DUŠAN BORIĆ
Cardiff University/University of Pittsburgh
boricd@cardiff.ac.uk

A VIEW OF VINČA FROM CAMBRIDGE:
MINNS’ REVIEWS OF THE 1930s PUBLICATIONS BY VASIĆ

Abstract: The article provides close readings of a series of book reviews of Vasić’s Vinča publications in the journal MAN of the Royal Anthropological Institute in Britain written in the 1930s by Russian and Eastern European studies expert and Cambridge-based archaeologist Sir Ellis Hovell Minns, including his unpublished notes and annotations of the volumes that are kept in the Cambridge University Library. In three installments, first in 1933 and then twice in 1937, Minns reviewed Miloje Vasić’s seminal four volumes of Preistoriska Vinča I-IV, which were published in 1932 and 1936. In these reviews Minns gives his own interpretation of the dating and significance of the site of Vinča-Belo Brdo near Belgrade, but also echoes the majority opinion of leading experts about the finds at the time. The reviews, which have not previously been discussed in literature, provide penetrating glimpses for the history of archaeological thought, especially in Serbia, and reveal important aspects of the international reception of Vasić’s works and his erroneous dating of the site. The purpose of this piece is to contribute to a critical evaluation of foundational figures in Serbian archaeology and can be seen as an extension of a conversation started by Palavestra and Babić in several previously published articles. The article ends by asking to what extent these early omissions in Serbian archaeology set the tone for structuring tropes and persistent traditions that have endured in this regional archaeological school ever since.

Keywords: Miloje M. Vasić, Vinča, Neolithic, Ellis Hovell Minns, history of archaeology, archaeological theory.

It is with reluctance that one differs from an excavator who has given so many years to the study of one site, but he himself furnishes the material on which one can base one’s own opinion and one must freely use what he himself furnished.

(Minns 1937: 68)

Don’t cling to a mistake just because you spent a lot of time making it.

(Anonymous)

1. Introduction

Early excavations at Vinča-Belo Brdo have for some time been the cherished legacy of Serbian archaeological history along with the personality of its excavator Miloje Vasić (1869–1956) (Fig. 1). Vasić was one of the founders of the 20th century archaeological discipline in Serbia and for better or worse is at the roots of the genealogical
tree from which spawned most of the subsequent tendencies and traditions of the Serbian archaeological school. An import part of the by now exoticized ethnography of Vasić’s early 20th century excavations at Vinča belongs to commemorative foundationalism with little critical discussion of Vasić’s controversial theories in which Vinča was for almost half a century persistently (one could also use the adverb ‘stubbornly’) interpreted at first as an Early Bronze Age site established by groups originating in the Cyclades and then as an even later Ionian colony. The interpretation of Vinča as a Neolithic site was only accepted internationally ever since the results of Vasić’s excavations became available in printed form. According to the dictum that even problematic traditions are better than no traditions, this central aspect of Vasić’s work has often been underplayed as a minor eccentricism among Serbian archaeologists who have previously evaluated Vasić’s contribution and influence.1 Moreover, part of the pride taken in Serbian archaeology regarding Vasić also stems from the cosmopolitan nature of his excavations in which various, in particular, British archaeologists or benefactors took part either by providing academic support (John Linton Myres from the University of Oxford) or financial backing (Sir Charles Hyde, a philanthropist and proprietor of the Birmingham Post & Mail Company). Vasić himself promulgated and emphasized these connections by giving names to some of the valued objects excavated at Vinča after such persons.

Recently, Palavestra2 and Palavestra and Babić3 provided superb deconstructions of such dominantly uncritical and commemorative perceptions of Vasić’s views (see also Babić’s earlier accounts that started the debate4). Systematically, Palavestra5 has shown that even before the first spade of dirt was turned at Vinča, Vasić had had a pre-formed idea of the date and significance of the site on which he would be focusing his research efforts for almost 30 years. It was an admiration for Greek antiquity that completely tainted any critical understanding of the discoveries being made at Vinča by Vasić himself. Palavestra’s long overdue analysis of various biases that shaped Vasić’s perception of Vinča is an important stepping stone and casts into sharp relief the growing need for critical discussion about the true extent of Vasić’s legacy and, for that matter, that of other key figures in the history of Serbian archaeology.

The analysis also has important implications for archaeological methodology and theory. It is one of the clearest cases in which ideas, theories and models formulated by a person’s background, academic or otherwise, remained unchallenged by the weight of the evidence encountered. This is a supreme example of anti-reflexivity and anti-flexibility.6 Instead of allowing the finds from his extensive excavations in Vinča to open up unknown and unexpected conceptual horizons, and to remain open to new theoretical outlooks and models, Vasić was determined to make the best use of that evidence to strengthen his pre-formulated ideas. Such a case remains relevant in current archaeological practice as it shows an extreme instance of the importance of theoretical pre-understanding, which can effect

1 E.g., Srejović 2001; Nikolić and Vuković 2008.
3 Palavestra and Babić 2016.
5 Palavestra 2012.
methodologies and descriptions. One cannot sustain a theory-free archaeological practice despite all those who wish the death of archaeological theory.\(^7\)

Palavestra is certainly right in suggesting that this particular “received idea”, by which only desirable parts of Vasić’s legacy are chosen to be celebrated and other problematic ones are ignored “with sympathy”, must critically be re-examined. This should certainly not be seen as hair-splitting or as a subversive attempt to undermine or compromise this key foundational figure and his legacy. However, if members of the Serbian archaeological community are to orientate themselves adequately in relation to the heritage of their archaeological forebears they must critically re-examine all aspects of the received traditions. Moreover, as will be argued at the end of this paper, there are symptomatic examples of a similar pattern of reasoning in Serbian archaeology amongst Vasić’s students who went to become very prominent archaeologists and who also used the evidence uncritically to support preferable theories and chronologies, occasionally showing little regard for the resistance of the archaeological evidence and opinions of their international academic peers.

This paper represents an extension of the critical evaluation of this particular case, the foundations of which were laid down by Babić and Palavestra. It focuses on the hitherto unexamined perception of Vasić’s Vinča publications among leading academics, focusing on the eastern European archaeology in the 1930s and includes some archival documents published here for the first time.

2. Cambridge University Library copies of Vasić’s Vinča with accompanying notes and Sir Edward Hovell Minns

The idea for this paper first arose after I accidentally stumbled upon some interesting documentation in 2009 regarding reviews of Vasić’s 1930s Vinča publications by Cambridge-based professor of archaeology Ellis Hovell Minns. While researching for a paper on the chronology of the Vinča culture\(^8\) at the Cambridge University Library I looked for Vasić’s four volumes where the results of his excavations at the site of Belo Brdo in Vinča were published.\(^9\) I discovered that these volumes were kept in the Rare Books Room of the library (UL class mark CCA.40.1), where particularly valuable and rare works are stored and special care is taken in handling non-borrowable pieces of printed work. Despite the nuisance of not being able to check out the volumes I was after, and geared up with a paper and a pencil, I visited the Rare Books Room on a cold January day and found that the library held three volumes of Vasić’s Vinča monographs, lacking volume II. Volume I was accompanied by the notes of Sir E. H. Minns and a copy of the journal MAN, volume 33, nos. 182–201, which contained his review of the work in the pocket inside the back board. Volume I also contained numerous handwritten notes on the margins of the book. Volume IV of Vasić’s Vinča contained Minns’ hand-written draft review of this last work.

---

\(^7\) Cf. Bintliff and Pearce 2011.

\(^8\) Borić 2009.

\(^9\) Vasić 1932; 1936a,b,c.
Born on July 16th, 1874, Ellis Hovell Minns (Fig. 2) was a British academic and archaeologist specializing in Eastern Europe and the Russian Steppe. He was educated at Charterhouse, which was considered “a breeder of Classical scholars”, and was admitted to Pembroke College, Cambridge on October 1893, studying the Classical Tripos. True to the Cambridge college tradition of loyalty, he remained a student, Fellow, College Librarian, President of Pembroke (1928–1947) and Senior Fellow, and until his death occupied the same room through all these different roles. In 1897 he lived briefly in Paris studying at L'École des Chartres and L'École des Langues Orientales Vivantes, where he learned Russian from Professor Paul Boyer, opting for a different academic trajectory from that of a typical classical scholar at the time. In 1898–1899 he visited Russia and in 1900–1901 he spent time in St Petersburg as a Craven student, working in the library of the Imperial Archaeological Commission as one of the first British scholars who studied in Russia with interests ranging from archaeology and history to ethnology. During this time he established lasting contacts with certain Russian scholars. In 1901 he returned to Cambridge and became Lecturer in Russian as well as Librarian at Pembroke, but despite his ambition he was not chosen as University Lecturer in Slavonic Studies. In his obituary of Minns, Phillips stresses that “[h]e was no communist” despite his continuing interaction with Russian scholars after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. As Librarian he built up a formidable collection of books and manuscripts related to Slavonic studies, kept today at the Cambridge University Library and the Slavonic Faculty Library while some of the icons he collected are kept by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. From 1906 to 1927 he was University Lecturer in Palaeography and was a world-leading expert in this field. He also taught Greek and Latin at the Faculty of Classics.

Minns’ appointment as Disney Professor of Archaeology, a prestigious Cambridge endowed chair, came in 1927, and he held it until his retirement in 1939. In this post, his predecessor was Sir William Ridgeway while his successor was Dorothy Garrod. While “[h]e was himself never a digging archaeologist” his interest in archaeology and history qualified him for this position sufficiently. He became Fellow of the British Academy in 1925 and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1920. Phillips notes that “[h]is knowledge of East European languages was used during the 1914–18 war in the Uncommon Language Department of the British Censorship. In the war of 1939–1945 he was again engaged for linguistic work, this time by the Admiralty”. Minns was knighted in 1945.

One of his celebrated articles is “Parchments of the Parthian Period from Avromian in Kurdistan”, regarding parchments written in Greek in Aramaic script dating to the 1st century BC, discovered in 1909, which he was the first to interpret. He authored the

---

10 Information about the life and works of Sir Ellis H. Minns are largely derived from three published obituaries: Clark 1985; Hill 1953; Phillips 1954.
12 Clark 1985: 599.
16 Ibid. 169.
17 Minns 1915.
seminal work *Scythians and Greeks*, a topic that later featured in his lecture “The Art of the Northern Nomads”, which discussed the origin and diffusion of animal style motifs in art. Minns was an authority on Slavonic icons. He translated from Russian and edited N. P. Kondakov’s *The Russian Icon* (Oxford 1927). He also composed an inscription in Russian that was engraved on the ceremonial “Sword of Stalingrad” presented by King George VI on behalf of the British people in homage to the defenders of the Russian city of Stalingrad. He received an honorary degree in Literature from the University of St Vladimir, Kiev and was a Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of the History of Material Culture in Leningrad, as well as a member of the Finnish Archaeological Society and the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute, and honorary member of the Kondakov Institute in Prague. Ellis Hovell Minns died on June 13th 1953 at the age of seventy-nine, when he was still academically active.

Like many other books from his extensive library, the Vinča volumes, together with the issue of the journal *MAN* containing Minns’ review and other hand-written notes ended up in the Cambridge University Library. The fate of volume II remains a mystery. A possible hint about the fate of certain books from Minns’ library could perhaps be found in the words of Grahame Clark, a student of Minns who himself went on to become Disney Professor. In the last paragraph of Clark’s obituary for Minns he writes: “In his will he was thoughtful enough to bequeath a book of my choice from his personal library. Since his copy of the *Scythians and Greeks* with his personal annotations was very properly left to the University Library, I chose his copy of Rostovtzeff’s *Iranians and Greeks*...”.

3. Minns’ review of Vasić’s *Preistoriska Vinča* I

Amongst the notes accompanying *Preistoriska Vinča* volume I, there was a handwritten note on a 20 by 13 cm piece of stationary with the printed heading of the Royal Anthropological Institute and the address 52, Upper Bedford Place, London, W.C.1. The note was dated March 10th 1933 and read as follows: “Dear Professor Minns, We have received ПРЕИСТОРИСКА ВИНЧА [Preistoriska Vinča] by МИЛОЈЕ М. ВАСИЋ [Miloje M. Vasić] for review. Can you earn my undying gratitude by reviewing it for R.A.I. please? Yours very sincerely, RM Fleming” (Fig. 3).

The note was in all likelihood signed by Rachel Mary Fleming who in 1930 moved from Aberystwyth, where she worked as assistant secretary of the Geographical Association, to London to become Librarian of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI). This post must have been connected with the publication of the journal *MAN*, which published numerous expert reviews of archaeological and anthropological publications, which the Library of the RAI Institute must have received. Fleming was trained as a linguist and specialized in Russian. It was possibly her familiarity with the work of Ellis Minns, the leading expert in Russian and Slavonic studies at the time, as well as the fact that Vasić’s

18 Minns 1913.
19 Minns 1942.
20 Clark 1985: 601.
21 Maddrell 2009.
publication of Vinča was printed in the Cyrillic alphabet only that guided her decision (or the decision of the journal editor and others at the RAI) to send this volume for review to Minns and not, for instance, to the leading prehistorian in Britain at the time, Vere Gordon Childe. Only a few years earlier, in 1929, Childe had published his seminal work *The Danube in Prehistory*22 where among other sites he mentioned the finds from Vinča-Belo Brdo. Another reason for this choice of a reviewer might have been that Vasić in some way was able to influence this choice. It is possible that Vasić might have viewed Minns as a sympathetic ear for the ideas presented in his book, and intentionally wanted to avoid Gordon Childe, knowing that Childe had dated the site to the Neolithic. Vasić was already in correspondence with Minns in January of the same year, before the book was received for review (see below). This last explanation for choosing Minns as the reviewer seems very likely especially in the context of Minns’ work *Scythians and Greeks*, where he was the first to provide an in-depth discussion regarding contacts and interactions between the Greek colonies on the Black Sea and the Scythian nomadic groups in the wider hinterland of that region. Vasić was possibly even influenced by the main narrative of Minns’ work and might have considered that he had discovered an analogous meeting of two different worlds at Vinča.

In the same year that the request for review was sent to Minns, in the November issue of the 1933 journal appeared Minns’ review of Vasić’s first publication of Vinča (Fig. 4). Just after Minns’ review, Childe’s review of the publication about early excavations at the site of Cucuteni by Hubert Schmidt was published in the same issue of MAN.23 Minns starts his review (Fig. 5) by noting that Vasić’s book represents the first installment of a planned five-volume publication of the site, noting that Professor Vasić had informed him of what each of the follow-ups will contain. This, as well as a letter that Minns mentions in the review that was sent to him by Vasić, dated January 20th 1933, proves that Minns was in direct contact with Vasić several months before Minns was officially asked to review the book by the Librarian of the RAI. It remains unclear how the contact between the two of them was established in the first place. Minns goes on to inform the prospective readership that the follow-up volumes of Vasić’s Vinča are to be expected shortly and indeed three other volumes were published in 1936 (see below). However, Volume V, mentioned in the review as the one that would have been dedicated to small objects, was never realized.

In his review, Minns24 underlines Vasić’s opinion on the importance of cinnabar as the key reason for the existence of a settlement at Vinča-Belo Brdo in this particular location, suggesting that the ore was obtained from Mount Avala some 20 km distant from the site. He also provides further details about Vasić’s reading of the site as a specialized centre for exporting metallurgical raw materials, which the inhabitants used as pigments for the production of black and red-colored cosmetics and which were stored in vases made in human and animal shapes such as the well-known Hyde vase shaped as “a human-headed

---

22 Childe 1929.
23 At the beginning of his review, Childe makes a memorable remark regarding the period of more than 20 years of delay in the publication of the Cucuteni finds, excusing the excavator: “The pardonable delay has not robbed its worth the scientific publication—the penalty which generally awaits unwarranted postponement....” (Childe 1933: 184). This must to this day remain the momento mori of all practicing archaeologists.
24 Minns 1933.
bird”. Minns mentions Vasić’s insistence on the presence of Aegean influences at the site and the “belief” that the site represented “a colony from the Cyclades founded soon after 1580 B.C.” Commenting on Vasić’s dating of various finds at Vinča, Minns seems inclined to take into consideration the time necessary for the accumulation of strata in the vertical sequence of the site and expresses an opinion that he would expect an earlier date for the basal deposits at Vinča, closer to 2000 BC, but also mentions that in Vasić’s letter (which was in German) to him, the excavator equated the time of the founding of Vinča with the founding of Troy IV, around the time of Amenhotep III, i.e. c. 1400 BC. In the polite phrase “[w]e shall await his reasons with interest”, Minns seems to express skepticism about such a conclusion.

In the third paragraph of the review Minns quotes Vasić’s insistence that his results should not be judged before the publication of the whole material from the site, and promises that he will “accordingly abstain from discussing his [Vasić’s] main position.” He does not entirely follow through with his promise though. In discussing the holes present in some of the figurines from Vinča and other sites in south-east Europe, Minns considers Vasić’s explanation that these are signs that they had been bound in order to restrain their movement and prevent them from fleeing from their worshiper, an interpretation that like many others found in Vasić’s writing was influenced by Greek literature. Unable to reconcile Vasić’s interpretation with the evidence, Minns plainly states that “this one seems rather far-fetched”. Furthermore, in his discussion of Vasić’s central narrative directly connecting the mythical story of the Hyperborean25 maidens and their offering to the temple at Delos “with a sending from Vinča to its mother-land in the Cyclades”, Minns states that this “juxtaposition is, like any other explanation of the Hyperboreans, too good to be true”.

Finally, Minns makes a note that the book is entirely in Serbian without a foreign language summary, but states that various articles were published in German or English about the site, including some popular ones “with good illustrations”, published in the Illustrated London News on October 18th and November 1st 1930. However, his recommendation to Vasić was to “supply a summary in some better-known language” in the forthcoming volumes. Here, Minns’ linguistic background becomes apparent. He states that he did not regret reading the book in Serbian and notes that since the language reform by Vuk Stefanović Karadžić the imperfect and aorist tenses “seem to have dropped out of use” in Serbian. Pencil marked annotations in the margins of this volume where Minns translated particular words and phrases from Serbian to English, along with two small sheets of handwritten notes taken from various important pages in the book found in the accompanying papers of Minns’s copy of Preistoriska Vinča I (Fig. 6), testify to the fact that he did indeed carefully read the work. With his knowledge of Russian and other Slavic languages and his familiarity with the Cyrillic script, Minns must have been uniquely placed to be able to review Vasić’s book. At the end of the review, Minns urges Vasić to make “swift progress” with further publications, adding the disclosure “even in these hard times”. This most probably relates to the devastating economic impact of the Great Depression of the 1930s, but possibly also the political impact of Hitler’s rise to power in Germany in 1933.

25 In Greek mythology, the Hyperboreans are the mythical people mentioned by Herodotus who lived “beyond the North Wind”.
4. Minns’ subsequent reviews of Vasić’s *Preistoriska Vinča* II-IV and unpublished notes

If Minns’ first review of *Preistoriska Vinča* I was kind and amicable and moderately refrained from criticizing Vasić, his tone significantly changed in his reviews of the subsequent installments of the Vinča publication that appeared in 1936. In the April 1937 issue of *MAN* (Fig. 7), Minns begins by noting that Vasić paid no attention to his previous advice to supply a summary in a foreign language. Furthermore, he directs the reader to the critical assessment of Vinča by American archaeologist Vladimir J. Fewkes, who in 1935 and 1936 published different views on the chronology of Vinča-Belo Brdo and Neolithic sites in eastern Yugoslavia, largely based on the results of the Harvard University’s Peabody Museum expedition to Serbia that he and Hetty Goldman led in 1931–1932. It is during this programme that he conducted the first excavations at the site of Starčevo-Grad near Pančevo, the eponymous site of the so-called Early/Middle Neolithic Starčevo culture.26 In his review, Minns summarizes Fewkes’ point about how over time Vasić changed his opinion regarding the dating of Vinča. In 1906 he considered it to be a Neolithic site; in volume I, published in 1932, he interpreted it as an Early Bronze Age settlement dated between 1580 BC and AD 6; in volumes II and III he claimed that it was founded in 600 BC as a polis of Ionian colonists in order to extract cinnabar mines in the Avala Mountain, thus becoming a trading centre in the Middle Danube region. Minns’ frustration is evident in his statement: “This change of opinion is most remarkable in my opinion. Dr. Vasić asks readers to suspend opinion on it if they have not seen all the material collected in the Belgrade museum. But in these three volumes he gives us grounds for judgment and it is no longer possible to refrain. This later dating seems pure illusion, in its origin quite unaccountable, subsequently supported by secondary illusions”. Minns also notes that Vasić referred to alternative opinions held about Vinča by many other scholars at the time as “Neolithic mirage”.

Minns goes on to dismiss Vasić’s dating based on analogies between Vinča figurines and later Greek artifacts. Although no expert in the archaeology of south-east Europe and partly relying on ideas published by Fewkes, Minns reaches the conclusion that “Vinča is a central example of the great culture of the Danube valley and neighboring regions, which beginning in Neolithic times seems to have lasted into the Early Bronze Age”. He also notes Fewkes’ important conclusion that, despite previous divisions of the sequence into Vinča I and II at around 5.5 m as proposed by Childe and Menghin, a more important division in the stratigraphy of this site is between the lowermost levels, at 9 m. These layers are defined by pit features and later wattle-and-daub houses and align with the chronological distinction between Early/Middle Neolithic Starčevo and Middle/Late Neolithic Vinča taxonomic units that is accepted today.

Minns notes with regret that “[g]iven the language difficulty, and the strange views of the excavator, the use of these well-produced volumes becomes rather restricted” concluding that “[i]t is with reluctance that one differs from an excavator who has given so many years to the study of one site, but he himself furnishes the material on which one can

---

26 Fewkes 1936.
base one’s own opinion and one must freely use what he himself furnished”.

A much shorter note, was written by Minns in the November issue of *MAN* in 1937 (Fig. 8), regarding the fourth volume of the Vinča publication. A hand-written version of this text also survives on a piece of paper accompanying the Cambridge University Library Volume IV (Fig. 9). In this brief overview, Minns states that his opinion has not changed from that expressed in his reviews of previous volumes, affirming that “all [Vinča] analogies are with the Neolithic settlements of Bulgaria and Romania”. When discussing Vasić’s comparison between Vinča and the early Ionic settlement of Berezán, situated on an island off the coast of the Black Sea at the mouth of the Dnieper River, Minns points out that in contrast to Berezán, at Vinča not a single piece of typical Ionian ware had been found.

5. Structuring tropes, persistent traditions and reflexive critical thinking

After World War II, one of Vasić’s former students, Milutin Garašanin, voiced strong disagreement with Vasić on the dating of Vinča. He wrote of his former teacher:

> It is regretful that in the scientific world these views did not spark appropriate timely criticism, and were instead overlooked either due to insufficient information about Vasić’s works (the monograph of Vinča was published without a foreign language summary), or out of respect for his reputation. Apart from M. Grbić and V. J. Fewkes, no one at that time scrutinized them with a serious critique. This was done only much later, after World War II, when a new generation of Yugoslav archaeologists with strong arguments showed his views to be unsustainable and are completely rejected today.

The reviews by Minns discussed in this paper clearly show that timely criticism of Vasić was voiced immediately after the publication of his four volumes. The critical notices were published in one of the most prestigious periodicals of the time, in which many other prominent British scholars reviewed scholarly productions in archaeology, ethnology and anthropology from across Europe and around the globe. As was clear from these publications, as well as Minns’ unpublished notes, the language barrier that Garašanin mentions did not stop Vasić’s works from being adequately and promptly evaluated in the international sphere. It is probable that Garašanin was not aware of Minns’ reviews, but it is also possible that he was attempting to pay homage to his own generation of scholars and inflate their contribution towards Serbian and Yugoslav archaeology in debunking Vasić’s misconceptions. As Garašanin admits, both Milorad Grbić and Vladimir Fewkes clearly criticized Vasić back in the 1930s, and Minns can also be added to this list.

Those who look with sympathy on Vasić’s fundamentally erroneous dating of Vinča have argued that at the time of his writing, and especially without the help of radiocarbon dating, different interpretive pathways were possible. Minns’ reviews of Vasić’s four volumes make such an apology difficult. They demonstrate that the majority scholarly
archaeological opinion at the time did not maintain the extravagant and inconsistent interpretive salto mortale offered by Vasić. The modes of deduction and induction evident in the comparative, culture-historical and typological methodologies of archaeological reasoning that were the paradigms of the day clearly allowed for broadly accurate conclusions to be made that stood the test of time even in the absence of science-based dating techniques. This is one of the main reasons for the need to properly contextualize Vasić’s place in the history of archaeology, critically revealing both his flaws (such as a tendency to interpret evidence at his whim with no reflective thought) as well as his virtues (such as the hard work put into recording his finds with relative precision, as well as his relatively swift and comprehensive publications of results) as an archaeologist. But there is a further reason why it is a useful and important exercise to disentangle with accuracy various aspects of the development of particular ideas, their reception and criticism.

As already hinted at by Palavestra31 and Palavestra and Babić,32 this problem is particularly important in considering the way local and regional archaeological traditions are built on foundational figures such as Vasić, who could shape the way the disciplinary field is practiced in a particular tradition of an archaeological regional or national “school”. There are also many other “received ideas” in Serbian archaeology that need discussion but remain muted. One hypothesis could be that Vasić’s erroneous dating of Vinča might have had a significant influence on various other erroneous positions held among later generations of Serbian archaeologists (despite the fact that the first generation of his students who went on to become professional archaeologists, such as Draga and Milutin Garašanin, strongly opposed his dating of Vinča and for this reason had to present their doctoral dissertations in Ljubljana rather than in Belgrade).33 At the very least, Vasić’s positions may have influenced some of his archaeology students early on, and negatively impacted on the pace of the adoption of certain modern methodological standards in Serbian archaeology.34 Two examples will suffice here to show the potentially damaging consequences of such early errors, which remained inadequately evaluated in this tradition of scholarship.

The first example is the innovation of radiocarbon dating, which completely revolutionized prehistoric chronologies in the late 1950s and early 1960s, including the dating of Vinča. Radiocarbon dating revealed the site to date to a much older age than previously thought, not only by the estranged Vasić but even by the majority opinion of

---

32 Palavestra and Babić 2016.
33 Babić and Tomović 1996; Palavestra 2012.
34 As an anonymous reviewer of an earlier version of this article rightly noted, one should specify what conditions enabled such transmissions of negative attitudes in this archaeological tradition. A possible factor could be that the Serbian school of archaeology was in many ways similar to an older German tradition of scholarship, where obedient following of one’s professor/mentor represented a well-trodden path towards a successful academic career (cf. Härke 1995), as suggested by V. Mihajlović (2014: 656) in his discussion of Branko Gavela’s attitudes toward Miloje Vasić. Throughout much of the 20th century Serbian archaeology in many ways followed the German academic model and one should be reminded that Vasić himself received his doctorate in Germany. This type of generational academic dependence might have hindered divergent views of subordinated younger academics and inhibited their critical evaluations of the older generation, thus perpetuating backward opinions and attitudes.
people such as Stuart Piggott,\textsuperscript{35} the leading British prehistorian of Europe in the 1950s, who himself was not a strong believer in radiocarbon chronologies. At the time, even before calibrations of radiocarbon dates, the first $^{14}$C measurements suggested that rather than being dated to the 3rd millennium BC, as many who believed it to be Neolithic had thought, Vinča was placed into the 5th millennia BC.\textsuperscript{36} It appears that among Serbian archaeologists at the time, only one person expressed ample excitement and enthusiasm about the possibilities brought about with the advent of radiocarbon dating\textsuperscript{37} which was Miodrag Grbić (1901–1969).\textsuperscript{38} In a short, one-page article published in the Serbian prominent periodical \textit{Starinar} in 1969, the same year Grbić died, he wrote positively about the consequences of new radiocarbon dates for the reconstitution of Neolithic chronologies, going against the grain of the very strong contemporary voice of the prominent German scholar from Heidelberg, Vladimir Milojčić, who rejected radiocarbon dating. In 1938 Serbian-born Milojčić was also a student of Miloje Vasić at the University of Belgrade. It may be that Milojčić, even though he did not accept Vasić’s late dating of Vinča, in many other ways inherited the backward attitudes of his former teacher. Moreover, Grbić and Vasić were bitter enemies,\textsuperscript{39} among other things, due to the fact that Grbić criticized Vasić in his 1933–1934 review of \textit{Preistoriska Vinča I}. Despite Grbić’s active and important research accomplishments in the period before World War II, Vasić never allowed him to become a university professor.\textsuperscript{40} Between the two world wars, Grbić closely collaborated with foreign scholars such as Vladimir Fewkes and several others involved in the Harvard University’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology expedition to Serbia. Together with these American scholars, he co-directed excavations at the site of Starčevo-Grad in 1931–1932. The biography of Grbić and his various international contacts and engagements\textsuperscript{41} testify to the fact that he was much more cosmopolitan in his attitudes and open to many more different views than Miloje M. Vasić.

Others, such as Milutin Garašanin, and post-war students of Vasić such as Dragoslav Srejović, Borislav Jovanović and Nikola Tasić, all three of whom became key figures of Serbian archaeology in the second half of the 20th century, did not reject the importance of radiocarbon dating methodologies in the style of Milojčić, but were closely wedded to the

\textsuperscript{35} Piggott 1965.
\textsuperscript{36} E.g. Renfrew 1976.
\textsuperscript{37} A possible exception to this generalization is Branko Gavela, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Belgrade, who was at first a faithful disciple of Miloje Vasić and who obediently defended Vasić’s theories up until Vasić’s death in 1956 (see footnote 34). However, in the years that followed he began to express different views, including an acceptance of the validity of the radiocarbon dating of Vinča (cf. Gavela 1965 cited by Mihajlović 2014: 661).
\textsuperscript{38} Cf. Gačić 2005.
\textsuperscript{39} Babić and Tomović 1996: 80.
\textsuperscript{40} Grbić’s university ambition became realized during the Nazi occupation of Serbia when he was elected as a professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, which was closed during the war years. This somewhat tainted his reputation and was a source of police interrogations immediately after the war when Grbić was politically and academically marginalized. However, soon after, in 1946, he obtained a state job in Novi Sad and, later, in 1949, became a researcher at the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade (Gačić 2005, cf. Babić and Tomović 1996).
\textsuperscript{41} Gačić 2005.
culture-historical comparative method, and only reluctantly and superficially used radiocarbon dates in their work. This dominant paradigm inhibited the full potential of radiocarbon dating results to be realized in the study of prehistoric periods in the central Balkans for a very long time, perhaps until very recently. The reluctance of this generation of Serbian archaeologists to appreciate fully the significance of radiocarbon dates, as well as (possibly) other implicit and subconscious influences coming from the teachings and general attitudes of Miloje Vasić, continued to have damaging consequences for the study of Serbian prehistory.

The second example discussed here regards the dating and interpretation of the celebrated and iconic site of Lepenski Vir, and the personality of its excavator Dragoslav Srejović. When Lepenski Vir was discovered in the 1960s, it was at first thought to be a typical Early Neolithic Starčevo site due to large amounts of Starčevo style ceramics found at the start of excavations in 1965. However, by the end of the second season of excavation in 1966 and the beginning of the third campaign in 1967, it became obvious that the site harbored some previously unknown and exceptional features, such as limestone floors with trapezoidally shaped bases, rectangular stone-lined hearths in the centers of these dwelling structures and, most fascinating of all, a sculpted tradition of sandstone boulder artworks never seen before in World Prehistory. All these finds prompted the excavator of the site to evoke here a pre-Neolithic tradition with strong Mesolithic roots, and to suggest that the aceramic deposits of the phases with trapezoidal buildings were clearly separated from the Early Neolithic Starčevo layer (phases IIIa-b), which contained abundant ceramic finds.42 In this way, Srejović stressed the narrative of early prehistoric origins for the sequence he excavated, exploiting with pride superlatives such as “the first” and “the earliest”.43 However, this understanding of the main phase of trapezoidal buildings was partly at odds with both a relatively large series of radiocarbon dates from these features, which suggested a chronological overlap with Early Neolithic settlement in the surrounding areas of the Balkans, and the discoveries that Borislav Jovanović was at the time making at the contemporaneous site of Padina, located only 5 km upstream the Danube from Lepenski Vir. At Padina, the same type of trapezoidal structures were discovered, but associated with abundant finds of Early Neolithic Starčevo ceramics on building floors. Jovanović maintained that both sites belonged to the Early Neolithic historical context.44 These contradictions brought the two researchers—Srejović and Jovanović—into a bitter and long-lasting row over the chronological place of the Lepenski Vir culture and its cultural origins in the prehistory of the Balkans. Moreover, as with Vinča-Belo Brdo, in the aftermath of the Lepenski Vir excavations, the evidence from the site started to be evaluated by leading world prehistorians,45 who almost unanimously agreed that the main phase at

43 This kind of “originary” narratives are frequent in archaeology (cf. Gamble 2007) and implicit or explicit ways of boosting the national pride. Such narratives are often appealing to the general public that consumes them with a limited understanding and can inspire nationalist and identitarian politics. A recent example of such a sensationalist narrative about early metallurgy in the context of the Vinča culture in Serbia can be found in the article by Radivojević et al. (2013). For a critique of this particular case see Šljivar and Borić (2014).
44 On the details of the debate see Borić 1999; 2002; 2007a, b and references therein.
Lepenski Vir must have been contemporaneous with Early Neolithic settlement in the Balkans, in contrast to the excavator’s opinion. These developments made Srejović relatively isolated in the international academic community for most of the 1980s and up to his death in 1996. Until his death he remained unmoved by different opinions and new evidence regarding the chronological place of Lepenski Vir and maintained the same position as in his early publications.

Uncertainties about the exact dating also inhibited the usefulness of Lepenski Vir and other Mesolithic-Neolithic sites in the Danube Gorges in wider discussions about forager-farmer, Mesolithic-Neolithic transitions, despite being some of the best case studies for such inquiries. Srejović’s stubborn reluctance to acknowledge the full complexity of evidence from Lepenski Vir, its dating and alternative interpretations abundantly expressed by his academic peers, firmly sticking to his initial narrative about the antiquity of the site despite mounting evidence to the contrary, seems to be analogous to the behaviour of his former professor Vasić. Vasić’s and Srejović’s agendas were of course different46, but their modes of reasoning, ways of evaluating the archaeological contexts of the sites they excavated and reactions in the face of external criticism were remarkably similar. It is only with the generation of Srejović’s students, and the students of Srejović’s students, that Lepenski Vir has been allocated to the correct chronological position.47 Despite this, a small number Srejović’s students and collaborators continue to either ignore48 or oppose49 new chronological redefinitions of the site’s stratigraphy.

Perhaps the reader will consider it far-fetched to suggest that some of the errors made by various key figures in Serbian archaeology during the second half of the 20th century could have been avoided had a healthy critical discussion of Vasić’s early misconceptions ever taken place. One should not however underestimate the importance of establishing a clear theoretical and conceptual basis for empirical research, which can never be done in a vacuum, independently of received ideas. This paper hopes to advocate constant critical evaluation of the potential biases and tendencies that shape archaeological production of knowledge about the past. Some preparatory sketches have been made in the preceding pages inviting open and honest discussion, reflection and dialogue.

46 However, see Palavestra’s (2011) discussion of Srejović’s views on ethno-cultural continuity, which show him to have similar interests to Vasić. Palavestra and Babić (2016) also cite examples of Srejović elaborating certain features of Mesolithic/Neolithic Lepenski Vir by evoking Hellenistic analogies in a style reminiscent of Vasić.
47 Cf. Borić 1999, 2002, 2016; Borić and Dimitrijević 2009; Garašanin and Radovanović 2001. One should note that Ivana Radovanović, who was Srejović’s student, defended her PhD dissertation in 1992 with the title “Iron Gates Mesolithic” (in Serbian “Mezolit Đerdapa”), which was later turned into a book (Radovanović 1996), and which contains a very limited mention of the debate regarding the chronological context of Lepenski Vir and other sites in this region. As the example given in footnote 37, in the case of this doctoral dissertation, a critical evaluation was inhibited and postponed (until after Srejović’s death) due to the need to make dissertation work passable in the eyes of the supervisor.
48 Babović 2006; for a critique see Borić 2008.
49 Bogdanović 2012; Perić and Nikolić 2011.
Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the research leave in the academic 2015–2016 at the Center for Comparative Archaeology, University of Pittsburgh during which I wrote this article. Here I would like to express my overdue gratitude to Nenad Lemajić from whom, at the age of fourteen, I learned many things, among which was the craft of critical thinking, researching and writing in the field of historical sciences. I thank Divna Gačić for providing her exhibition catalogue on Miodrag Grbić. Dragan Jacanović provided the photo of Miloje Vasić used in Figure 1. For comments on earlier drafts of this paper I am grateful to Aleksandar Palavestra, Susan Stratton, Alasdair Whittle, Genevieve Carver and James Whitley. I also thank an anonymous reviewer for very constructive comments and suggestions on an earlier version of the paper. However, I take full responsibility for the factual accuracy of the various statements and opinions expressed herein.

REFERENCES:

____. Grci i drugi: antička percepcija i percepcija antike, Beograd: Klio, 2008. (Serbian Cyrillic)
____. ‘Kultura Lepenskog vira u svetu novih istraživanja (Lepenski Vir Culture in the Light of New Research)’, Journal of the Serbian Archaeological Society, 24, 2008, 9–44. (Serbian Cyrillic)


___., ‘Cucuteni’, MAN, 33 (November), 1933, 184.


Fewkes, V. ‘Neolithic sites in the Moravo-Danubian area (eastern Yugolsavia)’, Bulletin of the American School of Prehistoric Research 12 (May), 1936, 5–81.


Gavela, B. ‘Vinčin kulturni i hronološki kompleks’, Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta, 8–1, 1965, 9–25. (Serbian Cyrillic)


_____. ‘Neolit i hronologija,’ Starinar, n. s. 20, 1969, 141. (Serbian Cyrillic)


A. ‘Vasić pre Vinče (1900–1908)’, Etnoantropološki problemi, 7(3), 2012, 649–679. (Serbian Cyrillic)

A. ‘Čitanja Miloja M. Vasića u srpskoj arheologiji’ Etnoantropološki problemi 8(3), 2013, 681–715. (Serbian Cyrillic)


Srejović, D. Lepenski Vir. Nova praistojijska kultura u Podunavlju, Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1969. (Serbian Cyrillic)


Vasić, M. M. Preistoriska Vinča I. Industrija cinabarita i kosmetika u Vinči, Beograd: Izdanje i štampa Državne štamparije Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1932. (Serbian Cyrillic)

Vasić, M. M. Preistoriska Vinča II. Oblici grobova. – Mitične oči. – Igra na tabli. – Datovanje Vinče, Beograd: Izdanje i štampa Državne štamparije Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1936a. (Serbian Cyrillic)

Vasić, M. M. Preistoriska Vinča III: Plastika, Beograd: Izdanje i štampa Državne štamparije Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1936b. (Serbian Cyrillic)

Vasić, M. M. Preistoriska Vinča IV: Keramika, Beograd: Izdanje i štampa Državne štamparije Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1936c. (Serbian Cyrillic)
Fig. 1 – Miloje Vasić at Viminacium in 1907.
Fig. 2 – Sir Ellis Hovell Minns. Painting by Arthur Trevor Haddon (Oil on canvas, 60 x 49 cm). Collection: The Haddon Library, University of Cambridge.
Fig. 3 – A facsimile of a hand-written note sent to Ellis Minns in 1933 asking him to review the first volume of *Preistoriska Vinča I* by Miloje Vasić for the journal *MAN* (Cambridge University Library).
CONTENTS

PLATE O. OBJECTS FROM A CHALCOLITHIC CAVE IN NORTH SYRIA.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES:

A CHALCOLITHIC CAVE SITE IN NORTH SYRIA. T. P. O'BRIEN. Illustrated. With Plate O. ... ... ... 182
SUMMARY REPORT ON THE KHARZA EXPEDITION OF 1932-33. E. W. GARDNER AND G. CATON-THOMPSON ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ......
November, 1933.


Acknowledgement is due to the Daily Argus and the Daily Chronicle, both of Georgetown, British Guiana, for some of the information included in the above notice.

KINGSLEY ROTH.

Fig. 5 – A facsimile of Minns’ 1933 published review of Vasić’s Preistoriska Vinča I (Cambridge University Library).
Fig. 6 – A facsimile of Minns’ hand-written notes taken while reading Vasić’s Preistoriska Vinča I (Cambridge University Library).
Fig. 7 – A facsimile of Minns’ 1937 (April) published review of Vasić’s Preistorika Vinca II-III.
a little to the west in the Tathi hills a number have been discovered and to me these are of special interest in view of the striking similarity which some of them bear to the amazing group of figures on "Impey's Cave," near Port Victoria, in Southern Rhodesia. Dr. Impey always claimed that these were Egyptian, and though his claims were disallowed the paintings admittedly did form a very remarkable group. And now, 10 years after the Impey Cave discussion died down here, we have almost identical figures which can be seen on Pl. LXXXI from Ifo. There is little doubt, I think, that the South African art group as a whole and that of North Africa must be connected. Probably the increasing drying-up of the area drove the inhabitants to migrate and all information that can anywhere be extracted from these day-to-day inscrutable regions is very welcome to prehistorians, who must therefore be grateful to Dr. Freiherrn for what he has done.

M. C. BURRETT.


This volume forms the companion-piece of Sir Arthur Evans’ monumental work on Cretan civilization, described round the framework of his own excavations at Knossos, the most important of the Cretan sites. Without a full index the scholar would have found difficulty in using the work, which, though so written that no one would grudge reading it through again and again, yet also contains such a storehouse of facts that it rivals as the encyclopedia of Cretan civilization.

The volume contains a single index, in which personal names, place-names and subject-matter are catalogued together. The multiplication of indices makes classification a more difficult, and as every heading contains a few words of analysis, no saving of space would have been effected by a separate topographical index. Then, so far as is possible, this index enables the reader to find, without delay and without hunting through a mass of irrelevant references, the passage which he is seeking.

It might have been wise to index as far as possible with cross-references all the page-headings and illustrations, some of which are found on no mention under any of the key-words, as many general readers would remember them as better than the best. There is no table of text-illustrations in any of the volumes, and a list of illustrations is as difficult to waste through as a table of contents, and need indexing. It would be better to refer to every illustration specifically in the general index. This might further be and have been more extravagant references, and occasionally an object is entered only under one heading instead of two; for instance, under Iaptos there is a reference to one from Ra-Shamata, but this is omitted under the place-name. Not one text criticizes him such a valuable aid to scholarship, which accords to the value of the book which it accompanies.

Preistoriska Vînca IV: Keramička. By Miroj. M. Vasić. Belgrade, 1936, 75 pp. 121 fig. 77 pl. with 24 figs. [and many in text.]

Volume I of this work was noticed in Man, 1933, 186, IV and III, Man, 1935, 80: IV gives further illustrations of the Ceramics on the same lavish scale, and with an elaborate description of each piece. There are two appendices: a catalogue of the Vînca and Beceara, the early Illyrian settlement on an island off the mouth of the Drina, and II on the fish-hooks and harpoons illustrated by Pl. LXXVI, also available in French in the B. Internat. des Ét. Préhist. in 1936. 82.

With regard to the work as a whole I have nothing to change in my view expressed in former notices. Professor Vasić compares Vînca with Beceara’s regarding both as settlements of Illyrians about the seventh century B.C.; yet in Beceara any amount of the typical Illyrian decorated ware has been found, whereas Vînca has not yielded one shred, and all attempts are with the neglieo settlements of Bulgaria and Romania.


The excavation of the Cypriot Archeology series with a volume on Susse should be welcomed by a large and diverse band of readers. The Editor has been fortunate in securing an author in Dr. Curwen, who has lived most of his life there and knows and loves every mile as few others have even of that much known and much loved country. But his qualifications are far greater than that alone would imply, for he has devoted the spare time of 24 years, following and together with his father, to the archeology of prehistoric and Roman Susse. His first book, Prehistoires Susse, appeared in 1919, and since then, as before, with an ever-growing band of supporters, he has pursued the unremitting course of excavation and field-work which since the war has transformed our knowledge of three thousand years of human settlement. The ‘open-air’ side of the subject, healthily dominant in the first book, has here not only been more fully exploited, but also admirably supplemented by comparative research covering a full range of archeological method and interpretation. And the result is an eminently straightforward and readable book.

It is safe to say that it will be read by everyone interested in the prehistory anywhere of Southern Britain. A reviewer for Man may better commend it, modestly but with confidence, to archaeologists for whom British prehistory and the archeological approach are not habitually a prime concern.

Firstly, the well-marked and familiar geographical features of the world, the South Downs, and the coastal plain made Susse an excellent field for observing the relationships between early man and his physical environment. Secondly and conformably, the great preponderance of the Downs and the coast in the tale of human settlement, together with the wonderful capacity of chalk country for the preservation of its remains, has enabled the intensive exploration here summarised to present a picture far clearer to effective completeness than is usually possible in the present state of British archeology. Thirdly, by reason largely of its Continental accessibility and the resistance offered by its Western hinterland to cultural backwash and disturbing survival, the sequence of prehistoric cultures in Susse is, on the whole, clear-cut and innocent of such confusions and confluences as may often drive an archeologist rather to technical obscurities than to generally intelligible direct contributions to the study of man. Certainly Dr. Curwen is Guinivere of such avoidance. He uses his archeology throughout as a vehicle of approach to the social and economic life ofS

Fourthly, this book may perhaps help to mark a stage in the advance of British archeology when ethnographic comparison may return to a more useful place in their equipment. That the weighty pioneering of General Pitt-Rivers appears in this regard as yet so
Fig. 9 – A facsimile of Minns’ 1936 unpublished hand-written review of Vasić’s *Preistorika Vinča IV.*
DUŠAN BORIĆ
Univerzitet u Kardifu/Univerzitet u Pittsburgu

POGLEĐ NA VINČU IZ KEMBRIDŽA:
MINSOVI PRIKAZI VASIĆEVIH PUBLIKACIJA IZ 1930-TIH

Rezime
Članak nudi detaljna čitanja serije prikaza knjiga o Vinči Miloja M. Vasića, koje je u časopisu MAN (Kraljevskog antrolopološkog instituta Britanije) objavio stručnjak za ruske i istočnoevropske studije i arheolog sa Kembridža, Ser Elis Hovel Mins. Rad takođe obuhvata i njegove do sada nepublikovane beleške i napomene o izdanjima Preistoriske Vinče, koje se čuvaju u Biblioteci Univerziteta u Kembridžu. U tri navrata, najpre 1933.g, a potom dva puta u toku 1937.g., Mins je prikazao Vasićeva prekretnička četiri toma Preistoriska Vinča I-IV, objavljena 1932. i 1936. g. U ovim prikazima Mins jasno izražava svoje mišljenje o datovanju i značaju lokaliteta Vinča-Belo Brdo kod Beograda, ali takođe prenosi ondašnje večinsko mišljenje vodećih stručnjaka o ovim nalazima. Prikazi, kojima do sada nije poklanjena pažnja i koji nisu razmatrani u literaturi, pružaju prodorne uvide za istoriju arheološke misli, naročito u Srbiji, i otkrivaju važne aspekte međunarodne recepcije Vasićevih dela i njegovog pogrešnog datovanja lokaliteta. Svrha ovog priloga je doprinos kritičkom vrednovanju rada osnivačkih figura arheologije u Srbiji, i on se može shvatiti kao produkat diskusije započete od strane A. Palaveste i S. Babić u nekoliko radova koje su prethodno objavili. Članak se završava pretpostavkama o pitanju do koje mere su rani propusti u srpskoj arheologiji postavili osnove za struktuirajuća uvrežena mišljenja i uporne tradicije koje sve do danas istrajavaju unutar ove regionalne arheološke škole.

Ključne reči: Miloje M. Vasić, Vinča, neolit, Elis Hovel Mins, istorija arheologije, arheološka teorija.

© Faculty of Philosophy, Novi Sad, 2016
ISTRAŽIVANJA – JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL RESEARCHES 27, 7-32