



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Internationalizing the Revolution: Veterans and Transnational Cultures of Memory and Solidarity between Yugoslavia and Algeria

Jelena Đureinović 

Research Center for the History of Transformations, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria
E-mail: jelena.dureinovic@univie.ac.at

Abstract

The article examines the role of memory in Yugoslav exchanges with the postcolonial world, focusing on the agency of Yugoslav war veterans and their involvement with Algeria. During decolonization, Yugoslav institutions and associations stood in solidarity with anti-colonial liberation movements. Former Partisans were critical agents of Yugoslav internationalism, and the memory of the People's Liberation War (Narodnooslobodilački rat, NOR), which dominated the Yugoslav memory culture, played a connecting role in this context. The article focuses on the transnational aspect of the Yugoslav war memory, an intrinsically everyday phenomenon, exploring its exportation and internationalization. Applying the transnational memory framework to relations between Yugoslav Partisans and Algerian mujahideen, the article illuminates the twofold role of memory: as narratives of the shared past, and as the transfer of knowledge in war commemoration. Firstly, Yugoslav veterans identified with the anti-colonial struggle as comparable to their own. This was not only an official political discourse, but was also shared by Yugoslav society at large. Secondly, they engaged in transfers of knowledge in memory work, providing expertise and training to Algerian veterans. The People's Liberation War memory constituted a key aspect of everyday life in Yugoslav state socialism and veterans internationalized it, adding the dimension of personal war memory. The exchanges of knowledge illuminate the transfer from the discursive level of the shared past to the sphere of commemorative policies and practices that reshaped cultures of war remembrance. The article represents a starting point of a global history of the Yugoslav revolution and a transnational history of memory from the perspective of anti-colonial solidarities.

On 1 May 1959, the Yugoslav Red Cross transported fifty wounded fighters of the Algerian Front de libération nationale (FLN) from Tangier to Yugoslavia. The wounded and disabled Algerians stayed in hospitals and rehabilitation centres across Yugoslavia, where they were provided with both medical and professional rehabilitation. The FLN fighters took Serbo-Croatian courses and completed



Figure 1. Soldiers of the National Liberation Army (ALN) with Yugoslav Partisan and journalist Zdravko Pečar in Algeria, 1958.

Source: *Museum of African Art, Belgrade*. CC BY-SA 4.0.

training in driving, orthopaedic bandaging, sanitation, and as telephone operators. A few took courses on the history of the Yugoslav workers' movement and the organization of trade unions at the Workers' University. Yugoslavia would transport and treat a few more such groups over the following two years. The Yugoslav Red Cross coordinated the costly initiative, together with other institutions and socio-political organizations, joining together in the Yugoslav Committee for Helping Algeria.

The treatment of the wounded liberation fighters represents an example of the broad political, military, and technical assistance and solidarity between Yugoslavia and Algeria, which strengthened during the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962) and continued into the postcolonial period (Figure 1). Initially, Yugoslavia tried to mediate between France and the FLN while secretly and illegally sending arms to Algeria, but it soon pivoted to openly providing military and diplomatic support and aid for the Algerian independence movement.¹ The Yugoslav state saw rendering assistance and building influence in soon-to-be independent Algeria as vital for the realization of the new idea of non-alignment,² exemplified in its co-founding role in the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961. Algeria served as a

¹ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World* (Princeton, NJ, 2015), p. 85.

² Ljubodrag Dimić, *Jugoslavija i hladni rat. Oglеди o spoljnoj politici Josipa Broza Tita* (Belgrade, 2014), p. 287.

“blueprint” for the future Yugoslav support to liberation movements in Africa and Asia in the 1960s and 1970s.³ Furthermore, Algeria also acted and positioned itself as Yugoslavia’s “bridge to Africa”, connecting it to sub-Saharan Africa.⁴

Socio-political organizations were vital agents of Yugoslav non-alignment and networks of solidarity with anti-colonial liberation movements. Besides the Confederation of Trade Unions, another socio-political organization actively involved in the Yugoslav Committee for Helping Algeria was SUBNOR, the Federation of Veteran Associations of the People’s Liberation War (Narodnooslobodilački rat, NOR).⁵ The NOR (1941–1945) was the official term for the communist-led Partisans’ struggle against the Axis occupation during World War II and a parallel socialist revolution that built the foundations for Yugoslav state socialism. In addition to care and advocacy for veterans, SUBNOR was the central mnemonic agent in socialist Yugoslavia, working on the preservation of war memory and its dissemination to society at large, with the focus on younger generations. More broadly, former Partisans dominated state institutions and socio-political organizations, shaping Yugoslavia’s domestic and international politics up to the late 1970s. During decolonization, SUBNOR was often the first Yugoslav contact for liberation movements, and Yugoslav veterans nurtured friendships with the latter in addition to contributing to Yugoslav assistance programmes in the postcolonial world. The memory of the NOR, on which the culture of remembrance centred and which acted as a main source of legitimacy for Yugoslav state socialism, performed an important connecting role in this context.

The article examines the role of war memory in Yugoslav exchanges with the postcolonial world, focusing on Algeria and the agency of war veterans in cultures of solidarity. It contributes to the scholarship on socialist internationalism and East–South connections during the Cold War from the perspective of memory studies.⁶ While scholars of socialist globalizations have generally observed that the shared history of anti-imperialism and narratives of common struggle bound Eastern Europe and the Global South together,⁷ they have not adequately addressed and analysed these narratives, their roles, and their practical implications. The article centres on the Algerian Organization nationale des moudjahidine (ONM), the association of veterans of the War of Independence.

³Milorad Lazić, “Arsenal of the Global South: Yugoslavia’s Military Aid to Nonaligned Countries and Liberation Movements”, *Nationalities Papers*, 49:3 (2021), pp. 428–445, 432.

⁴Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (New York, 2016), p. 6.

⁵SUBNOR was founded as the Association of Veterans (Savez boraca) in 1947. In 1961, the association merged with the organizations of the Disabled War Veterans and Reserved Officers, becoming SUBNOR – the Federation of Veteran Associations. In this article, SUBNOR refers to the Partisans’ veterans’ association in general.

⁶James Mark and Paul Betts, “Introduction”, in James Mark *et al.*, *Socialism Goes Global: The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the Age of Decolonization* (Oxford, 2022), pp. 1–24; James Mark, Artemy M. Kalinovsky, and Steffi Marung, *Alternative Globalizations: Eastern Europe and the Postcolonial World* (Bloomington, IN, 2020).

⁷James Mark and Quinn Slobodian, “Eastern Europe in the Global History of Decolonization”, *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, 6 December 2018.

The NOR in Yugoslavia and the Algerian War of Independence were the main sources of legitimacy for the respective regimes and central historical references in both societies. While the two memory cultures developed in parallel to the socialist and Third World internationalism to which Yugoslavia and Algeria were committed, there are no comparative or transnational studies that look at war memory beyond state borders and in relation to the international context. Building upon the sources and perspectives of Yugoslavia, this article applies a transnational memory studies framework that goes beyond the nation state as the natural container of memory. Algeria serves as the case study for the broader process of the globalization of the Yugoslav revolution in the Global South and its position in global anti-colonial memory cultures after 1945.

This article argues that war memory played a twofold role in the context of decolonization and cultures of solidarity. Firstly, the personal memory and experience of war and revolution among former Partisans underlay and shaped the solidarity initiatives and connections with the postcolonial world. Yugoslav veterans saw the anti-colonial struggle as comparable to the NOR and liberation fighters as facing similar challenges and fighting for the same goals. Secondly, Yugoslavs engaged in a transfer of knowledge in the sphere of memory work, providing training to liberation movements in how to build a culture of remembrance. In the case of Algeria, the exchange of experiences in war commemoration surfaced in the early 1970s and were formalized through a series of inter-state cultural cooperation agreements. Veterans' advocacy led to the addition of a section on veterans, documentation, and memory in the official agreements concerning cultural cooperation. These contracts illuminate the power and relevance of war veterans in both state structures and societies; the transfer from the discursive level of the shared past to the sphere of commemorative policies and practices; and, finally, the transformation of solidarity based on the narrative of a common struggle into exchanges that affected and reshaped cultures of war remembrance. After a brief discussion of the concepts of transcultural and transnational memory, the article outlines the main characteristics of war remembrance and veterans' agency in Yugoslavia and Algeria, before moving on to discussing the two manifestations of memory in Yugoslav–Algerian relations.

Internationalism was not simply a top-down political discourse disconnected from Yugoslav society; it was integrated in people's direct experience and everyday practices of state socialism. This article argues that war memory represents a fascinating way of exploring the dynamics of everyday internationalism. The memory of the NOR represented a central element of everyday life in Yugoslavia. War commemoration went beyond state-sponsored ceremonies and institutions such as museums and involved a broad range of community, cultural, and leisure activities that brought together and involved very diverse and large segments of the Yugoslav population. SUBNOR itself was a mass organization with more than one million members who worked together with other socio-political and voluntary associations to organize these activities. In this way, SUBNOR was a foundational and inescapable part of everyday life in Yugoslavia, but, as this article shows, it also played an important transnational role through its foreign policy mandate. The article focuses on the transnational aspect of the Yugoslav war memory, an intrinsically everyday phenomenon, exploring its exportation and internationalization.

Solidarity with the postcolonial world was an important aspect of Yugoslav socialist internationalism. During decolonization, all Yugoslav institutions and socio-political organizations engaged in solidarity initiatives with anti-colonial liberation movements. Veterans were critical agents of Yugoslav socialist globalization, demonstrating the multi-level nature of Yugoslav cultures of solidarity as both centralized and grassroots initiatives. On the one hand, most Yugoslav state actors were NOR veterans. On the other hand, as a veterans' association, SUBNOR was a mass socio-political organization that acted independently, and government institutions often only got involved if funding or a formal inter-state cooperation agreement became necessary. Veterans' internationalism and cultures of solidarity were about face-to-face encounters and friendships between people who shared the experience of combat – the experience that shaped their identities and made them see themselves as distinct from the rest of society and connected to each other.⁸

The post-1945 world can be interpreted as “a world of war veterans” as they were historical actors involved in major processes that shaped the world in this period.⁹ This article looks at the fascinating and understudied example of Yugoslav and Algerian veterans in the international context. Yugoslav Partisan veterans have not featured as a prominent research subject, with only a few studies on their memory work in the early socialist period and at the local level in late socialism.¹⁰ This is also true in the case of the mujahideen and *shuhada*, the veterans and fallen fighters of the War of Independence in Algeria, who are observed in a handful of publications as guardians of the revolution and symbols of the official war memory.¹¹ At the same time, however, we cannot think about socialist Yugoslavia or postcolonial Algeria, their societies, politics, and cultures, without war veterans, as Partisan and FLN veterans dominated political and public life and institutions in the post-war and postcolonial period respectively. The Partisans' central position in society, leading agency in memory politics and as representatives of Yugoslavia abroad, makes them exceptional in state socialist Eastern Europe, where World War II veterans in other countries of the region did

⁸Ángel Alcalde and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, “Introduction: A World of Veterans”, in Ángel Alcalde and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas (eds), *War Veterans and the World after 1945: Cold War Politics, Decolonization, Memory* (London [etc.], 2018), pp. 1–15, 3.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁰Heike Karge, *Steinerne Erinnerung. Versteinerte Erinnerung? Kriegsgedenken in Jugoslawien (1947–1970)* (Wiesbaden, 2010); Tina Filipović, “Borački prioriteti i autoriteti. SUBNOR u lokalnoj zajednici 1970-ih i 1980-ih godina”, in Igor Duda (ed.), *Mikrosocijalizam. Mikrostrukture jugoslavenskoga socijalizma u Hrvatskoj 1970-ih i 1980-ih* (Zagreb, 2023), pp. 125–148; Tina Filipović, “SUBNOR-ove politike i prakse sjećanja na NOR u sisačkim proslavama”, *Historijski zbornik*, 74:2 (2021), pp. 389–408; *idem*, “Osnutak, struktura i djelovanje boračke organizacije na lokalnoj razini: Općinski odbor SUBNOR-a Labin”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 53:1 (2021), pp. 43–68.

¹¹Raphaëlle Branche, “The Martyr's Torch: Memory and Power in Algeria”, *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16:3 (2011), pp. 431–443; Emmanuel Alcaraz, “Les Monuments Aux Martyrs de La Guerre D'Independence Algérienne. Monumentalité, Enjeux de Mémoire et Commémorations”, *Guerre Mondiales et Conflits Contemporains*, 1:237 (2010), pp. 125–146; Thomas DeGeorges, “The Shifting Sands of Revolutionary Legitimacy: The Role of Former Mūjahidin in the Shaping of Algeria's Collective Memory”, *The Journal of North African Studies*, 14:2 (2009), pp. 273–288.

not shape official narratives or society.¹² Because of their direct experience of war and revolution, and their decisive role in building the post-war state and society, the Yugoslav Partisan veterans' position was similar to that of veteran liberation fighters in postcolonial settings such as Algeria.

Travelling Memory

War memory correlates with the concepts of memory politics and memory culture, or the culture of remembrance, as a historical frame of reference and as a broad social, political, and cultural context where the politics of war memory takes place. This article discusses war memory in Yugoslavia and Algeria centring on official and dominant narratives. Official memory pertains to state agency and hegemonic narratives that underpin commemorative practices at the state level. At the same time, dominant memory is about the power of historical narratives and their pervasiveness in society, achieving centrality and authority, while alternative representations of war are marginalized, excluded, or recast.¹³ World War II in Yugoslavia and the War of Independence in Algeria were transformative events that were not only experienced and remembered by combatants, but that also affected the societies and populations at large. While elements of official and dominant memory in both countries reflected the war experiences of large segments of society, they also excluded or denied any war interpretations that did not fit the official discourse or were represented by minority groups. When it comes to war memory, veterans balance the official memory politics with “their own need to commemorate, narrate and speak out about their experience”.¹⁴ Memory politics represents one of veterans' most prominent public roles, but the broader issues of exclusion, selectivity, and denial also surface within this social group.

The understanding that the nation state is not “the natural container, curator and telos of collective memory” is at the core of the transnational turn in the interdisciplinary field of memory studies, which goes beyond the dominant national and comparative approaches to memory cultures and politics.¹⁵ This approach recognizes that memories exist in an essentially dialogic reaction to each other, rather than in the isolation of nation states and particular communities.¹⁶ Memory travels in the global context. The term “travelling memory” is shorthand for the fact that, in the production of cultural memory, people, media, mnemonic forms,

¹²Joanna Wawrzyniak, *Veterans, Victims, and Memory: The Politics of the Second World War in Communist Poland* (Frankfurt am Main, 2016); Mark Edele, *Soviet Veterans of the Second World War: A Popular Movement in an Authoritarian Society, 1941–1991* (Oxford [etc.], 2008).

¹³Popular Memory Group, “Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method”, in Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson (eds), *The Oral History Reader* (London [etc.], 1998), pp. 75–87, 76.

¹⁴Alcalde and Núñez Seixas, “Introduction”, p. 10.

¹⁵Ann Rigney and Chiara De Cesari, “Introduction”, in *idem* (eds), *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales* (Berlin, 2014), pp. 1–29, 1.

¹⁶Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson, “Introduction”, in *idem* (eds), *The Transcultural Turn: Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders* (Berlin, 2014), pp. 1–29, 19.

contents, and practices are in constant, unceasing motion.¹⁷ Of course, memory does not travel on its own; rather, various actors and media power its movement. In the case of Yugoslavia, it was the central and most powerful memory agent, the veterans' association SUBNOR, which became the primary conduit for the East–South travelling of memory.

Travelling memory can be understood as transcultural memory, “as the incessant wandering of carriers, media, contents, forms, and practices of memory, their continual ‘travels’ and ongoing transformations through time and space, across social, linguistic, and political borders”.¹⁸ Transcultural memory encompasses two separate dynamics in commemorative practices in the global context: firstly, it implies “the travelling of memory within and between national, ethnic, and religious collectives”; and secondly, it involves “forums of remembrance that aim to move beyond the idea of political, ethnic, linguistic, or religious borders as containers for our understanding of the past”.¹⁹

For this article and the exchanges of Yugoslav veterans with the postcolonial world, it is useful to distinguish between transnational and transcultural memory. We can imagine transnational memory as something that travels across borders, and transcultural memory as enabling “the imagining of new communities and new types of belonging”.²⁰ In other words, the “transnational” is about the relationships between multiple localities of memory, and the notion of “transcultural” is about their blending.²¹ In the context of SUBNOR, we can similarly think of a twofold role of memory in the global Cold War context. Firstly, similar to the “transnational”, Yugoslav Partisan veterans engaged in exchanges with veterans' associations and liberation movements from the Global South. These exchanges involved mutual visits to important sites of memory and commemorative events, the exchange of statues and other memorial objects related to the war, and SUBNOR sharing its expertise in memory work and providing training in how to preserve the memory of the war of liberation and revolution. The veterans and liberation fighters exchanged their practices and “modes of conveying knowledge about the past”.²² Secondly, the process of decolonization generated new memory communities and the blending of different historical experiences into the narrative of anti-imperialism in the past, present, and future. Yugoslav veterans connected their experience of the NOR with the anti-colonial struggles in Africa and Asia as a shared past of the armed struggle for freedom. The idea of the shared past underlay Yugoslav solidarity and assistance initiatives during decolonization. For many liberation fighters and veterans from the postcolonial world, the Yugoslav revolutionary and socialist state-building experience played an equally connecting role.

¹⁷Astrid Erll, “Travelling Memory”, *Parallax*, 17:4 (2011), pp. 4–18, 12.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁹Bond and Rapson, “Introduction”, p. 19.

²⁰Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, “The Transnational Dynamics of Local Remembrance: The Jewish Past in a Former Shtetl in Poland”, *Memory Studies*, 11:3 (2018), pp. 301–304, 302.

²¹Jenny Wüstenberg, “Locating Transnational Memory”, *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 32:4 (2019), pp. 371–382, 374.

²²Erll, “Travelling Memory”, p. 13.

The Position of SUBNOR in Yugoslav Society

SUBNOR was founded in 1947 as a mass organization; it had with 1.2 million members by 1951.²³ Its position in Yugoslav society was determined by its designation as a socio-political organization (*društveno-politička organizacija*, DPO). There were four other DPOs in Yugoslavia: the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Yugoslavia (SSRNJ); the Alliance of the Socialist Youth of Yugoslavia (SOJ); the Confederation of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia (SSJ); and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (SKJ), as the Communist Party of Yugoslavia renamed itself in 1952. They were imagined as spaces for the free political organizing of people, with voluntary membership and semi-autonomous functioning between state control and independence. Their relationship with state structures was complex. While the organizations operated with a high degree of autonomy, they did not deviate from the official ideological frameworks of Yugoslav state socialism,²⁴ and they had prominent political actors among their leadership and participated in parliamentary structures from the local to the federal level. The process of decentralization in the Yugoslav state led to increasing independence of organizations below the federal level.

The balance between autonomy and state control, and the central position of veterans in Yugoslav politics, are key to understanding the agency of SUBNOR. Its administrative and territorial organization reflected that of other socio-political organizations: it functioned as a league or alliance with a delegated decision-making system and had offices and committees from the communal to the federal level. On the one hand, SUBNOR enjoyed a high degree of autonomy in its work within Yugoslavia and in international relations. On the other hand, it was intertwined with state and party structures since its members – the Partisans – were also the highest-ranking state and party officials and leading figures of other socio-political organizations. Finally, SUBNOR's task was to preserve and promote the foundational ideological framework of Yugoslav state socialism, the NOR.

SUBNOR was more than a veterans' association responsible for care and advocacy for its members, based on the understanding that Partisans were not only soldiers, but also engaged political activists of the socialist revolution.²⁵ Hence, SUBNOR was not just a group of veterans who had completed their role and laid down their rifles to wait for old age in peace; it saw itself as a militant and activist organization that would preserve the legacies of the NOR and inspire younger generations.²⁶ The official goals of the association included strengthening brotherhood and unity, national independence, and security; cooperating with all peaceful nations; rebuilding the country; educating the youth in the spirit of the NOR; fighting “all domestic and foreign enemies”; and caring for veterans, especially those with disabilities, and the

²³*Drugi kongres Saveza boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata Jugoslavije* (Belgrade, 1951), p. 21.

²⁴Nikola Baković, “Retracing the Revolution: Partisan Reenactments in Socialist Yugoslavia”, in Vanessa Agnew, Juliane Tomann, and Sabine Stach (eds), *Reenactment Case Studies: Global Perspectives on Experiential History* (London, 2022), pp. 105–125, 107.

²⁵Iko Mirković, *Savez boraca u političkom sistemu* (Belgrade, 1978), p. 6.

²⁶*Osnivački kongres Saveza boraca Narodno-oslobodilačkog rata* (Belgrade, 1947).

families of fallen soldiers.²⁷ Additionally, the preservation and dissemination of war memory and international cooperation were among SUBNOR's key activities.

SUBNOR's international cooperation developed in the broader context of Yugoslavia's repositioning after its 1948 expulsion from Cominform. Yugoslav veterans cooperated with numerous individual veterans' associations, in addition to participating in two international organizations: the World Veteran Federation (WVF) and International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR).²⁸ In addition to veterans' associations around the world, Yugoslav veterans had connections with active anti-colonial liberation movements in Africa and Asia, which they maintained into the postcolonial period. Beyond the exchanges in matters pertaining to combatants and veterans, SUBNOR and other socio-political organizations acted as the main drivers of Yugoslav solidarity initiatives during decolonization. While Yugoslav government institutions funded these efforts, the organizations acted independently, individually, and often spontaneously, responding to direct requests from liberation movements.

Because of its organizational power, semi-autonomous character, leading agency in memory politics, and the broader centrality of veterans in Yugoslav society, SUBNOR and the Yugoslav Partisans represented an outlier in state socialist Eastern Europe. It was also these characteristics pertaining to the political power of Yugoslav veterans that enabled them to connect with anti-colonial liberation movements and contribute to Yugoslav solidarity initiatives. Finally, the Partisans' experience of a war of liberation, revolution, and the building of socialism went beyond fulfilling a connecting role with the postcolonial world at a discursive level. The political power and agency of the Partisans in Yugoslavia was equivalent to that of liberation fighters in postcolonial contexts such as Algeria.

Veterans and War Memory in Yugoslavia and Algeria

In both Yugoslavia and Algeria, war was a foundational event that gave birth to the new state and radically transformed society and the political order, with former combatants and revolutionaries taking a central place in society, politics, and the culture of remembrance. In Yugoslavia, former Partisans became vital actors in building the new socio-political system after the war ended, and the Yugoslav leadership immediately recognized the preservation of war memory as an important task. The War of Independence was a pivotal site of memory in postcolonial

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 25–26.

²⁸SUBNOR, or initially the Association of Fighters and the Association of Disabled War Veterans, was the only veterans' association from a socialist country that was a member of the World Veteran Federation. The first WVF General Assembly was held in Belgrade in 1951, and SUBNOR had a leading role in the WVF. As the federation increasingly turned towards the postcolonial world, SUBNOR advocated for WVF membership among veterans' associations in newly independent countries such as Algeria. The Western and anti-communist orientation of the WVF generated criticism and suspicion among anti-colonial liberation war veterans, who were not eager to join. At the same time, the Yugoslavs argued that the WVF was a useful platform for pursuing different goals, which could also improve the status of veterans worldwide. See Ángel Alcalde, "The World Veterans Federation: Cold War Politics and Globalization", in Ángel Alcalde and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas (eds), *War Veterans and the World after 1945: Cold War Politics, Decolonization, Memory* (London [etc.], 2018), pp. 33–51.

Algeria, just like the NOR was for socialist Yugoslavia, but the war was not the focus of public discourse in the initial post-war years that it would become in the 1970s and 1980s. While SUBNOR and the ONM had maintained close contacts and visited each other from the late 1950s, it was only in the early 1970s that cooperation in the sphere of war memory emerged, coinciding with the newly awakened interest of the mujahideen in memory work.

Yugoslavia: Nurturing Revolutionary Traditions

SUBNOR was the primary agent of memory politics in Yugoslavia, and it considered the work on war memory a duty.²⁹ The Yugoslav culture of remembrance celebrated the NOR and commemorated the fallen Partisans and victims of fascist terror, defined as all people who died without weapons in their hands. Different committees and working groups within SUBNOR collected documents and testimonies about wartime events; published books and newspapers; organized commemorative and other events to engage the broader public; and planned, financed, and erected monuments and memorial museums. The organization of commemorative activities was at the core of SUBNOR's work from its establishment, implemented through the Commission for the Preservation of Traditions of the NOR, which was in charge of all graves, memorials, and museums. The parallel roles of memory maker and veterans' association was not surprising, considering that the hierarchy of the Yugoslav war memory placed the fallen Partisans at the highest position, followed by veterans who had survived the war, and, finally, the victims of fascism.³⁰

While SUBNOR recognized the preservation of the memory and legacies of the war as an important task from the war's end, the official politics of war memory and its discourses, practices, and forms underwent changes during the socialist period in Yugoslavia. In the first post-war decades, the war generation was the target audience of commemorative efforts with the central goal of honouring the fallen Partisans. Most war memorials were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s.³¹ From the 1960s, the focus of the culture of war remembrance turned to the younger generations and Yugoslavs without direct experience of war, shifting to more large-scale memorial projects and utilizing diverse media formats and popular culture. The modernization of war remembrance to appeal to the youth was intended to transform the official war memory into a truly collective cultural memory of Yugoslav society.³² In addition to the media and popular culture, sites of memory, which were often situated in nature, became popular tourist attractions in the 1970s with the addition of restaurants, hotels, and parking places.³³

²⁹Karge, *Steinerne Erinnerung*, p. 41.

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 46–47.

³¹Heike Karge, "Local Practices and 'Memory from Above': On the Building of War Monuments in Yugoslavia", in Sanja Horvatinčić and Beti Žerovc (eds), *Shaping Revolutionary Memory: The Production of Monuments in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Ljubljana [etc.], 2023), pp. 92–114, 94.

³²Karge, *Steinerne Erinnerung*, pp. 43, 76.

³³Sanja Horvatinčić, "Formalna heterogenost spomeničke sculpture i strategije sjećanja u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji", *Anali galerije Antuna Augustinčića*, 31 (2011), pp. 81–106, 102.

Yugoslav officials and veterans always referred to their memory work as keeping, nurturing, and developing the traditions and legacies of the NOR. The initial purpose of the politics of memory was to honour the wartime generation, but it extended to making the experience of war and revolution accessible and tangible to the Yugoslav youth and an inspiration for the future. The scale of the activities and outputs of SUBNOR's memory work was immense: between 1951 and 1955, SUBNOR erected 1322 monuments, 3521 plaques, and 150 memorial fountains. In 1955, 200 museums existed across Yugoslavia, eighty-one of which were memorial museums of the NOR. Furthermore, between 1951 and 1955, almost 5000 celebrations of uprisings and other anniversaries took place, in addition to nearly 10,000 other events and gatherings.³⁴ The construction of memorials was not only a top-down effort governed by SUBNOR, but it was also embedded in local communities. Local populations of cities, towns, and villages across Yugoslavia actively participated in generating the war narrative, donated money to finance war memorials, and shaped the local practices of war remembrance.³⁵

The culture of war remembrance was an everyday phenomenon and practice in Yugoslavia. It went far beyond the agency of the state and war veterans and involved the mass participation of socio-political organizations, leisure associations, and the population at large. The anniversaries of wartime events were opportunities for local communities to reveal new monuments, open museums, and honour local Partisans, but they were also annual festive community celebrations with cultural programmes, village fairs, and food, drinks, and entertainment for all generations. Especially from the late 1960s, sporting events, re-enactment marches, and nature hikes constituted the core commemorative activities with mass participation of the Yugoslav population. Numerous socio-political and voluntary organizations became SUBNOR's partners as memory agents, including youth groups, scouts, hostelling, and alpinists' and foresters' associations.³⁶

Algeria: From Low-Key to Large-Scale War Commemoration

As noted earlier, the War of Independence was the central historical reference in postcolonial Algeria, serving a legitimating purpose similar to that of the NOR in Yugoslavia. While war narratives were always present in public and political discourses, the FLN regime initially did not engage in substantial commemorative practices or projects. Considering that they had more pressing issues than commemoration to deal with, the FLN established national holidays, renamed streets and schools to commemorate the FLN heroes and martyrs, and "enshrined its version of the revolution in the 1963 constitution".³⁷ Large-scale memorial projects such as the Martyrs' Monument in Algiers only ensued in the 1980s, when it became "harder to 'sell' the version of the war in which independence

³⁴Treći kongres Saveza boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata Jugoslavije (Belgrade, 1955), pp. 123–127.

³⁵Karge, "Local Practices".

³⁶Baković, "Retracing the Revolution", p. 108.

³⁷Natalya Vince, *The Algerian War, The Algerian Revolution* (Basingstoke, 2020), p. 169.

had resolved, or would soon resolve, all of Algeria's economic, social, and cultural issues".³⁸

At the core of the FLN war narrative was the continuity of the freedom struggle of the united Algerian people throughout history and "the idea of 130 years of incessant anti-imperial struggle based on a binary opposition between a united nation and its colonial enemy".³⁹ The shared history of all Algerian people, unified behind the FLN to fight for their freedom, was "the corner stone and the cement" that held together the FLN political project.⁴⁰ The narrative of the joint struggle of all the people of Algeria ignores the infighting that occurred after independence as well as multiple actors beyond the FLN who advocated or fought for independence, even though the FLN successfully mobilized supporters from a range of backgrounds and political orientations.⁴¹ Furthermore, an important element of the war narrative during the initial post-war period was that of reassuming Arabo-Islamic identity and traditions, as well as Algerian culture, as Arabic in language and Muslim in religion, thus excluding many non-Arab ethnic groups, including the Amazigh communities. Martyrs who gave their lives for the struggle were at the top of the hierarchy of dominant war narratives, followed by war veterans, or the mujahideen.

The mujahideen had a monopoly on the public memory and written history of the 1954–1962 period. The goals of the ONM were similar to those of SUBNOR: in addition to the identification and care of veterans, the ONM worked to preserve the spirit of November 1954 and to eternalize the revolution by instilling its principles and values in future generations.⁴² Alongside commemorative practices, Algerian veterans worked on encouraging history writing, gathering documentation, and preventing the distortion of the history of the revolution and crimes of colonialism.⁴³

The turn from understated to more prominent memory politics in Algeria can be traced to the early 1970s and included an increased interest among the mujahideen in historical research and its management and in the dissemination of war memory among the broader population. This change coincided with the re-establishment of relations with SUBNOR, which had been put on hold after the 1965 coup that resulted in Houari Boumediène becoming Algeria's president. In 1972, the National Museum of the Mujahideen opened with the aim to collect and preserve objects and documents from the war and to present the history of the liberation struggle to a broader audience. Between the early 1970s and the late 1980s, the official memory politics were focused on establishing a range of institutions of memory and large-scale memorial projects. They were the most visible outputs of the aim among the mujahideen and the political leadership to bring the war memory closer to the population and make it an inseparable, visible, and broadly relatable aspect of the everyday life of Algerian society.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 178.

³⁹Edward McAllister, "The Past in the Present: Algeria at 50", *Mediterranean Politics*, 1:3 (2012), pp. 446–451, 447.

⁴⁰Branche, "The Martyr's Torch", p. 437.

⁴¹Laurie Brand, *Official Stories: Politics and National Narratives in Egypt and Algeria* (Stanford, CA, 2014), 117.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 141.

⁴³*Ibid.*

Narratives of the Shared Past

Cooperation between SUBNOR and the FLN emerged during the War of Independence, when SUBNOR and the Association of Disabled War Veterans provided various forms of support to the FLN, both independently and through the Yugoslav Committee for Helping Algeria. Both sides continuously emphasized the similarities of the respective struggles for independence, and against domination and the military traditions of the Yugoslav and Algerian people, as binding the two countries and their people together.

The NOR was a threefold struggle – against the fascist occupation and domestic collaborators, for socialist revolution, and for independence – and it was a state-building project.⁴⁴ Its multifaceted nature, goals, and strategies resembled the anti-colonial struggles for independence that spread across Africa and Asia in the post-1945 period and also had a connecting purpose. The NOR served as a point of connection and understanding between Yugoslavia and the postcolonial world and created “a kind of symbolic resonance and affective affinity” with anti-colonial struggles in the Global South.⁴⁵ For the Yugoslav Partisans, it was only natural to support the anti-colonial struggles that had so many similarities to their own war of liberation. For the anti-colonial liberation movements in Africa and Asia, the NOR fostered an image of Yugoslavia as an ally that would share its revolutionary experience through military training and assistance.

Anti-imperialism represented an essential aspect of official and popular politics in Yugoslavia.⁴⁶ The narratives of a similar or shared past suited the Yugoslav geopolitical reorientation after 1948 and its dedication to non-alignment. Yugoslav political actors paralleled the Partisans’ struggle against occupation during World War II with the fight against colonialism. The narrative of the anti-imperialist past, present, and future played a significant role for Yugoslavia in the global Cold War, with the claim of a shared historical experience of the struggle for liberation underlying Yugoslav relations with the postcolonial world. Yugoslav political actors emphasized that they had never had “imperial holdings or sought great power status” and positioned themselves as natural partners for national liberation movements and postcolonial states,⁴⁷ arguing that they had always stood on the side of those fighting for freedom.

SUBNOR fully supported the politics of non-alignment, investing enormous efforts in the political and material support and training of liberation movements and political organizations in numerous countries. For former Partisans, the support for

⁴⁴Bojana Videkanić, “The Long Durée of Yugoslav Socially Engaged Art and Its Continued Life in the Non-Aligned World”, in Paul Stubbs (ed.), *Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement: Social, Cultural, Political, and Economic Imaginaries* (Montreal [etc.], 2023), pp. 133–156, 142.

⁴⁵Paul Stubbs, “Introduction: Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement. Contradictions and Contestations”, in Paul Stubbs (ed.), *Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement: Social, Cultural, Political, and Economic Imaginaries* (Montreal [etc.], 2023), pp. 3–37, 5.

⁴⁶James Mark et al., “We Are With You, Vietnam’: Transnational Solidarities in Socialist Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 50:3 (2015), pp. 439–464, 442.

⁴⁷Ljubica Spaskovska, James Mark, and Florian Bieber, “Introduction: Internationalism in Times of Nationalism: Yugoslavia, Nonalignment, and the Cold War”, *Nationalities Papers*, 49:3 (2021), pp. 409–412, 410.

liberation movements was “an extension of Yugoslav revolution abroad”.⁴⁸ They were motivated by the Yugoslav anti-fascist and revolutionary experience, and they knew how important help and solidarity was to those leading an ongoing armed struggle for their independence. For SUBNOR, providing political and material support to the liberation movements was a duty because their struggle was not only about gaining independence, but also “a contribution to the freedom, independence, and equality of all people in the world”.⁴⁹ The impetus behind the solidarity initiatives during decolonization was the personal experience of war and revolution among Yugoslav state officials. Through the anti-colonial struggle, Partisan veterans could vicariously recapture their finest hours.⁵⁰

SUBNOR, as a veterans’ association or former Partisans in the broader sense, was key to Yugoslav cultures of solidarity. They initiated or participated in a myriad of solidarity initiatives in the postcolonial world, including military assistance and humanitarian aid for liberation movements as well as support and training in matters specifically relevant for war veterans, such as policies and legislation, medical and professional rehabilitation, and reintegration. Yugoslav support for liberation movements included “military internationalism”,⁵¹ which involved sending arms and providing military training, funding, and medical assistance. What bound these actions together were the narratives of a shared past and struggle, and the memory of the NOR underpinned them.

While the narrative of the shared struggle and solidarity with anti-colonialism constituted an aspect of Yugoslav non-alignment and official foreign policy, they were not top-down political discourses instrumentalized in the diplomatic and official context. There was a “deep emotional identification on the part of Yugoslav leadership with liberation movements and revolutionary governments”.⁵² The Yugoslav leadership and veterans more broadly identified with and imagined anti-colonial solidarities through the lens of resistance during World War II.

Moreover, the people of Yugoslavia, regardless of whether or not they had direct experience of the Partisans’ struggle, recognized the similarities between the NOR and anti-colonial movements. This was particularly true in the case of the Algerian War of Independence, when the media continuously informed the Yugoslav public about the war, presenting it as similar to the NOR and reporting on it in an emotive way, making the Algerians’ suffering and heroic struggle tangible for Yugoslav society. During the war, numerous exhibitions, film screenings, and publications brought the Algerian cause to the attention of the people of Yugoslavia. The support of the Yugoslav public was also important to legitimize the large-scale assistance that Yugoslav institutions and organizations provided to the FLN during the war. This was most evident during the 1961 tour of the FLN

⁴⁸Lazić, “Arsenal of the Global South”, p. 428.

⁴⁹Arhiv Jugoslavije – Savez boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata Jugoslavije, fond 297, kutija 297, hereafter AJ-SUBNOR, f. 297, k. 297.

⁵⁰Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World*, p. 87.

⁵¹Lazić, “Arsenal of the Global South”.

⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 433.

football team in Yugoslavia, when the Yugoslav regime wanted to involve “the whole society in supporting the Algerian cause”.⁵³

Transfer of Knowledge: Exporting the Yugoslav Memory Culture

Yugoslav veterans’ internationalism with anti-colonial liberation movements involved numerous mutual visits and joint activities. Judging from SUBNOR’s reports and newspapers, a delegation was almost always about to travel to or come back from one or a few countries of the Global South, in addition to their other travels. Delegations of veterans and liberation movements from across the postcolonial world were often SUBNOR’s guests in Yugoslavia, attending its congresses and important commemorations; visiting sites of memory, memorials, and museums; and participating in organized study trips about the NOR. When constructing monuments honouring their fallen fighters, some veterans’ associations approached SUBNOR for advice or help in finding suitable architects.

As an aspect of its international cooperation goals, SUBNOR invested strenuous efforts in popularizing the NOR and the building of socialism among veterans’ associations and liberation movements abroad. Because it considered the conditions for the liberation struggle in Yugoslavia and in decolonizing countries as similar, SUBNOR, usually together with other socio-political organizations, institutions, and the army, organized training in Partisan warfare and political organization for liberation movements. What to do after achieving independence was not a subject of the military training that took place in the midst of the war of liberation. In 1967, the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) visited Yugoslavia for a six-week study trip, including seven days of lectures at the Military Academy and Military Historical Institute about the tactics of Partisan warfare, the organization of units, and political mobilization. In cases such as this, the building and management of the culture of war remembrance was naturally not a topic since the purpose of the study trip was to improve military capacities for an ongoing war of liberation. However, former Partisans always used the opportunity to showcase the prominent sites of memory and museums and methods of preserving and promoting the traditions of the revolutionary struggle for future generations.

Yugoslav veterans considered the similarities of the struggle and militant traditions of the Yugoslav and Algerian people a good basis for friendship and cooperation. Like SUBNOR, one of the official tasks of the Algerian veterans’ association was to “preserve the flame of the revolution”, in addition to the protection of veterans, the care of families and children of fallen fighters, and the integration of veterans into socio-economic life.⁵⁴ Considering it an important topic that the two associations had in common, Yugoslav veterans would often talk about Yugoslavia’s experiences in the preservation of revolutionary traditions at bilateral meetings in Yugoslavia or Algeria. However, the Algerian mujahideen did not initially see commemoration of the war and revolution as an important task, arguing that they had more urgent

⁵³Dora Tot and Stipica Grgić, “The FLN 1961 Football Tour of Yugoslavia: Mobilizing Public Support for the Algerian Cause”, *Soccer & Society*, 24:2 (2023), pp. 235–244, 238.

⁵⁴AJ-SUBNOR, f. 297, k. 297.

issues to deal with first. The report of the SUBNOR delegation that visited Algeria in 1967 mentions a “modest museum of revolution” and a visit to a small memorial to fallen fighters and one military cemetery as reflecting the attitude that preserving memory was a relatively unimportant activity at the time.⁵⁵ Given their commitment to memory work at home, the former Partisans were critical of the Algerians’ neglect of war commemoration and failed to understand the reasons for it.

From the early 1970s, as the FLN became increasingly keen on memory work, Algerian veterans became more interested in the Yugoslav memory culture and started actively requesting support from Partisan veterans in this sphere. In January 1972, a delegation of the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of Algeria visited Yugoslavia with the aim of becoming acquainted with Yugoslav experiences in “studies of our recent history and preservation and development of the revolutionary traditions of the NOR”.⁵⁶ SUBNOR tailored a programme for their visit to present what had been done in historiography, museology, art, and other areas concerning the NOR in the best possible way. The Algerian delegation visited the Museum of Revolution of the People of Yugoslavia, the Institute of Contemporary History, the Military-Historical Institute, the Museum of the Yugoslav People’s Army, and, finally, the Federal Institute for International Scientific, Cultural and Technical Cooperation. They learned how these institutions worked, about the archiving of historical documents, research projects, and cultural-educational activities aimed at preserving the memory of the revolution.

The Algerian Ministry of Veteran Affairs was officially responsible for “researching the history of the liberation struggle of the people of Algeria, upholding revolutionary traditions, and initiating opening of museums and marking of sites of memory”.⁵⁷ At every meeting they had with historians, curators, and sculptors and architects of war memorials in Yugoslavia, they wanted to learn and ask as many questions as possible about how various processes worked. In the Museum of the Revolution, they wanted to know how the museum had started, how it was organized, how to gather and organize materials and present them to the broader public, and how to cooperate with schools. The same happened at the Military-Historical Institute, where the Algerian veterans were particularly interested in the preservation of documents and the work of the laboratory for conservation of documents and photographs. They visited the atelier of sculptor Miodrag Živković, where they were joined by Živa Đorđević, an architect who was on several juries for Partisan memorials. The sculptor and the architect told them about the construction of monuments and memorial complexes in Yugoslavia, which was particularly interesting for one member of the Algerian delegation, unnamed in the documents, who was an architect and wanted to get advice about the Algerian context and the difficulties they faced.

The 1972 visit marked a turning point in the cooperation between SUBNOR and ONM, when war memory, vital for both organizations, emerged as a link between the two. The aim of the visit was to explore the possibilities for specialization and education in the fields of history, museology, documentation, and memorial

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ AJ-SUBNOR, f. 297, k. 297, “Informacija o poseti studijske delegacije alžirskih boraca”.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

architecture, in techniques of preserving the documents from the war, but also how to communicate the past to the broader public. Yugoslavia had more than two decades of experience in memory work and Algeria desperately needed cadres in this sphere. This is why SUBNOR took the Algerian guests to the Federal Institute for International Cooperation, the institution responsible for all international cooperation, exchange, and assistance programmes in Yugoslavia. The plan was to provide training for Algerian veterans in Yugoslav institutions and to send Yugoslav experts to Algeria. The director of the Federal Institute, Krsto Bulajić, agreed with the general cooperation plan, asking the Algerian delegation to prepare concrete proposals to be realized through the existing frameworks of cultural cooperation programmes. The visit ended with SUBNOR and Algerian veterans' representatives agreeing to start advocating for the exchange of experts in historiography, museology, and memorial architecture at the responsible institutions in both countries.

In 1975, Algerian–Yugoslav cooperation in the sphere of war memory was further formalized when Minister of Veteran Affairs Mahmoud Guenez met with SUBNOR's General Secretary Iko Mirković. They discussed the potential exchange of experiences in the fields of museums, historiography, and memorial architecture; exhibitions on the NOR and revolution; and the exchange of publications, television series, films, and gramophone records.⁵⁸ One of the issues raised in these meetings was the complex landscape of Yugoslav federal institutions, socio-political organizations, and committees responsible for and active in cooperation with the postcolonial world. In Algeria, the institutional context was simpler as only ministries were responsible for international cooperation. The two veterans agreed that all future cooperation protocols would have to name concrete institutions that would implement each activity. Broadly speaking, the Federal Institute was in charge of international cooperation in general, while veterans' associations would initiate specific cooperation arrangements, and institutions such as the Museum of Revolution would take over the implementation of specific activities. Such a division of responsibilities was characteristic of SUBNOR's internationalism and, in fact, necessary because they could not finance or implement their cooperation and assistance programmes on their own and had to involve state institutions and other socio-political organizations. In this way, solidarity initiatives in Yugoslavia were usually a collective endeavour of multiple actors.

The talks between Algerian and Yugoslav veterans in the early 1970s led to the integration of veterans into the official cultural cooperation agreements between the two countries, with a special section in contracts dedicated to the veterans and memory.⁵⁹ In 1974, the veterans' section in the cultural cooperation protocol introduced the training of one Algerian cultural worker in the Museum of the Revolution per year, as well as five scholarships for specialization in interior design,

⁵⁸Mirković and Guenez agreed that SUBNOR would compile a short overview of the Yugoslav understanding of the revolutionary traditions and the means of their preservation and promotion, including concrete tasks involved in the commemoration of war and revolution. This document would represent a manual of memory work. Unfortunately, I could not trace the document in Yugoslav archives.

⁵⁹Arhiv Jugoslavije – Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, fond 465, kutija 1485, hereafter AJ-SZMNPT, f. 465, k. 1485, "Protokol o kulturnoj i naučnoj saradnji u između SFR Jugoslavije i DNR Alžira za 1976., 1977. i 1978. Godinu".

decoration, photography, conservation, and making maquettes in Yugoslavia.⁶⁰ For 1974 and 1975, the Algerian Ministry of Veteran Affairs asked that Yugoslavia send an architect, an archivist, a curator, a museologist, and two sculptors to work in the National Museum, in addition to medical workers. The cooperation protocols also encompassed the sending of Yugoslav experts in culture, museums, architecture, and restoration to Algeria.

Cooperation in the spheres of documentation and archives was formalized in 1975, involving the twinning of sites of memory, regions, and institutions such as the Museum of the Revolution and the National Museum of Mujahideen; the co-production and distribution of films about the NOR and the War of Independence; and the mutual sharing of film archives.⁶¹ The two countries committed to encouraging mutual visits of veterans and cooperation of youth organizations with the goal of nurturing the traditions of the respective liberation struggles. Throughout the 1970s, Yugoslavia and Algeria exchanged numerous historical and art exhibitions dealing with their respective wars of liberation. The cooperation protocol for the period 1976–1978 further specified cooperation between veterans and exchanges in the sphere of documentation and commemoration of the liberation struggle. Activities included the twinning of historical sites and sites of memory and the co-production of films of interest for veterans and war invalids, the sharing of materials, and cooperation between the National Museum of Mujahideen and the Museum of the Revolution, including the organization of an exhibition about the Algerian resistance and revolution in Belgrade. The list of requests by the Algerian side expanded into various arts and crafts, photography, restoration, and conservation of documents. The veterans' associations would also organize the exchange of children of veterans and fallen fighters. Moreover, the cultural cooperation agreement involved scholarships for the staff of the National Museum of Mujahideen, incorporating all relevant skills for museum exhibitions, such as animation, maquette making, photography, audio-visuals, and conservation of weapons.

The addition of the section on veterans, memory, and documentation to the official Yugoslav–Algerian cultural cooperation agreements demonstrates the power and central position of war veterans in both societies. It also illuminates the transfer of the war memory from the discursive level of the shared struggle to the more practical spheres of policy and exchange of experience in war commemoration and historical research. The cooperation agreements reveal not only the spheres in which Yugoslav and Algerian veterans exchanged knowledge, but also what they considered as relevant components of the culture and politics of war memory. These included museums, architecture, archives and documentation, historical research, cultural production, and youth involvement. Zooming in on these aspects of memory politics and their later development, which is beyond the scope of this

⁶⁰ Arhiv Jugoslavije – Savezni zavod za međunarodnu naučnu, prosvetno-kulturnu i tehničku saradnju, fond 465, kutija 948, “Alžirski predlog protokola kulturne i naučne saradnje”, 1974.

⁶¹ AJ-SZMNPT, f. 465, k. 1485, “Protokol o saradnji u oblasti prikupljanja i razmene istorijske i arhivske grade između DNR Alžira i SFR Jugoslavije”, 1976.

article, can shed light on transnational memory and the mutual influence and interaction between multiple localities of memory.

Conclusion

Focusing on the relations between veterans of the Yugoslav and Algerian wars of liberation, this article engaged with the question of how the memory of the NOR, as central to politics, society, and everyday life in Yugoslavia, featured in Yugoslav socialist internationalism during decolonization. The memory of the NOR represents a neglected but fascinating path of exploration of Yugoslav non-alignment and anti-colonial solidarity, which illuminates the entwinement between war commemoration as an element of everyday life and its role in internationalist endeavours. As a mass organization of NOR fighters and the primary agent in preserving the war memory, we can also view SUBNOR, like all socio-political organizations, as an integral part of everyday life in Yugoslavia. By focusing on SUBNOR's transnational role, this article set out to explore the exportation, internationalization, and globalization of the Yugoslav revolutionary memory.

The case study of Algeria and the exchanges between war veterans demonstrate the pattern of Yugoslavia's relationship with anti-colonial liberation movements and the discourses that underlay these relations. Yugoslav–Algerian relations during and after the Algerian War of Independence were characterized by the blending of historical experiences of anti-fascism and anti-colonialism. For Yugoslavs, the Algerian War of Independence revived their memory of the NOR. Through media accounts of the war, not only former Partisans, but also the broader society identified with Algerians' struggle and suffering. The discourses of similarity of the struggles, their conditions, and their goals underpinned all Yugoslav initiatives of solidarity during the Algerian War of Independence. Yugoslav veterans, both individually and through SUBNOR, were the driving force behind the solidarity actions, initiating and participating in the Yugoslav military, medical, and humanitarian assistance and aid programmes.

In the immediate postcolonial period, the mujahideen did not consider memory work an important task, and the two veterans' associations failed to connect on these grounds. The understanding of the importance of preservation and dissemination of war memory surfaced in the early 1970s, together with the idea that the mujahideen should be responsible for it. They immediately turned to the Partisans as the main agents of the Yugoslav culture of remembrance to test the possibilities of applying it at home. Algerian veterans visited museums, historical institutes, architects, and sculptors, exploring practices of archiving, research projects, and the preservation of objects and how institutions of memory worked. Their continuous demands resulted in the inclusion of a section on veterans in Algerian–Yugoslav cultural cooperation agreements. The two countries committed to exchanges of experts and in the fields of public history, archives and documentation, museology, and research. Throughout the 1970s, Yugoslavia and Algeria exchanged numerous historical and art exhibitions about their respective wars of liberation and hosted mutual visits of veterans, youth organizations, and children of fallen fighters. The cultural cooperation agreements that formalized and

enabled these exchanges demonstrate the influence and power of war veterans and the transfer of the narrative of the shared past to the sphere of policy and practice, affecting both cultures of war remembrance.

The exchange of knowledge and experience in war commemoration that this article analyses is a form of everyday internationalism. The culture of remembrance surrounding the NOR constituted a key aspect of everyday life in Yugoslav state socialism, and war veterans internationalized and exported this everyday phenomenon, adding the dimension of personal war memory to it. Both veterans' associations aimed at disseminating the memory of the wars of liberation they had fought to the broadest and most diverse segments of the Yugoslav and Algerian population respectively, aiming for it to become an inseparable aspect of everyday life in the two societies. By the early 1970s, when the mujahideen turned their focus to war remembrance, the Yugoslavs had gained a great deal of experience in the integration of the NOR in everyday life, celebrating the war memory through a wide range of cultural, leisure, and sporting activities with mass participation. Veterans' internationalism represented a globalization of war remembrance as an everyday practice.

As noted earlier, the analysis presented in this article builds upon the Yugoslav sources and correspondence between SUBNOR and ONM, including documents that the two associations provided to each other. Based on Yugoslav archival sources, reconstructing the exchanges outlined in the cultural cooperation agreements and their outcomes and legacies in Algeria represents a challenge. It is even more difficult to unravel the personal dimension and stories of the people who participated in the cultural cooperation concerning veterans and memory as experts, scholarship holders, and trainees. SUBNOR's archives can tell us a great deal about veterans' internationalism and their contacts, meetings, and visits, but following up on specific initiatives requires navigating through the whole socio-political and institutional ecosystem of Yugoslav state socialism. Even when we map out the processes and the actors driving them, the outcomes and the people who participated in the exchanges remain difficult to identify. Nevertheless, the discourses behind Yugoslav initiatives of solidarity with Algeria and formal cooperation after Algerian independence show us how decolonization and the global Cold War affected and transformed war narratives and the politics and cultures of memory within specific states, and how important war veterans' internationalism was in this context. Aware of the predominant lens of Yugocentrism in the study of non-alignment and the need to decentre the analysis,⁶² this article represents a starting point in writing a global history of Yugoslav revolution and a transnational history of memory from the perspective of anti-colonial solidarities.

⁶²Paul Stubbs, "Yugocentrism and the Study of the Non-Aligned Movement: Towards a Decolonial Historiography", *History in Flux*, 3 (2021), pp. 133–155.