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EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL, FAMILY BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL POSITIONING IN MID-19th CENTURY SERBIA

Abstract: This paper explores different pathways to higher education in mid-19th-century Serbia and its role in upward social mobility. It compares representatives of two groups: students from modest backgrounds who earned European university degrees through state scholarships and the sons of prominent figures whose education was funded by family resources. Focusing on Radivoje Milojković and Jevrem Grujić from the first group, and the sons of Vuk Karadžić and Ilija Garašanin from the second, the analysis shows that educational capital often outweighed family background as a driver of mobility. It also traces the mid-century shift in societal attitudes toward children's education, reflecting the broader transition from traditional to modern structures.

Keywords: educational capital, family background, family networks, society, students, elites, 19th-century Serbia.

The scarcity of educated citizens was one of the first challenges confronting the Serbian state after gaining autonomy in 1830. Throughout the 19th century, considerable effort was devoted to developing a nationwide school network, expanding the teaching corps, and increasing enrolment. This was a difficult task not only because of the shortage of resources and qualified personnel, but also due to prevailing social conditions–above all, the dominance of extensive agriculture, which required little, if any, formal education. Even when compulsory schooling was finally introduced in 1882, its implementation proved a constant struggle. As one contemporary observed, "elementary education could no longer be left to parental discretion, nor reduced to something resembling military mobilization or compulsory unpaid labor."[1]

According to John Caldwell's wealth flows theory, a central difference between traditional and modern societies lies in the direction of intergenerational transfers: In traditional societies, resources flow from children to parents, whereas in modern ones they

[1] Cited in Ilić Rajković 2021: 53.

flow from parents to children.[2] In agrarian, subsistence-based economies such as 19th-century Serbia, children contributed to the household's livelihood based on their age and abilities, and their labor often outweighed the costs of raising them. This economic pattern encouraged high fertility and left parents with limited motivation to invest in formal schooling. Low social mobility and high child mortality in the pre-transitional demographic phase further discouraged such investment.

In modern societies, the flow is reversed: Parents invest in their children's education rather than relying on their labor. This shift is driven not only by the introduction of compulsory primary education but also by broader economic and social transformations that encourage parents to view schooling as a path to social mobility and economic security. Investing in children's education in modern societies is thus motivated by both obligation and opportunity, as it opens prospects for social advancement and material well-being.[3] Nevertheless, educational capital[4] was neither the sole nor an unconditional driver of advancement; as this paper aims to show, it was closely intertwined with other factors, such as family background and networks.

In the first decades of the 19th century, educational opportunities in Serbia were limited, and parental motivation to educate children was low, not only among the wider population but also within the ruling family. Prince Miloš Obrenović himself was illiterate, as were most members of his entourage. Despite holding the hereditary title of prince since 1817, his sons and heirs to the throne did not receive an education befitting their status. An employee of the government noted in 1837 that the prince's eldest son had mastered only basic reading and writing in Serbian and had received minimal instruction in French, with almost no knowledge of other subjects. Even such limited learning was considered sufficient by the prince at the time.[5] The sons of other high-ranking figures were similarly undereducated. For example, Toma Vučić Perišić's son became an artisan specializing in sheepskin coats, while Mileta Radojković's son worked as a tailor and merchant.[6]

With the establishment of the national state administration, the shortage of highly trained personnel was initially addressed by "importing" educated Serbs from the neighboring Habsburg Monarchy. The attainment of autonomous status within the Ottoman Empire opened the way for organized efforts in education. As the demand for skilled civil servants grew and could not yet be met by domestic schools, the state began sending undergraduates abroad for further study from 1839 onward. According to the needs of the state apparatus, most were directed toward law, political economy, mining, and military sciences. Candidates were selected primarily based on their academic achievements and the modest financial means of their families.[7]

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2 Due to increasingly higher costs of investing in children, the fertility rate decreases in modern societies, see Caldwell 1976: 321–366; 2005: 721–740.

3 *Ibid*.

4 Educational capital can be understood as a specific form of institutionalized cultural capital—officially recognized knowledge and qualifications that legitimize social status and facilitate upward mobility. The term is often linked to Pierre Bourdieu even though he did not use it explicitly, Sullivan 2001: 893–912.

5 Ljušić 1988: 323–324.

6 *Sabrana dela Vuka Karadžića* XV, 1969: 210–211.

7 Milićević 2002: 32–33; Popović 2017: 60, 66.

Before departing, state scholarship holders completed their education at Serbian institutions, notably the grammar school and, from the early 1840s, the Lyceum. Many had already spent several years in government service, and most took the initiative themselves by petitioning the relevant minister to allow them to study abroad. At the time of departure, they were typically over twenty years old. In an era when state policy on sending students to European universities was still taking shape, such personal initiative by young, ambitious civil servants often played a decisive role in shaping their professional careers.[8]

Completion of the school system in Serbia (primary school, grammar school, and later, the Lyceum) was a prerequisite for obtaining a state scholarship. As primary education was neither compulsory nor widely available, children's schooling largely depended on the will and means of their parents. In many cases, parents hired and paid private teachers. Owing to the high costs of education and the ongoing need for children's labor in the household, most families, if they chose to educate any of their children, sent only one child to school. A paradigmatic example is Radivoje Milojković, one of the most prominent politicians of the second half of the 19th century. Born into a village merchant's family as one of six children (four sons and two daughters), he was the only one his father sent to school. Education enabled him to rise to the highest state offices, while his siblings, denied such an opportunity, were doomed from childhood to remain peasants. A similar case is that of Jevrem Grujić, who recorded the following about his enrolment in school:

> It was said that, since its founding, Darosava [his native village] had not produced a single priest, civil servant, or even a schoolboy. It was therefore remarkable that now [1836] four boys from the village were already attending school at the same time. People began to say that I would be the fifth, as priest Nikola often remarked that it would be good if our family, too, gave a schoolboy.[9]

Scholarship holders typically received their primary education thanks to their parents' initiative, yet parental influence rarely extended to the decision to study abroad. Radivoje Milojković's case is again illustrative. Having completed the Serbian school system, he spent three years in state service before, at the age of 24, petitioning the minister of education to be sent abroad for university studies. After securing the scholarship, he returned to his native village to greet his family and, in keeping with patriarchal custom, to formally seek his mother's opinion and consent (his father having passed away in the meantime). Her reply reveals both the limits of parental involvement and the recognition of individual agency in such decisions: "My son, you are wiser than us. If you believe it will be good for you, then go; if you believe it will not, then don't."[10]

A similar scene unfolded in the family home of Jevrem Grujić. Upon being awarded a state scholarship, he too returned to his village to bid farewell to his family:

> My brothers and father were pleased, but my mother was taken aback. She did not know whether to pity me. Still, she asked if I was being forced to go. When I replied that it had been my request, and that many would gladly be in my place, she seemed neither very sad nor particularly joyful.[11]

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8 Milićević 2002: 32–33; Popović 2017: 60, 66.
9 Pavković 1992: 58–59.
10 Vuletić, Trgovčević 2003: 70.
11 Pavković 1992: 105.

Scholarship recipients were provided with funds covering basic study expenses, while their academic progress and financial expenditures were monitored by designated government officials. Nonetheless, neither the Ministry of Education nor the State Council maintained clearly defined guidelines regarding study programs or required diplomas. The interaction between the state and scholars was intensive, and the scholars showed remarkable initiative, proposing and requesting that the government allow them to choose or change their fields of study as well as the country in which they studied.[12] Some sources note that Jovan Ristić–another recipient of a state scholarship who came from a poor family–was initially expected to study at the Kiev Theological Academy in preparation for a clerical career, but he declined and, in 1849, applied to study in Germany, pointing out that the government had not yet sent anyone to study history and that it was essential for someone to engage systematically with sources for Serbian history. His petition was approved.[13] Most scholarship holders were enrolled at universities in Germany and France, often seeking experience within both academic traditions. For instance, Jevrem Grujić initially studied administrative law at Heidelberg, and two years later, petitioned the Ministry of Education to continue his studies in Paris, stating that the French capital had the best department of administrative law in Europe. Similarly, Jovan Ristić, originally sent to Berlin to study history, later requested transfers to Heidelberg, then Paris, and finally Prague, highlighting the advantages of each university and the benefits that studying in these academic centers would bring. The Ministry granted these requests as well.[14]

In the early 1840s, the Serbian government appointed Vuk Karadžić to oversee the progress of scholarship recipients, a role subsequently assumed by other civil servants in the following years. In his report to the Ministry, Vuk pointed out what he considered their excessive independence of thought: "They think they are not pupils or children who need to be told how to behave, but rather former officials and gentlemen who already know it themselves."[15] One of them, Stojan Jovanović Cukić, emphasized the same attitude in his own correspondence with the Ministry: "I, being already in mature years, know well how to distinguish good from evil and what I ought to do."[16] Aside from their academic progress, which was supervised by state officials, the scholars were largely left to manage their daily lives independently, relying mostly on their fellow students.[17] Their scholarships barely covered a modest standard of living. Reflecting on his student years, Jevrem Grujić recalled that heating was a luxury, and he often had to bundle up in all his clothes or take brisk walks to keep warm.[18] Despite material hardships, their thirst for new experiences remained undiminished. As Grujić wrote, "All the deprivation I suffered did not smother my desire to observe things that are not often seen."[19]

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12 This is particularly evident in the extensive diary notes that Dimitrije Matić left about his student days, as well as about the lives of his Serbian peers at European universities, see Matić 1974.

13 Radović 2023: 58.

14 Pavlović 1986: 191; Radović 2023: 58; Radović 2024: 141. A similar request by Dimitrije Matić was also approved, while that of Stojan Jovanović Cukić was rejected, Matić 1974: 96–97; Popović 2017: 67; Bataković 1997: 73–95.

15 Cited in Popović 2017: 65.

16 *Ibid*., 66.

17 More about this in Matić: 1974.

18 Pavković 1992: 108–109, 122.

19 *Ibid*., 108.

During his studies in Paris, he visited exhibitions at the Louvre, travelled across France to deepen his knowledge of the country, and even managed to spend a week in London on his modest savings.[20] The Serbian government occasionally involved scholars in tasks such as acquiring books for libraries and conducting archival research. Moreover, many scholars took personal initiative in activities they believed would benefit their homeland, such as writing brochures in French and German about Serbia and the Serbian people to introduce them to a wider European audience.[21]

As the first state-funded students were sent abroad, senior civil servants and, soon after, wealthy merchants also began sending their children to European universities. This growing focus on education marked the early stages of a broader shift from traditional to modern societal structures, with social advancement and schooling reinforcing each other: Society needed educated individuals, and education, in turn, fueled further development. This process gradually made education a key driver of social mobility and a central mechanism for both individual advancement and the emergence of a modern elite.

One of the first civil servants to send his son abroad for studies was Jakov Jakšić, the longtime treasurer of Prince Miloš. His son Vladimir later recalled that his father originally steered him toward a career in commerce, which he considered not only more profitable but also less stressful than civil service. The return of the first scholarship holders from Vienna and Paris in autumn 1842, including their relative, Dimitrije Crnobarac, changed his father's mind. Encouraged by their example and their repeated urging, he sent his son to Germany the following autumn to study political economy.[22] This example shows how the first Serbian students themselves played an active role in spreading educational aspirations, inspiring their compatriots to pursue similar paths.[23]

Among the most prominent figures sending their sons abroad to study in the mid-19th century were Vuk Karadžić and Ilija Garašanin. Having received only modest formal education themselves, they were all the more aware of the importance of education for their children's professional and social advancement. Both invested not only financial resources but also their hopes and ambitions, making their efforts among the earliest examples of modern parental investment in children's futures in Serbian society.

The families of Vuk Karadžić and Ilija Garašanin differed significantly in terms of size. Vuk Karadžić fathered twelve children, the majority of whom died in childhood, with only two surviving their parents. Such high fertility coupled with elevated child mortality was typical of societies in the pre-transitional demographic phase, a category to which Serbia largely fell at the time.[24] Despite generally low incentives to invest heavily in offspring under these conditions, Vuk's approach to his children's education was notably modern. In contrast, Ilija Garašanin's family comprised only two children (both sons), reflecting a family model more characteristic of the emerging modern type,

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20 Pavković 1992: 108–109; *Životopis Jevrema Grujića*, 31.

21 Pavlović 1986: 195–196; Radović 2023: 63.

22 Jakšić went to study in Tübingen, and two years later he continued his studies at the University of Heidelberg, *Svečani sastanak Srpskog učenog društva 1890*: 318–319.

23 There are numerous references in Dimitrije Matić's diary to the efforts made to encourage as many students as possible to pursue studies at foreign universities, Matić: 1974.

24 Jovanović, Vuletić, Samardžić 2017: 222–230.

where smaller family size facilitates greater parental investment–both emotional and material–in each child.

Unlike the parents of most state scholars, who mainly did not intervene in their sons' lives during their studies, Karadžić and Garašanin controlled their sons' education from the start to the end of their university studies. They also played a decisive role in choosing their sons' future professions and countries of study. Karadžić's sons, Sava and Dimitrije, and Garašanin's sons, Svetozar and Milutin, were enrolled in military academies in accordance with their fathers' wishes. Vuk sent his elder son to Russia, leveraging his favorable connections with the administration there. Nearly fifteen years later, he dispatched his younger son to Austria, the homeland of his wife, and a country where the family had long resided. Reflecting his foreign policy orientation, Garašanin had both his sons educated in France. Unlike most state scholars, whose studies abroad typically began in their early or mid-twenties, Karadžić's and Garašanin's sons commenced their education abroad at a much younger age. Given the relatively low quality of education in Serbian schools compared with Western Europe, Garašanin sent his sons abroad immediately after they completed grammar school, around the age of seventeen. Vuk Karadžić's sons left home even earlier: Sava went to Saint Petersburg at age thirteen, while Dimitrije traveled to Trieste at around ten, then to Vienna at thirteen, and later to Bruck. Both Karadžić and Garašanin initially financed their sons' education privately, with their efforts to secure state scholarships being only partially successful.[25]

In contrast to state scholars, who exercised independence and personal initiative in selecting their fields of study, the sons of prominent fathers had limited opportunities to develop their own academic interests and enthusiasm. Sent abroad as teenagers and guided more by parental ambitions than by their own choice, they often exhibited uncertainty about their abilities and, at times, a lack of desire to pursue the disciplines chosen for them. However, their hesitation was tempered by strong parental authority. Ilija Garašanin's stern yet revealing admonition to one of his sons captured this dynamic:

> I chose that discipline for you and that is what I want for you. I don't want anything else, so nothing else will be possible. I'm not strict at all; you know well my feelings and expectations, and it's not my fault that they are such.[26]

Parental ambitions often outweighed the desires and aptitudes of their children. Vuk Karadžić's elder son, Sava, was a youth with a strong interest in art and literature, yet lacked both the inclination and physical predisposition for the military career his father envisioned. The strict regimen of the imperial cadet corps, coupled with the harsh Russian climate, further weakened him, aggravating tuberculosis and ultimately leading to his early death in 1837. Vuk's other son, Dimitrije, was similarly unhappy with the rigid discipline at the

[25] Vuk Karadžić secured a scholarship for his elder son Sava from the Russian rather than the Serbian government, while his younger son Dimitrije, after an excellent first year, was awarded only half the amount granted to other state scholars. Similarly, Ilija Garašanin financed his sons' education himself until his younger son Milutin, in his final years of study, received a state scholarship in recognition of his strong academic performance, Šaulić 1978: 127; Stranjaković 2005: 106–110.

[26] Cited in Vuletić 2006: 343.

military academy in Bruck and, at the start of his studies, asked to be allowed to return home, but his father refused. [27] For both Karadžić and Garašanin, education was not simply a personal pursuit; it was closely tied to family honor and social advancement. They viewed their substantial emotional and financial investment in their sons' schooling as a way to secure their future while also fulfilling parental aspirations and social standing.

Karadžić hoped that the formal education he himself had lacked would secure his son a steadier and more financially rewarding career than his own. By guiding their sons toward clearly defined professional paths, fathers sought to spare them the sense of disappointment and frustration they had once endured. A letter written by Stojan Novaković to his son, near the end of his long career in public service, captures this sentiment with particular clarity:

> It has often been bitter and hard for me to be in the civil service, being in a position that makes me dependent on all kinds of people and events. If you were fortunate enough to develop and prepare yourself so that you can be an independent and autonomous citizen, this would be the most pleasant comfort to me in my old age.[28]

The same sentiment also drove the aforementioned Jakov Jakšić, the treasurer of prince Miloš, initially to steer his son toward a career in commerce.[29]

The sons of dignitaries, accustomed to a standard well above that of ordinary state scholars, often carried with them expectations that exceeded the bare necessities. Dimitrije Karadžić, for example, repeatedly asked his father to indulge him with purchases he openly acknowledged were unnecessary but pleasurable–items such as lacquered shoes, gloves, and a vest to enhance the appearance of his uniform. Others from similar backgrounds voiced similar wishes, requesting funds for elegant "saloon garments" that matched the style of upper social circles.[30] While striving to ensure their children's comfort and proper education, prominent fathers also sought to temper any inclination toward wastefulness. Ilija Garašanin, during his sons' studies in France, entrusted their daily supervision to his French friend Hippolyte Mondain, who not only managed their living arrangements but also strictly controlled their modest weekly allowance throughout the entire period of their education.[31]

Given their fathers' political stature and influence within the state apparatus, the sons of high-ranking dignitaries often assumed that family networks would help them secure prestigious and well-paid positions. Such expectations were openly expressed by Dimitrije Karadžić, who, during his final year of studies, shared with his father his wish for a role close to the court and a rank above the standard entry level for a young officer.[32] At the same

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27 Šaulić 1978: 224; D. Karadžić to V. Karadžić, Bruck, 2 November 1850, *Sabrana dela Vuka Karadžića*, VIII, 1989, 786; V. Karadžić to D. Karadžić, Vienna, 14 November 1846, *ibid*., VII, 589; D. Karadžić to V. Karadžić, Bruck, 22 December 1850, *ibid*., IX, 37.

28 Cited in Vuletić 2006: 341.

29 *Svečani sastanak Srpskog učenog društva 1890*: 318–319.

30 Cited in Vuletić 2006: 344–345.

31 *Ibid.*

32 D. Karadžić to V. Karadžić, Bruck, October 22, 1854, *Sabrana dela Vuka Karadžića*, X, 690; D. Karadžić to V. Karadžić, Bruck, 10 March 1855, *ibid.*, XI, 87.

time, his qualifications lent substance to such expectations: Graduating among the top cadets of his class, he undertook initiatives to modernize military infrastructure. After completing the military academy, he received government support for advanced training in Berlin and Antwerp. By twenty-four, he had become a first-class captain, a professor at the Artillery School, and its deputy principal. Yet the interplay between inherited privilege and individual agency proved unstable. Despite his exceptional start, Dimitrije's career soon derailed as heavy drinking and gambling eroded his professional standing. Within a few years, Dimitrije was dismissed from his teaching post, a sharp reversal underscoring the limits of the elite education he had received.[33]

In contrast, Ilija Garašanin's sons demonstrate how parental guidance and educational investment could yield more stable, if not entirely self-directed, professional outcomes. Svetozar Garašanin completed his military education at the prestigious French academy at a time when his father held the highest offices of state, including president of the government and minister of foreign affairs. His subsequent assignment as the Prince's adjutant reflected both his formal qualifications and the durable political capital of the Garašanin family. Nevertheless, family correspondence reveals that Svetozar's personal ambition remained limited; he often preferred ease and avoidance of responsibility over active engagement, indicating that educational attainment and family ties did not lead to initiative or professional excellence.[34] Milutin, the younger son, also received a comprehensive foreign education. Yet his career trajectory was sharply shaped by external political forces: Following his father's fall from power and loss of political favor, opportunities that might have opened naturally through family connections were no longer available. Instead, the family redirected its resources to establish a domestic enterprise, including a steam mill, providing Milutin with a tangible professional grounding. This shift demonstrates that even in higher strata, the interplay of family influence, state structures, and individual capacity was contingent, and success depended not only on educational or inherited capital but also on broader social and political conditions. Milutin Garašanin achieved his most significant advancement in public life only after his father's death, when he began participating in political activities. Nevertheless, even at this stage of his career, his father's influence and reputation continued to shape his position. The family prestige and the well-known Garašanin name provided him with authority and helped him navigate political challenges, but at the same time kept him in the shadow of his father's legacy, limiting his autonomy and initiative.[35]

In the mid-19th century, the first state-funded students educated abroad returned to their homeland, ready to gradually assume the highest positions in the state administration thanks to their advanced education.[36] Unlike the descendants of dignitaries, who possessed both education and family connections, state scholars from lower social strata entered their professional careers with education as their only capital. Lacking family networks in urban settings as well as material resources, they usually compensated by forming marital

[33] Vuletić 2006: 345–346.
[34] I. Garašanin to M. Garašanin, Belgrade, 20 May 1862, ASASA, 14983/68.
[35] Jovanović 1991: 274; Vuletić 2006: 347.
[36] Trgovčević 2003: 233–243.

alliances with members of higher and wealthier social circles, typically senior civil servants and affluent merchants.[37] Senior servants and, in particular, wealthy merchants, readily married their daughters to graduates of European universities, since the educational capital they possessed provided a direct pathway to senior positions within the state administration and, consequently, entry into upper echelons of society.

Jevrem Grujić, for instance, married the daughter of Teodor Herbez, a prominent official from the time of Prince Miloš, whom he had met at a court ball. After a brief period living in a small house in Palilula following the wedding, Grujić and his family moved into his father-in-law's residence in the center of Belgrade. The very name of the street where the house was located–Gospodska [Gentry Street]–aptly reflected his elevated social status. He later recalled that living in the larger, well-appointed house brought a sense of pleasant comfort:

> Truthfully, I preferred that beautiful apartment on Gospodska Street to our small detached house in Palilula… Gradually, I got used to feeling at home there. The comfortable rooms, nicely painted and well-furnished, with long and spacious corridors on the first and second floors, were all clean and at the same time pleasant to stay in… My judicial position, which I increasingly enjoyed, my family, and my economic situation–all this allowed me to feel satisfied with my social standing.[38]

An even more telling example is that of Radivoje Milojković, who married the daughter of Hadži Toma, one of Belgrade's wealthiest merchants. In mid-19th-century Serbia, marriage to an educated state official was considered more prestigious than marriage to the richest merchant, prompting many wealthy traders to seek such alliances for their daughters.[39] The Hadžitomić family illustrates the power of familial and social networks in shaping Serbia's political elite. Several of its members rose to prominence in the late 1860s and throughout the 1870s, largely thanks to Hadži Toma's strategy of marrying his four daughters to university-educated men, all of whom later became ministers. Three of them–Filip Hristić, Jovan Ristić, and Radivoje Milojković–rose from modest backgrounds, while only Antonije Bogićević combined academic credentials with an established family pedigree. Although Bogićević also reached a ministerial post, the other three played a far more significant role in Serbia's political life. Their rise from the lower rungs of society fueled an ambition often stronger than that of peers from privileged backgrounds. Jovan Ristić's life illustrates this trajectory vividly: His extensive biography claims that he began life in the greatest poverty among 19th-century major Serbian politicians, yet by the end of his career, he had become one of Serbia's wealthiest men, his fortune largely derived from the dowry his wife brought into marriage.[40] Marriages linking highly educated men from modest backgrounds with the daughters of the wealthiest families brought together financial resources and educational capital, forming networks that, especially in the 1860s and 1870s, were crucial in shaping the emerging Serbian elite.[41]

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37 Vuletić 2022: 167–185.
38 Pavković 1992: 139; see also *Životopis Jevrema Grujića*, 36–37.
39 *Uspomene i doživljaji Dimitrija Marinkovića 1846–1869*, 1939: 54.
40 Radović 2023: 32, 643.
41 Vuletić 2022: 167–185.

Although based on a small number of cases, this analysis suggests the main patterns and dynamics through which education and family background shaped social mobility in mid-19th-century Serbia, with these examples considered indicative of broader trends. The first holders of educational capital came from the lower strata of society and obtained degrees from European universities through state scholarships. Another group consisted of the descendants of notable families, who acquired university degrees thanks to their parents' ambition and financial resources. Sons of prominent families thus benefited from both forms of capital: education and family background. Yet inheriting a family's status also imposed constraints. While it provided initial authority and opportunities, it often limited autonomy, as careers and personal choices remained closely tied to, and sometimes overshadowed by, the family name. In contrast, scholarship recipients from modest backgrounds relied primarily on their educational attainment to advance socially. Unlike their fellow students from the notable families, they displayed greater personal agency, beginning with their departure for university and continuing throughout their careers. Their achievements demonstrate the transformative potential of educational capital: By excelling academically and forming strategic matrimonial alliances, they were able to compensate for the lack of family pedigree and gain entry into wealthy social circles. In this way, by combining educational and financial capital, they actively contributed to the formation of the elite stratum of Serbian society. Through these efforts, they converted their educational capital into social standing more successfully than many of their peers from established families.

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ОБРАЗОВНИ КАПИТАЛ, ПОРОДИЧНО ПОРЕКЛО И ДРУШТВЕНО ПОЗИЦИОНИРАЊЕ У СРБИЈИ СРЕДИНОМ 19. ВЕКА

Резиме

У раду се испитују обрасци и динамика кроз које су универзитетско образовање и породично порекло обликовали друштвену мобилност у Србији у раној фази друштвене стратификације. Анализом неколико карактеристичних примера високообразовних појединаца откривају се показатељи ширег тренда. Први носиоци диплома европских универзитета у Србији долазили су из нижих друштвених слојева, а дипломе су стицали захваљујући државним стипендијама. Другу групу чинили су потомци истакнутих јавних радника и богатијих трговаца, који су студирали захваљујући амбицијама и финансијским средствима својих родитеља. За разлику од припадника прве групе, они су осим образовног капитала уживали и у предностима породичног порекла и породичних веза. Ипак, такав статус носио је и извесна ограничења. Породично порекло пружало је почетну предност, али је често ограничавало личну аутономију, јер су професионални избори у великој мери били усмеравани родитељским амбицијама. Осим тога, неповољан преокрет друштвеног или политичког положаја родитеља негативно се одражавао и на њихове каријере. Насупрот њима, државни стипендисти ослањали су се првенствено на сопствено образовање како би градили професионалну каријеру и друштвене везе у престоници. Показивали су већу личну иницијативу – често већ при одласку на студије, што је у многим случајевима био плод њиховог личног залагања. Недостатак материјалних ресурса и породичних веза у градској средини често су компензовали склапањем брачних веза са припадницама имућнијих кругова. На тај начин, комбинујући образовни и финансијски капитал, активно су доприносили формирању елитног слоја српског друштва почетком друге половине 19. века. Кроз овакво деловање успешније су користили свој образовни капитал, конвертујући га у виши друштвени положај, него многи њихови вршњаци с породичним „педигреом”.

Кључне речи: образовни капитал, породично порекло, породичне везе, друштво, студенти, елите, Србија у 19. веку.

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