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## Dossier Ludwik Fleck

### Ludwik Fleck's concepts slicing through the Gordian Knot of Serbian Archaeology

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#### Abstract:

This article delves into the work of a researcher group based around the Center for Theoretical Archaeology in Belgrade (2007 – present) and the path they have taken to establish a foundation for further archaeological development within Serbia. This process illuminates the conceptual tools Fleck originally formulated - thought collectives, thought style, proto-ideas – which have played a significant role in the deconstruction of the concept of scientific fact and in the historicization / socialization of the theory of knowledge. For the Serbian archaeological community, one of the most fiendish aspects has been the ever present correlation between the field and the construction of a national identity - an especially painful theme for the postwar Balkans whose borders are still imprecisely defined. Hence, this work pays special attention to long held beliefs of ethnicity, ethnogenesis and continuity, emanating from outdated racial anthropology, but unfortunately still held as fact in Serbian archaeology.

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## An introduction to the issues facing Serbian archaeology

Serbian archaeology has undergone a long, complex transformation since the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which does not allow it to easily inter-correlate with the general narrative of archaeological progress and which lends Serbian archaeology its own distinct and unique tradition of scientific development (Trigger, 2008; Novaković, 2011, 386-400; Palavestra & Babić, 2016, 316-334). The Serbian archaeological community therefore values a reflexive reassessment of the history of ideas in archaeology as well as the role of scientists in society as to address this uniqueness (Kuzmanović, 2012). As a consequence, albeit Fleck's *Genesis and Development of Scientific Fact* has yet to be translated into Serbian, his approach of knowledge transfers has still proven edifying in the establishment of research programs that study the history of ideas in archaeology and closely related disciplines. Indeed, Ludwik Fleck and his epistemological ideas

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have found their way to becoming a relevant source for credible solutions in the process of understanding the burden of conceptual heritage and current transfers of knowledge from archaeological centers to their periphery (Milosavljević, 2015, 33-40; Palavestra & Babić, 2016, 318; Ćosić, 2016, 760-761; Bandović, 2016, 832).

Serbia is a country whose borders have changed several times within the last 140 years. During the 1990s, under the regime of Slobodan Milošević and international sanctions, Serbia emerged as a post-cold war, ethnic state which lived through a complete collapse of its former socialist identity, experiencing infamous hyperinflation, engaged in ethnic strife and civil war within its neighbouring states of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Galijaš, Archer & Bieber, 2014). Such were the traumatic circumstances during which a significant rise in nationalistic ideas and demands for revising the past occurred, as a response to its radical social context. Within the history encompassing the development of Serbian archaeology, this work seeks to address the correlation between nationalistic tendencies in society and archaeology, as not being merely a misuse of science but rather in the sense of isolation from international circles (Babić, 2002, 309-322, Novaković, 2011, 398-400).

What needs to be drawn attention to is that archaeology is a field which has long been a tool that supports and establishes the aims of identity in times of crises, its evidence being cited as firm grounds for a newly changed perspective onto the past. Generally speaking, in times of political shift, the question of a nation's ethnic past becomes a burning issue (Wiwjorra, 1996, 164-188; Meskell, 2002, 1-12; Arnold, 2008, 120-144).

It is also interesting to note that during "the bleak 90s", Serbian archaeology was remanded to a passive mainstream, wherein critical discussion was mostly directed against the then ongoing war and policies of the Milošević regime. Critical orientation was, when it could be found, limited to marginal circles of intellectuals, who acted within non-governmental organizations and "parallel" educational institutions. The destitute economic situation, as well as the explicit control of public institutions by the regime of Slobodan Milošević, contributed to the additional passivity and neutralization of archaeological critical thinking skills. Due to international sanctions, including a rigorous visa system introduced against the rump Yugoslavia, almost all international academic relations were severed. No funds were available for the acquisition of concurrent literature, nor to attend international conferences. As a consequence, the exchange of ideas with other European archaeologists was modest at best in all Serbian academic fields during the 1990s. In short, Serbian archaeology spent the final decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in isolation, resulting in economic, infrastructural, and conceptual levels of stagnation (Novaković, 2011, 398-400; Babić, 2006, 655-659).

The usurpation of one regime with another is by no means tantamount to a transition of the social arena proper, which serves as a backdrop against for the sciences. Yet, for the ease of differentiation as to establish a more ready and comprehensible idea between historically recent periods in Serbian and Yugoslav history, as looking from today backwards, and as loosely defined according to institutional transformations, the following shall suffice: 1) the cessation of the Slobodan Milošević regime; 2) the collapse of the Former Republic of Yugoslavia; 3) the Second World War; and 4) the First World War. These are not absolute, but merely serve as useful for the task at hand of delineating the history of archaeological thought in Serbia.

Therein, after the fall of the Milošević regime in 2000, which had from the late 1980s fostered a form of demagogic nationalism throughout Serbian society, the return to a more normalized state came about gradually, wherein Serbian archaeology slowly started to exit its own isolation. Work in concert with foreign partners started, as well as reflexive reassessments regarding the events of the decade prior, leading to questioning the role of the profession in public discourse. Considerable effort to move archaeology forward survived the "bleak 1990s" in Serbia, but only came recently to reveal its great potential after 2000. The change has been foremost lead by archaeology professors at the University of Belgrade, through the introduction of standards in archaeological theory and the initiation of a higher education contemporary with modern European archaeological thought (Babić & Vasiljević, 2005, 70-76). Consequently, the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology (CTA) was first established within the Department of Archaeology at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade in order to better apply theoretical archaeology in practice. At its start in 2007, it initially focused on organizing public discussions on archaeology, covering questions of scientific theory in a general sense, epistemology in archaeology, the process of deriving knowledge from data, and promoting translations of new books on archaeological theory. From this work with the public, the subsequent phase in implementing new approaches into Serbian archaeology emerged, first requiring a

harmonization of ideas upon which “traditional” Serbian Archaeology lie and which entailed a study of the history of ideas in archaeology. To put it in a nutshell, the first layer of issues arose after 2000, when it would have seemed that not a single known paradigm was an all held in common in Serbian archaeology. To compound the complexity of the issue, Serbian archaeologists of the time perceived themselves as true scholars who were doing “true” archaeological work that was supposedly non-theoretical, in spite of its clear non-scholarly nature and complete theoretical standing. The situation this academic incongruence caused then necessitated research to be carried out on the theoretical background of Serbian archaeology leading up to and coming after 2000, despite archaeologists claim and belief that they were “non-theoretical”.<sup>2</sup> Due to the actual theoretical framework, it proved also necessary to come to a conclusion as to what Serbian archaeologists believed to be as “normal” and “true” archaeology as the standard of archaeology as well as the commonsensical knowledge to be used thereof. For this extract reason, in order to research the history of ideas in archaeology, it is pertinent to enquire into those ideas which appeared within the framework of the Center for Theoretical Archaeology prior to their familiarization with Fleck’s work and theories (Palavestra, 2013, 685; Milosavljević, 2015; Palavestra & Babić, 2016).

## The centre for theoretical archaeology in Belgrade

In the first of phase of development of the Center for Theoretical Archaeology which occurred roughly from 2007 to 2013, eight public debates were held which had the overall aim of introducing the general public with the basic concepts of archaeological theory. It was not until the second phase, occurring from 2013 until the present, that the concrete issues facing Serbian archaeology were addressed.<sup>3</sup>

Archaeologists began to group together by assembling around the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology in order to deal with the sociology of knowledge as to derive what conceptual tools Serbian Archaeology has at its disposal (Škorić, 2010, 339-352). To this aim, a research group gathered at the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology in 2013 to constitute theoretical and methodological foundations for the history of Serbian Archaeology on the basis of the legacy of Ludwik Fleck. As a key concept in comprehending the development of scientific knowledge and the status of scientific fact, the group adopted a thought collective as a suitable analytical tool in line with Fleck’s thought-collective theory (Fleck, 1981, 38-44). Such an approach has since opened up a multitude of possibilities to better reach an understanding of the history of ideas and the sociology of knowledge in archaeology as compared to the use of Kuhn’s paradigm shift (its study being required in the philosophy of science for a significant number of archaeologists) (Babić, 2009, 123-132; Brorson and Andersen, 2001, 123). Hence, the group around the Center for Theoretical Archaeology began to perceive itself as a thought collective in which Ludwick Fleck served as inspiration to comprehend the process of change within scientific thinking and the difficulty which the introduction of new thinking in scientific communities produces. Flecks ideas were not singularly in use, as a number of possible conceptual frameworks were being considered. The group maintained a critical stance toward Fleck’s theories and avoided putting him on a pedestal of total philosophic authority.

Therein, the Center for Theoretical Archaeology has included a number of key authors in addition to Fleck for the production of archeological knowledge and a history of ideas in archaeology: Michel Foucault<sup>4</sup>, Karl Mannheim (Mannheim, 1952, 276-320), Bruno Latour (Latour, 2005), Tera Pruitt (Pruitt, 2011) and Wiktor Stoczkowski (Stoczkowski, 2008, 346-359). Though important to better understanding the history of science, Fleck comes in addition to a number of open questions in the history of archaeology that also must be incorporated the relation of knowledge and power, theory and practice, authority, the role that institutions play, commonsensical knowledge, changes in the history of ideas as well as archaeological practice, transfer of knowledge, the sanctification of certain aspects of knowledge. Given this broad expanse of incorporation as to obtaining a clear picture of the history of science vis-à-vis Fleck, the usage of different theoretical tools for the history of scientific ideas is better suited to understanding the (local) history of

<sup>2</sup> Digital Archive, The Centre for Theoretical Archaeology (Department of Archaeology at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade).

<sup>3</sup> Digital Archive, The Centre for Theoretical Archaeology (Department of Archaeology at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade).

<sup>4</sup> <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/foucault/>, Consulted September 16, 2016.

archaeological thought. Notwithstanding, among the numerous differing authors and approaches, Fleck is salient due to the fact his theories provide for a thought collective as being the main tool for analyzing the history of science (Eberhardt & Link, 2015, 16-17; Engström, 2015).

Not only may archaeology yet profit from Fleckian application, their utilization also shows that archaeology can question both hypothesis and theories. This very nature also allows archaeology to be truly articulated with other disciplines that share the same interests in the history of knowledge production. A new theoretical introduction to knowledge production in science would allow for a more substantial connection between Fleckian theory and the real problems of present scientific communities. This can be seen as evident through an examination of the history of Serbian archaeology, which was traditionally never a perfect fit for frameworks which were developed through Kuhn's perspective to the history of archaeological thought but nonetheless still shed light on the production of knowledge (Babić, 2014, 284-290; Milosavljević, 2016, in preparation).

Today, the 'thought-collective' around the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology in Belgrade consists of ten to fifteen scholars affiliated with the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad, the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade, the Institute for Balkan Studies SASA in Belgrade, and the National Museum in Belgrade, as well as specialists who do not possess any particular institutional affiliation. Most of the participants are PhD students or post-doc researchers, the majority of its members being younger than 35 years of age. Since 2013, this group has organized an archaeological conference in March or April of every year which aims to promote Fleck's approach to the history of science as applied to Serbian archaeology. Each year, the conference is held under the same title 'Serbian Archaeology between Theory and Fact' while the secondary title is differently targeted from one year to another (Kuzmanović, 2013; Janković & Kuzmanović, 2014; Janković & Kuzmanović, 2015; Milosavljević, 2016).

The group of scholars participating within the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology actively nurture research aims in order to understand the history of ideas in Serbian archaeology as to better set a status quo in the Serbian archaeological community and society in general to further archaeology into a range of promising directions. To this same aim this paper focuses on the deconstruction of the so-called 'traditional' manner of thinking found in Serbian archaeology (i.e., archaeology without theoretical explication). Opposing this 'a-theoretical, traditional way' is a 'generally open-minded, post 2000 Serbian archaeology' which does take into account theory, correcting the past century of rejecting theory. All contemporary schools of archaeology are theoretically incorporative; a-theoreticalism is treated at best as an anathema.<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding, albeit they be lacking theory as inherent to their conclusions, the a-theoretical ideas arrived at still serve as "proto-ideas" which deserve further discussion as to derive actual theory from them (Rotenstreich, 1986, 161-178; Gramsch, 2011, 48-71).

Understanding the substance of "commonsensical knowledge" (*sensu* Stoczkowski, 2008, 346-359) in traditional way of thinking in Serbian archaeology is the Gordian knot in need of unraveling in this case study. By pointing to key challenges, such as the challenge of determining the roots of interpretation of the ethnic continuity of the Balkans and the (mis)use of scientific duties, the history of the archaeological idea in its Serbian context could better illustrate other problems that exist more generally in archaeology and in similar scientific fields. The key question is where these conservative tendencies of traditional way of thinking in Serbian archaeology arise from. Their ideas would seem to not be random; even though their roots are laborious to determine, certain patterns do exist. Due to congruence, it has been necessary to reassess the 'commonplaces' of Serbian archaeology, as well as to trace back their supposed occurrence in Yugoslav archaeology (Novaković, 2011; 2014). Hence, the hypothesis is whether conservative ideas in Serbian archaeology occurred as a part of Yugoslav archaeology. To answer these questions, however, first requires an explanation of what Yugoslav archaeology is (Babić, 2011, 188-189).

## Legacy of Yugoslav archaeology

Analyzing Serbian or Yugoslavian archaeology in their totalities is far beyond the breadth of this work; therefore, it is necessary to define those characteristic ideas which may be followed in order to illustrate the

<sup>5</sup> Digital Archive, The Centre for Theoretical Archaeology (Department of Archaeology at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade).

continuity of ideas between Yugoslav archaeology (1918 - 1991) and Serbian archaeology (1991 - present). The political events of the civil/ethnic-wars of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia did indeed bring about changes in the social reality of the Balkans but the methods of the interpretation of the past remained part of a continuity. The traditional manner of interpreting the past for the identity of Yugoslavia simply found news modes for interpretation within the nationalist sphere, where a concern of ethnic identity arose where it had once disappeared (Milosavljević, 2015). Due to this permutation of identity ideas in the Yugo-sphere, an examination of Yugoslavian archaeology is warranted in order to define a clear origin of the ideas of ethnic and cultural identity as well as ethnic and cultural continuity in archaeological interpretations. It is pertinent therefore to examine these through the history of Yugoslavian and Serbian scientific thought (Palavestra, 2011, 579-594; Džino, 2011, 198-199).

Yugoslavia was a country in Southeast Europe that had existed in the 20th century (today is superseded by the countries of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and FYR Macedonia). The concept of Yugoslavia as a singular state for all Southern Slavic people dated from the Illyrian Movement of the 19th century. This state came into existence in 1918 as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to which the Serbian royal family became its Yugoslav royal dynasty. It was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929, and then into as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, when a communist government was established led by Josip Broz Tito (1892-1980). Both the once royal and federal capital was Belgrade, today the capital of Serbia. In 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, Yugoslavia disintegrated, leading to the Yugoslav Wars. Though a civil war in origin, they devolved into ethnic conflicts from 1991 to 2001 within the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The similarity of their languages as well as their common history and way of life have left ties among the people and cultures of these new states in Southeastern Europe, still known as the Yugosphere. The connections are extremely important for scholars who were anti-war activists during the wars and who believe the experience of Yugoslavia to be a common ground for future development in sharing knowledge within the Yugosphere (Lampe, 2003; Babić & Vasiljević, 2005, 70-76).

As Predrag Novaković has aptly pointed out, Yugoslav archaeology cannot be observed as a “distinctive”, national school of archaeology, but rather as a well-organized network of national archaeologies that maintained their respective specifics within the former Yugoslav state. One should bear in mind that the matter of Yugoslav archaeology should be discussed in at least two stages: 1) between the two world wars and 2) after the Second World War. The cultural context in Yugoslavia is of vital importance to the strategies of understanding the function and growth of archaeology as a discipline. Analysis has shown that archaeological interconnections in Yugoslavia before WWII were weak, hence should not be merely taken for granted. However, the growth in the number of institutions and archaeologists started as elemental to the process of modernization in Yugoslavia directly subsequent to WWII. Nevertheless, it is interesting to yet note that despite the complex picture of development in archaeological science in Yugoslavia in the 20th century, the dominant focus has been placed on the importance of changes in the archaeological community after WWII and not prior (Novaković, 2014, 221-254).

The second half of the XX century is clearly marked by the doctrine of modernization as well as the doctrine of brotherhood and unity. Together with other historical disciplines, archaeology was considered an adjunct to the process of the emancipation of the Yugoslav people(s). Due to its inherent ability of presenting the past and their respective heritage in a broader European context, it also served as an indicator of the accomplishments of the new post-war government. It is not as straightforward to understand whether, and in what manner, the doctrine of brotherhood and unity influenced the archaeology in Yugoslavia. After the Second World War, early Slavic archaeology, in collaboration with medieval history, began a tendency to show South Slavs as an entirely homogenous group. The ideology of brotherhood and unity required adequate roots to help their legitimization by addressing the past. Admittedly, though, the historical narratives of the pre-war period supported the common South-Slavic past as well (Gori, 2014, 299-300).

A far more interesting aspect is the refraction of certain elements of the doctrine of brotherhood and unity in pre-historic archaeology, as can easily be seen from the treatment of the Illyrians from the Iron Age, used as a metaphor of the common pre-historic past (Džino, 2014, 1-39). It is worth adding that the idea of the highly questionable continuity between the Illyrians and the Slavs was also considered valid; in the words of Vladimir Dvorniković, Yugoslav identity was considered a “Slavic sprout on an Illyrian stump” (Dvorniković, 1995 [1937], 86-87). In the context of the doctrine of brotherhood and unity, Illyrians could be the example of common pre-historic ancestors. In the archaeological interpretations of the 1950s and 1960s, they are

present in the archaeological record in all the republics (and by default, peoples) of the former Yugoslavia. So much was this linkage evident that even some of the presumed boundaries of Illyrian expansion matched the exact borders of Yugoslavia. Illyrians became one of the central archaeological topics in Yugoslavia (Novaković, 2007; Gori, 2012; Džino, 2014).

Perusing the themes and titles in Yugoslav archaeology from the 1950s to the 1960s and comparing them to the 1980s, several symptomatic differences are immediately apparent. The image of a unifying past, created in the first decades of post-World War Two, were gradually superseded by a specific mosaic of several distinctly separate pasts, as interpreted by some national schools of archaeology where the reference frame of the "Yugoslav past" was not as revered as before (Novaković, 2014, 238–240).

From today's perspective, it could seem unwarranted to follow this change of reference frames as, with the demise of Yugoslavia, the constituting nations forming their own independent republics have since established their own cultural and geographical reference frames anew. Nonetheless, what has been pointed up in recent research is the conclusion that the heritage of archaeological ideas, which can be linked to the second half of the XX century in Yugoslavia, has been influential throughout the former Yugoslavia up to the present day (Novaković, 2014, 221–254; Džino, 2011, 197–198; Babić, 2011, 118–119). Hence, it is not a priority to reach conclusions about understanding Yugoslav and Illyrian (non)unity, but to consider the heritage of the interpretation of identity and continuity that has been carried over from its Yugoslav context into that of Serbian archaeology (Palavestra, 2011, 588–589). These themes are strongly involved in an area of research termed the ethnogenesis of nations, where it is mandatory to note the tendency of theory and method as remaining approximately the same, regardless of changes in the ethnic determination of the formulation (whether it be the ethnogenesis of the Yugoslav or Serbian nation). It follows that Yugoslav archaeology may be viewed as an incubator that has developed ideas constituting the framework of the field up to the present day, irrespective of them being understood affirmatively or presenting a conceptual burden (Curta, 2002, 201–218; Milosavljević, 2013).

As if in a mirror, a group of the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology researchers studying the past recognized a thought collective that initiated significant changes in the history of Yugoslavian archaeology after the end of the Second World War. This same archaeological thought collective predominant from 1948 to 1991, was made up of several prominent leaders, who formatively affected the "traditional" thought manner in Serbian archaeology. The shift appeared as in relation the cessation of a singular authority in knowledge production from the first half of the XX century (Palavestra & Babić, 2016). In contrast, the post-second world war period saw differing scholars working together for the common democratization in the knowledge production of Yugoslavian archaeology. A reflexive interpretation of these changes in the past of archaeology in the Centre for Theoretical Archaeology has brought about a clear hope that actual change in possible as well as in the present (Babić, 2013, 621–631). However, a thorough examination of this shift after the Second World War has turned up an unexpected dark side. It has turned out that a change has meant a culling of those aspects which will lead to change and which will be transferred to the coming generation from the corpus of "outdated ideas", all done in the name of building up an identity of a new state that arose from the destruction of the Second World War (Palavestra & Milosavljević, 2015, 634–640).

The responsibility for this specific transfer of ideas lay in a thought collective whose oral tradition concerning them was taken as the best possible for change within the Yugoslavian archaeological community post-WWII. Notwithstanding, outdated ideas transferred into the transformed archaeology after the Second World War were whitewashed of their racial anthropology in Yugoslavia as well as considerable regressive concepts concerning ethnic and racial identity. To make matters even more complicated, Yugoslavian archaeology post-World War Two could be viewed as better in its function (naturally with Serbian archaeology within this same framework). 1948 - 1991 saw far more scholars in their respective fields as well as an increase in institutions whose youngest scholars were sent abroad to further their education, a fact which lent itself to the organization of numerous local and international projects (Novaković 2012, 51–71). The leaders of these changes were Milutin Garašanin (Serbian, 1920–2002) along with Alojz Benac (1914–1992), a prominent archaeologist from Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Simultaneously, however, as supported by a number of other scholars, Yugoslavian archaeology nurtured a distinct problematic viewpoint of cultural identity, which was only possible owing to a trans-Yugoslavian thought collective that established its own self-representation as opposing so-called "obsolete" authorities, such as the founder of Serbian archaeology, Miloje M. Vasić (1869–1956) (Palavestra, 2013; Palavestra & Babić, 2016).

The analysis of knowledge production does not necessitate merely an indication of character and continuance of the thought collective, rather, an evaluation of its influence as well as the detection of the authorities pertaining to the society as a whole who promote the ideas of the thought collective to which they belong (Pruitt, 2011). Subsequent to this question, I would like to directly note the issue of trans-generational knowledge transfer in relation to the mechanisms allowing for the tracking of these same processes (Mannheim, 1952). As an illuminating example, please consider the history of Serbian archaeology. Despite the conflicts and varying interpretations over the same phenomena, its concepts and ideas have carried over from generation to generation. Although Miloje Vasić and his students acted entirely against one another due to their differing interpretations of Serbian archaeology, the interpretation to the commonly held notions between them came to be the common groundwork of archaeology (Palavestra & Babić, 2016). These common ideas are of exceptional importance as they present a conceptual tool-box of different groups of scholars (Stoczkowski, 2008, 346-359). Within this segment of the text is also shown more precisely how the transfer of ideas from one generation to another functions when these ideas become commonly held. In this manner a natural view of the world is formed for the group. That which must be demonstrated is what the essence is; i.e., what is transferred.

## Searching for origins in Yugoslavia

This study has striven to demonstrate a detailed, illustrated instance of what positive results may be achieved and extracted through the theory and methods of a research program as based on Fleck (Milosavljević, 2016, *in preparation*). It has selected issues and concerns not previously recognized as typically relevant in the study of the history of archaeology, such as the continuing duration of non-scientific ideas from a diachronic perspective, and has brought them to the surface for examination. The analysis provided proffers a stable ground upon which the discussion of the role of such archaeological (proto)ideas may be discussed within the political sphere of the former Yugoslavia.

This study has noted how the thought-collective led by Milutin Garašanin and Alojz Benac promoted Yugoslavian ideas on Illyrians which has influenced knowledge production to the present day. As has been illustrated, this idea was expressed explicitly at the Third Archaeological Symposium on Illyrians organized in 1968 in Mostar (today Bosnia and Herzegovina), where seventeen presentations were held and seventy-one participants attended. Organized by the Center for Balcanological Research in Sarajevo, which proceeded from the two prior conferences: on the *Territorial and Chronological Expansion of the Illyrians* (Benac, 1964) and on the *Illyrians during Antiquity* (Benac, 1967). The title of the third symposium '*Pre-Slavic Elements in the Ethnogenesis of the South Slavs*' (Benac, 1969) as well as the names of the speakers elucidate the organizers' intentions to establish a basis for a discussion on an Illyrian-Slav continuity and their supposed ethnogenesis as an extremely complex phenomenon.

Odd it would appear then that the participants of the symposium had no corresponding opinion in regards to what the task of the symposium was in practice, nor as to the keywords such as *autochthonous*, *ethnogenesis*, *substrate* and *continuity*. In his final address Alojz Benac remarked:

We now, for example, can certainly claim after this Symposium that ethnic and cultural formations, as well as the symbiosis of disparate ethnic groups on this ground, were a long, drawn-out process. Due to which, this symbiosis needs to be observed in its stages, and not as a singular whole (...) Here a thesis that South Slavs carried an original ethnic component with themselves has been presented and established. The goal of further research is to make visible this autochthonousness, to attempt to clearly define its components. It is only then that we may speak with more certainty about the contact – from an ethnic and cultural viewpoint – of the South Slavs with the Paleo-Balkan peoples native to the geographical area. In this very context arises the question of differing perspectives on the process of symbiosis spread out in the region, since specific autochthonous ethnic groups had existed throughout the various areas. Therefore, disparate processes occurred. I deem it particularly important to observe urban and rural processes separately ... (Benac, 1969, 305)

At the VI congress of Yugoslav archaeologists in 1963, the key subject was relegated to the question of continuity and the introductory text served as a theoretical – methodological appendix for all those willing to express interest into the subject. Milutin Garašanin was the author here and the purpose of the article '*The*

*Problem of Continuity in Archaeology*' was to separate the phenomena of cultural and ethnic continuity, as well as to point out to the numerous preconditions needed to address these subjects in their entirety. In the framework of cultural-historical archaeology in Yugoslavia, theoretical-methodological determination in the judgment of Garašanin was well summarized by Alojz Benac, according to whom, continuity necessitates evolution and change, which is has two modes of diffusion and migration. Nonetheless, not many archaeologists in Yugoslavia were able to utilize the conceptual tools Benac and Garašanin had at their disposal (Garašanin, 1964).

Regardless of the criticism to be directed to the particular standpoints presented, or regardless of the possibility of any particular interpretations being rated as more or less influential, it is necessary to take into account the wide spectrum of opinions that circulated within the network of Yugoslav archaeologists. If the dominant thought-collective of the Center for Balcanological Research in Sarajevo receives special attention, it could also be termed as a large and heterogeneous collective, and "democratic" by its direction (*sensu* Fleck, 1981), albeit critical orientation sometimes does occur within the thought collective, and, on its fringes - its epistemological pessimism. At this point, it behooves us to reiterate that no single individual opinion, as according to Fleck, may receive complete and total comprehension by members of a thought collective. On the contrary, translations, misunderstandings and compromises frequently occur in communication and lead to a standardization within a thought collective. In this very sense, several points may be singled out which present a standard in understanding ethnic identity, ethnogenesis, and continuity, not to mention the belief of constant contact with barbarism, atavism, cultural degradation, autochthonousness, cultural substrates, and essential determination of what constitutes "identity".

General presumptions already extant in the trans-Yugoslavian thought collective based around the Center for Balcanological Research may be brought to light with relative ease. The collective, at least since the outset of the 1990s, have frequently undertaken a moderate tone and established critical enclosures to their academic research. As a result of an affinity towards equivocation though, the illusion of critical speaking about phenomena such as ethnicity, borders, continuity and ethnogenesis is still an active issue. Nonetheless, at the very least, these questions do receive their due consideration and review in a removed traditional environment for archaeological research that allows for a progression in the thought collective proper.

When boiled down and impurities removed, the essence of the ideas of the collective can be seen as such that archaeology is a study of archaeological cultures which are in correlation with ethnicities but not determined by ethnicity. The extracted ideas of the trans-Yugoslavian thought collective of the Center for Balcanological Research could be summarized in the following manner:

There is no ethnicity as a single-component phenomenon, in lieu of which there is, however, ethnic structure, ethnogenesis, or ethnic stratigraphy (the first two consist of differing components). Ethnicity cannot be estimated in a short chronological sample but rather only over extended span of time as it is unraveled in context. When examined from a broader perspective including substrates, the character of ethnicity is read from the existing substrate. For instance, resistance and endurance of which are best seen in encounters and victories over a newly introduced elements may assimilate qualities as to determine ethnicity (read enemies identifying ethnicity as counterpoised of one group to another – "They are not us and we are not them – they are the invader"). If a substrate is utilized as such as the essence of ethnicity, it enables a specific coloring of ethnicity, but this may also include non-substrate elements which are non-essential to definition of the ethnicity but are incorporated nonetheless. As a consequence of its isolation of other elements, substrate as an essence of ethnicity is easily and readily connected to conservative tendencies in a group due to the fact that it may naturally be exclusive (to illustrate this concept of conservatism, consider its most expressed form in the manner of burial and ritualization and memory for the dead of which anything other is anathema due to the singular nature and importance of the ritual).

Albeit they had once been crucial in reconstructing the ethnic past in this retrograde perspective, survivals are "windows into the past" also for the thought collective, in which present ethnogenetic traces of earlier customs and material culture are held as the most significant indicators of atavistic forms of ethnicity. Survivals necessitate that all mechanisms of ethnic identifications in archaeology are unable to be possible if constant contact with the substrate has not been established. The standing option to slide along a timeline, thanks to being an active "window into the past" as found in the present has been utilized methodologically as a foolproof backbone and starting point. The substrate is, therefore, only possible to understand and interpret due to survivals and bares a non-inclusive or comprehensive meaning to ethnicity as such (Curta,

2002, 201-218; Džino, 2011, 197-206; Milosavljević, 2015).

Substrates had served as an extremely reliable methodological backbone for the trans-Yugoslavian thought collective around the Center in Sarajevo. The same idea had its origins in the discipline of history, from the historian Fanula Papazoglu, who explicitly used the concepts of unilineal evolutionism as her theoretical-methodological framework. Due to the concurrence of these two different fields, this methodological aid could be taken seriously at the time. Additionally, this approach was partially present in generally popular narratives about the past owing to the racial anthropologist and philosopher Vladimir Dvorniković who has remained popular, even today (Palavestra & Milosavljević, 2015, 634-640).

On the methodological bases of rudimentary unilineal evolutionism as seen in the trans-Yugoslavian thought collective and adjusted to the needs of archaeology as it comes in need of an ethnic origin, the concept of the continuity of an autochthonous culture was developed. While the use of this concept receives seldom theoretical explication in archaeological texts, it does seek to incorporate the presumption of the continuity of a autochthonous culture as linked to a specific geographic area, as well as a domination of the culture of the autochthons, which is transferred by insufficiently explained processes onto the (new) population of the area. This occurrence is, allegedly, recognized in archaeological material through stylistic archaism and conservative characteristics of material culture (Kuzmanović, 2012).

The question of origin, ethnicity, continuity, and territorial rights in its specificities have been key for Serbian archaeology and have presented a basis for interpretation of the past in a nationalistic and racial prism, though the very authors of the interpretations of the past were unaware of the origin of the ideas they so expressly insisted on (Yeomans, 2007, 83-122). Using the history of ideas as based on Fleck's concept of the thought collective, the genesis of these malign ideas is more straightforward to demonstrate and it is easier to understand the reasons of their continuing duration in the academic community of Serbia.

## Conclusions

The revelation of regressive ideas that lay at the heart of contemporary archaeology in Serbia is a matter of concern in and of itself, notably as one preventing the active development of Serbian archaeology although the field is open to progress in the global context. The sheer character of these regressive ideas has also led to their dangerous ideation. The essence of these ideas is akin to the racial anthropology found in the German speaking world of the early Twentieth Century, which met their complete explication during the failed new world order of the Second World War. As regards the ethical and epistemological issues arising from such rigid approaches in anthropology and archaeology, much has already been written and criticism given, hence little need be added here (Brather, 2008, 317-338; Bunzl & Glenn, 2006, 1-30; Massin, 1996, 79-154; Veit, 2002, 41-66; Wiwjorra, 1996, 164-188; Haßmann, 2002, 67-142). The ideas that form the marrow of Serbian archaeology as it stands now have been lamentably adapted from a defense of an exclusionary ethnic and racial identity which replaces pro-Serbian slavicism as a corresponding integer to pro-Germanic ideology of the past. The argumentation remains the same while the names merely are replaced – such is the status quo.

The question may still be further raised as to why such malign ideas can be so maintained for such a prolonged period of time within a single academic community while their dubiousness remains untouched. The answer is that hidden behind the idiosyncrasy of the history of Serbian archaeology.

Until the outbreak of the Second World War, Serbian archaeology was veritably a field in which one authority ruled and suffocated any work considered other to it from official circles within the archeological community. Albeit that Vasić was a founding father of Serbian archaeology as a scientific discipline, he was ultimately responsible for the trauma of 50 years of authoritarian-led knowledge production. Yet, from this very authoritative state, Serbian archaeology was led down a “better path” by a thought collective as headed by Milutin Garašanin. He laid out the trans-Yugoslavian channels and brought about a functioning form of archaeology that was more democratic. This exact change generally has been perceived as truly heroic. However, this article challenges even this viewpoint based on its continuation of essentialist ideas on identity that draw on outdated and falsified concepts of racial and ethnic identity.

Through following which ideas were cited by members of the trans-Yugoslavian thought collective in standard archaeology in a post WWII environment, it has been pointed up that this change of ideas still held close to those outdated ones which had come before, especially those concerning the understanding

of ethnicity and ethnogenesis. In the context of the Balkan Wars of the 1990s, these ideas were transferred into a popular language of demagogic political speech.

The issue of ethnic origins as connected to ethnic identity is very much alive and present in the contemporary state of Serbian society, as well as that of the region of the former Yugoslavia as a whole. Concordant to post-colonialism, the former colonial relations which once had ruled are still hard at work but have taken on a new form. Even though they may have been swept under the carpet, much like racial and ethnic tensions in developed areas of the world in which these issues result merely in unrest and not civil strife, so it is in a "post-ethnic" Balkans. The question of origins has become a politicized one and not one of epistemic virtue.

The political background, which the archaeologists of Serbia have lived in and continue to function from, in which I am also a part, has incorporated into itself a renounced idealization originally arising from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. These ideals once envisioned wider social rights, greater social and political mobility, free education, and, most prominently, a far-reaching multi-cultural state. This same idealization excluded ethnic nationalism and harshly criticized such ideologies which ironically appeared in the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. In much simpler yet comprehensive terms, binary opposition has been forged between a once multi-cultural Yugoslavia and its subsequent ethnically oriented post-Yugoslavian nation states based on ethnic nationalism of contrast and not similarity. Due to the rift between these two spheres and the active dichotomy of thought inherent to it, it is odd indeed that this paper should address and establish significant links between the concept of origins in Yugoslavia and the current Serbian state, which are essentially ideologically oppositional yet mutually respective of one another as two great beasts who live side by side but do not acknowledge one another's' existence.

In the context of academia since the year 2000, when archaeology came to a crossroads of choosing between the humanities and the hard sciences, when it is more profitable to select the latter (such as emerging DNA-analysis, big data analysis and network analysis), archaeology's lack of adaption of reflexivity and theoretical explication may be seriously abused and misused. Due to this very real concern, the Center for Theoretical Archaeology in Belgrade, though placed in a contentious political context, is striving to untie both aspects of archaeology (the humanities and sciences), as one of the key advantages which allow archaeologists to produce a more complex picture of the past as well as to be more responsible researchers.

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