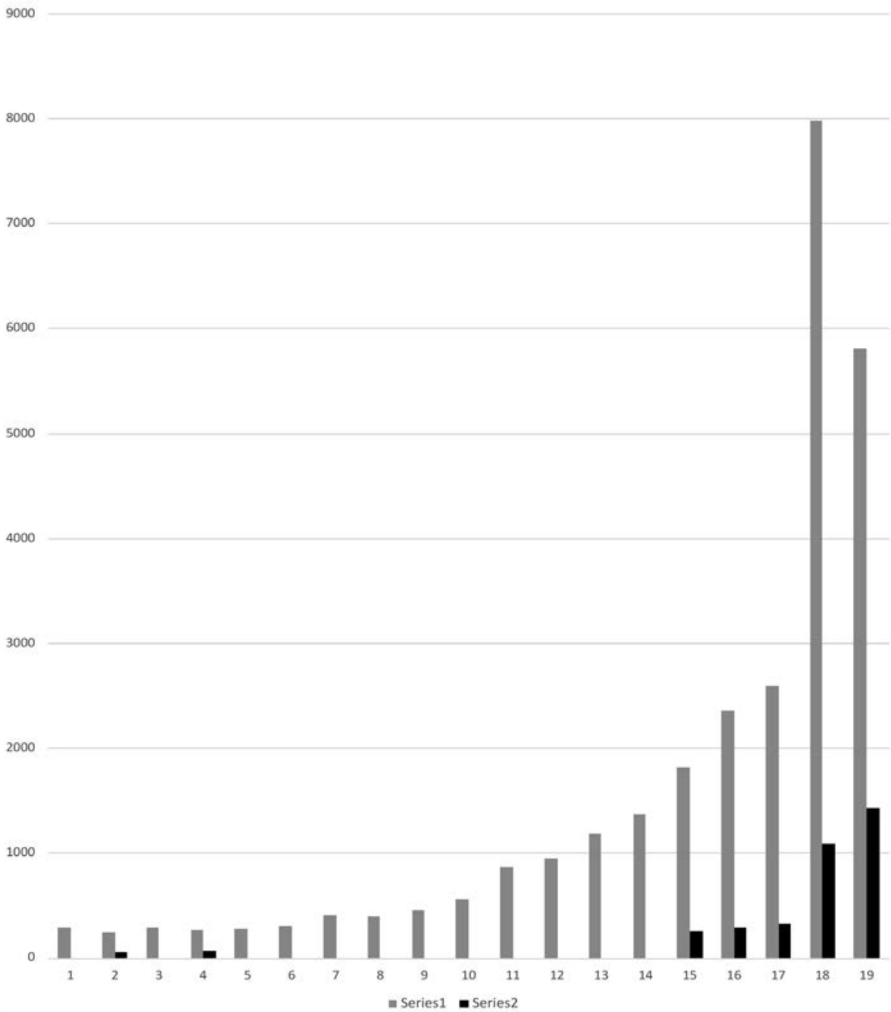
In 1961–62, out of a total of 867 international students, 235 Africans were studying in Yugoslav universities, such that almost one-third of international students in Yugoslavia were of African origin (27.1 per cent). Their share steadily increased to more than one-third in subsequent years (see figure 13.3). While students from Asian countries[5] were the primary beneficiaries of Yugoslavia's non-aligned education policy, with more than 5 per cent of all international students a year earlier (see figure 13.3), the proportion of those from African countries rose rapidly – Ethiopia, South Africa, Kenya, Congo, Liberia, Morocco, the Ivory Coast, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zambia – such that they became the largest non-European group by 1960–61. In the same period, the last "human zoos" still attracted a white audience at the great Belgian exhibition of 1958 (Blanchard et al. 2011) while Black people were refused entry to universities (Karabel 2005) in certain regions of the United States, a country commonly perceived as the centre of the "Free World" at the



13.4 Proportion of international students in Yugoslavia, 1951–65.

time. By 1963, Belgrade was hosting hundreds of international students, mainly from North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, Zagreb and Ljubljana hosted significant numbers of Kenyans, Sudanese, Ghanaians, Nigerians, and Ethiopians, while Sarajevo hosted a smaller number of students mainly from Arab countries such as Syria, Jordan, and Algeria.

The proportion of stateless students peaked in 1959–60: more than 10 per cent of all international students (see figure 13.2). It would be difficult to explain such a peak if we were to think of non-alignment exclusively in terms of national political interest. The foreign policy of non-alignment was guided by internationalism, which was not only an important source of political legitimization for the state but also an orientation that shaped Yugoslav citizens (Robertson 2015). This is one of the reasons why Yugoslav authorities were well disposed towards student-refugees from countries such as Kenya, Algeria, Mali, Iraq, Iran, and Palestine. Yugoslav students, however, studied in Western Europe, reflecting the asymmetry of relations between non-aligned nations. They also studied abroad less in the postwar years than international students



13.5 Proportion of international students by gender, 1951–91.

who came to study in Yugoslavia. In 1948–49, international students in Yugoslavia (476) outnumbered Yugoslav students abroad (24) according to the Yugoslav Student Union. The reverse did not occur until 1953–54 (Yugoslav Union of Students 1959, 52).

Yet, during the ten-year period from 1955 to 1965, international students consistently accounted for less than 1 per cent of the student population in

Yugoslavia (see figure 13.4). This is low compared to France during the same period, where the proportion of international students ranged from 7.2 to 10.6 per cent between 1950 and 1965 (Prost and Cytermann 2010). French and German-speaking destinations such as Paris, Berlin, Brussels, Zurich, and Lausanne attracted the largest number of international students between the turn of the century and the 1940s (Karady 2004).

Indicators such as student numbers or the graduation rate "are advocated for technocratic use, which classifies societies according to their degree of economic 'development' and goes so far as to conceive of migration as a product of these inequalities of 'development'" (Sayad 2004). Yet the economic and social outcome of an academic title is a function of its scarcity in the social system as well as its position and the relative weight that system gives to each subcategory of graduates (Castel and Passeron 1967, 24). Rather than a simple index of economic development, we therefore consider international student rates as an indicator of the symbolic dimension of power relations between countries. From the point of view of Cold War historiography, the peculiarity of the student population in Yugoslavia in the 1950s rests on the fact that the majority of international students came from non-aligned nations. The societies that Christophe Charle (2001) calls "imperial" – because they exercised a double domination, territorial and cultural, through their education systems – traditionally welcomed international students. Such cultural diversity is striking in a country like Yugoslavia, which, arguably, had itself been colonized within the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.

International Students' Trajectories: Alumni Who Outlived Their Educational Institutions

Overview of the Interviewees and Their Social Characteristics

The interviewees come from eight countries with relatively unstable political regimes that were all member states or observers of the Non-Aligned Movement: Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Kenya, Madagascar, Morocco, Palestine, and Syria. This chapter is based on eight interviews; the interviewees are anonymous unless they are clearly identifiable in today's postwar societies (see table 13.1).

Table 13.1
The interviews

Pseudonym	*Date*	*Length*	*Place*
Stiv	20.11.2018	2h04	Belgrade, Serbia
Mehdi	09.11.2018	1h26	Belgrade, Serbia
Malik	22.01.2018	1h21	Belgrade, Serbia
Yani	29.01.2018	57 min	Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina
Victor	14.11.2018	2h	Novi Kneževac, Vojvodina
Elias	21.11.2018	2h52	Belgrade, Serbia
Abdelmalek	25.01.2018	1h37, 47 min	Belgrade, Serbia
Ruben	06.11.2018	2h32	Belgrade, Serbia

The interviewees were all men aged fifty-six to seventy-three at the time of the interview, retired or at the end of their professional careers. Although this sample is not representative, it is not surprising as the vast majority of international students in Yugoslavia were males. Data is fragmentary, yet when female students appear in federal statistics, their proportion is statistically insignificant in the years 1952 and 1954 and over 10 per cent only in 1984–85 and in 1990–91. All had voluntarily departed from their countries of origin, with the exception of Yani, who arrived stateless from Palestine seeking refuge in Sarajevo. They all belonged to local small and medium bourgeoisies (lower middle and middle classes), some of them established (Mehdi, Abdelmalek) or linked to national liberation movements (Stiv, Ruben); others were refugees (Yani) or political exiles (Viktor). They bring together acquired and inherited resources: especially institutionalized and embodied forms of cultural capital. While their educational, individual, and family trajectories are distinctive in their societies of origin, they carry the characteristics of the countries where they have lived, sometimes as an emblem and sometimes as a stigma.

Analyzing students' trajectories, we can see that interviewees come from a diversity of continents, regions, and countries. They share the following biographical and social characteristics: they are mainly Muslim; they do not

Table 13.2
Social characteristics of interviewees: Social status

Pseudonym	*Age*	*Arrival in YU*	*Place of birth*	*Country*	*Foreign languages*	*Profession*
Stiv	69	1965	Mombasa	Kenya	English	Actor & musician
Mehdi	72	1965	Fès	Morocco	English, French	Translator at Embassy
Malik	72	1965	Alep	Syria	English	Photo reporter
Victor	71	1968	Basrah	Iraq	English	Physician
Elias	60	1979	Antananarivo	Madagascar	English, French	Food technology
Abdelmalek	56	1982	Algiers	Algeria	French	Sales representative
Ruben	60	1982	Bissau	Guinea-Bissau	Portuguese	Musician

Table 13.3
Social characteristics of interviewees: Social origin

Pseudonym	*Nepotism*	*Father's profession*	*Siblings*	*Siblings' studies abroad*
Stiv	Father	Minister	7	NR
Mehdi	Father	Land owner	"Many"	Yes
Malik	No	Director, Islamic waqf	4	No
Victor	No	Director, large company	9	Yes
Elias	Yes	University professor	7	Yes
Abdelmalek	Father	Goldsmith	9	Yes
Ruben	Uncle	Director construction firm	8	No

Table 13.4

Social characteristics of interviewees: Higher education in Yugoslavia

Pseudonym	Studies	Scholarship	Finished studies	Work during studies	Married	YU nationality
Stiv	Psychology	Yes	No	Yes	NR	Yes
Mehdi	Economics	Yes	Yes, 1972	Yes	Yes	No
Malik	Veterinary	No	No	Yes	NR	NR
Victor	Medicine	No	Yes, 1976	Yes	Yes	Yes
Elias	Technology	Yes	Yes, 1990	Yes	Yes	Yes
Abdelmalek	Forestry	Yes	Yes, 1992	Yes	Yes	No
Ruben	Chemistry	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

necessarily come from the respective capital cities of their countries; they went to Yugoslavia during the "Glorious Thirty Years" (1950–80); they were born into families with relatively large economic, cultural, and social capital in their countries of origin, and with more than four children; they speak one or more of the world's most widely spoken languages (English, French, Portuguese); almost all of them – except Malik and Victor – received scholarships from the Yugoslav state; and most of them settled in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia and socialist Yugoslavia.

They arrived in Yugoslavia a few years after their homelands were freed from colonial rule, some of which Yugoslavia had helped in the anticolonial struggle. It is precisely for this reason that, in the words of one student, "all students" from these countries "wanted to come to Yugoslavia" and that obtaining a Yugoslav scholarship was "at the same level as a Western scholarship." It was difficult to obtain, even through nepotism, as Ruben recalls: "At the time, when you got to Yugoslavia, it felt like you were going to the West. Yugoslavia was then a force in every sense of the word … Since the 1960s, Yugoslavia had been helping us during the war, but even after independence, it continued to help us. Yugoslavia was then what the United States is today without using force and imposition. It was sincere cooperation … Everyone wanted to come to Yugoslavia. One of my uncles was a strong man, he had a certain position there; my father asked him if he could get me a scholarship." When Ruben evokes the appreciation that his people had for Yugoslav aid to Guinea-Bissau in the liberation struggle against Portugal, he recalls that "even the rural children recognized Tito." This is why studies in Yugoslavia were his priority, although for political reasons, he would have agreed to study in other countries as long as they were communist.

The only student in our sample who arrived in Yugoslavia twenty years after the liberation of his country, and reluctantly, is Abdelmalek. Although he too highlights that Yugoslavia was highly esteemed in Algeria for its support of the struggle for independence (1954–62), unlike Ruben, he was unhappy that he had to "go and study in a red country," because his scholarship application was rejected in Canada. He was, from his youth, an anticommunist with religious convictions. In this regard, he highlights that he was "very surprised" Bosnian Muslims were "not real Muslims" according to his definition: "I was most disappointed by Muslims, by their hypocrisy. I am talking about Bosnia. I'm not saying that they are all dishonest, but those I met … people

drank too much alcohol ... young and old, of all faiths. So when they say they are Muslims, it's just a name, but most of them are as I described. They were arguing about who was going to eat more pork."

His case suggests that, unlike the countries of the Soviet bloc, which mainly welcomed students through left-wing communist and nationalist political organizations (Katsakioris 2019), political affiliation was not a selection criterion for admitting international students in Yugoslav universities. The experience of another former student, Mehdi, supports this observation. He recalls that within the Association of Moroccan Students, which included "between thirty and forty people," there were often "quarrels between communists, nationalists, and monarchists." The same is true of Malik, who was involved in a Syrian student association. This reflects the political diversity in the membership in the Non-Aligned Movement but also, perhaps more significantly, the adoption of market mechanisms in the 1970s and 1980s, which favoured self-financing international students over scholarship holders (Wright 2020).

One of the contributions of this research is to shed light on students who came to Yugoslavia from local petit bourgeois families with strong social and cultural capital. Many of these interviewees came from fractions of dominant classes, yet not the uppermost in their respective countries, before coming to study in Yugoslavia. For example, Ruben's grandparents were among the educated groups in Guinea-Bissau who were associated with Portuguese colonizers. His father, the director of a construction company, "had his own driver." Mehdi's parents offered him the opportunity to attend a high school that was reserved for the French; Viktor's father worked as a biochemist and held a management position in a large oil company; Abdelmalek's grandfather was a prosperous merchant who owned several businesses, and his father was a goldsmith; Malik's father headed the *waqf*[6] of the Islamic community; Stiv's father was one of the leading figures in the Kenyan political movement for independence (even in colonial times, his grandparents were landowners); Elias, in turn, came from a family of university professors.

With the exception of Malik and Viktor, who arrived in Yugoslavia without scholarships and whose families financed their studies, all the others were recipients of scholarships as a result of an intervention in state administration by either parents, relatives, or acquaintances. For example, Ruben benefited from the help of his uncle, Mehdi from an influential relative, and Victor from

a friend of his father's. Without being questioned on this point, all interviewees emphasized the importance of this factor. Hence, having substantial cultural and economic capital was a necessary but not sufficient condition for obtaining a Yugoslav scholarship. A high level of social capital was still required. It should be noted that the interviewees come from societies marked by social change and are now living in "hybrid" postsocialist Serbia, which is still in a phase of transformation and stabilization and where social capital holds a central place as the basis of social differentiation (Cveticanin et al. 2021). In most cases, we found that interviewees were not the only ones in their families to receive scholarships to study abroad. In this sense, the case of Elias, who has eight brothers and sisters, all of whom are graduates of universities outside their country of origin, is revealing. Yet it is not surprising; among all the interviewees, he is the most privileged from the point of view of cultural capital.

With the exception of Stiv, who came from Kenya at the age of fifteen to attend secondary school in Yugoslavia, other interviewees enrolled directly in universities. They studied different subjects: Ruben, chemistry; Mehdi, economics; Viktor, medicine; Abdelmalek, forestry; Malik, veterinary medicine; Stiv, psychology; Elias, food technology. As can be seen from the archives, international students were granted scholarships to study technical and applied sciences, which is consistent with the characteristics of our sample. The only exception is Stiv, who studied psychology; however, he arrived in Yugoslavia with a scholarship granted for medical school at the secondary level (*srednja medicinska*). Four of them graduated; three did not. What characterizes the graduates is that none of them managed to graduate in less than eight years, even if studies normally lasted four years, or in the case of medicine, five years. While Yugoslav policy since the mid-1970s and throughout the 1980s was to keep students in higher education as long as possible so that they would not contribute to unemployment statistics (Woodward 1995, 317–20), the change of country clearly resulted in a longer investment time for studies, which complicates the notion of international/cosmopolitan capital as necessarily cumulative.

The main problem noted by interviewees with regard to the extension of studies was the Serbo-Croatian language. Following their arrival in Yugoslavia, students had from six months to a year to master the basics of a language previously unknown to them. This extension of studies had drastic consequences

for their lives in Yugoslavia because the duration of each scholarship was five years, the norm for higher education plus the extra year for learning Serbo-Croatian. They had to develop new strategies of social reproduction, what de Saint Martin (2011) defines as reconversion. Thus, all the interviewees indicated that, although they were students, they also obtained necessary jobs through the Student and Youth Cooperative. Regarding the nature of these jobs, those who received a scholarship as representatives of political organizations or who started to engage in student activism and political life in Yugoslavia were able to choose and get the best paid jobs, while others were tourist guides, musicians, photographers, or actors. Being in politics allowed Viktor and Mehdi to compensate for the delay in learning Serbo-Croatian. As for Stiv and Ruben, they were able to take advantage of this period of their lives to embark on a musical career, realizing their dreams, which they could not even have imagined in their countries of origin due to family expectations. Stiv and Ruben are cases of reconversion, they illustrate how reproduction strategies change according to the social context of the host society. "My parents wouldn't let me play music there. I had a choice: I could either accept it or drop out of school. And since I wanted to study, music was forbidden. Then, when I came here, while I was learning the language, I played some guitar and entertained my compatriots, who knew that I could play … The disintegration of Yugoslavia also affected my life because when I lost my scholarship, jobs started to become scarce … and Borko, a friend of mine encouraged me to make music" (Ruben). Viktor, on the other hand, found jobs that were well paid through the student co-op: "In Tito's time, I was part of the student co-op and they offered me all the good jobs … I worked, for example, at the world table-tennis championship in Novi Sad. There were delegations from Algeria, Tunisia, and so on. Only elected officials could do it, and besides knowing the language, it was important to be trustworthy. So I worked at the Hotel Park for ten to fifteen days, and it was very well paid. I received a salary equal to three monthly salaries of a doctor."

Student organizations were thus a means of building Yugoslav political capital and thereby securing relatively well-paid jobs to finish their studies. Much of the political action in Yugoslavia, including public demonstrations in favour of decolonization, was due to the political activism of international students, as recognized by officials at committee meetings.[7]

When they arrived in Yugoslavia, most of the interviewees lived in university housing, mainly in the New Belgrade dormitory, built in 1955, and in the Patrice Lumumba dormitory, built in 1961. All interviewees, with the exception of Abdelmalek, whose experiences were "both positive and negative," said that, although at first they mostly found friends among students from their own country, as well as other international students, they were well accepted by Yugoslavs and were not subject to racial discrimination. Their testimonies show that problems arose mainly "around girls" and were solved by insults and sometimes by direct confrontation.

Ruben noted, for example, that "Tensions were around women as they are everywhere else in the world. That was the only disadvantage at the time. We also had conflicts, sometimes fights, over women. In the faculty, it wasn't the case, everyone was focused on work, and there were no divisions. We didn't have time for these things. However, when I was walking around with a girl, sometimes someone would say: 'It's because there are no whites here that you want Blacks.'"

Interviewees nonetheless emphasized the warm welcome of the families and the help of Yugoslav comrades in preparing for exams. Similar experiences are highlighted with respect to contacts with their teachers, with citizens in general, and with the parents and families of their future wives. In speaking to the warm reception of the Yugoslav people, Ruben added: "Before I came to Europe, I only wanted to come to this part of Europe. East, not West. Now I see the reason why. I couldn't deal with such a corrupt policy there [in the West] as a person. So it's good that I'm here and I'm happy to be here … All thanks to the people who received me well. I was very well received back in college and as a musician, that's what keeps me here. Here, people are open and they want to help." Malik echoed this sentiment, saying, "When I arrived here, I was living in the street Palmotićeva, behind the National Assembly. I stayed there for about two months. In the family I was in, I remember it as if it was my family. It was wonderful. I was respected. I respected them too."

The interviewees all, with one exception, married Yugoslav women and stayed in the country for emotional and family reasons. Abdelmalek is the only one who married a woman of the same geographical origin. He is also the only respondent that focused on negative experiences. His singularity should be noted here. Unlike the others, he arrived in Yugoslavia in 1982, a

time of generalized crisis: high inflation, explicit nationalism, and workers' strikes (Music 2021). His religious beliefs guide his vision of Balkan societies: "Society is closed here … I don't know if it's because of a real historical trauma, which is nevertheless artificial … When I said at the time to the director of the Algerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'what am I going to do among the Reds, they are retrograde societies,' I was right, I know … They are all retarded! Here, you take the whole Eastern bloc, that's how it is. It has nothing to do with religion either; they are like that … because communism as an idea, or as a mode of government, in my opinion and according to my conviction, is in conflict with nature. It denies the existence of God and, as a believer, for me there is a God." A businessman, he highlights that they stayed for professional reasons.

Only Viktor found that work in his profession, albeit as a field physician, carried less prestige than a physician working in a city. This could be explained by the fact that he finished his studies in the 1970s. As for the others, either they did not finish their studies or they finished while Yugoslav social structures were collapsing. As for the two who finished in the 1990s, one is doing well while the other is not. Elias has not been able to adapt to the social changes. Abdelmalek, who studied forestry, has become a businessman. Elias, with his studies in food technology, is facing a combination of professional, financial, and family difficulties (his wife died suddenly four years before the interview), leading him to be suspected of alcoholism by his entourage. Also, with the exception of Elias, who taught English as a freelancer shortly before retiring, all the interviewees were rewarded for their efforts to retrain professionally. Stiv and Ruben became well-known musicians; Malik, an esteemed photoreporter; Mehdi still works at the Moroccan embassy in Belgrade; Viktor was hired as a physician and was elected as hospital director at the end of his career.

While three out of eight interviewees are famous in the host society, the symbolic value accorded by fame has, to a large extent, disappeared along with Yugoslavia. The cases of Stiv, Ruben, and Yani illustrate that the convertibility of their symbolic capital in the successor states is related to their degree of investment into the Yugoslav social space. The actor Stiv was most involved with such cultural content, which is still today among the cultural references emblematic of the Yugoslav era, while the musician Ruben had invested more in his African roots. Stiv had been an actor in famous Yugoslav movies and with

film stars such as Velimir "Bata" Živojinović in *Nije nego* (1978) and Milena Dravic in *Laf u Srcu* (1981) – both directed by Milivoje "Mica" Milosevic – and in Stanko Crnobrnja's *Hajde da se volimo 3* (1990) with Lazar Ristovski and the pop music icon Lepa Brena. In addition to the actors, directors, and musicians he worked with, some of his phrasings attained cult-like status during the mid-1970s and 1980s, marking generations of Yugoslavs. For this reason, he is consecrated in YouTube video compilations of vintage Yugoslav commercials and by the Yugoslav lexicon.[8] Stiv reminisced, "We started shooting a commercial, nonchalantly, there in Knez Mihailova … There was a main actor … Each of the actors had to ask another: 'where are you going?' And to respond: 'I'm going to Kluz [a Yugoslav textile factory].' In the end, the main actor was supposed to say: 'if everyone is going to Kluz, so am I!' But while we were filming, some girl has to ask me where I am going and I am sitting there and thinking: Why do I have to respond like everyone else? I didn't tell anyone, the camera is filming, she asks: 'Stevo, where are you going?' 'Kitten, I'm going to Kluz,' I respond. And that kitten became a thing, like a cartoon [laughs]!"

Ruben shared how he got started in music: "One of my compatriots played tam-tam drums in the band 'Trinidad.' He was there at the same time, managed to finish [his studies] and go back [to Guinea-Bissau]. And in that band someone from Africa was needed to replace him. People knew I played music, not intensively because of school, but they still found me. When I started [music], I think it was the 90s … A friend said, 'let's do something Afro' … And that's how we started, even before the crisis … And I didn't plan that. So if there was no disintegration of Yugoslavia, sanctions, I would really be a chemist."

In contrast with Stiv and Ruben, who were involved in the field of cultural production, the physician Yani became famous during the siege of Sarajevo (1992–95) and is today among the reputed wartime personalities in the Sarajevan postwar social microcosm. The multiple changes of political regimes may thus disrupt individual trajectories, especially as related to symbolic capital. Yet, it is not only a question of regime change in the countries of origin, but also of the value of diplomas, a variable strongly dependent on the social structures in which they were obtained. Forged during the wars that destroyed Yugoslavia, Yani's reputation is maintained in present-day Sarajevo while Stiv and Ruben have lost theirs due to the disintegration of the Yugoslav social space.

Conclusion

In reviewing the diversity of students' experience based on a small number of in-depth interviews and synthesizing findings from secondary sources, we have reconstructed interviewees' trajectories in their host country as well as their family history in their countries of origin to capture the various resources that help define their social origins – which is missing from other sources that use only federal archives and statistics. Challenging the conventional understanding of transnational educational strategies as resource multipliers, these alumni have outlived the educational institutions that informed their mental structures or "habitus" and therefore lost the anticipated social advantages and recognition. We find that these students lacked what Bourdieu called the "sense of placement," in its dual meaning of practical anticipation and symbolic profit. Their trajectories are marked by brutal changes in political regimes and the disintegration of social structures occurring in their countries of origin and in Yugoslavia. They suggest that the conventional conception of international or cosmopolitan capital as a resource multiplier is wholly insufficient. This specificity of the terrain also challenges the pre-eminent methodological nationalism in migration studies, which focuses on the problems of immigrant integration in host countries.

Shifting the focus to international trajectories reveals the historicity of the figure of the migrant who must first be analyzed as an "emigrant" to be understood as an "immigrant" (Sayad 2004). Moreover, moving from one country to another implies an "allegiance" to the dominant one, which Sayad theorizes as producing a "double absence." While this may suggest a break with the context of emigration, it does not simply erase the experiences and resources acquired in that context. If there is a "double absence," there must be both loss and accumulation of assets as individuals move through multiple national spaces. In addition to deconstructing the loose notion of "international capital" in a field-theoretic perspective, we would emphasize two findings before calling for further research. First, there is an important, often overlooked, interdependence between economic and cultural capital. Second, as a resource for moving between national social spaces, the preponderance of social capital in Bourdieu's sense is also often neglected in trajectory analyzes and migration studies. In the future, a critical question for further research is to improve understand-

ing of how much the symbolic dimension of non-alignment – which emerged in the students' discourse as specifically Yugoslav – was shared by other non-aligned nations.

NOTES

1 Unlike the current Russian Peoples' Friendship University, which bore Lumumba's name from 1961 to 1992.

2 On the idea of a national habitus as informed by national education systems, see Elias (1978); Bourdieu (2000).

3 Archival documents – although not always in agreement in terms of numbers – all point to a sudden influx of international students. Archives of Yugoslavia (AJ), Savezni zavod za međunarodnu tehničku saradnju (208), file 865, "Pomoć zemljama u razvoju u oblasti stipendiranja;" AJ, Savez studenata Jugoslavije (145), file 45, "Informacija o međunarodnoj saradnji univerziteta," Belgrade, April 1967; AJ, 145-45, "Studenti stranog državljanstva na univerzitetu u Beogradu;" AJ, 145-45, "Informacija o školovanju stranih studenata na univerzitetu u Sarajevu," 17 October 1966.

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5 These countries were: Afghanistan, Burma, Ceylon, Iraq, Iran, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Mongolia, and Pakistan.

6 A *wafq* refers here to an Islamic endowment or property used for charitable or religious purposes.

7 Branko Lukovac and Ivan Iveković, leading members of the Yugoslav Students' Union, both acknowledge that "foreign students" were the main organizers of anticolonial protests and demonstrations in Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Belgrade. See AJ collection 114, Yugoslav Association of Young Socialists, Handwritten minutes of a session of the Commission for Cooperation and International Relations of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Youth Association, held on 18 July 1967.

8 *Leksikon YU Mitologije*. 2014. s.v. "Hannington, Steve." http://www.leksikon-yu-mitologije.net/hannington-steve/.

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